

Blame Attributions for Experienced Incivility and  
Links to Leader Well-Being: A Mixed-Methods Approach

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A Thesis Submitted to  
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Masters of Science in Applied (I/O) Psychology

August 2022, Halifax, Nova Scotia

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## Abstract

The current mixed-methods study applied latent variable modelling to understand unique subpopulations of leaders attributing blame for an uncivil incident instigated by a higher-up. Profiles of blame attributors were developed as a combination of internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender-extrinsic attributions. Latent Profile Analysis conducted on the quantitative attribution scales uncovered four profiles (*perpetrator-dominant, perpetrator-situational, balanced, muted-balanced*) and Latent Class Analysis conducted on the qualitative codes transformed from incident descriptions uncovered two profiles (*perpetrator-dominant, perpetrator-situational*). Differences between the Latent Profile Analysis profiles in subsequent well-being were observed for high-intensity and low-intensity negative affect and high-intensity positive affect, but not for low-intensity positive affect. Attribution profiles were explored, in part, through a gender-lens but no significant differences in the gender distribution of leaders across profiles were observed. Study limitations, implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.

August, 2022

## Acknowledgements

An infinite amount of gratitude and appreciation is owed to my supervisor, Dr. Camilla Holmvall, whose support has been unwavering throughout this entire process. Her guidance and mentorship has pushed me to think more critically, explore different perspectives, see the bigger picture and impact of our research. Camilla, most of all I want to thank you for your kindness and patience with me. With any mishaps throughout this year, you've truly always been in my corner, supporting me and believing in my potential as a researcher. For your kindness, I will always be grateful.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Kevin Kelloway, Dr. Dianne Ford and Dr. Wendy Carroll. I am beyond lucky to have had such a fantastic committee. Your support throughout my thesis, your input and comments has helped guide me throughout this project.

A huge thank you goes out to my Halifax friends, now family. Moving out here alone was not easy but meeting you all was the best thing to happen to me. Desiree and Anne, thanks for listening to all my rants and taking care of me. Claire, your kindness always amazes me. Diana, you're my forever buddy in academia and more; we'll always have Paris (or not!). Thanks for all the love, laughs, tears, and memories.

To my parents, Rania and Alaa, I owe everything to you. Your endless love and support are the only reasons I am here today. I must have called you both a million times stressing over my thesis and you were always there to listen. Thank you for being there for every milestone of my life; this is no different. Love you the most, always and in all ways.

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## **Blame Attributions for Experienced Incivility and Links to Leader Well-Being: A Mixed-Methods Approach**

Incivility is a form of workplace mistreatment defined as “low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect” (Andersson & Pearson, 1999, p. 457). Common yet subtle, incivility influences the work lives of many employees (Pearson et al., 2005) and has been linked to negative outcomes including lowered job satisfaction, higher turnover intentions, and poorer mental health and overall well-being (Lim et al., 2008; Porath & Pearson, 2009; Schilpzand et al., 2016a). Although much work on incivility has accumulated, researchers do not fully understand how targets attribute blame for this form of mistreatment. Theories of attribution (i.e., blame) have been applied to understand the effects of more intense forms of workplace mistreatment, such as sexual harassment and aggression (Herscovis & Barling, 2010a), but have been less readily used to explain interpretations of incivility.

Uncivil conduct is often thought to be ambiguous in nature as the behaviours often “lack clear [and] conscious intentionality” (Cortina, 2008, p. 56). This lack of clear intentionality creates opportunity for variation in attributions and blame for uncivil acts as well as their subsequent well-being outcomes (Herscovis & Barling, 2010a). For example, targets of uncivil behaviours may rationalise intentionality and attribute the incident to factors such as the perpetrator’s ignorance or personality (i.e., external perpetrator attributions; Anderson & Pearson, 1999). Additionally, the uncivil behaviours could be interpreted to be due to the target’s own inadequacy (i.e., internal attributions). Targets may also attribute the incivility as due to their group-membership (e.g., gender attributions; Herscovis & Barling, 2010a), to the nature of their relationship with the perpetrator (i.e., relational attributions; Eberly et al., 2011) or to some

context-driven reason (i.e., situational attributions; Bowman et al., 2009). As incivility experiences and impacts may differ by the gender of the target (e.g., Cortina, 2008; Cortina et al., 2013; Holmvall & Sobhani, 2019), the current study adopts a gender-lens by applying principles of stereotype threat activation (Steele & Aronson, 1995) to further understand how attribution processes may differ for male and female targets of incivility.

Differential attributions for an uncivil act, as might be expected, may have implications for a target's well-being. Indeed, as demonstrated by Hershcovis and Barling (2010a) when examining sexual harassment and aggression, perceived internal attacks are linked to greater adverse well-being outcomes than perceived external or gender attacks. As such, the effect of incivility on well-being outcomes may be influenced similarly by interpretations and blame attributions, which may differ across targets of uncivil conduct.

The most common approach to examining attributions is a variable-centered one where independent relationships between each type of attribution and other variables are established (Craig & Smith, 2000; Eberly et al., 2011). However, attribution categories are not mutually exclusive. For example, the presence of internal attributions does not necessarily indicate the absence of external attributions (Eberly et al., 2011). This suggests that targets of mistreatment can hold several attributions simultaneously, including internal, perpetrator (i.e., external), relational, situational and gender-based. To further the understanding of how multiple attributions can develop simultaneously, the current thesis instead took a person-centered approach by examining the unique subpopulations (i.e., groups, profiles or classes) of incivility targets who hold different patterns of combined attribution types (Craig & Smith, 2000; Gabriel et al., 2015). This approach was facilitated through conducting latent variable modelling

(Muthén & Muthén, 2000) which allowed for the creation of profiles of attribution patterns as a combination of internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender-based accounts.

Previous work has predominantly focused on mistreatment either enacted by leaders towards their subordinates or between co-workers (Miner et al., 2018). Although less well understood, leaders can also be targets of mistreatment and incivility, which may influence their well-being (e.g., Keashly et al., 1994; Holmvall & Sobhani, 2019). Compromised leader well-being can be detrimental to not only their own performance, but also that of their subordinates and the organization (Bernerth & Hirschfeld, 2016). Mistreatment directed towards leaders may be enacted by multiple sources (e.g., subordinates, colleagues and higher-up leadership). However, the impact of mistreatment from those in higher positions of power has been shown to be more damaging to incivility targets than co-worker- or subordinate-instigated incivility (e.g., Guidroz et al., 2012; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b). Research also suggests that incivility behaviours themselves may vary on factors such as their perceived intentionality and intensity (Matthews & Ritter, 2015; Miner et al., 2018). The current study adopts a narrow focus by examining uncivil behaviours which imply that a higher-up leader has doubted the judgement or ignored the input of the target leader (Matthews & Ritter, 2015).

The purpose of the current study then was to explore the interpretation and attribution processes of leaders when they are targets of incivility enacted by those to whom they report. These attribution processes and patterns were explored, in part, through a gender-lens to identify potential differences in incivility attributions and well-being outcomes for male and female leaders. Using a mixed-methods approach (Creswell et al., 2003; 2004), this research sought to address the following research questions. First, how do leaders construct attributions of blame for uncivil behaviours that specifically imply a doubting of their judgement or ignoring of their

input from higher-up leadership? More specifically, are there distinct profiles of ‘blame attributers’ for leaders experiencing incivility? Second, how do the different attribution profiles link to well-being outcomes? Third, how, if at all, do the attribution profiles and well-being outcomes differ for male and female leaders?

## **Workplace Incivility**

**Defining Incivility.** Uncivil conduct can be considered a form of employee deviance and anti-social workplace behaviour (Cortina et al., 2001). Incivility in the workplace presents as low-intensity behaviours that are often ambiguous in intent (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). For example, doubting an expert’s judgement, inappropriate email behaviours, talking down to a co-worker and ignoring another’s input are all uncivil behaviours (Cortina et al., 2001; Porath & Pearson, 2009). Among the defining features of incivility is the ambiguity in the intention of the enacted behaviours. However, there has been a recent shift in the literature which acknowledges that the ambiguity in uncivil behaviour intent may vary on a case-by-case basis (Miner et al., 2018). This variation may be explained by the assumption linking low-intensity negative behaviour with ambiguous intent and high-intensity negative behaviour with unambiguous intent; thus, intensity and ambiguity are often confounded (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b; Miner et al., 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to frame the ambiguity of incivility separately from the intensity of the actions to retain the definition of such mistreatment.

Although incivility has generally been considered a unidimensional collection of behaviours (Schilpzand et al., 2016a), recent work has identified distinctions between forms of incivility labelled as *covert/passive* and *overt/active* (Carmona-Cobo et al., 2019; Yuan et al., 2020). Covert/passive incivility encompasses subtle and indirect actions (e.g., ignoring colleagues, not paying attention in a meeting) while overt/active incivility reflects more obvious

acts (e.g., being condescending, public reprimands; Carmona-Cobo et al., 2019; Yuan et al., 2020). Covert/passive forms of incivility have received lower ratings of intent to harm while overt/active behaviours were rated to be higher on intent to harm (Cortina et al., 2013; Matthews & Ritter, 2015). This suggests that different uncivil actions may vary in the perception of how ambiguous they are typically deemed. Therefore, the current study focused on behaviours which are more likely to be covert/passive and often rated as more ambiguous in intent in order to allow for more variation in target interpretations and attributions. More specifically, to further the focus of incivility experienced by leaders and highlight possible gender differences in that experience, the present study addresses a specific set of behaviours that may align more with covert/passive incivility: doubting of a leader's judgement or an ignoring of a leader's input and opinions (DeMarco et al., 2018; Matthews & Ritter, 2015). Indeed, Lim and Teo's (2009) conceptualization of active/overt and passive/covert email incivility categorized ignoring input or a request over email to be more passive incivility behaviour.

In their evaluation of the twelve-item Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS; Cortina et al., 2013), Matthews and Ritter (2015) examined the scale items in relation to several outcomes. The items "Paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions" and "Doubted your judgement on a matter over which you had responsibility" were among the more commonly experienced uncivil behaviours. Additionally, Matthews and Ritter (2015) explored the level of ambiguity for each item by assessing each items' perceived intent to harm. The WIS includes a number of items with high ratings of intent to harm suggesting that these behaviours may be understood as less ambiguous than the definition of incivility implies (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). However, doubting judgement and ignoring input received among the lowest ratings (yet still mid-range) for intent to harm suggesting that these behaviours are relatively

more ambiguous and more aligned with the definition of incivility. Because of leaders' higher position of power, this doubting of judgment and ignoring of input may be particularly relevant and impactful for their well-being. Leadership positions assume a level of influence such that when a leader's judgement is doubted or their input is ignored, this incivility would represent a violation in their work role and thus may be particularly damaging in this context (Adair, 2003; Chen et al., 2011; Dulac et al., 2008; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Williams et al. 2020).

**Targets and Sources of Incivility.** Research on incivility has often collapsed across incivility targets and has generally overlooked isolating leaders as targets of this form of workplace mistreatment (Schilpzand et al., 2016a). Power dynamics in the workplace dictate the hierarchical nature of incivility often being enacted by higher-ups toward subordinates (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b). However, leaders do experience incivility which in turn can have negative implications for their well-being (Holmval & Sobhani, 2019; Keashly et al., 1994). Diminished leader well-being may be detrimental to their own performance, that of their subordinates and the organization overall (Bernerth & Hirschfeld, 2016). This larger ripple effect of poor leader well-being thus warrants the examination of the influence of incivility on leaders as a specific category of employees.

Research examining the influence of different sources of incivility has also been minimal (Schilpzand et al., 2016a). In fact, the most commonly used scale to measure incivility, the WIS, does not differentiate between different sources of incivility (Cortina et al., 2001; Schilpzand et al., 2016a). The measurement of incivility often combines incivility sources without considering the differential impact each may have on outcomes. This grouping of incivility sources may overlook the unique impact that each source has on targets of incivility (Schilpzand et al., 2016a).

Indeed, within the broader workplace mistreatment literature, studies have highlighted that the influence of mistreatment on the target may differ based on its source (e.g., Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b). For example, conflict with those in higher positions of power demonstrates stronger negative associations with target well-being than conflict with co-workers and outsiders (Guidroz et al., 2012). However, other studies on workplace aggression have observed an equivalent influence on well-being between different instigator sources, depending on how well-being is operationalized (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b). Broader mistreatment research on aggression has shown that supervisor-enacted aggression has the strongest adverse influences on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes compared to co-worker instigated aggression (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b) and customer/client instigated aggression (e.g., Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b; LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002). Clients and customers are considered organizational outsiders, who may mistreat employees and produce strain (Grandy et al., 2007; Layne et al., 2019). However, these negative interactions are often temporary and may have less influence on an employee's ongoing work experiences compared to supervisors and co-workers (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010b; Sliter et al., 2011).

When examining incivility specifically, feelings of embarrassment (Hershcovis et al., 2017) and negative incident appraisals (Cortina & Magely, 2009) are more strongly associated with higher power (versus co-worker) instigators within such incivility incidents. Additionally, civility interventions have been shown to be more effective for supervisor-instigated incivility rather than co-worker instigated incivility (Leiter et al., 2011, 2012).

Given these patterns, it is expected that incivility from higher-up leadership sources will be more harmful to leader well-being than incivility from other sources. This is consistent with extant research suggesting that the actions of those in higher positions of power are more likely

to dictate the social environment and influence organizational outcomes (e.g., resource allocation, work assignments, career progression) than the actions of those in lower positions of power (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2003; Keltner et al., 2003). Although leaders as recipients of incivility may have influence and power within their organizations, the hierarchy of leadership suggests that incivility from leaders who are in even higher positions of power will be detrimental to target well-being (e.g., Holmvall & Sobhani, 2019). Leaders in higher positions of power have influence on valued resources/outcomes and their actions may be a more influential signal of organizational culture (Grojean et al., 2004). Therefore, this study explored higher-up sources of incivility enacted against leaders to understand better attributions and subsequent affective reactions.

**Well-being Outcomes.** The ubiquity of incivility in the workplace is alarming as the estimated majority of employees have reported experiencing incivility (Cortina et al., 2001; Porath & Pearson, 2013). The low intensity and ambiguity of incivility may suggest that these behaviours are not seriously harming targets; however, research on the influence of incivility has shown otherwise. The influence of incivility goes well beyond just the target to influence organizational outcomes negatively (e.g., high turnover intentions, low satisfaction, low commitment; Schilpzand et al., 2016a). Incivility can also have large negative financial ramifications on organizations through job withdrawal, work delays, distraction, retaliation, lower task performance, and absenteeism among other outcomes (e.g., Bunk & Magley, 2013; Pearson & Porath, 2009, Sliter et al., 2011).

The current study focuses on an individual level outcome of incivility: leader well-being. Following experiencing uncivil conduct, target well-being has been a well-documented outcome of interest (Schilpzand et al., 2016a). Previous research has linked incivility with negative

affective outcomes within targets such as depression (Lim & Lee, 2011), negative emotions (Kim & Shapiro, 2008), higher stress (e.g., Cortina et al., 2001; Miner & Reed, 2010) and reduced optimism (Bunk & Magley, 2013). The detriment to target well-being may extend beyond just the workplace as incivility can also influence a target's life at home through lower overall well-being (e.g., Lim & Cortina, 2005; Lim et al., 2008), increased work-family conflict and lower marital satisfaction (Ferguson, 2012).

In terms of the influence of incivility on leader well-being specifically, not much empirical work has accumulated. This, in part, may be due to the focus on leaders as enactors of incivility and not targets (Miner et al., 2018). However, recent work has showed that those who supervise, lead or manage the work of others do experience incivility and that such negative workplace behaviour is indeed associated with worsened leader well-being (Heffernan & Bosetti, 2020; Heffernan & Bosetti, 2021; Holmvall & Sobhani, 2019).

Much debate and empirical work has been dedicated to describing and defining well-being (Dodge et al., 2012). Although many views of what constitutes well-being exist, a commonality between these views is the understanding that well-being is multi-faceted. Among the more common facets used to describe and define well-being are positive and negative affect. Affective well-being can be context-free (i.e., life in a general sense) or can be related to a specific domain (e.g., job-related; Warr, 1990). In addition, affective well-being includes emotions and reactions in response to life events that individuals experience. Affect and emotions play a critical role in “thought, decision making and individual success” (Hosie & Sevastos, 2010, p. 409). The emotions that targets of incivility experience following an uncivil encounter may also facilitate spiraling and tit-for-tat uncivil behavioural responses (Andersson &

Pearson, 1999). Therefore, the current study focused on leader job-related affective well-being through resultant emotions after experiencing incivility in the workplace.

Although well-being is often conceptualized in positive terms (i.e., healthy, well, comfortable), affective well-being encompasses both positive and negative affect (Van Katwyk et al., 2000). According to the model of affective well-being at work (Warr, 1987), emotions tend to have an underlying cognitive structure following two dimensions: pleasure and arousal. These dimensions are orthogonal to one another and represent systemically interrelated categories of emotions which can be used to describe affective well-being (Van Katwyk et al., 2000; Warr, 1990). Consequently, when examining leader well-being, the current study draws upon this model of affective well-being to better understand how incivility influences leaders' positive and negative affective states. These states are comprised of a series of emotions which the dimensions of pleasure and arousal intersect to create. For example, high-intensity negative affect is the category resulting from low pleasure and high arousal including emotions such as being angry or frustrated. Low-intensity negative affect includes emotions of low pleasure and low arousal such as being gloomy or discouraged. High-intensity positive affect includes emotions of high pleasure and high arousal such as being energetic and inspired. Conversely, low-intensity positive affect includes emotions of high pleasure but low arousal such as being calm or satisfied.

Building on Warr's (1990), as well as Van Katwyk and colleagues' (2000) work on job-related negative and positive affect, the current study adopted an appraisal and attribution specific framework to understand better the affective well-being of leaders after experiencing incivility. In accordance with Bunk and Magley's (2013) work on appraisals and emotions when experiencing incivility, cognitive appraisals are linked to the emotions that targets feel.

Accountability is one of the main four cognitive appraisals formed within the Cognitive-Motivational-Relational theory of emotions (CMR; Smith & Lazarus, 1990) and can be assigned as self-accountability (i.e., internal attribution) or other-accountability (i.e., external attribution). Both forms of accountability or attributions are related to discreet felt emotions such that targets would likely experience *anger* when assigning blame externally but feel *guilt* when the blame is internal (e.g., Bunk & Magley, 2013; Smith & Lazarus, 1993). *Anger* falls within the high-intensity negative affect category while *guilt* is more in line with low-intensity negative affect. Therefore, the category of affect that leaders will experience is likely related to the appraisals or blame attributions they assign to the incivility incident. The current study applies blame attributions (or in CMR terminology: accountability appraisals) and associated emotions/affective categories as key factors in explaining the influence of incivility on leader well-being.

### **Interpreting Incivility**

**Attributions and Blame.** Attribution theory suggests that following a significant event in one's life, individuals often try to make sense of the causes of the event especially if the event was negative or unexpected (Weiner, 2000). Weiner (1995) suggests that blame attributions are the critical determinants of subsequent emotions (see Weiner, 1995, for a review). Blame attributions have generally been presented in a dichotomy of internal and external causal attributions (e.g., Eberly et al., 2017).

Internal attributions reflect a self-accountability wherein the individual assumes the causal reasoning for the event stems from themselves internally (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985). Alternatively, external attributions reflect an other-accountability as the individual views the causal reasoning for the event to stem from an external source (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985).

This attribution process is parallel to the appraisal process noted in CMR theory (Smith & Lazarus, 1990) as internal attributions reflect a self-accountability appraisal while external attributions reflect an other-accountability appraisal. Recent research has questioned, however, whether the internal and external categories of attributions sufficiently capture concepts of blame thus leading to the development of more nuanced categories (e.g., discrimination-based, situational, relational; Burton et al., 2014; Cortina, 2008; Eberly et al., 2011, 2017).

When applied to workplace mistreatment, blame attribution/appraisal processes can provide a nuanced understanding of the interpretation process following an incident and the subsequent emotions or affective states leaders experience. Indeed, as highlighted in Bowling and Beehr's (2006) meta-analysis, the attribution process may be a key variable in explaining any links between workplace mistreatment and outcomes such as well-being. Attribution processes beyond just blame have been minimally applied to the incivility context. For example, previous work has examined self-blame across shared incivility experiences (Schilpzand et al., 2016b), links between negative versus challenge incivility attributions and various job attitudes (Marchiondo et al., 2018), individual differences in general attribution orientation (Wang et al., 2021) as well as links between incivility attributions and post-incivility response behaviours (Beattie & Griffin, 2014). However, the following typology of specific blame attributions (i.e., internal, external perpetrator, gender, relational, situational) has, to my knowledge, not yet been applied to understanding incivility experiences.

Although the application of blame attribution processes to workplace mistreatment has been scarce, Hershcovis and Barling's (2010a) examination of more intense forms of mistreatment (i.e., sexual harassment and aggression in the workplace), provides insight into these processes. The researchers examined four attribution categories: internal, external, personal

and gender-based. Their first study, using an experimental design, compared the attributions of sexual harassment and those of aggression in the workplace and found that sexual harassment generally resulted in more external attributions while aggression incidents were more likely to be interpreted through internal attributions. In the second study, a meta-analysis comparing outcomes of sexual harassment and aggression, the researchers found that aggression had a stronger adverse association with well-being than did sexual harassment. Since sexual harassment resulted in more external attribution and aggression resulted in more internal attribution (Study 1), which was associated with worse well-being outcomes, they concluded that it is likely the detriment to well-being is higher for internal than for external or gender-based attributions (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a).

The current study considers five types of blame attributions: internal, perpetrator, gender, situational and relational. These attribution types either reflect a self-accountability thus involving intrinsic attribution accounts (i.e., internal), an other-accountability involving extrinsic attribution accounts (i.e., perpetrator, situational, gender) or a blend of each form of accountability involving both intrinsic and extrinsic accounts (i.e., relational). The internal attribution category involves blame cast towards the leaders themselves as the mistreatment reflects a personal inadequacy (e.g., the leader may feel they have done something to deserve the mistreatment; Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985). Alternatively, the perpetrator attribution category involves blame towards the higher-up leader who instigated the mistreatment (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985). This category is often referred to as external attribution; however, within the current thesis, it will instead be referred to as perpetrator attribution. External attribution is an umbrella term, which encompasses several extrinsic accounts and reasons not internal or reflective of the target which may have contributed to the incident (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985).

Specifically, when the external source of attribution is the perpetrator, perpetrator attributions is more appropriate wording. Next, the situational attribution category involves a consideration of contextual factors, which may have driven the higher-up leader's behaviour (e.g., pressure from others in the organization; Bowman et al., 2009). The gender attribution category involves blame towards the higher-up leader's gender-biased attitudes, which may contribute to their uncivil behaviour (Cortina, 2008; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a). Lastly, the relational attribution category involves a shared blame between the leader themselves and the higher-up perpetrator as the uncivil behaviour reflects an element of the nature of their relationship (Eberly et al., 2011).

The five attribution types evaluated in this study differ somewhat from those applied in Hershcovis and Barling's (2010a) research, which did not include situational or relational categories but did include a personal attribution category. Personal attributions reflect a personal and intentional slight against the recipient of mistreatment. However, the items developed for personal attributions reflected blame towards the perpetrator who intended to personally mistreat the target. This blame rationalization seemed more aligned with the perpetrator attribution category. Additionally, not much empirical work on personal attributions exists within the attribution literature. To account for any personal factors influencing the nature of the relationship between the leader and the higher-up instigator, however, the relational attributions category was added. Indeed, Eberly et al. (2011) proposed relational attributions as an additional locus of blame causality grounded in the interaction between those involved. This suggests a shared blame for the incident between the leader and the higher-up, as an element of their relationship has contributed to the uncivil behaviours (Eberly et al., 2017). Additionally, situational attributions will add an extrinsic contextual element to the blame causality of the incident not captured in Hershcovis and Barling's (2010a) research (Bowman et al., 2009).

**Attribution Profiles.** It is important to note that attribution categories are not mutually exclusive. The presence of internal attributions, for example, does not necessarily indicate the absence of perpetrator attributions. Indeed, Eberly et al. (2011) proposed that attributions are separate categories and do not reflect a single continuum. This notion is also further supported by the small correlations (all  $r_s \leq .34$ ) reported between attribution types (or categories) in Hershcovis and Barling's (2010a) research. This suggests that targets of mistreatment can hold several attributions simultaneously including internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender attributions.

The current thesis aims to build upon Eberly and colleagues' (2011) call for research by considering how targets of mistreatment can hold multiple attributions at once. The analysis of attribution categories will shift from a variable-centered strategy to a person-centered strategy (Craig & Smith, 2000). Thus, independent relationships with variables of interest will not be established directly with each attribution category but instead with attribution profiles as a combination of levels of categories through latent variable modelling (i.e., latent profile analysis and latent class analysis; McCutcheon, 1987; Muthén & Muthén, 2000). The potential outcome of this analytic strategy is unique attribution profiles based on both quantitative (latent profile) and qualitative (latent class) data that reflect the heterogeneity of blame beliefs within incivility targets. These identified profiles can better account for the extent each 'person' uses each blame attribution 'variable' simultaneously hence shifting from a variable-first to a person-first strategy (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2015). Although previous work on mistreatment may not have taken such an approach to analysis, some studies that include attribution concepts have applied this analytic strategy. For example, Brun and colleagues' (2021) work on the causal attributions teachers hold for student academic success and failure has identified five attribution profiles, which were then

linked to several outcomes. Additionally, Osborne and Weiner (2015) applied latent profile analysis to causal attributions of poverty to examine participants' willingness to help the poor and identified three distinct profiles.

As such, selecting latent profile and latent class analyses as the methods for examining these attribution categories following an incivility incident allows for the identification of unique subpopulations who may apply different patterns of attributions in tandem (Gabriel et al., 2015; Muthén & Muthén, 2000). These statistical techniques allow for the creation of profiles of attribution patterns as a combination of internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender attributions. Previous research has generally approached attributions for mistreatment as separate categories without a direct consideration of how attribution types may co-exist (e.g., Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a; Wang et al., 2021). The relationships established between attribution types and other variables of interest have provided much insight but are likely limited due to their nature (i.e., linear relationships tested through correlations, regressions, and modelled interaction effects). A variable-centered approach to attributions de-emphasizes the existence and potential influence of the unique combinations of variables on shaping outcomes such as well-being (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2015; Wang & Hanges, 2011). Therefore, latent profile and latent class techniques contribute novelty and nuance to understanding incivility attributions through examining the presence of potentially distinct attribution profiles. As such, to assess and establish whether attribution profiles exist within an incivility context, the following research question is posed:

***Research Question 1:*** Are there distinct profiles of 'blame attributors' and if so, what profile patterns emerge as a combination of internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender attributions for incivility?

**Links to Well-being.** Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) proposed Affective Events Theory (AET), which states that work events function as affective experiences. They suggest that events, such as incivility incidents, may act as “proximal causes of affective reactions and then as more distal causes of behaviours and attitudes through affective mediation” (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996, p. 31). However, these affective reactions are the second step in this emotion elicitation process according to cognitively-oriented emotion theories where individuals must first react to events through a cognitive appraisal (e.g., an attribution of blame to an event; Lazarus, 1991a, 1991b; Plutchik, 1994; Stein et al., 1993). Although different theories offer several dimensions of such cognitive appraisals including evaluations of relevance, importance, context, consequence and coping, the current thesis adopts blame attributions as the first step in the emotion elicitation process following an incivility incident.

Indeed, aligned with AET, attributional and blame evaluations are linked to experiencing discreet emotions regarding an event (Wang et al., 2021; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Self-accountability reflects an internal blame attribution and, as discussed within the CMR framework (Smith & Lazarus, 1990), leads to targets feeling guilt (i.e., a low-intensity negative affect emotion; Bunk & Magley, 2013). Moreover, other-accountability reflects an external blame attribution and leads to targets feeling anger (i.e., a high-intensity negative affect emotion). Although anger and guilt have been used to describe discreet emotions experienced following mistreatment (e.g., Bunk & Magely, 2013; Kabat-Farr et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2021), the current study will take a broader approach to emotions through measuring affective well-being via both negative and positive affect. Although not much empirical work has explicitly linked positive affect and attributions for mistreatment, links between incivility and dampened positive affect haven been established (e.g., Holmvall & Sobhani, 2019; Motro et al., 2021). Therefore, it

is expected that incivility will influence leader well-being through both negative and positive affect.

The extent and pattern of each category of blame attributions within the identified attribution profiles is expected to be linked to differences in target well-being. Perceived intrinsic attacks (i.e., on one's identity as a person) can be damaging to the target's sense of self and therefore may have more intense affective and well-being outcomes (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Weiner, 1985). When targets of mistreatment turn the blame inwards, these perceived attacks on the leaders themselves may influence their self-worth, self-esteem and self-efficacy (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Major et al., 2003; Winefield et al., 1992). Conversely, perceived extrinsic attacks place the blame externally to the target, which, although it can still influence their well-being, may be less harmful (Crocker & Major, 1989; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a). Placing the blame, even if only partially, on an external source (e.g., perpetrator attitudes towards target gender, situational factors) may partly buffer the experience of incivility thus protecting the target's sense of self (Abramson et al., 1978; Crocker & Major, 1989; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a, Weiner, 1985). Therefore, within the identified attribution profiles, the extent of intrinsic (i.e., internal), extrinsic (i.e., perpetrator, situational, gender) and combined accounts (i.e., relational) are expected to predict differential well-being outcomes for the leaders. As such, I propose the following hypothesis:

***Hypothesis 1:*** Attribution profiles with higher intrinsic accounts will be associated with more detriment to leader well-being following an experience of incivility compared to attribution profiles with lower intrinsic accounts.

## **Gender Influences**

Gender is an influential element within the current study in examining how incivility attributions explain disparities in leader well-being. Although much of the attribution literature conceptualizes causality as internal and external (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985), recent work has highlighted more nuanced blame attributions. For example, targets may rationalise their mistreatment as a form of prejudice or discrimination (Cortina, 2008). Attributions to discrimination are formed when the causal mechanism for mistreatment explains “poor outcomes [as a function of] the prejudiced attitudes of others towards their groups.” (Crocker & Major, 1989, p. 612). The gender attributions adopted in this study reflect similar underlying discrimination reasonings for mistreatment.

**Stereotype Threat.** Despite progress in gender equity within the workplace, women are still underrepresented at higher levels of leadership and their abilities are often questioned (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). This pattern is consistent with the disconnect between feminine traits and the construal of leaders. Implicit Leadership Theories (ILTs) highlight prototypic conceptualizations of leaders based on the attributes (e.g., skills, personality characteristics) that are perceived as necessary for effective leadership (Lord & Maher, 1991). Research on ILTs has uncovered a ‘think manager, think male’ phenomenon suggesting a congruence between masculine characteristics (e.g., strength, assertiveness) and archetypes of leaders (Offermann & Coats, 2018; Schien, 1973). Females are expected to be communal (e.g., helpful, kind) while males are expected to be agentic (e.g., independent, ambitious; Eagly, 1987). Since perceptions of leadership traits are often aligned better with agentic traits, this may give males a gendered advantage within leadership positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Gender is among the more visible social categories and the categorization of people based on their gender often dictates others' behaviour towards them (Allport, 1954; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Therefore, when encountering mistreatment in the workplace, leaders may draw on social context and stereotypes to inform the role that their identity plays within that context (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a). This process likely differs for male and female leaders due to the gendered expectations of leadership and the gender stereotypes applied in the workplace (Lord & Maher, 1991). Following an encounter of incivility, both male and female leaders can experience a heightened saliency of their gender identity within that context (Schmidt & Branscombe, 2002). This logic suggests that when a leader experiences incivility, they may consider or think of their gender in relation to the incident. However, due to the gendered advantage that male leaders more commonly have, the organizational context may favour men in leadership positions (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016; Offermann & Coats, 2018; Schien, 1973). Hence, the existing stereotypes about males and females in leadership may lead to different processes and outcomes for male versus female leaders (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016).

The gendered nature of the leadership role may influence cognitive processes following an incivility incident (Turner et al., 1987). The mismatch between the female gender role and the archetype of leaders can lead to a further heightened saliency of group identity and how the current role is not aligned with that stereotypical identity (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016; Offermann & Coats, 2018; Schien, 1973). When encountering incivility, female leaders may consider the incident to be a cue for stereotypical leadership incongruence on their part. Due to some of the negative gender stereotypes, which can exist for female leaders, they may interpret the incivility with a gender lens, leading to more extrinsic gender attributions (i.e., the higher-up leader holds prejudiced views which is why I was treated this way). Conversely, due to the alignment of the

male gender role with the archetype of leaders, even if the social context suggests that their gender plays a role in the incident (e.g., female-dominant fields), males may be less likely to apply a gender lens to the incident. That is, because male leaders do not draw on the same negative gendered stereotypes that female leaders do, the male gender group may be a less salient reasoning cue for incivility. Therefore, male leaders are expected to attribute mistreatment to gender less often than female leaders would. As such, I propose the following hypothesis:

***Hypothesis 2:*** Female leaders will be more likely to display an attribution profile with higher gender-based attributions than male leaders.

The incivility incident could also lead to a greater internalization of blame for female leaders compared to male leaders through more prevalent intrinsic accounts. The attributions for incivility female leaders develop may be more intrinsic due to stereotype threat processes. Stereotype threat reflects the fear and anxiety one might experience when one is worried about conforming to a negative stereotype of a group to which one belongs (Steele, 1997). The experienced incivility may serve as a cue for female leaders that their leadership abilities are inadequate. Indeed, female leader self-ratings of leadership effectiveness are significantly lower than male leader self-ratings (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Due to the already comprised self-perception of leadership abilities female leaders may hold, the incivility may cue stereotype threat processes thus partly explaining further detriment to their self-concept and competence. Certainly, stereotype threat is linked with adverse effects on female leader self-confidence (Stangor et al., 1998; von Hippel et al., 2011). This threat can lead to female leaders internalizing the blame for an act of incivility. Although base rates of experienced incivility may not differ between males and females, Holmvall and Sobhani (2019) demonstrated that incivility was associated with worse well-being outcomes for female leaders. A higher rate of internalization of

blame through more intrinsic accounts in attribution profiles of female leaders may partially explain the discrepancy in well-being between male and female leaders experiencing incivility (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a; Holmvall & Sobhani, 2019; Major et al., 2003; Winefield et al., 1992). Therefore, I propose the following hypothesis:

***Hypothesis 3:*** Female leaders will be more likely to display an attribution profile with higher intrinsic accounts than male leaders.

**Exploratory Duality of Gender Attributions.** In terms of the well-being outcomes arising from group-based attribution, the evidence is inconsistent. For example, some studies suggest that attributing blame to racial discrimination may be a self-protective measure to self-esteem thus lessening the influence on well-being (e.g., Crocker & Major, 1989; Major et al., 2003). However, other studies have shown that attributing causal blame for an event to discrimination can be to the detriment of the target's health (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). This damage may be due to the threat to a stable and salient social identity one holds as well as the added form of stress the target experiences from the incident (e.g., the mistreatment; Chae et al., 2011). Group-based gender attributions have been associated with both a pattern of protective benefits (e.g., Crocker & Major, 2003; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a) and a pattern of detrimental influences to target well-being (e.g., Schmitt et al., 2014). The inconsistencies in outcomes of group or identity-based attributions (i.e., gender) may be exacerbated within the incivility context due to the generally ambiguous intentions behind uncivil behaviours (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Ambiguity regarding intention for mistreatment is likely to increase variation between extrinsic self-protective reactions (e.g., Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a) and intrinsic more detrimental reactions (e.g., Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995).

The inconsistencies in well-being outcomes may be due to the need for nuance in the understanding and structure of group-based attributions. Previous research examining group-based attributions has generally approached gender-based explanations for mistreatment as a unidimensional category for blame (Crocker & Major, 2003; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a; Major et al., 2003). However, I posit that gender attributions may be dichotomous in nature as leaders can attribute blame to themselves through their gender (i.e., intrinsic) and to the actor's gender-contingent mistreatment (i.e., extrinsic). That is, incivility against female (or male) leaders can be interpreted as an internalized confirmation of a gender stereotype (e.g., buy-in regarding negative female leader stereotypes) or it can be projected onto the actor's attitudes towards individuals of a certain gender (e.g., the perpetrator holds sexist female leader stereotypes). Although not much empirical work has examined the duality of gender-based attributions, Schmitt and Branscombe (2002) did challenge the complete alignment of gender-attributions as extrinsic accounts. They suggested that because one's group membership is considered an element of the self, attributions to prejudice will include intrinsic accounts as well.

The items developed by Hershcovis and Barling (2010a) for gender attributions reflect extrinsic accounts where the perpetrator of the mistreatment is to blame for their biased gender beliefs. To explore further the potential existence of intrinsic accounts for gender-attributions, the qualitative data will be coded for any such references. These attributions are distinct from solely internal attributions as the gender-intrinsic causal reasoning would make reference to gender-specific elements. However, due to the exploratory nature of this attribution type, it will not be included within the main latent profile and latent class analyses. Therefore, this logic leads to the following research question:

**Research Question 2:** Do gender attributions reflect gender-specific intrinsic and extrinsic attribution accounts?

## **Method**

### **Design**

A mixed-methods design was used to test the hypotheses and explore the research questions. The most common type of mixed-methods design is the triangulation method, which aims to collect different yet complementary data on the same topic (Morse, 1991). This is applicable to the current study as the strength of the qualitative measures allows for a detailed, in-depth and unprimed examination of incivility attributions (Patton, 1990). Participants reflected on a recent incivility incident and responded freely to the open-ended questions. In addition, the quantitative measures (which refer to the same incident) allowed for the observation of trends and links to well-being more concretely in terms of the specific forms and levels of incivility attributions (Patton, 1990).

A variant of the triangulation method, the data transformation model, usually involves separate data collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data; however, following the initial analysis, one data type is transformed into the other data type (Creswell et al., 2004). The current study collected qualitative and quantitative data within a single-phase survey. This approach is more aligned with the embedded model design (Creswell et al., 2003). Therefore, a combination of the embedded model design and the data transformation model (i.e., a variant of the mixed methods triangulation design) was applied. This allowed for a single-phase of primary data collection while retaining the strengths of the triangulation design including the facilitation of comparisons and interrelation between the two data types. The coding and transformation of the qualitative data into quantitative data is further outlined in the analysis section.

This study included two surveys: a Time 1 eligibility survey and a Time 2 main survey containing both qualitative and quantitative components as noted above, completed approximately two weeks later. The Time 1 screening phase was used to create a list of eligible participants who were then invited to complete the main survey at Time 2. Latent profile analysis and latent class analysis techniques require a large and sufficient sample size to avoid poor functioning fit indices, convergence failures as well as any issues with uncovering profiles or classes of low membership (Nylund-Gibson & Choi, 2018). Sample size recommendations suggest a final sample of 300 participants (Nylund-Gibson & Choi, 2018; Weller et al., 2020). Therefore, the current study aimed for at least 300 (Time 2) participants. This study was funded by a SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) Insight grant held by the faculty supervisor (as the Principal Investigator; the two committee members are co-investigators on the grant).

### **Participants and Procedure**

**Recruitment and Eligibility.** Participants were recruited through the Prolific platform ([www.prolific.co](http://www.prolific.co)). This online sample sourcing service combines good recruitment standards while explicitly informing participants that they are participating in research (Palan & Schitter, 2018). A recent study comparing data sourcing techniques (Peer et al., 2017) found that both MTurk and Prolific replicated existing results and delivered higher data quality relative to other online services and university subject pools. Therefore, for the current study, we anticipated that Prolific would provide data of good quality as well as a diverse sample for examining incivility attributions (Peer et al., 2017).

Due to the gender influences of interest in this research, sample balancing considerations were made for participant gender. Recruitment for the Time 1 survey was conducted separately

through two streams: males (including trans man/male;  $n=364$ ) and females (including trans woman/female;  $n=314$ ). To allow for greater gender inclusivity, leaders who identify as gender queer/gender non-conforming, a different identity or would rather not say were sampled with the female participants. Sampling for Time 1 was done in increments (with appropriate adjustments for gender) to try to achieve a balanced recruitment sample (for males and females) for the Time 2 survey.

The screening survey at Time 1 included a re-confirmation of the eligibility questions captured in Prolific's demographic management process, that were used to recruit the Time 1 sample. To be eligible to participate, participants had to be adults (18 years of age or older) residing in Canada, the US or the UK, who were working 21 or more hours per week. Additionally, participants must have had supervisory responsibilities and the authority to give instructions to subordinates (i.e., be in a supervisory, management or leadership position). The responses of 71 participants did not match the screening questions stored by Prolific ( $n_{\text{female+}} = 27$ ;  $n_{\text{male}} = 44$ ). These individuals were ineligible for the study and were not compensated. Note that this process of re-confirmation of Prolific-specific screening criteria is recommended by Prolific (Prolific, 2022).

The next section of the Time 1 screening survey contained study-specific questions not captured in Prolific's demographic data (See Appendix A). Participants who completed the study-specific questions were compensated £1.25. To be invited to take part in the Time 2 main survey, participants had to have a higher up leader, manager or supervisor to whom they report or are accountable. They must also have experienced the specific type of incivility being examined within the last six months<sup>1</sup> (i.e., doubting of their judgement or ignoring their input;

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<sup>1</sup> The 6-month recall window was chosen with considerations of previous research indicating that the recall window applied can meaningfully impact the relationships between incivility and other relevant outcomes

Cortina et al., 2001; Matthews & Ritter, 2015), been willing to write about a specific incident, and expressed interest in taking part in the Time 2 survey. One hundred and thirty-one participants ( $n_{\text{female+}} = 48$ ;  $n_{\text{male}} = 83$ ), were not invited back for the Time 2 survey due to ineligibility based on these criteria, resulting in a final recruitment sample size for the Time 2 main survey of  $N = 476$  ( $n_{\text{female+}} = 239$ ;  $n_{\text{male}} = 237$ ).

For the main Time 2 survey, participants were prompted to recall the most recent incident of incivility within the last six months in which they felt someone to whom they report or are accountable doubted their judgement or did not consider their input (regardless of whether the incident had any impact on them; Matthews & Ritter, 2015). Then, they were asked to write in detail about the incident including describing the event, the perpetrator, incident attributions, the context of the incident and how they felt following experiencing the incivility (see Appendix B). Next, participants were directed to complete the quantitative survey measures and demographics before finishing the survey. The majority of the quantitative measures referenced the incident that they had described in the qualitative section. Additionally, two attention checks were included to assess data quality.

**Participants.** A total of 377 participants completed the main Time 2 survey. No participants failed both attention checks or completed the survey too quickly (i.e., 3 SD below the mean). All participants provided mostly complete and adequate responses and were compensated £3.00. Participants were excluded from data analysis primarily based on incivility incidents not reflecting the behaviours of interest and relevance to the current study as per the

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(Matthews & Ritter, 2015). Indeed, past incivility research has varied in the recall window specified for participants ranging from two weeks (Kern & Grandey, 2009) up to five years (Lim & Lee, 2011). Due to the specific nature of the incident of interest within the current study, a shorter recall period, such as two weeks or one month, may not have provide sufficient time for participants to have experienced such incivility (e.g., Matthews & Ritter, 2015). A longer period of time allowed for a higher likelihood that participants experienced such incivility, however, to reduce retrospective bias, six months was chosen to minimize the length of time between the incident and its recall (Cameron & Webster, 2011; Golden, 1992).

outlined criteria. In summary, data from a total of  $n = 18$  participants were excluded based on: not reporting a specific incident ( $n = 2$ ), incorrect instigator status ( $n = 4$ ), a recall timeframe longer than 6 months ( $n = 5$ ), the incident not happening to them ( $n = 1$ ), incidents not reflective of the incivility type of interest for the current study ( $n = 5$ ), and unclear incident descriptions ( $n = 1$ ). No overlap in the reason for exclusion was identified. Refer to Exclusion Criteria in the Analytic Approach section for more details about these criteria.

The final sample for analysis included  $N = 359$  participants. With respect to gender, 52.6% of participants identified as women ( $n = 189$ ), 47.1% identified as men ( $n = 169$ ) and .3% identified as non-binary ( $n = 1$ ). In terms of their highest level of education attained, 42.3% of participants held a bachelor's degree ( $n = 152$ ), 23.1% held a master's degree ( $n = 83$ ), 11.4% held a high-school diploma ( $n = 41$ ), 8.9% held a non-university certificate ( $n = 32$ ), 5.8% held a professional degree ( $n = 21$ ), and the remaining 8.3% ( $n = 30$ ) indicated other educational categories. A majority of 86.9% identified as Caucasian ( $n = 312$ ), 4.5% identified as South Asian ( $n = 16$ ), 3.3% identified as Black ( $n = 12$ ), 2.2% identified as East Asian ( $n = 8$ ) and the remaining participants identified as other racial categories ( $n = 11$ ). A majority of 89.7% worked full time ( $n = 322$ ), 7.8% worked part time ( $n = 28$ ), and the remaining 1.4% were contract workers or self-employed ( $n = 5$ )<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, 57.1% of participants were in middle-management positions ( $n = 205$ ), 26.5% were front-line managers ( $n = 131$ ), and 5.0% were in top management-level positions ( $n = 18$ )<sup>3</sup>. The average age was 39.71 years ( $SD = 10.72$ ). Participants worked in a variety of different industries (categories drawn from Statistics Canada, 2022) with the majority being employed in either educational services (17.8%,  $n = 64$ ), or healthcare and social assistance (17.8%,  $n = 64$ ), as well as professional, scientific and technical

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<sup>2</sup> Remaining participants did not identify their work status.

<sup>3</sup> Remaining participants did not identify their leadership level.

services (11.4%  $n = 41$ ), finance and insurance (7.8%,  $n = 28$ ), and retail trade (7.2%,  $n = 26$ ). The average tenure of participants in their current positions was 74.60 months ( $SD = 70.74$ ; in years:  $M = 6.22$ ,  $SD = 5.90$ ).

## Measures

The *qualitative measures* are outlined in Appendix B. Participants were prompted with critical incident reporting requirements which defined incivility, the specific behaviours of interest and the incident details requested. More specifically, participants were asked to describe their most recent incident of incivility (within the last six months) including details of the exact behaviours enacted, when and where the incident took place, clarifying contextual details, characteristics of the perpetrator and what happened following the incident. Participants were also asked about the reason they believe the higher-up leader behaved this way (i.e., blame attributions and cognitive process) and their feelings following the incident (i.e., well-being). They were also given an opportunity to add in any extra details they wanted to share.

The following are *quantitative measures* that were asked of participants as survey style questions. The measures were either directly relevant to the thesis or were collected for a more exploratory purpose. Two attention checks were embedded within the quantitative measures where participants were instructed to choose a specific response (e.g., strongly agree).

## Thesis Measures

**Incident Attributions.** Different types of blame attributions were assessed using a combination of measures. Participants were asked to rate the extent they believed each of the reasons explain the higher-up leader's behaviour towards them in the incident they recalled. All attributions were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagree, 7-Strongly Agree)

with the lead-in “In thinking about the incivility incident, I feel that.” Additionally, item wording was adapted to reflect the target being a higher-up leader.

The internal, perpetrator (i.e., external), and gender-extrinsic attribution scales used were developed by Hershcovis and Barling (2010a). The *internal attribution* scale is comprised of 4 items (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .80$ ) with sample items including “I may have done something to deserve this behaviour from the higher-up leader” and “I am to blame for the higher-up leader’s behaviour towards me.” The *perpetrator (i.e., external) attribution* scale is comprised of 3 items (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .94$ ) with sample items including “The higher-up leader is to blame for this behaviour” and “The higher-up leader is at fault for this behaviour.” The *gender-extrinsic attributions* scale is comprised of 5 items (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .96$ ) with sample items including “The higher-up leader has it out for my gender group” and “The higher-up leader dislikes members of my gender.”

The *relational attributions* 3-item scale used was developed by Burton and colleagues (2014; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .97$ ). Sample items include “The higher-up leader’s behaviour is a result of the relationship we have” and “The relationship I have with the higher-up leader is why they acted the way they did towards me.” The *situational attributions* 2-item scale used was developed by Bowman and colleagues (2009;  $r = .68$ ). A sample item is “The higher-up leader’s behaviour towards me was influenced by situational factors.”

**Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale (JAWS).** Leader well-being after the incident of incivility was measured using the JAWS (Van Katwyk et al., 2000). The scale is comprised of 20 items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagree, 5-Strongly Agree). Participants rated the extent that they had experienced the emotions within the incivility incident which they had recalled. The lead in used was “In my experience of and reactions to the incident,

I felt...” The emotions are categorized into 4 facets: low-intensity negative affect (e.g., gloomy, bored; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .63$ ; high-intensity negative affect (e.g., frightened, angry; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .72$ ); low-intensity positive affect (e.g., calm, satisfied; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .83$ ); high-intensity positive affect (e.g., inspired, energetic; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .87$ ). A modification was made for the low-intensity negative affect subscale to remove the item pertaining to the extent which participants felt ‘bored’ after the incident. This item was not conceptually consistent with the current study as it is unlikely leaders would feel bored after their judgement was doubted or input was ignored. Additionally, the inclusion of the bored item lowered the subscale’s reliability (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  reliabilities with bored item:  $.63$ ; without bored item:  $.70$ ) and influenced the overall subscale mean. Other scales were checked for this pattern and only high-intensity negative affect showed a marginal increase in reliability when removing the rating of how ‘anxious’ participants felt after the incident (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  reliabilities with anxious item:  $.72$ ; without anxious item:  $.73$ ). However, since this anxious item is conceptually consistent as a likely emotion following the incident, the item was retained.

**Incident-Specific Workplace Incivility Scale.** The 7-item workplace incivility measure developed by Cortina et al. (2001) was adapted and used to examine levels of incivility at the incident level. Participants were instructed to rate on a 5-point Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagree, 5-Strongly Agree) the extent that the incident they described included any of the behaviours listed in the scale. This scale was used to check whether the incident described included the uncivil behaviours of interest and if the incident was perceived to include other uncivil behaviours as well (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .73$ ). Sample items include “The higher-up paid little attention to my statements or showed little interest in my opinions” and “The higher-up put me down or was condescending to me.”

## **Exploratory Measures**

Exploratory measures were collected to gain a better understanding of the incident, context and the leaders. Exploratory measures included a 7-item Workplace Incivility Scale reflecting general uncivil behaviours from higher-ups in the last 6 months (Cortina et al., 2001), a 5-item shortened Sexist Climate Scale to assess organizational climate for gender prejudices (Settles et al., 2017) and a 4-item shortened Competitive Climate Scale (Fletcher et al., 2008). Additionally, measures of incident context (higher-up gender, level of management, frequency of uncivil behaviour), a 2-item Job Gender Context scale to assess the organization's and the immediate work group's gender breakdowns (Kabat-Farr & Cortina; 2014) as well as a measure of the ambiguity of the incivility behaviours (Hershcovis & Barling; 2010) were collected.

Moreover, measures specific to the leaders were also collected. These included a 5-item competence subscale from Stereotype Content Model (Fiske et al., 2002) as well as an 8-item Leader Self-Efficacy Scale (Murphy, 1992). A 3-item Gender-Intrinsic attributions scale was developed by the researchers and guided by literature on internal attributions as well as stereotype activation and threat processes. More specifically, the internal attribution scale (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010) and the stereotype threat scale (Shapiro, 2011) were examined to create the items for the current context.

## **Analytic Approach**

### **Qualitative Data Preparation**

The qualitative data was explored, prepared, and transformed into quantitative data following guidelines outlined by Cresswell and Plano Clark (2017). As participants typed their responses into an online platform, a transcription process was not necessary and the data were downloaded and transferred into a qualitative database (i.e., Excel spreadsheet) for examination.

The first step in qualitative data analysis is data exploration, which included reading through all the qualitative incident cases and responses to all qualitative question in their entirety (Cresswell & Plano Clark; 2011; 2017). Initial thoughts about the data set including potential exclusion criteria, data patterns and additional codes were recorded in a separate document for reference.

**Exclusion Criteria.** At the data exploration stage, based on participant inclusion criteria and the incident type requirements,  $n = 39$  participants were flagged for further incident examination to confirm eligibility for inclusion in the analysis. The research team, comprising the principal student investigator and the research supervisor, discussed the flagged participants and developed 5 exclusion criteria to assess the flagged cases. However, after the data coding process, an additional  $n = 37$  participants were flagged for further examination and one additional exclusion criterion was developed. This iterative process led to a final number of  $n = 76$  flagged cases for further examination and 6 exclusion criteria.

Participant data that did not meeting the following requirements were excluded. (1) To increase the specificity of their experience and subsequent well-being ratings, participant descriptions had to focus on a specific incident or have an incident that was embedded within a larger context that outlines the frequency of the incident happening ( $n = 2$ ). (2) The incivility instigator had to be either someone in a higher-up leadership position or someone to whom participants reported or were accountable ( $n = 4$ ). Initially, the higher-up leadership position of the instigator was defined through a hierarchical difference in organizational level. However, after examining the data, some participants reported incidents where they were held accountable by same-level peers who were in a contextual position of power over valued processes, outcomes, or resources. These latter cases were retained for analysis. (3) The incident timeframe, from the incident description instructions, had to have occurred within the last 6 months.

Although not all participants noted a timeframe, if they explicitly indicated that the incident occurred more than 6 months ago, they were excluded ( $n = 5$ ). (4) The incident reported on must have happened to the participant themselves and not be a situation they witnessed in their workplace ( $n = 1$ ). (5) To account for the variation in the type of reported incidents, the incident-specific Workplace Incivility Scale (Cortina et al., 2001) quantitative ratings for the items “Paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions” and “Doubted your judgement on a matter over which you had responsibility” were examined. If participants rated both items 2 or lower (on a 5-point Likert scale), the participant was excluded ( $n = 3$ ). If either one of the items received a rating of 4 or more, the participant was included. If one of the items was rated 3 and the other received a rating of 3 or less, the participant was flagged for further incident examination. This further examination included reading through the qualitative incident description and responses to ensure the incident adhered to the incivility type of interest ( $n = 2$ ). (6) Lastly, the incident description had to be understandable. This criterion does not include instances of grammar, spelling or sentence structure deficiencies. Rather, this criterion includes instances where the incident is not understood by the research team and thus is not codable ( $n = 1$ ). In total, data from  $n = 18$  participants were excluded based these criteria; however, no overlap in the criteria for exclusion among these participants was identified.

**Codebook Development.** Although codebooks are generally developed either using a deductive theory-driven top-down approach or an inductive data-driven bottom-up approach, a third middle ground between the two approaches is common in qualitative research (Chi, 1997; Syed & Nelson, 2015). This middle ground, a data-driven deductive approach, includes drawing on theoretical perspectives for codes but also examining the data for additional or adjusted codes

(Syed et al., 2011; Syed & Neslon, 2015). This middle ground approach was applied in this study.

A preliminary codebook was developed prior to data collection outlining an initial anticipated structure informed by the attribution literature (Weiner, 2000). The anticipated codes included the type of incivility recalled (i.e., doubting judgement and/or ignoring statements/input) and the different attribution types (e.g., perpetrator, internal, situational, relational, gender-extrinsic, internal-gender). These attribution codes adopted a presence/absence approach where the attribution was either present (scored as 1) or not (scored as 0; Cresswell et al., 2017). After the data exploration stage, the research team coded the same random 10 incidents based on the preliminary codebook (Syed & Nelson, 2015). This initial coding step as well as the recorded notes from the data exploration stage guided the discussion and development of the final codebook. Five additional codes were added (race, age, colleagues, apology, multiple instigators<sup>4</sup>) and the structure of the incivility type code was adjusted. Another 10 random incidents were coded by the research team using the updated codebook as a coding calibration step to facilitate interrater agreement for future coding (Braun & Clark, 2006). Following this second coding step, a discussion between the research team solidified the final codes, their definitions and coding structure as well as any examples in the codebook. Refer to Appendix C for the final codebook.

It is important to note that the final codebook is not comprehensive of all the relevant codes, which the data set reflects. Moreover, the additional codes beyond the 5 attribution codes are more exploratory and were not included in the main thesis analysis. The 12 codes included in the final codebook were chosen as a balance between parsimony and nuance (Campbell et al.,

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<sup>4</sup> Incidents with multiple instigators ( $n = 17$ ), were retained in the analysis.

2013). The reliability and usefulness of the data were considered when deciding on the codes (Hruschka et al., 2004), but also their immediate applicability to the current thesis. Beyond this thesis, additional patterns and codes may be explored.

**Data Coding.** The final sample ( $N = 359$ ) was coded separately by the principal student investigator and the research supervisor following the developed codebook. The coding process occurred over 2 weeks and the researchers did not discuss any individual cases, beyond potential flagged cases, during this timeframe to retain the independence of their coding. The structure of the coding process took a master coder/reliability coder approach where the principal student investigator was the master coder and the research supervisor was the reliability coder (Syed & Nelson, 2015). While the master coder coded the entire data set, the reliability coder only coded a random 20% of the dataset ( $n = 71$ ) to evaluate inter-rater reliability (e.g., Lilgendahl & McAdams, 2011; McLean & Pratt, 2006). This approach is deemed sufficient for generalizability in larger data sets and coding schemes, which are not too complex. Additionally, as long as adequate inter-rater reliability can be established, no reconciliation of differences in coding needs to be made and the master coder's coding is retained (Syed & Nelson, 2015).

Two measures were used to assess interrater reliability: Cohen's Kappa (1960) and percent agreement. Both internal ( $\kappa = .84, p < .001$ ) and gender-extrinsic ( $\kappa = .80, p < .001$ ) attributions had excellent agreement between raters while situational ( $\kappa = .66, p < .001$ ) attributions showed good agreement (Altman, 1991; Landis & Koch, 1977). Perpetrator ( $\kappa = .42, p < .001$ ) and relational ( $\kappa = .55, p < .001$ ) attributions had moderate agreement. However, percent agreement values showed deviations from Cohen's Kappa for all attribution variables. Raters agreed on 97.18% of internal codes, 92.96% of perpetrator codes, 95.77% of relational codes, 85.9% of situational codes and 98.59% of gender-extrinsic codes. Such deviation between

these reliability measures is expected and well-documented within qualitative literature (i.e., paradoxes of Kappa: high agreement but low reliability) especially for highly skewed categorical variables (Cicchetti & Feinstein, 1990; Feinstein & Cicchetti, 1990; Feng, 2015; Yarnold, 2016). Additionally, Cohen's (1960) Kappa accounts for chance in coding further explaining differences with percent agreement values. However, both reliability indices indicate sufficient agreement between raters satisfying adequate interrater reliability for the master-coder ratings to be retained (Syed & Nelson, 2015). In addition, no incidents were coded with the exploratory presence of gender-intrinsic accounts by either coder.

The data transformation process resulted in categorical variables relevant to the current thesis and additional exploratory variables. Six dichotomous attribution variables (i.e., internal, perpetrator, relational, gender-extrinsic, gender-intrinsic and situational) were coded and applied to the current thesis. Five additional context dichotomous variables (i.e., race, age, apology, colleagues, multiple instigators) and 2 incivility-type dichotomous variables (i.e., doubted judgement, ignored input) were coded for exploratory purposes.

### **Attribution Profiles**

**Latent Variable Modelling.** A latent variable modelling analytic approach was used to identify distinct categorical latent profiles (i.e., attribution profiles) based on either continuous or categorical observed variables (i.e., attribution variables: internal, perpetrator, relational, gender-extrinsic, situational). Latent profile analysis was conducted on the five continuous attribution variables (i.e., quantitative data) and latent class analysis was conducted on the five categorical attribution variables (i.e., transformed qualitative data). All latent variable modelling analyses were conducted using MPlus Version 8.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2022).

To retain the model reflecting the best attribution profile/class solutions, an iterative and inductive approach was taken as suggested by Nylund and colleagues (2007). This approach began by specifying two latent profiles and increasing the number of profiles “until the increase in model fit no longer merited the reduction in parsimony achieved by specifying another latent class [or profile]” (Gabriel et al., 2015, p. 866). When selecting the best profile/class solution, three criteria were used including model fit statistics, theoretical relevance, and smallest profile size. Based on the analytic process outlined in previous research, all available information and multiple indicators for model fit, interpretability and practical relevance were used to select the best profile/class solution (e.g., Daljeet et al., 2017; Gabriel et al., 2015; Nylund et al., 2007).

Seven fit statistics were examined to evaluate the models: log likelihood (LL), Akaike information criterion (AIC; Akaike, 1987), Bayesian information criterion (BIC), sample size adjusted BIC (SSA- BIC), Lo-Mendell-Rubin adjusted likelihood ratio test (LMR; Lo et al., 2001), bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT) and entropy (Foti et al., 2012; Morin et al., 2011; Nylund et al., 2007; Tofighi & Enders, 2007). Although there are no cut-off scores for LPA/LCA fit statistics, the best model fit is identified by having lower LL, AIC, BIC, and SSA-BIC values compared to other solutions. Additionally, LMR and BLRT should be significant ( $p < .05$ ) indicating better fit than the simpler ( $k - 1$ ) model (Spurk et al., 2020). Entropy values should approach 1 to indicate a higher probability of correctly classifying participants into the profiles/classes and thus indicate a clearer distinction between profiles/classes (Masyn, 2013; Nylund et al., 2007; Williams & Kibowski, 2016). However, entropy is not often used to make model fit decisions (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2015). Furthermore, the posterior classification probabilities for all classes provide additional information about correct classification. Although

there is no agreed upon cut-off, values above .80 suggest a high probability that cases were classified correctly (Spurk et al., 2020).

In addition to fit statistics, the theoretical meaning of the profiles within each solution should be examined when selecting the best model (Foti et al., 2012). Although the current analysis was mostly exploratory, attribution theory and literature were used to guide the selection of the best model based on the pattern of attributions made within the profiles (Bowman et al., 2009; Eberly et al., 2011; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010; Weiner, 1985). Furthermore, the percentage of the sample classified into profiles/classes was examined to evaluate the models. If any profile/class within a solution contained less than 5% of the overall sample, it was considered too small to be robust. Such small profiles likely do not add any explanatory power, are low in generalizability and may reflect a spurious profile (Hipp & Bauer, 2006; Nylund et al., 2007).

**Outcome Variables.** Following the LPA and LCA, participants were then grouped into attribution profile categories based on their highest profile/class assignment probability within the retained models. This resulted in two categorical variables added and used as the independent variables to examine category/profile relationships to well-being via conducting Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with the four subscales of the JAWS (Van Katwyk et al., 2000) as outcomes. Additionally, the attribution profiles/classes were used to compare how male and female leaders attribute blame for experienced incivility and whether any well-being disparities as a function of gender can be explained through attributions. This comparison was done by considering the distribution of leader gender in each attribution profile/class through Chi-Square analysis.

Due to the design used in the current study (i.e. a combination of the embedded model design and the data transformation model), the qualitative data play a more supplemental role in the analysis. To triangulate and link the data types, both the LCA class variable and LPA profile variable were used in subsequent outcome analyses. However, the LCA classes and their associated analyses were considered supplementary to the LPA profiles to assess similarities and differences in patterns with outcome variables.

## **Results**

### **Data Screening**

Data were screened for linearity, normality, outliers and missing data. Evaluations of normality for the five continuous attribution variables and the four JAWS subscales including skew, kurtosis, Shapiro-Wilk's tests (all  $p < .001$ ) and visual examination of frequency histograms revealed non-normal distributions for all variables. However, large sample size ( $N = 359$ ) tests of normality are more sensitive to violations and the sample size obtained was considered robust to violations of normality assumptions (Nosakhare et al., 2017; Shapiro & Francia, 1970). No concerns with linearity were observed. Only one participant had completely missing data on both the situational and relational attribution measures. The LPA/LCA was conducted with and without them and no influence on profile/class patterns or model fit was observed. A classification for their profile/class was still estimated despite the missing data using full information maximum likelihood (FIML). Additionally, their inclusion within the MANOVA did not influence the pattern of results observed. Thus, this participant was retained in the analysis. Furthermore, participants were only excluded from the MANOVA if they were missing more than 1 item within each individual scale. However, no such cases were identified.

Standardization of mean scale scores to check for univariate outliers indicated seven outliers (all  $z > \pm 3.30$ ; Field, 2009) among the attribution variables (internal:  $n = 1$ ; perpetrator:  $n = 6$ ) and 7 outliers (all  $z > \pm 3.30$ ) among the JAWS subscales (high-intensity positive affect:  $n = 4$ ; low-intensity positive affect:  $n = 3$ ). Only one multivariate outlier was identified when considering all JAWS subscales as well as attribution variables which was subsequently removed (i.e., extreme Mahalanobis and Cook's distance values). The attribution variable outliers were considered most relevant for conducting the LPA and LCA, while the JAWS subscale outliers were more relevant for the MANOVAs.

To assess the influence of the attribution variable outliers on the LPA/LCA, both latent variable modelling analyses were conducted with and without the outliers. Due to the observed influence of the outliers on the subsequent profiles and classes, the attribution outliers were excluded from analyses. Although this is a more conservative approach to outliers, latent variable modelling is sensitive to extreme values which often influence the estimation of the final solution and thus removing outliers is recommended (Hirschi & Valero, 2017; Spurk et al., 2020; Vermunt & Magidson, 2002). However, the JAWS subscale outliers were retained due to the large sample size and the MANOVA being robust to violations of normality (O'Brien & Kaiser, 1985). These exclusions resulted in a final sample of  $N = 351$ . Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all study variables are presented in Table 1.

### **Latent Variable Modelling**

Research Question 1 addressed the possibility of distinct profiles of 'blame attributors' and the patterns which may emerge as a combination of internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender-extrinsic attributions for incivility. To evaluate the presence of such profiles, latent profile and latent class analyses were conducted.

**LPA.** Latent profile analysis was conducted using mean scale scores on the five continuous attribution variables: internal, perpetrator, gender-extrinsic, situational and relational. Correlations between internal and perpetrator attributions, internal and relational attributions and perpetrator and relational attributions were specified within the models as the theoretical support and demonstrated relationships in past research between these variables were expected to and did improve model fit (e.g., Eberly et al., 2011; 2017; Weiner, 1985, 1995). Fit statistics for possible latent profile structures are presented in Table 2. The iterative model fitting process showed an improvement in fit statistics between the 2-Profile and 3-Profile solutions as well as between the 3-Profile and 4-Profile solutions where the more complex model (i.e.,  $k + 1$ ) demonstrated better fit. However, the 5-Profile solution did not demonstrate better fit when compared to the 4-Profile solution.

The 4-profile solution exhibited lower LL, AIC, BIC and SSA-BIC values than the 3-profile solution and significant LMR and BLRT values ( $p = .03$ ;  $p < .001$  respectively) suggesting that this more complex model demonstrated better fit relative to the 3-profile solution. Entropy values were higher for the 3-profile solution (.829) compared to the 4-profile solution (.787). However, as both entropy values approached 1, these values were not used to inform choice of retained model (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014; Nylund et al., 2007). Furthermore, although there is no agreed upon cut-off, the posterior classification probabilities for all profiles were above .80 suggesting a high probability that cases were classified in the correct profiles across both solutions (Spurk et al., 2020).

Although fit statistics suggest the superiority of the 4-Profile solution, due to the 3- and 4-Profile solutions' theoretical viability, the difference between the solutions was further examined through the estimated means on the indicator variables for content-related

considerations (see Tables 3 and 4; Gabriel et al., 2015; Spurk et al., 2020; Vermunt & Magidson, 2002; Woo et al., 2018). This approach allowed for the examination of the qualitative and quantitative differences between the solutions. Across both 3-Profile and 4-Profile solutions, Profiles 1, 2 and 3 showed similar qualitative patterns (see Figures 1 and 2) and somewhat similar quantitative patterns (see Tables 3 and 4) in the indicator variables. However, the additional Profile in the 4-Profile solution seems to be adding nuance to Profiles 2 and 3. Profile 4 showed similar patterns in the gender-extrinsic, situational and relational indicators as Profile 2 but its decrease in perpetrator attributions and a slight increase in the internal attributions showed similarities with Profile 3. Therefore, Profile 4 shows a subset of participants who, similar to Profile 2, mainly hold perpetrator and situational attributions, but similar to Profile 3, also show a slight increase in internal attributions. These observed differences in attribution indicator variables thus make Profile 4 quantitatively different than Profiles 2 and 3. That is, although the attribution indicators show a similar pattern and little differences in Profile shape, the quantitative extent of the indicators in each profile differs.

Moreover, as reviewed above, the 4-Profile solution outperforms the 3-Profile solution on all fit indices except a lower entropy value. The additional nuance of Profile 4, the lower perpetrator attributions ratings, the implications of an increase in internal attributions on well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Weiner, 1985) as well as the adequate size of Profile 4 ( $n = 71$ ) contributed to the retention of the 4-Profile solution as the best fitting model.

Table 4 summarizes the estimated means for the attribution indicators in each profile of the retained 4-Profile solution. Profile 1 was labelled *perpetrator-dominant attributors* (21.65% of overall sample) as participants within this profile showed high levels of perpetrator blame and relatively low blame values on the other indicators. Profile 2, the largest profile, was labelled

*perpetrator-situational attributors* (49.29% of overall sample) as participants attributed the highest levels of blame to both the perpetrator and the situation. Therefore, participants within this profile appeared to consider the contextual details of the incident, which may have driven the perpetrator to behave in an uncivil manner, yet they still held the perpetrator accountable for their actions. Profile 3, the smallest profile, was labelled *balanced attributors* (8.83% of overall sample) as participants within this profile acknowledged the role of multiple attributions including higher internal, relational and gender-extrinsic ratings than all other profiles. Although perpetrator attributions are still the highest, participants within this profile have distributed blame for the uncivil action between multiple attribution reasonings. Profile 4 was labelled *muted-balanced attributors* (20.23% of overall sample) as participants within this profile showed similar qualitative patterns as Profile 3. However, the attributions within Profile 4 were somewhat more ‘muted’ and lessened in quantitative extent compared to Profile 3.

**LCA.** Latent class analysis was conducted using the five categorical attribution variables transformed from the qualitative data coding: internal, perpetrator, gender-extrinsic, situational and relational. Of the coded incidents, 96.30% were coded to include perpetrator attributions, 3.40% for internal attributions, 8.80% for relational attributions, 29.10% for situational attributions and 7.10% for gender-extrinsic attributions. Research Question 2 addressed the possibility of gender attributions that are reflective of a more internalised confirmation of gender stereotypes. However, none of the coded incidents included gender-intrinsic codes thus showing no support for Research Question 2.

Fit statistics for possible latent class structures are presented in Table 2. The iterative model fitting process showed a slight improvement in fit statistics between the 2-Class and 3-Class solution but the not between the 3-Class and 4-Class solution. Thus, the iterative process

was stopped at three classes as no additional improvement was observed (Nylund et al., 2007; Spurk et al., 2020). The 2-class solution had lower LL, BIC and SSA-BIC values while the 3-class solution had lower AIC values and a higher entropy value. Both solutions had significant LMR and BLRT values. Additionally, the posterior classification probabilities for all classes were above .80 suggesting a high probability that cases were classified in the correct classes across both solutions (Spurk et al., 2020).

Due to the similarity in fit statistics between the 2-Class and 3-Class solutions and their theoretical viability, the difference between the solutions was further examined. Across both solutions Class 1 showed similar quantitative (see Tables 5 and 6) and qualitative patterns (see Figures 3 and 4) in the indicator variables with mainly perpetrator and situational attributions. Class 2 across both solutions shows mainly perpetrator attributions with a slight increase yet still low probabilities for gender and relational attributions. In the 3-Class solution, Class 3 not only shows an increase in relational attributions and internal attributions but also a decrease in perpetrator attributions. Therefore, Class 3 represents a more shared blame distribution regarding the incivility. Although theoretically viable, this profile was too small to be considered robust ( $n = 3$ , 0.85% of overall sample). Thus, the 2-Class solution was retained as the best fitting model.

Table 5 summarizes the probability estimates of the indicator variables for the retained 2-Class solution. Class 1 was labelled *perpetrator-situational attributors* (29.06% of overall sample) as participants within this class showed high perpetrator and situational attributions but low blame attributed to the other indicators. Therefore, participants acknowledged the contextual details of the incivility incident driving the perpetrator's behaviour but still held the perpetrator accountable. Class 2 was labelled *perpetrator-dominant attributors* (70.94% of overall sample) as perpetrator attributions were high in relation to the other indicators.

The results of both the LPA and LCA indicate the presence of unique subpopulations who may apply different patterns of attributions in tandem. Thus, these findings address Research Question 1 and provide potential patterns of blame attributors<sup>5</sup>.

## MANOVAS

Hypothesis 1 proposed that profiles with higher intrinsic accounts will be associated with a higher detriment to leader well-being than those with lower intrinsic accounts. To test this hypothesis and examine the link between attribution patterns based on the developed profiles from both the LPA and LCA and well-being, 2 MANOVAs were conducted (one for LPA profiles and the second for LCA classes). The four JAWS sub-scales were examined as separate outcome variables. Table 7 summarizes profile and class means for each of the four well-being outcomes. Due to the unequal sample sizes of both the profiles and classes, the MANOVAs were conducted with Type 2 sums of squares to adjust for the differences in group sample sizes (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2006). However, the MANOVA was also conducted with Type 3 sums of squares to assess any differences. A consistent pattern of results emerged between both approaches. All analyses retained the identified univariate outliers on the JAWS scales as winsorized values did not influence the pattern of results observed.

**LCA Classes.** Results for the LCA classes showed no significant multivariate effects on the four JAWS subscales,  $F(4, 346) = 1.12, p = .31$ , Pillai's trace<sup>6</sup> = .014,  $\eta^2 = .01$ . Furthermore,

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<sup>5</sup> Both LPA/LCA analyses were also conducted separately for male and female leaders to examine if any differences in groupings emerged as a function of gender. Due to breaking down the final sample by gender, this additional analysis did not have adequate sample sizes (Nylund-Gibson & Choi, 2018). Therefore, the fit statistics for all solutions were unstable. However, when examining the four-profile and two-class solutions, a similar pattern in classes/profiles emerged for each gender as when running the combined sample. This similar pattern is especially true for female leaders' profiles where the solutions are very close to the originally retained ones. However, for male leaders, although similar, the profiles generally had lower gender attributions and also lower internal attributions.

<sup>6</sup> Pillai's trace is considered the more robust test statistic, compared to Wilk's lambda, Hotelling's trace, and Roy's largest root, when there are unbalanced group sample sizes (i.e., profiles/classes; Ates et al., 2019).

no significant between-subjects (univariate) effects were observed for any of the JAWS subscales such that there was no difference between the two classes on high-intensity positive affect ( $p = .66$ ), low-intensity positive affect ( $p = .96$ ), high-intensity negative affect ( $p = .11$ ) and low-intensity negative affect ( $p = .75$ ).

**LPA Profiles.** Results for the LPA profiles revealed significant multivariate effects on the four JAWS subscales,  $F(12, 1038) = 2.97, p < .001$ , Pillai's trace = .10,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . These results suggest a small effect size for the influence of attribution profile on the JAWS subscales. Tests of between-subjects effects indicated a non-significant univariate effect of LPA profile on low-intensity positive affect,  $F(3, 347) = 2.22, p = .09, \eta^2 = .02$ , and significant univariate effects of LPA profile for high-intensity positive affect,  $F(3, 347) = 2.80, p = .04, \eta^2 = .02$ , low-intensity negative affect,  $F(3, 347) = 3.20, p = .02, \eta^2 = .03$ , as well as high-intensity negative affect,  $F(3, 347) = 4.42, p = .01, \eta^2 = .04$ . Tukey's post hoc test, applying the Tukey-Kramer method for unequal sample sizes (Hayter, 1984), was conducted to further examine differences between the LPA profiles on the JAWS subscales (see Table 7).

**High-Intensity Positive Affect.** Participants within the *perpetrator-dominant attributors* profile ( $M = 1.30, SD = .49$ ) exhibited significantly lower high-intensity positive affect ratings than those within the *muted-balanced attributors* profile ( $M = 1.53, SD = .55$ ),  $p = .03$ , 95% CI [-.45, -.02]. No further significant differences between the profiles were observed ( $ps > .05$ ).

**Low-Intensity Positive Affect.** No significant differences emerged between the profiles for low-intensity positive affect.<sup>7</sup> However, the difference between the *perpetrator-dominant*

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<sup>7</sup> To assess the influence of the 7 outliers identified for the positive affect JAWS scales ( $n = 3$  low-intensity;  $n = 4$  high-intensity), several analyses were conducted. First, when all 7 outliers were winsorized, a similar pattern of significance was observed within the MANOVA compared to retaining the original values. If all 7 outliers were removed within the MANOVA, significant univariate effects were no longer observed for high-intensity positive

*attributors* profile ( $M = 1.45$ ,  $SD = .62$ ) and the *muted-balanced attributors* profile ( $M = 1.70$ ,  $SD = .52$ ), approached significance,  $p = .06$ , 95% CI [-.01, .51].

**High-Intensity Negative Affect.** Significant differences emerged for high-intensity negative affect, where those in the *muted-balanced attributors* profile ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = .73$ ) exhibited significantly lower ratings than both the *perpetrator-dominant attributors* profile ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SD = .75$ ),  $p = .01$ , 95% CI [-.76, -.08], and the *perpetrator-situational attributors* profile ( $M = 3.31$ ,  $SD = .82$ ),  $p = .01$ , 95% CI [-.63, -.06]. No further significant differences between the profiles were observed ( $ps > .05$ ). However, the difference between the *muted-balanced attributors* profile ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = .73$ ), and the *balanced attributors* profile ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SD = .86$ ), approached significance,  $p = .07$ , 95% CI [-.02, .86].

**Low-Intensity Negative Affect.** For low-intensity negative affect, participants within the *balanced attributors* profile ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = .64$ ) exhibited significantly higher low-intensity negative affect than all other profiles including the *perpetrator-dominant attributors* profile ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = .85$ ),  $p = .03$ , 95% CI [-.94, -.04], the *perpetrator-situational attributors* profile ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = .87$ ),  $p = .02$ , 95% CI [-.88, -.06], and the *muted-balanced attributors* profile ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = .73$ ),  $p = .03$ , 95% CI [-.94, -.03]. No further significant differences between the profiles were observed ( $ps > .05$ ).

These results show partial support for Hypothesis 1. The profile with the highest intrinsic accounts (i.e., *balanced attributors*) was associated with higher low-intensity negative affect

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affect, but they were observed for low-intensity positive affect where perpetrator-dominant profiles gave lower ratings than muted-balanced profiles ( $p = .03$ ). If only the high-intensity positive affect outliers were removed, ANOVAs on individual JAWS outcomes showed nonsignificant univariate effects of both high-intensity and low-intensity positive affect. If only the low-intensity positive affect outliers were removed, ANOVAs on individual JAWS outcomes showed a similar pattern of significance compared to retaining all the outliers. Finally, when combining the scales for both high-intensity and low-intensity positive affect into one positive affect scale without removing any outliers, significant univariate effects were observed within the MANOVA where perpetrator-dominant profiles gave lower ratings than muted-balanced profiles ( $p = .02$ ).

following an experience of incivility compared to attribution profiles with lower intrinsic accounts (i.e., *perpetrator-dominant attributors*, *perpetrator-situational attributors* and *muted-balanced attributors*). However, the profile with the highest perpetrator blame (i.e., *perpetrator-dominant attributors*) showed lower high-intensity positive affect than the profile with the lowest, yet still above the midpoint, perpetrator blame (i.e., *muted-balanced attributors*). In addition, profiles with higher perpetrator blame (i.e., *perpetrator-dominant attributors* and *perpetrator-situational attributors*) were associated with greater high-intensity negative affect relative to the profiles with the lowest perpetrator blame (i.e., *muted-balanced attributors*). Therefore, it seems that the pattern of well-being observed depended on the type of affect considered thus suggesting a more nuanced understanding of detriment to leader well-being than originally proposed in Hypothesis 1.

**Exploratory Gendered MANOVAs.** Hypotheses 2 and 3 proposed gender differences in the distribution of leaders across profiles. However, additional exploratory MANOVAs were conducted to assess whether the interaction between gender and both the LPA profiles and LCA classes indicated a moderating effect of gender on well-being outcomes. No multivariate interaction with gender was observed for the LPA profiles,  $F(12, 1023) = .52, p = .90$ , Pillai's trace = .02,  $\eta^2 = .01$ , nor the LCA classes,  $F(4,343) = 1.62, p = .17$ , Pillai's trace = .02,  $\eta^2 = .02$ . However, a significant multivariate main effect of gender emerged<sup>8</sup>,  $F(4,339) = 2.92, p = .02$ , Pillai's trace = .03,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . Tests of between-subjects effects indicated significant univariate effects of leader gender on low-intensity positive affect,  $F(1, 342) = 7.79, p = .01, \eta^2 = .02$ , and high-intensity positive affect,  $F(1, 342) = 7.59, p = .01, \eta^2 = .02$ . Thus, in considering the

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<sup>8</sup> Both the LCA and LPA MANOVAs including gender as a moderating variable showed a significant main effect of gender for high-intensity and low-intensity positive affect. The pattern of posthoc analyses was also similar between the LPA and LCA. Only the LPA analysis results for the main effect of gender is reported above for brevity.

incivility incident, Tukey's post hoc test, applying the Tukey-Kramer method for unequal sample sizes (Hayter, 1984), showed that female leaders reported lower levels of low-intensity positive affect ( $M = 1.50, SD = .56$ ), than male leaders ( $M = 1.69, SD = .65$ ). Female leaders also reported lower levels of high-intensity positive affect ( $M = 1.32, SD = .51$ ) than male leaders ( $M = 1.47, SD = .51$ ).

### **Chi-Square**

Hypothesis 2 anticipated more female leaders would be classified within profiles with more gender-extrinsic attribution accounts. Similarly, Hypothesis 3 expected more female leaders would be classified within profiles with more internal attribution accounts. To test these hypotheses, a chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the distribution of leader gender within the four LPA profiles and two LCA classes (see Table 8). The proportion of female and male leaders did not differ across the LPA profiles,  $\chi^2(3, N = 351) = 2.16, p = .53$ , nor the LCA classes,  $\chi^2(1, N = 351) = .08, p = .78$ . As no difference in leader gender distributions was found for the profile with the highest gender-extrinsic attributions (i.e., *balanced attributors*) and for the profile with the highest intrinsic accounts for the incivility (i.e., *balanced attributors*), no support was found for Hypotheses 2 and 3, respectively.

### **Exploratory Post-Hoc Analysis: Incident Incivility Ratings**

Recommendations for latent variable modelling techniques suggest assessing differences in the profiles on several outcomes and antecedents (Nylund et al., 2007). Although the scope of the current thesis does not address differences among the profiles beyond gender and well-being variables, an exploratory consideration of incident incivility ratings was made. This testing of differences in incivility behaviour ratings provides context for how the incidents may or may not have differed in incivility. Thus, a MANOVA was conducted to assess whether any differences

in the incident incivility ratings among the LPA profiles emerged. Only the LPA profiles were considered as well-being differences were observed only for the LPA profiles and not the LCA classes.

Results revealed significant multivariate effects on the individual incivility items,  $F(21, 1026) = 2.04, p = .004$ , Pillai's trace = .12,  $\eta^2 = .04$ . These results suggest that the extent to which participants experienced specific uncivil behaviours within each profile may have differed. Tests of between-subjects effects indicated non-significant univariate effects of LPA profile on doubting judgements,  $F(3, 346) = 2.35, p = .07, \eta^2 = .02$ , making unwanted attempts for discussions of personal matters,  $F(3, 346) = 1.14, p = .33, \eta^2 = .01$ , and a univariate effect approaching significance for making demeaning remarks<sup>9</sup>,  $F(3, 346) = 2.61, p = .052, \eta^2 = .02$ . Significant univariate effects of LPA profile were observed for ignoring input,  $F(3, 346) = 4.17, p = .01, \eta^2 = .04$ , being condescending,  $F(3, 346) = 7.53, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06$ , addressing the leader in unprofessional terms,  $F(3, 346) = 3.18, p = .02, \eta^2 = .03$ , and excluding the leader from professional camaraderie,  $F(3, 346) = 2.66, p = .04, \eta^2 = .02$ . Tukey's post hoc tests, applying the Tukey-Kramer method for unequal sample sizes (Hayter, 1984), showed that participants in the *perpetrator-dominant* profile reported higher levels of ignoring input behaviours ( $M = 4.61, SE = .09$ ), the higher-up being condescending ( $M = 4.21, SE = .10$ ), being addressed in unprofessional terms by the higher-up ( $M = 3.28, SE = .16$ ), and being excluded from professional camaraderie by the higher-up ( $M = 3.62, SE = .14$ ), than those in the *muted-balanced* profile, ( $M = 4.16, SE = .09$ ;  $M = 3.59, SE = .11$ ;  $M = 2.59, SE = .16$ ;  $M = 3.07, SE =$

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<sup>9</sup> Participants in the *perpetrator-dominant* profile reported higher levels which were approaching significance ( $p = .052$ ) for derogatory remarks from the higher-up ( $M = 2.91, SE = .14$ ), than those in the *muted-balanced* profile, ( $M = 2.35, SE = .15$ ).

.14). Additionally, participants in the *perpetrator-situational* profile reported higher levels of the higher-up being condescending ( $M = 4.13, SE = .07$ ) than those in the *muted-balanced* profile ( $M = 3.59, SE = .11$ ).

## Discussion

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine links between the interpretation process of experienced incivility and subsequent well-being. More specifically, I examined the experiences of leaders who had their judgment doubted or their input ignored by those to whom they report (Cortina et al., 2001; Matthews & Ritter, 2015). A person-centered approach was taken to further the understanding of how multiple attributions can develop simultaneously for specific incidents of incivility including internal, perpetrator, situational, relational and gender-extrinsic attributions. That is, the current study sought to uncover whether specific groupings (profiles or classes) of blame-attributors would emerge in leaders' accounts of mistreatment.

It was expected that profiles that contained more intrinsic attribution accounts would be associated with more detriment to leader well-being than those with less intrinsic attribution accounts (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Major et al., 2003; Winefield et al., 1992). Additionally, this study adopted a gender lens to understand incivility attributions and well-being as a function of leader gender. Female leaders were expected to display higher classification within profiles exhibiting higher gender-extrinsic attributions and higher intrinsic attributions than male leaders. Lastly, a dichotomy of gender attributions was proposed such that this category was expected to not only reflect extrinsic blame (i.e., the instigator's gender-contingent mistreatment) but also display intrinsic patterns (i.e., internalised confirmation of gender stereotypes; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002).

Latent variable modelling allowed for the identification of unique subpopulations of leaders who display distinct patterns of attributions. Latent Profile Analysis, which drew upon leaders' quantitative attribution ratings, resulted in four profiles, which combine internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender-extrinsic attributions for incivility. Profile 1, *perpetrator-dominant attributors*, was characterized by very high use of perpetrator attributions with a relatively low application of other attribution types. Individuals classified within this profile largely blamed the higher-up leader for their incivility.

Profile 2, *perpetrator-situational attributors*, was characterised by the high use of perpetrator attributions coupled with situational attributions. This was the largest profile group with approximately half of participants still largely blaming the higher-up for their incivility but also acknowledging contextual factors, which may have influenced the higher-up leader's behaviour.

Profile 3, *balanced attributors*, was characterised by blame distributed along most attribution categories; however, high perpetrator blame still persisted. This was the smallest profile and showed the highest displays of internal, relational and gender-extrinsic attributions relative to other profiles. Participants within this profile still largely blamed the perpetrator while acknowledging the situational factors contributing to the higher-up's behaviour. They also considered the role that they played within the situation and how their relationship with the instigator could have contributed to the incident. Thus, there is more accountability on the target's part within this profile relative to other profiles. Additionally, the higher gender-extrinsic attributions relative to other profiles suggest that more participants interpreted the higher-up leader's gender-biased attitudes as contributing to the mistreatment behaviour in this group.

Finally, Profile 4, *muted-balanced attributors*, was most similar to the *balanced attributors* profile yet also shared some characteristics with the *perpetrator-situational* profile. Profile 4 was characterised by a distribution of blame across attribution categories. However, this profile showed lower, or muted, internal, perpetrator, relational and gender-extrinsic attributions than the *balanced attributors* profile. This pattern suggests that participants within this profile placed most of the blame equally on the perpetrator and the situation, but they also somewhat acknowledged the role that they and their relationship with the higher-up played in the incident. Classification between Profiles 1 and 4 was equivalent as both showed similar group sizes.

Latent Class Analysis, which drew upon the qualitative accounts of leaders' incivility experiences, resulted in only two classes, which combine internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender-extrinsic attributions for incivility. Class 1, *perpetrator-situational attributors*, showed blame distributed between perpetrator and situational attributions. Thus, participants within this class blamed the higher-up while acknowledging contextual factors, which have contributed to their behaviour. Class 2, *perpetrator-dominant attributors*, showed blame mainly attributed to the perpetrator in relation to the other categories. Participants within this profile very prominently blamed the higher-up for their behaviour. The majority of leaders were classified into Class 2.

### **Integrating LPA and LCA Results**

A strength of the design used for the current study was the ability to combine qualitative and quantitative evaluations of blame attributions. The qualitative incident descriptions reflect unprimed and free response blame attributions while the quantitative measures provide more nuance and direction for blame attribution reflections. This pattern of data type strength is reflected in the outcomes of the two analyses conducted. Although similarities between the

profiles and the classes do emerge, the quantitative data provided more nuance in terms of the unique blame attributor subpopulations. Profile 1 and Class 2, both *perpetrator dominant attributors*, as well as Profile 2 and Class 1, both *perpetrator-situational attributors* showed similar blame attribution patterns.

The additional nuance captured in Profiles 3 and 4 using quantitative data as input suggests that there may be a difference between unprimed and prompted attributions. When individuals are asked to think about and rate different types of blame attributions, they appear to reflect more deeply about the incident. This reflection allows them to consider the incident in its entirety and the factors, which contributed to the experienced behaviours. Such differences in cognition are reflected in dual-processing and logic-belief theories, which suggest a distinction between fast and intuitive processes versus slow and reflective ones (Evans, 2008; Kahneman, 2011). Unprimed attributions may fall within fast and intuitive cognitive reasoning such that individuals are constructing blame to the most salient blameworthy reasonings. However, prompted attributions may facilitate these slow and reflective cognitive reasoning processes to allow for greater variations in attributing blame. Indeed, the distinction between the largest LCA class, *perpetrator dominant*, and the largest LPA profile, *perpetrator-situational*, suggests a higher likelihood of more thorough considerations of contextual factors with prompted attributions.

Within negative incivility incidents, such as those captured in the current study, it is expected that the targets will hold the perpetrator accountable for the event; however, acknowledging other factors, especially those reflecting internal- or self-accountability, are often less likely (e.g., Baumeister et al., 1990; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a; Mezulis et al., 2004). Although the perpetrator could be largely to blame for the incident, predominantly blaming the

perpetrator through such fast and intuitive cognitive processes may be a self-protective defence mechanism for the target. Indeed, unprimed blame attributions may be conceptually similar to self-serving attributions where individuals are protecting their own self-image by minimizing their contributions to negative events/outcomes (Mezulis et al., 2004). However, in the case of the current unprimed qualitative blame attributions, it is important to note that some participants still constructed reasoning beyond just perpetrator attributions (i.e., 3.40% for internal attributions, 8.80% for relational attributions, 29.10% for situational attributions and 7.10% for gender-extrinsic attributions). This pattern suggests some higher-order cognition, for some, at the unprimed stage but further and deeper analysis of the incident within the prompted stage.

A critical theoretical contribution of the current study is the identification of blame attributor profiles for incivility. Previous research has mostly examined attributions in a variable-centered manner where independent relationships between each type of attribution and other variables are established (Craig & Smith, 2000; Eberly et al., 2011). However, since attribution categories are not mutually exclusive, targets of mistreatment can hold several blame reasonings simultaneously (Eberly et al., 2011; 2017). Latent variable modelling allowed for the understanding of heterogeneity in blame patterns across incivility targets. Unlike variable-centered approaches, these established profiles better account for the extent to which leaders apply different attribution types in tandem. For example, the persistent blameworthiness of the perpetrator regardless of the presence of any other attribution type would not have been as clearly observed within variable-centered approaches. Additionally, this analytic approach allowed for an understanding of how common each of these unique subpopulations of blame attributors were among leaders. Thus, the current person-centered approach emphasized the existence and possible influence of the unique combination of attribution patterns on shaping

outcomes such as well-being. Additionally, links with well-being outcomes through these profiles may be clearer and not as limited compared with examining the linear contribution of each attribution type separately (through correlations, regressions, and modelled interaction effects; Gabriel et al., 2015; Wang & Hanges, 2011).

### **Blame Attributions and Links to Well-being**

Following the identification of the blame profiles and classes, well-being group differences were examined. Using the qualitative attribution accounts, which uncovered only two class groups, no differences on any of the well-being outcomes were found. This is likely due to the limited nuance within these unprimed blame interpretations as they did not readily capture internal attributions (nor relational or gender-extrinsic), which were anticipated to play a key role in well-being outcomes (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Crocker & Major, 1989; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a). Conversely, the profiles using quantitative attribution accounts showed significant differences in high-intensity positive affect, high-intensity negative affect and low-intensity negative affect following the incivility incident.

In considering the potential influence on positive emotions when leaders experience incivility from those to whom they report, there seems to be a stronger dampening effect for certain profiles. Leaders within the *perpetrator dominant* profile took larger well-being hits to their high-intensity positive affect than those in the *muted-balanced* profile. Although only approaching significance, a similar pattern was observed for low-intensity positive affect. Interestingly, these profiles represent the highest and lowest accounts of perpetrator attributions, respectively. Positive affect is associated with optimism as emotions such as enthusiasm, excitement and inspiration reflect an individual's zest for life (Marshall et al., 1992; Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Across all profiles, positive emotions are low (i.e., below the midpoint)

suggesting the incivility incident itself, regardless of blame, likely dampened positive emotions. However, leaders who highly and solely blame the higher-up for the incident are reporting pronounced dampened positive emotions compared to when the higher-up is seen as less blameworthy in relation to other attribution types. This observed pattern is likely associated with the expectations that leaders have about their own influence.

Leadership and management positions often entail the choice of what should be done and input on efficient execution within the workplace (Adair, 2003). However, in the case of the incivility where these leaders are experiencing a doubting of their judgement or an ignoring of their input and only blaming the higher-up (i.e., *perpetrator-dominant* profile), the incivility may serve as a direct violation of role and trust expectations (Chen et al., 2011; Dulac et al., 2008; Williams et al. 2020). Additionally, the higher-up's constant or permanent presence may represent an uncontrollable and unchangeable source of such incivility as opposed to other attribution factors such as situational accounts which may change over time. Conversely, when leaders are attributing less blame to the perpetrator and are considering several reasonings beyond just the higher-up (i.e., *muted-balanced* profile), the violation in role and trust expectations may not be as high. Their lack of influence is no longer solely due to boundaries put up by the higher-up but may be due to other factors which may change over time. Thus, this dampening of positive emotions like enthusiasm, excitement and inspiration, may be contingent on how blameworthy the perpetrator was in relation to other blame attributions.

In considering the potential influence on negative emotions when leaders experience incivility from those to whom they report, the pattern associated with each profile seems contingent on affect intensity. Leaders within the *perpetrator-dominant* profile experienced more high-intensity negative affect (e.g., anger) than those applying the *muted-balanced* profile. A

similar pattern emerged where leaders within the *perpetrator-situational dominant* profile also took larger well-being hits to their high-intensity negative affect than those within the *muted-balanced* profile. Interestingly, both profiles which demonstrated greater high-intensity negative affect contained more extrinsic blame attributions compared to the profile with the lowest reported high-intensity negative affect. This pattern suggests that, somewhat similar to high-intensity positive affect, high-intensity negative affect may be contingent on how much blame is directed outwards, to the perpetrator and for some, the situation. This pattern of results may combine violations in role and trust expectation reasonings with the subsequent emotions suggested by the Cognitive-Motivational-Relational theory of emotions (CMR; Smith & Lazarus, 1990).

Cognitive-Motivational-Relational theory proposes that cognitive appraisals of events are linked to the emotions that targets feel. Accountability for an event can be assigned as self-accountability (i.e., intrinsic accounts) or other-accountability (i.e., extrinsic accounts; Smith & Lazarus, 1990). These forms of accountability are related to discreet felt emotions such that *anger* is often experienced when assigning blame to extrinsic accounts or other-accountability (e.g., Bunk & Magley, 2013; Smith & Lazarus, 1993). This framework is consistent with the results of the current study as *anger* is aligned with the high-intensity negative affect category. Thus, when leaders are predominantly blaming the higher-up, even if they also acknowledge the incident's contextual factors which led to uncivil behaviour, they are experiencing heightened high-intensity negative affect (e.g., anger and frustration).

An opposite yet conceptually consistent pattern of well-being outcomes was observed for low-intensity negative affect. Leaders within the *balanced attributors* profile experienced more detriment to their low-intensity negative affect than those in the *perpetrator dominant*,

*perpetrator-situational dominant* and *muted-balanced* profiles. Interestingly, although no internal dominant profile emerged, the *balanced* profile included the highest ratings of internal attributions and relational attributions in tandem with other attribution types. Both internal and relational attributions reflect an extent of intrinsic accounts. According to CMR theory, when assigning blame to more intrinsic accounts (i.e., self-accountability), *guilt* is the dominant experienced emotion (e.g., Bunk & Magley, 2013; Smith & Lazarus, 1993). As *guilt* is more in line with low-intensity negative affect, this pattern is demonstrated with the current findings. Leaders who acknowledge the role which they and their relationship with the higher-up played in the incident, are internalizing some of the blame and potentially feeling more low-intensity negative emotions like fatigue, depression and discouragement. Although they still largely blame the leader for the incident, this uptick in blame internalization seems to be influencing their low-intensity negative affect. It is noteworthy that this profile pattern of attributions was least likely to occur and represented the smallest profile classification. This may indicate that when experiencing incivility of the type considered in the current study, internalization of blame may be relatively infrequent.

These results observed for the *balanced* profile (relative to the other profiles) were most consistent with Hypothesis 1, which anticipated that profiles with more intrinsic accounts of blame would be associated with more detriment to leader well-being. This hypothesis is consistent with previous research which has posited extrinsic accounts of blame to be less influential on well-being compared to intrinsic accounts (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Crocker & Major, 1989; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a; Major et al., 2003; Winefield et al., 1992). However, the findings of the current study suggest that the relationship between intrinsic blame accounts and well-being detriment may differ based on both affect type (i.e.,

positive/negative) and affect intensity (i.e., high/low). These more nuanced findings among well-being outcomes is another theoretical contribution of the current study. Well-being implications of incivility accounted for by attributions are not likely as straightforward as originally proposed.

Although exploratory and in need of replication, differences were observed between the profiles on the extent to which leaders reported experiencing specific uncivil behaviours in the incidents (i.e., WIS items; Cortina et al., 2001) Profile 1, *perpetrator-dominant attributors* showed consistently higher incident incivility ratings where higher-ups were perceived as more condescending, addressed leaders in unprofessional terms, excluded leaders from professional camaraderie and ignored leaders' input more so than Profile 4, *muted-balanced attributors*. Additionally, Profile 2, *perpetrator-situational attributors*, showed higher incivility ratings for condescending behaviours relative to Profile 4, *muted-balanced attributors*. No differences in the profiles emerged for doubting judgements and drawing leaders into discussions of personal matters but marginally significant differences were observed for making demeaning remarks. Although the incivility behaviours of interest in the current study were ignoring input and doubting judgements, leaders' ratings of the incident suggest that other incivility behaviours may also have been present within the incident. Interestingly, it seems that leaders in the *perpetrator-dominant and perpetrator-situational* profiles (i.e., highest levels of perpetrator blame) perceived higher levels of incivility than those in the *muted-balanced* profile (i.e., lowest level of perpetrator blame).

These patterns of differences in behaviours reported among profiles may suggest that incidents that are perceived to be higher in intensity (via encompassing higher levels of specific uncivil actions or more variety in uncivil behaviours) are associated with more extrinsic blame accounts, such as perpetrator and situational accounts, but less consideration of other more

intrinsic attribution accounts. The extent to which these behaviours differ across profiles may be a function of perceptions of perpetrator control over their own actions (Rothschild et al., 2012). For example, ignoring input (which differed across profiles) might be a behaviour that is perceived to be within the control of the perpetrator (i.e., more perpetrator blame) whereas doubting judgement (which did not differ across profiles) might not be entirely within the perpetrator's control (i.e., leading to other blame attributions). It may also be that leaders are perceiving their higher-ups to be more uncivil when the perpetrator is highly to blame regardless of if the objective behaviours differ from other profiles. It is also possible that contextual factors, such as a history of negative interactions with the higher-up (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and target personality (e.g., negative affectivity; Tett & Guterman, 2000) may lead to greater perceptions of incident incivility. Future research can examine such factors, among others, which may predict profile membership and incivility perceptions.

### **Gender Influences**

Beyond establishing blame attribution profiles and examining any well-being differences among the different observed profiles, this study also applied considerations of leader gender. Gender-extrinsic attributions were not as prevalent in both the qualitative and the quantitative attribution accounts, in relation to all other attribution types except internal. This pattern is expected as male leaders, who make up approximately half of the sample, are less likely to experience incivility stemming from gender biases (Cortina, 2008; Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). However, a difference in the distribution of male and female leaders among profiles with higher gender-extrinsic and internal attributions was anticipated (i.e., in the *balanced* profile). Moreover, a dichotomy of gender attributions was proposed to expand beyond just extrinsic accounts and include gender-intrinsic attributions (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). The results of

this study did not show support for these propositions as female and male leaders were equally likely to apply any of the four identified blame attribution patterns and no qualitative evidence was observed for gender-intrinsic attributions.

It is noteworthy, however, that zero order correlations do indicate some gender influences on attributions as separate variables and on well-being outcomes. The relationship between gender and gender-extrinsic attributions ( $r = .21$ ), suggests that female leaders were more likely to assign blame for the incident to the higher-up's gender-biased attitudes. Although a few qualitative cases did portray gender-bias towards male leaders (e.g., bias against males working in female-dominant environments), the majority of the gender codes were associated with bias towards female leaders. Thus, the quantitative and qualitative attribution patterns are similar. These findings are consistent with past literature indicating that the mismatch between the female gender role and leadership may be linked to further heightened saliency of group identity for female leaders (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016; Offermann & Coats, 2018; Schien, 1973). When female leaders experience these incivility incidents, they may be taking such behaviours as a cue that their higher-up holds gender-biased attitudes towards them. Thus, although no profile with high gender-extrinsic attributions emerged (likely because of the somewhat gender-balanced sample not capturing such a profile), female leaders were still more likely to make gender-extrinsic attributions.

Gender also displayed links with both high-intensity ( $r = -.15$ ) and low-intensity ( $r = -.15$ ) positive affect, suggesting that female leaders may have been more likely to take larger hits to their positive affect overall following an incivility incident. In addition to these observed correlations, within the multivariate analysis, a main effect of gender on well-being emerged, further suggesting that female leaders took larger hits to their positive affect (both high and low

intensity) following experiencing incivility. These findings are consistent with past literature suggesting that incivility may be similarly influential for male and female leaders' negative affect; however, female leaders tend to take larger well-being hits to their positive affect (Holmvall & Sobhani, 2019). As positive affect is associated with excitement, enthusiasm and inspiration, it seems that female leaders may feel less optimistic following an incident of incivility. These dampened positive emotions show a similar pattern as the *perpetrator-dominant* profiles and interpretations about leader's expected influence may be even more applicable for female leaders. That is, the violation in role and trust expectations for female leaders through doubting their judgement or ignoring their input is coupled with negative gender stereotypes (Chen et al., 2011; Cortina, 2008; Dulac et al., 2008; Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). The feelings of lack of influence, input and trust which female leaders experience seems to be leading to an exacerbated dampening of their excitement and enthusiasm. However, these findings, while significant, are small in magnitude suggesting a weak effect of leader gender overall.

The limited observed gender influences within the current study may be due to a number of factors. First, the types of incivility examined, ignoring input and doubting judgements, are expected to be especially relevant and impactful for leaders due to expectations of influence (Adair, 2003; Chen et al., 2011; Dulac et al., 2008; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Williams et al. 2020). Thus, the incivility incident may serve as a direct violation of these expectations of influence, which regardless of gender, may lead to negative well-being outcomes for leaders. That is, the type of incivility examined may have overshadowed the anticipated gender differences due to the extent of the work-role violation for leaders. For example, being addressed in unprofessional terms might be more readily tied with gender and status for female leaders when compared to other types of uncivil behaviours. This pattern might not emerge as readily for

male leaders due to the congruence between stereotypically male characteristics and the prototype of leaders, which may not lead to a questioning of status (e.g., Eagly, 1987; Jaffee, 1989; Lord & Maher, 1991). Thus, future research should examine the role of incivility type and work-role violations on understanding potential gender differences in blame attributions and subsequent well-being outcomes. Second, although the overall sample size for this study was likely adequate for conducting latent variable modelling (Nylund-Gibson & Choi, 2018; Weller et al., 2020), the sample sizes for each gender may have limited the statistical power required to examine differences in attribution and well-being patterns for male and female leaders. Therefore, future research may benefit from collecting larger samples for male and female leaders for a more in-depth comparison.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The present study contributes much novelty and insight due to its strengths. For example, the research rigor of a mixed-methods design and person-centered analytic approach as well as the narrow focus on leaders as targets of incivility and higher-ups as instigators contributes novelty in our understanding of incivility experiences. However, the current study is not without limitations. For example, there are general limitations to latent variable modelling approaches, which include the potential for model misspecification, the identification of spurious profiles/classes and the misclassification of individuals (Williams & Kibowski, 2016). Additionally, the study design is correlational in nature and no clear causal conclusions about the relationship between the profiles of blame attribution and differences in experienced emotions can be made.

This study was also exploratory in nature as blame attributions for incivility have not been examined through such person-centric analytic approaches. Therefore, these profile

findings should be replicated in future research to ensure the stability of these demonstrated blame-attribution patterns. Replication would be particularly important for gender attributions, as the expected differential distribution of leader gender across profiles was not seen within the current study. A larger sample, and possibly one which considers additional incivility behaviours, may uncover more of these leader gender distribution differences in attribution profiles that were hypothesized. Furthermore, this study only considered differences between the profiles on one potential outcome (i.e., affective well-being). However, a validation process for established profiles with an examination of predictors of profile membership (both antecedents and outcomes) is recommended for future research to ensure the profiles' criterion-validity (Spurk et al., 2020). Additionally, future research can adopt and test formal hypotheses for the relationship between these established profiles of blame attributors and other organizational variables, including examining violations in role and trust expectations as potential mediators (Adair, 2003; Chen et al., 2011; Dulac et al., 2008; Williams et al. 2020).

Moreover, although a sufficient sample was collected and methodological efforts were in place for gender balancing, the final sample did include more female leaders than male leaders. This slight gender imbalance may have influenced the nature of the identified profiles regardless of the lack of differences in leader gender distribution across profiles. Furthermore, the sample was predominantly Caucasian, which is an issue in the majority of psychological research, and is expected to be influential as race plays an important role in how people think and behave (Roberts et al., 2020). For example, leaders who belong to marginalized racial groups may experience incivility rooted in racial prejudice (Cortina, 2008) and thus attribute blame to group-based reasonings (i.e., beyond just gender but also potentially intersecting with gender) more readily than Caucasian leaders. Moreover, race may be a factor in terms of differences in

attributions for the incivility as a function of whether the higher-up was an ingroup or outgroup racial member in relation to the leader. Indeed, research has shown that the extent of internal and external attributions may differ based on the perpetrator's group membership status (e.g., Hewstone, 1990).

Another limitation within this study pertains to the retrospective nature of examining well-being outcomes, as participants were asked to reflect about how they felt when they thought of the incident. Although it is challenging to examine incivility targets' emotions immediately after an incident, it may be beneficial to conduct a longitudinal diary study in an effort to capture the leaders' emotions in closer time proximity to incivility incidents for greater accuracy. Such longitudinal designs would also allow for examining the dissipation of emotions following an incivility incident over time. Furthermore, blame attributions captured in the current study reflect blame attributions that are incident-specific. However, blame patterns may shift across different incidents as a function of the context and specific behaviours involved in the incident and within-person differences in blame patterns or profile tendencies. Moreover, the additive influence of attributions relevant to multiple incivility incidents over time on well-being and other work attitudes is not clear. Thus, future research could consider how dynamic blame attribution patterns are through examining within-person variation over time as well as the factors (e.g., contextual, incivility type, individual characteristics) which contribute to these potential variations. As suggested by Gabriel and colleagues (2015), other person-centered techniques can assess changes in class membership over time (e.g., latent transition analysis; Wang & Chan, 2011) to show if and under which circumstances incivility targets apply different blame attribution profiles.

Although also a strength, the current study only examined one type of incivility (i.e., doubting judgements or ignoring input) which had the lowest ratings (yet still mid-range) for intent to harm in previous research, suggesting that these behaviours are more ambiguous and thus better aligned with the definition of incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Matthews & Ritter, 2015). With respect to attributions, this form of incivility may be expected to elicit the potential for high levels of intrinsic blame since the behaviours of interest inherently doubt the leader's competence. It is possible that different forms of incivility may be associated with different attribution profiles, gender differences and subsequent outcomes. For example, uncivil behaviours such as pulling the leader into an unwanted discussion of personal matters (Cortina et al., 2001), or gossiping behind the leader's back (Martin & Hine, 2005) might reflect more relational-based behaviours rather than the competence-based behaviours examined in the current study. Indeed, as noted by Eberly and colleagues (2017), there is a distinction in attributions between performance-related events (e.g., My idea pitch was ignored) and more dyadic and relational events (e.g., She only acts like this towards me).

### **Practical Implications**

The findings from this study can be applied to understand better incivility experiences which leaders may encounter in the workplace. A detriment to leader well-being can influence not only their own performance, but also that of their subordinates and the organization overall (Bernerth & Hirschfeld, 2016). Therefore, it is critical for organizations to identify mistreatment issues which leaders experience from their higher-ups with a focus on how the blame for experienced incivility was constructed for the targets.

Interestingly, all profiles contained a moderate to high level of blame directed to the perpetrator, suggesting perhaps that the leaders never quite excuse the higher-ups for their

actions. Despite potentially seeing other factors, themselves included, as contributing to the higher-up's behaviours, the perpetrator is always seen as responsible for their actions. In practice, this finding suggests that higher-ups should not expect the people who report to them to 'understand' or excuse why they may have behaved poorly (e.g., "I was just having a bad day"). As higher-up leadership, they may be held to a standard of respect and civil interactions which, when violated, will be seen as their fault regardless of context. The interactions between leaders and their higher-ups resemble a psychological contract where maintaining that relationship may partly depend on a reciprocation of civil behaviour (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Rousseau, 1995). Thus, when this breach or violation in expectations of the psychological contract occurs (i.e., via incivility incidents), the leaders' feelings, attitudes and behaviours will be negatively influenced (Conway & Briner, 2005; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Following such uncivil behaviour from a persistently blameworthy higher-up across all blame profiles, the negative well-being outcomes for the targets (i.e., the leaders) can be detrimental for the organization overall (Bernerth & Hirschfeld, 2016) thus highlighting the importance of civil conduct.

Another implication of this study is that regardless of profile membership, leaders reported low levels of positive emotions and moderate to high levels of negative emotions following incivility incidents. Leaders are therefore not brushing off these incidents as inconsequential, yet the specific emotions encountered do seem to be contingent on the blame profile. The extent to which the profiles contain different intrinsic and extrinsic accounts of blame is differentially associated with subsequent well-being based on affect intensity and affect type. Therefore, organizations can benefit from knowing the patterns and profiles of blame which may emerge when negative incivility incidents occur at work. By being aware of the

different blame patterns, organizations may be better able to recognize and address the different emotions associated.

For example, if a leader highly blames the higher-up for the incident, the organization may expect that the leader will feel anger. This high intensity negative emotion can lead to negative attitudes and behaviours such as counterproductive workplace behaviours, revenge behaviours, decreased satisfaction and increased incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Bies & Tripp, 1998; Gibson & Callister, 2010; Glomb, 2002). However, from a socio-functional perspective, these feelings of anger in the leader can also signal to organizations that a negative incident has occurred thus potentially influencing any negotiations or outcomes positively (Keltner & Kring, 1998; Van Kleef et al., 2004). Thus, the anger experienced by the leaders due to the incivility might help clarify their needs, signal boundaries for how the higher-up should treat them in future and overall drive change in their interpersonal relationship (Gibson & Callister, 2010). Conversely, if the leader acknowledges more intrinsic accounts of blame, the organization might apply self-efficacy boosting and motivational techniques, such as self-enhancing educational interventions (Isaac et al., 2017) and mentorship (Bang & Reio Jr, 2017; Palumbo, 2018), to address feelings of discouragement (i.e., low-intensity negative affect).

The dampening of positive emotions for leaders may appear as reduced excitement and enthusiasm for their role as their sense of influence is being targeted. This reduction in positive emotions seemed most pronounced when the perpetrator was solely and highly to blame for their mistreatment. Moreover, this pattern seems to be more pronounced for female leaders who experience dampened positive emotions regardless of blame profile memberships. This latter pattern is consistent with the research of Holmvall and Sobhani (2019) and needs to be better examined and understood in future work. As the observed differences between the extent of

dampened emotions in male and female leaders may not be related to attributions solely, future research can examine the underlying mechanism to explain this disparity.

Moreover, these lowered positive emotions across all leaders are an especially important finding for organizations, which should be considering how incivility in the workplace may be damaging their leaders' enthusiasm and drive for their roles. Indeed, outcomes such as work engagement, enthusiasm and proactive workplace behaviours often decrease due to experiencing incivility (Hosseinpour-Dalenjan et al., 2017; Lan et al., 2020; Wang & Chen, 2020). When leaders are experiencing a doubting of their judgement or an ignoring of their input, they may be especially likely to exhibit this lower pattern of engagement and enthusiasm, as their work role expectations have been explicitly violated (Adair, 2003; Chen et al., 2011; Dulac et al., 2008). Thus, higher-ups are encouraged to engage and consult with leaders when making decisions that are not consistent with the leader's initial judgement or input. Indeed, research has shown that engaging employees through participatory decision-making processes and considering their input or judgements improves organizational citizenship behaviours and engagement (Ike et al., 2017). Allowing leaders to still express their input when making judgement calls may buffer the dampening of positive emotions leaders can experience when a higher-up does not apply their input or accept their judgements, as a more collaborative approach was taken to reach a final solution.

Additionally, over time, the negative affect experienced as a result of incivility may contribute to a negative work culture, influencing negative work attitudes and possible retaliatory behaviour (Begley, 1994; Pearson & Porath, 2009, Schilpzand et al., 2016; Sliter et al., 2011). For example, a theme which emerged during the qualitative analysis were intentions to quit due to negative work attitudes linked with the incivility incident. Such negative attitudes are

important for organizations to consider when aiming to retain their leaders through promoting civil interactions with higher-ups. Additionally, as suggested by Andersson and Pearson (1999), incivility is related to violations of norms and values of mutual respect in the workplace, which may indicate a negative working culture.

Indeed, the emotional contagion literature suggests that the negative emotions of these leaders who are experiencing incivility may be imitated and transferred to organizational members beyond the leader (Hatfield et al., 1993). Moreover, incivility events can be ongoing or repeated incidents, rather than single events, such that a repetition of this uncivil behaviour from higher-ups may contribute to consistent high-intensity negative affect for leaders, especially those who highly apply perpetrator blame. Additionally, tit-for-tat (i.e., retaliatory) behaviours may be more likely with identity threats and high-intensity negative affect such as anger (Bunk & Magley, 2013; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a). That is, there is potential for reactionary behaviours on the part of leaders especially due to the severity of damage to their identity as leaders and the potential violation in both work norms and role norms (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Tedeschi & Felson, 1994).

Lastly, organizations can consider the current results when applying perspective-taking techniques within incivility-reduction interventions to influence blame attributions and subsequent well-being. The difference between unprimed and prompted attributions suggests that interventions which support leaders in their consideration of contextual and additional factors which contribute to uncivil behaviours in the workplace may be beneficial. If leaders are prompted to consider factors beyond the perpetrator, which may contribute to the perpetrator's behaviour, feelings of anger and frustration (i.e., high-intensity negative affect) may be reduced while feelings of excitement and enthusiasm (i.e., high-intensity positive affect) may be less

damaged. Indeed, some research has shown promising links between perspective taking and buffering negative well-being when experiencing incivility in the workplace (Arnold & Walsh, 2014; Gedro & Wang, 2013; Vasconcelos, 2020). However, it would be important for organizations to cautiously carry out such interventions to not encourage leaders to blame themselves when they experience incivility, which may be associated with greater feelings of discouragement and gloominess (i.e., low-intensity negative affect) in incivility targets. Additionally, any perspective-taking methods should be embedded within incivility reduction interventions so as not to approach incivility through a victim-blaming lens (Cortina, 2017).

### **Conclusion**

The current study offers novel contributions to the incivility literature by examining blame attributions through a person-centered approach as a variable which explains some of the discrepancy in well-being outcomes for targets. Additionally, a more nuanced approach to understanding incivility was applied through examining a specific form of incivility that may be particularly impactful for leaders (Matthews & Ritter, 2015; Chen et al., 2011; Dulac et al., 2008; Williams et al. 2020). The results identified four profiles of blame attributors, *perpetrator-dominant*, *perpetrator-situational*, *balanced* and *muted-balanced* as unique subpopulations, who apply internal, perpetrator, relational, situational and gender-extrinsic attributions in tandem distinctly. Furthermore, differences in well-being outcomes between these established profiles of blame attributors were observed and suggest a nuanced pattern of well-being detriment based on who, or what, leaders see as to blame for their mistreatment. By continuing to further examine variables, such as blame attribution patterns, which influence the outcomes of experienced incivility, greater insight into how we can best support targets of incivility can be gained.

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**Table 1***Study Variables Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations*

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	1.54	.51											
2. Age	39.70	10.67	-.11*										
3. Internal Attribution	2.17	1.15	.04	-.17**	<b>(.79)</b>								
4. Perpetrator Attribution	6.19	.84	.01	.21**	-.43**	<b>(.91)</b>							
5. Relational Attribution	3.41	1.67	-.02	-.05	.28**	-.08	<b>(.97)</b>						
6. Situational Attribution	4.47	1.53	-.02	-.15**	.13*	-.22**	-.01						
7. Gender-E Attribution	2.52	1.50	.21**	.01	.13*	.10	.07	-.11*	<b>(.95)</b>				
8. JAWS HI-Positive	1.39	.51	-.15**	.00	.09	-.23**	.07	.08	-.04	<b>(.87)</b>			
9. JAWS LI-Positive	1.58	.60	-.15**	-.01	.02	-.19**	.05	.14**	-.12*	.56**	<b>(.83)</b>		
10. JAWS HI-Negative	3.27	.80	.03	.07	.06	.26**	.09	-.10	.29**	-.11*	-.38**	<b>(.72)</b>	
11. JAWS LI-Negative	3.40	.83	.08	-.04	.26**	.06	.14**	-.06	.10	-.09	-.19**	.49**	<b>(.70)</b>

*Note.* *N* = 351. Gender: 1 = Man, 2 = Woman. Only 1 participant identified as non-binary and they were removed for any gender correlations to improve interpretability, however, this participant was retained for all other correlations. Gender-E= gender extrinsic. JAWS = job-related affective well-being scale. HI = high intensity. LI = low intensity. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  reliabilities are presented in parentheses on the diagonal. Attribution rating scales: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 7 (Strongly Agree). JAWS rating scales: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree). The situational attribution scale included 2 items correlated at  $r = .68$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

**Table 2***Model Fit Statistics for Attribution Profiles and Classes*

No. of Profiles/Classes	LL	FP	AIC	BIC	SSA-BIC	LMR ( <i>p</i> )	BLRT ( <i>p</i> )	Entropy
<i>LPA Profiles</i>								
2	-2838.72	19	5715.44	5788.80	5728.52	.0000	.0000	.918
3	-2803.25	25	5656.51	5753.03	5673.72	.0000	.0000	.829
4	-2778.14	31	5618.28	5737.97	5639.62	.0318	.0000	.787
5	-2762.17	37	5598.35	5741.20	5623.82	.2906	.0000	.759
<i>LCA Classes</i>								
2	-491.28	11	1004.56	1047.03	1012.13	.0004	.0000	.751
3	-483.80	17	1001.60	1067.23	1013.30	.0003	.0000	.920
4	-482.08	23	1010.15	1098.95	1025.99	.0010	1.000	.730

*Note.* *N* = 351. LL = log-likelihood; FP = free parameters; AIC = Akaike Information Criteria; BIC = Bayesian information criteria; SSA-BIC = sample-size adjusted BIC; LMR = Lo, Mendell, and Rubin test; BLRT = bootstrapped log-likelihood ratio test.

**Table 3***Estimated Means for LPA 3-Profile Solution*

	Profile 1 <i>n</i> = 73	Profile 2 <i>n</i> = 239	Profile 3 <i>n</i> = 39
	<i>M</i> ( <i>SE</i> )		
Internal	1.71(.10)	1.90(.07)	4.55(.18)
Perpetrator	6.61(.07)	6.14(.06)	5.65(.15)
Gender-E	2.81(.21)	2.30(.10)	3.20(.32)
Situational	2.29(.17)	5.11(.09)	4.97(.19)
Relational	3.09(.26)	3.40(.12)	4.04(.26)

*Note.* Profile 1 represents ‘perpetrator-dominant attributors,’ profile 2 represents ‘perpetrator-situational attributors’ and profile 3 represent ‘balanced attributors.’ All attribution scales were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree).

**Table 4***Estimated Means for LPA 4-Profile Solution*

	Profile 1 <i>n</i> = 76	Profile 2 <i>n</i> = 173	Profile 3 <i>n</i> = 31	Profile 4 <i>n</i> = 71
	<i>M (SE)</i>			
Internal	1.73(.10)	1.73(.07)	4.76(.17)	2.45(.15)
Perpetrator	6.63(.06)	6.58 (.06)	5.71(.20)	5.06(.12)
Gender-E	2.83(.21)	2.34(.13)	3.20(.37)	2.29(.17)
Situational	2.33(.19)	5.13(.12)	4.94(.22)	5.11(.13)
Relational	3.09(.26)	3.28(.17)	4.27(.28)	3.66(.20)

*Note.* Profile 1 represents ‘perpetrator-dominant attributors,’ profile 2 represents ‘perpetrator-situational attributors,’ profile 3 represents ‘balanced attributors’ and profile 4 represents ‘muted-balanced attributors.’ All attribution scales were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree).

**Table 5***Classification Probability Estimates for LCA 2-Class Solution*

		Class 1 <i>n</i> = 102	Class 2 <i>n</i> = 249
		<i>Probability Estimate (SE)</i>	
Internal	Absent	.93(.03)	.98(.01)
	Present	.07(.03)	.02(.01)
Perpetrator	Absent	.12(.04)	.00(.00)
	Present	.88(.04)	1.00(.00)
Gender-E	Absent	1.00(.00)	.90(.02)
	Present	.00(.00)	.10(.02)
Situational	Absent	.08(.08)	.96(.04)
	Present	.92(.08)	.04(.04)
Relational	Absent	.94(.03)	.90(.02)
	Present	.06(.03)	.10(.02)

*Note.* Class 1 represents ‘perpetrator-situational attributors’ and class 2 represents ‘perpetrator-dominant attributors.’

**Table 6**

## Classification Probability Estimates for LCA 3-Class Solution

		Class 1 <i>n</i> = 101	Class 2 <i>n</i> = 247	Class 3 <i>n</i> = 3
		<i>Class Probability Estimate (SE)</i>		
Internal	Absent	.94(.03)	.99(.01)	.00(.00)
	Present	.06(.03)	.01(.08)	1.00(.00)
Perpetrator	Absent	.12(.04)	.00(.00)	.37(.30)
	Present	.88(.04)	1.00(.00)	.63(.30)
Gender-E	Absent	1.00(.00)	.90(.02)	1.00(.00)
	Present	.00(.00)	.10(.02)	.00(.00)
Situational	Absent	.00(.00)	.96(.04)	1.00(.00)
	Present	1.00(.00)	.04(.04)	.00(.00)
Relational	Absent	.96(.03)	.91(.02)	.00(.00)
	Present	.04(.03)	.01(.02)	1.00(.00)

*Note.* Class 1 represents ‘perpetrator-situational attributors’ class 2 represents ‘perpetrator dominant attributors’ and class 3 represents ‘internal-relational-perpetrator attributors.’

**Table 7.***Descriptive Statistics of JAWS Subscale Cells*

Profiles/Classes	Sample Size ( <i>n</i> )	HI Positive <i>M (SD)</i>	LI Positive <i>M (SD)</i>	HI Negative <i>M (SD)</i>	LI Negative <i>M (SD)</i>
<i>LPA Profiles</i>					
1: Perpetrator Dominant	76	1.30 (.49) <sup>a</sup>	1.45 (.62)	3.39 (.75) <sup>a</sup>	3.35 (.85) <sup>a</sup>
2: Perpetrator-Situational	173	1.38 (.51)	1.61 (.63)	3.31 (.82) <sup>b</sup>	3.37 (.87) <sup>b</sup>
3: Balanced	31	1.33 (.45)	1.54 (.62)	3.39 (.86)	3.84 (.64) <sup>a,b,c</sup>
4. Muted Balanced	71	1.53 (.55) <sup>a</sup>	1.70 (.52)	2.97 (.73) <sup>a,b</sup>	3.35 (.73) <sup>c</sup>
<i>LCA Classes</i>					
1: Perpetrator-Situational	102	1.37 (.44)	1.59 (.56)	3.16 (.80)	3.42 (.77)
2: Perpetrator Dominant	249	1.40 (.54)	1.59 (.63)	3.31 (.80)	3.39 (.85)

*Note.* N = 351. JAWS = job-related affective well-being scale. HI = high intensity. LI = low intensity. Values with a shared subscript indicate significant differences between profiles within the respective affective well-being subscale columns. Significant at  $p < .05$  level.

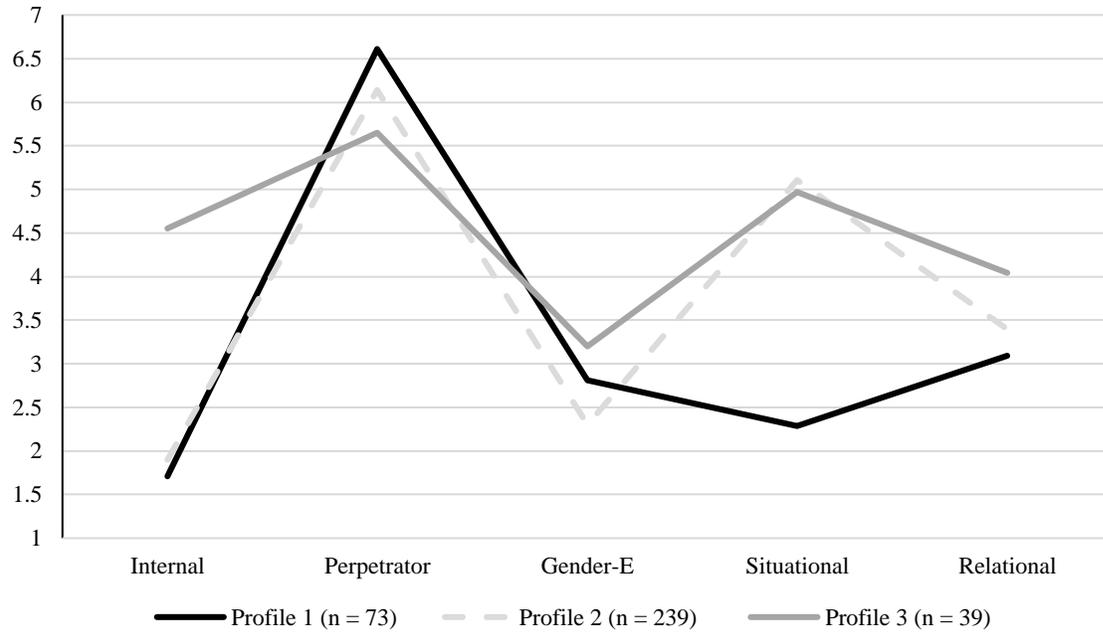
**Table 8.***Chi-Square Tests for Leader Gender Across Profiles and Classes*

	Total <i>N</i> = 350		Female Leaders <i>n</i> = 188		Male Leaders <i>n</i> = 162		$\chi^2$
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
<i>LPA Profiles</i>							
1: Perpetrator-Dominant	76	21.71%	45	23.94%	31	19.14%	2.16, n.s.
2: Perpetrator-Situational	172	49.14%	86	45.74%	86	53.09%	
3: Balanced	31	8.86%	18	9.57%	13	8.02%	
4: Muted-Balanced	71	20.29%	39	20.74%	32	19.75%	
<i>LCA Classes</i>							
1: Perpetrator-Situational	102	29.14%	56	29.79%	46	28.40%	.08, n.s.
2: Perpetrator-Dominant	248	70.86%	132	70.21%	116	71.60%	

*Note.* Only 1 participant responded to the third category provided for gender and they were removed for this analysis.

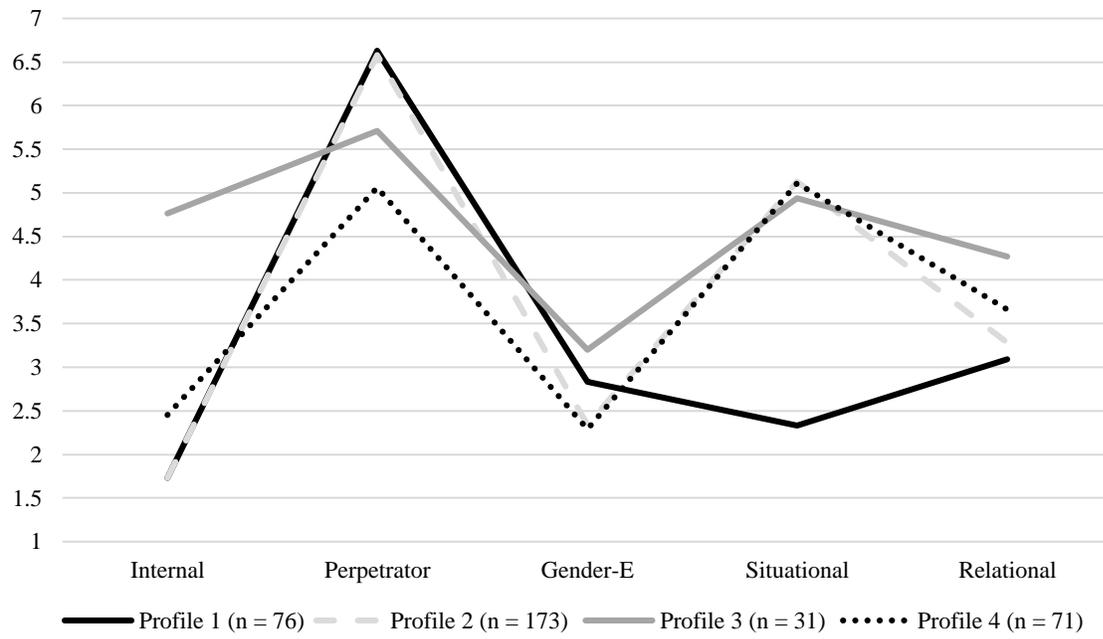
**Figure 1**

*LPA 3-Profile Solution*



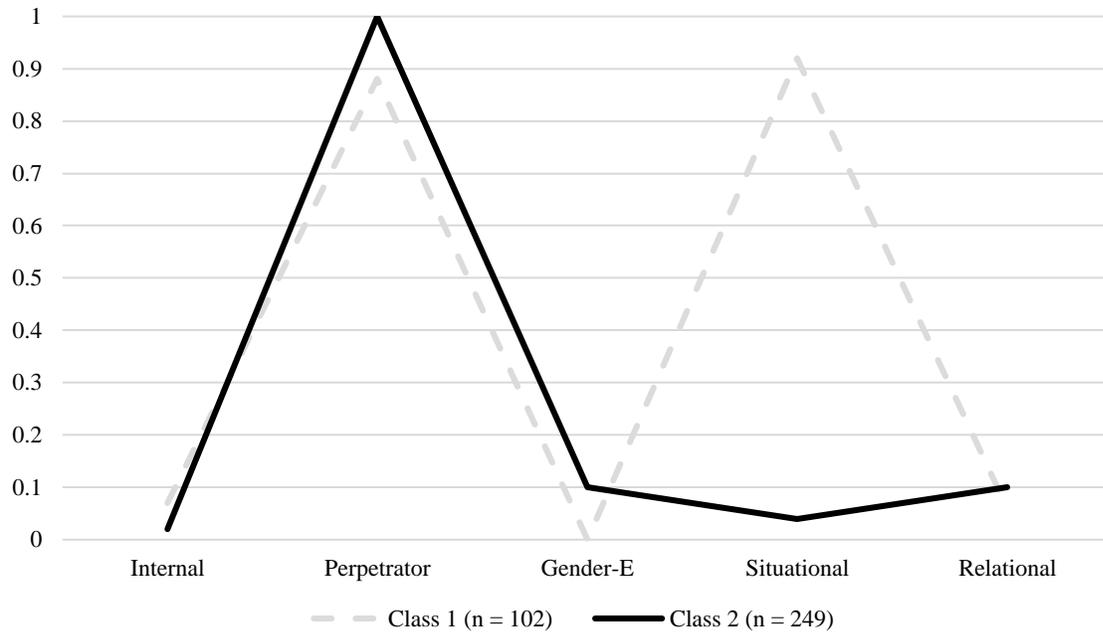
**Figure 2**

*LPA 4-Profile Solution*



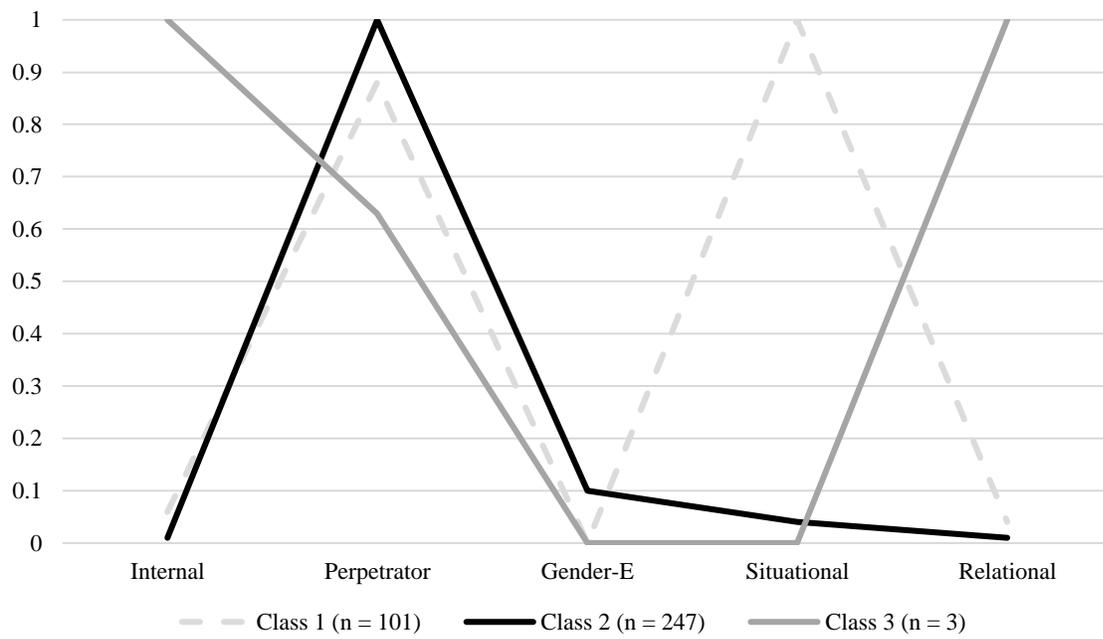
**Figure 3**

*LCA 2-Class Solution*



**Figure 4**

*LCA 3-Class Solution*



## Appendix A

### Time 1 Measures – Study-Specific Screening Criteria

#### **Survey 2 Eligibility Questions (questions appeared on a new screen only for those who passed the first set of screening questions)**

Incivility in the workplace reflects low-intensity mistreatment behaviours (different from high-intensity mistreatment behaviours such as physical violence or psychological aggression, such as yelling at someone). Uncivil behaviour may be seen as rude or discourteous. The intentions behind these uncivil behaviours is not always clear.

For the current study, we are specifically interested in times when **higher up leadership—that is, someone to whom you report** – paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions or doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility.

**Instructions:** Please respond to the following questions which will determine your eligibility to participate in our main survey.

- 1- In your current leadership/managerial/supervisory role, do you have any higher-up leaders to whom you report or to whom you are accountable? This can be either direct or indirect higher leadership such as a department head, board member, regional manager, CEO, etc.  
**Yes/No**
- 2- In your current leadership/managerial/supervisory role, **within the last 6 months**, have you experienced incivility **from someone in a higher up leadership** position to whom you report or are accountable (e.g., CEO, department head) when they paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions or doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility?  
**Yes/No**
- 3- Are you able to describe an incident in detail when your judgement was doubted or your opinions discounted or ignored? **Yes/No**
- 4- If you answered yes to the questions above, would you be interested in participating in our main survey (i.e., survey 2) to share your experiences of incivility from a higher-up individual? Please note that we are interested in hearing about your experience **regardless of whether or not you felt it impacted you.** You will **not** be asked to reveal any identifying information.  
**Yes/No**

**Those who answered Yes to all four questions were invited to complete the Time 2 survey**

## Appendix B

### Time 2 Measures – Qualitative

#### Critical Incident

Incivility in the workplace reflects low-intensity mistreatment behaviours where the intention behind the action is not always clear. Uncivil behaviours are often rude and discourteous, and thus violate social norms in the workplace.

We'd like you to think back to a time in the **past 6 months** in your current position when you encountered **incivility from higher-up leadership** (i.e., someone to whom you report or are accountable).

Specifically, please think and write about the **most recent incident of incivility** when someone you report to or are accountable to **paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions or doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility**. We are asking for you to consider the **most recent incident that you can recall**, regardless of whether or not you felt that this incident impacted you.

In your description of the incident, please **do not** use the name of your organization or the real names of anyone involved in the event. Please ensure that **no identifying information** is included in your description. You may use fake names (pseudonyms) if it helps when describing the incident.

#### Qualitative Measures:

1. Use the text box below to describe the incivility incident you experienced from someone higher up. Please provide as much detail as you can pertaining to the incident when someone to whom you report or are accountable **paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions or doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility** (Cortina et al., 2013). Please include details of:
  - The exact behaviours the higher-up leader did (or did not do) which made you perceive that your judgement was doubted or your input or opinions were ignored.
  - Any important details leading up to the incident (i.e., any additional clarifying context).
  - When and where this incivility incident took place.
  - Any characteristics of the higher-up leader who behaved this way that you feel are relevant (e.g., their gender, age, general demeanor).
  - What happened after the incident.

[inset text box here]

*CONSTRUCT: INCIVILITY INCIDENT*

2. What do you think led this person to behave this way toward you? In other words, what or who do you think is to blame for this incident?

[inset text box here]

*CONSTRUCT: BLAME ATTRIBUTIONS*

3. What was your thought process going through the incident?

[inset text box here]

*CONSTRUCT: COGNITIVE PROCESS*

4. How did the incident make you feel?

[inset text box here]

*CONSTRUCT: WELLBEING*

5. Is there any additional information about this incident that you would like to share with us?

[inset text box here]

## Appendix C

### Final Qualitative Codebook

The following is the final codebook used for the qualitative data. Only internal, perpetrator, relational, situational, gender-extrinsic and gender-intrinsic were considered for the thesis analysis. The additional codes were exploratory.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Scoring</b>	<b>Description</b>
Internal Attribution (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a)	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Involves blame cast towards the leaders themselves as the mistreatment reflects a personal inadequacy.
Perpetrator Attribution (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a)	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Involves blame towards the higher-up leader who instigated the mistreatment (e.g., their ignorance, personality, Anderson & Pearson, 1999). This is a characteristic that is stable. Additionally, 2 core elements of other-directed attributions are controllability and intentionality (Weiner, 2012). When coding this type of attribution, consider how the participants have portrayed the higher-ups behaviour to be intentional and controllable.
Relational Attribution (Eberly et al., 2011)	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Involves a shared blame between the leaders themselves and the higher-up perpetrators as the uncivil behaviour reflects an element of the nature of their

		relationship. Needs to be specific to their relationship only, not others.
Gender Attribution (extrinsic) (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010a)	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Involves blame towards the higher-up leader's gender-biased attitudes which may contribute to their uncivil behaviour.
Gender Attributions (intrinsic)	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Involves blame cast towards the leaders themselves through their gender as the incivility is interpreted as an internalized confirmation of a gender stereotype (e.g., buy-in regarding female leader stereotypes).
Situational Attribution (Bowman et al., 2009)	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Involves a consideration of contextual factors which may have driven the higher-up leader's behaviour.
Age	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Mention of their own or the higher-up's age to have influenced the incident and potentially contributed to their uncivil behaviour.
Race	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Involves blame towards the higher-up leader's biased racial attitudes which may contribute to their uncivil behaviour.
Apologized	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Mention of the higher-up apologizing and acknowledging their behaviour.
Colleague	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present	Instigator is a colleague who has influence or can

	1 - Present	hold the participant accountable.
Ignored input or opinion	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Type of incivility described in the incident. The context here would be ignoring a suggestion or input that the participant brings up (i.e., not necessarily part of their job description). To code this as present in conjunction with doubting judgement, the participant must have had their judgement doubted, then argued their point but their input was ignored. If they give in after their judgement is doubted, code absent for ignored input.
Doubted judgement	Dichotomous 0 – Not Present 1 - Present	Type of incivility described in the incident. The context here should be doubting a decision, process or any element that is specific to the participant's job.

