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# The Role of Co-Workers' Solidarity as an Antecedent of Incivility and Deviant Behavior in Organizations

Yariv Itzkovich<sup>a,b</sup> and Sibylle Heilbrunn<sup>a,b,c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Kinneret Research Center for Applied Ethics in Organizations, Sea of Galilee, Israel; <sup>b</sup>Kinneret Academic College, Sea of Galilee, Israel; <sup>c</sup>Haifa University, Haifa, Israel

## ABSTRACT

Drawing on the social exchange theory this study assesses the relationship between co-workers' solidarity as an antecedent of incivility and deviant behavior. More specifically we hypothesize that reduced co-workers' solidarity will increase not only incivility but also deviant behaviors of employees. An additional hypothesis predicts that incivility will enhance co-workers' deviant behavior. Data was collected in 15 organizations of various types using an online questionnaire in 2014. We analyze the data using structural equation modeling. Our findings reveal interrelationships between all three variables. Co-workers' solidarity reduces uncivil and deviant behaviors of employees, whereas incivility increases organizational deviance. Moreover, we found that the explained variance of property deviance by incivility was twice as high compared to production deviance.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

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## Introduction

In times of globalization, changing market dynamics, and technological developments, organizations need structures that are more flexible. In order to meet labor market tendencies such as downsizing or restructuring job combinations—often following mergers and acquisitions—which lead to more complex and more intensive interdependencies between people in organizations (Ley et al. 2012; Van der Vegt and Flache 2006). These interdependencies often increase employees' responsibilities on the one hand, but at the same time, practices such as extensive monitoring, digitalization and elimination of network jobs facilitating communication introduce new layers of possible inner-organizational conflicts between managers and workers (Richardson 2010). Organizational solidarity concerns one form of this interdependency, and therefore in the framework of this article we intend to explore relationships between co-workers' solidarity, incivility, and deviant behavior. When placing solidarity at one pole of a continuum and incivility at the other pole, we would expect employees' production and property deviances—harmful to the organization—to be much more extensive at the incivility pole and when facing lack of co-workers' solidarity. Examining the role of co-workers' solidarity as an antecedent of incivility and deviant behavior towards the organization is important, since there is a lack of knowledge as to the antecedents of incivility (Schilpzand De Pater, and Erez 2015), and since deviant behavior can cause damage to the organization (Cortina 2008; Lee and Jensen 2014). In line with Lee and Jensen (2014), we argue that understanding the sources of uncivil and deviant behavior (to both production and property) in the workplace can reduce incivility, thereby contribute to a positive workplace atmosphere.

The broad theoretical framing of this article is the classical social exchange theory (Blau 1964; Homans 1961; Thibaut and Kelley 1959) assuming that individuals are rational and engage cost and benefit calculations in all social exchanges. The theory postulates that the exchange of social and

material resources is a fundamental form of human interaction. Rational assessment of self-interest in human social relationships is the focus of the theory, people choosing behaviors that maximize their likelihood of meeting self-interests; therefore, an interaction that prompts approval from another person is more likely to be repeated than one that causes disapproval (Cook et al. 2013). Rewards or approval can take tangible or intangible forms and in the framework of organizational settings examples include recognition or money. An example for intangible punishment or disapproval would be public humiliation and wage reduction for tangible punishment or disapproval (Andersen and Taylor 2009). In order to account for the fact that this study is situated within the framework of organizations, we focus on the application of the theory in business and economic literature.

Cropanzano and Mitchel (2005) reviewed the utilization of social exchange theory (SET) and noted that although the norms of reciprocity are used originally for explaining interpersonal relations between two individuals, it can well be applied to social interactions between various groupings of actors including the relationship between individuals and organizations (Cropanzano and Mitchel 2005; Masterson et al. 2000). This extended approach to interpersonal relationships in organizations was later adopted by scholars using SET framing such as Aryee and colleagues (2013), who investigated the impact of justice perceptions of employees on performance, and Paillé, Grima, and Dufour (2015), who investigated the impact of support on intentions to leave. A recent review on incivility indicated that such a wider perspective is missing in the research arena of incivility, which primarily focuses on interactions between individuals (Schilpzand et al. 2015).

The basic principles of SET postulate that individuals estimate their exchange with the organization. Once these exchange relationships are perceived as valuable, individuals reciprocate in a manner that is valuable to the organization (Aryee et al. 2013; Paillé et al. 2015). This constitutes the bright side of organizational behavior. This line of thought is well developed in the research of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Cropanzano and Mitchel 2005; Paillé et al. 2015). Alternatively, if one of the parties perceives the transaction as negative, on the grounds of the same but now negative norm of reciprocity, the other partner to the exchange will react negatively (Cropanzano and Mitchel 2005). This alternate line of argumentation refers to the dark side of organizational behavior. Drawing on this line, researchers found that frequent experiences of co-worker incivility is related to increased adverse feelings and decreased work effort (Sakurai and Jex 2012). These findings demonstrate the darker path of SET, but also indicate that the impact of co-workers' support (or lack of support) goes beyond the boundaries of dyadic interactions.

Taken together, it is plausible to expand the micro level 'tit for tat' principle presented by Andersson and Pearson (1999) concerning incivility, to a combined micro-macro level and to draw adverse (i.e., comparing to OCB) reciprocity relationships between individuals and organizations, which are based on initial negative exchange between co-workers. By doing so, to some extent, this article responds to Schilpzand et al. (2015), who called for investigating incivility implications beyond the dyadic relationships of the two parties to the conflict.

The present study contributes to the literature by presenting extended "tit for tat" relationships, manifested through a linkage between co-workers' solidarity and perceptions of incivility at the micro level and deviant organizational outcomes at the macro level. To date, such linkage between co-workers' solidarity and incivility was not introduced. Moreover, only two researchers investigated the relationship between incivility and employee deviance, yet both focused on specific forms of incivility-e-incivility (Lim and Teo 2009) or co-workers' incivility (Sakurai and Jex 2012). Our study measured perceived incivility from different sources.

In addition, the current study offers some support for the outstanding theoretical conceptualization of Robinson and Bennett (1995) of property and production deviance. To the best of our knowledge, such empirical support was not introduced beforehand. The only scale including the property and production differentiation is the Hollinger and Clark's (1982) scale, which was designed for specific occupations such as retail, hospital, and manufacturing industries (Bennett and Robinson 2000).

Last, this study was conducted in the Mediterranean area. To the best of our knowledge, only scant research investigated incivility in this geographical zone (e.g. Itzkovich 2014). This contribution is in line with Schilpzand's et al. (2015) call for further investigating incivility in diverse cultures.

## Literature review and hypotheses development

### *Solidarity*

Solidarity refers to a situation in which the well-being of one person or group is positively related to that of others, indicating mutual interdependence (De Beer and Koster 2009:12). Organizational solidarity refers to the application of a general definition of solidarity—contributing to the common good (Hechter 1987; Lindenberg 1998) of organizations and people in organizations. Following Koster and Sanders (2007:570), we maintain that in the organizational context solidarity is conceptually located within co-operative types of behavior, and should be specified in terms of the structural location at which the behavior is aimed. Thus, workers can behave in a cooperative manner either to supervisors or to peers. The former is called vertical solidarity and the latter horizontal solidarity. In the context of this study we used the term of horizontal solidarity (Sanders and Schyns 2006) understood as cooperative behavior of employees to team members/co-workers. Koster and Sanders (2006) maintain that horizontal solidarity concerns behaving agreeably with co-workers even when it is not convenient or formally described.

Research focusing on the causes of solidarity ranges from interpersonal relations at the micro level (Koster 2005; Koster and Sanders 2006, 2007; Koster et al. 2007) to social contexts at the macro level, such as heterogeneity, globalization, and social policies (Koster 2007; Koster and Kaminska 2012). Organizational-level characteristics associated with employee solidarity are high levels of both formal and informal information exchange, low-level authority decentralization, and transformational leadership styles (Cramm, Strating, and Nieboer 2013). Results of their study revealed that hierarchical culture and centralization are negatively associated with employee solidarity, whereas formal and informal exchange of information is positively associated with employee solidarity. Consequences of horizontal solidarity should be high levels of cooperation, positive attitudes and behaviors, and a positive work place atmosphere (Locke 2003). In accordance, results of former studies revealed a positive relationship between cohesiveness (Sanders and Schyns 2006) and solidarity behavior as well as a positive impact of presence of explicit fair play rules on solidarity (Sanders and Emmerik 2004). Therefore, solidarity behavior is seen as one of the most important success factors in organizations (Wickens 1995) contributing to willingness to cooperate, and to enhance pro-social and citizenship organizational behavior, whereas lack of solidarity may foster uncivil patterns of behavior.

### *Incivility*

Incivility was first defined by Andersson and Pearson (1999) as “low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect” (p. 457).

While civility is demonstrated through adequate interpersonal interactions, incivility is represented through inappropriate social encounters (Andersson and Pearson 1999; Pearson and Porath 2005), either active as in the case of public criticism or passive as in the case of silent treatment (Hershcovis 2011).

Incivility is distinct from other interpersonal mistreatment by two main criteria: First, incivility is low-intensity deviant behavior (Andersson and Pearson 1999; Pearson and Porath 2005; Walker, van Jaarsveld, and Skarlicki 2014). Thus compared to high-intensity behaviors such as bullying or aggression, incivility represents a milder form of interpersonal mistreatment (Cortina et al. 2001; Pearson, Andersson, and Porath 2000; Pearson, Andersson, and Wegner 2001).

The second criterion which distinguishes incivility from other forms of interpersonal mistreatment is its ambiguous intent to harm its target (Sliter, Sliter, and Jex 2012; Trudel and Reio 2011). Thus incivility is subjective in nature and therefore each one of the parties to an uncivil encounter can interpret reality in a different manner, which eventually leads to differences in attribution of intent. While some targets of incivility perceive it as intended, others might not consider it as intended (Gallus et al. 2014; Sliter et al. 2012).

As a deviant interpersonal interaction, incivility inflicts harm to both individuals and organizations. From the individual perspective, research findings indicate an adverse relationship between incivility and physical well-being (Hershcovis 2011; Nicholson and Griffin 2014). Nicholson and Griffin (2014) found that daily incivilities impact psychological detachment and relaxation after work. Additional individual impacts of incivility concern physical health (Githens 2011; Hershcovis 2011), psychological health (Hershcovis 2011; Miner and Eischeid 2012) or reactive perpetration responses as described by Gallus et al. (2014).

From the organizational perspective, researchers focused on implications on job dissatisfaction (Githens 2011; Hershcovis 2011), withdrawal intentions (Hershcovis 2011), actual withdrawal from work (Githens 2011; Porath and Pearson 2012), and absenteeism. For instance, Porath and Pearson (2012) found that incivilities lead to negative emotions such as fear which was associated with withdrawal intentions; both fear and sadness were correlated with absenteeism. Other studies investigated implications of reduced affective commitment (Hershcovis 2011; Smith, Andrusyszyn, and Laschinger 2010), reduced engagement (Trudel and Reio 2011), and deviant behavior (Lim and Teo 2009; Sakurai and Jex 2012). The study of Lim and Teo (2009) revealed that workers who experienced cyber incivility were more inclined to engage in deviant behavior.

As exchange of information is positively associated with solidarity (Cramm et al. 2013), and on the other hand incivility can be manifested through lack of such exchange as in the case of silent treatment (Hershcovis 2011), in the framework of our study we maintain that lack of solidarity from co-workers will be interpreted by their colleagues (i.e., the targets of this lack of solidarity) as uncivil behavior.

**H<sub>1</sub>** Organizational co-workers' solidarity will be negatively connected to incivility.

### ***Deviant behavior***

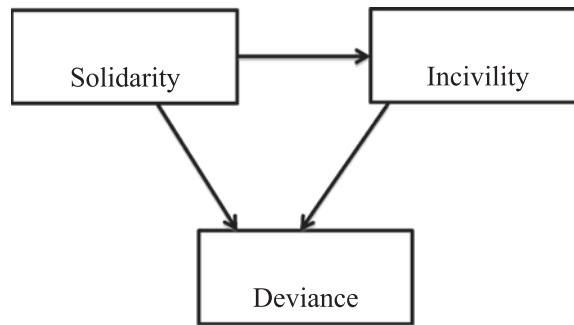
Robinson and Bennett (1995) introduced the concept of workplace deviance and defined it as "voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members or both" (p. 556).

Mapping the concept by multidimensional scaling method revealed two dimensions. The first dimension distinguishes between deviant acts by the inclination of the deviancy toward people versus its inclination toward the organization. The second dimension distinguishes between deviant acts which are less serious versus those which are more serious. The two dimensions represent four distinct facets of deviancy:

The first two dimensions concern property and production deviance, which are directed toward the organization. These dimensions of deviance were initially introduced by Hollinger and Clark (1982) and by Hollinger (1986).

The third and fourth dimensions concern political deviance and personal aggression, which are directed toward people. Out of the four, political deviance and production deviance are considered minor compared to property deviance and personal aggression (Robinson and Bennett 1995).

Five years later Bennett and Robinson (2000) developed a scale for measuring workplace deviance. The scale consists of twelve items which measure organizational deviance and five items which measure interpersonal deviance. Yet, to date, the former structure of four dimensions is not expressed through the measurement scale. As mentioned before, one exception is the Hollinger and



**Figure 1.** The theoretical structure of the proposed framework.

Clark's scale (1982), which did correspond with the property and production conceptualization, yet was designed for specific occupations (Bennett and Robinson 2000).

Workplace deviance has been widely investigated in the last two decades. Findings indicate that workplace deviance was widely used to assess its connection to abusive supervision (Tepper et al. 2008). Additional studies assess the connection between employee deviance and justice perceptions (Aquino, Galperin, and Bennett 2004), yet to date no research investigated the connection between solidarity and workplace deviance. Moreover, the investigation of the connection between deviant outcomes and incivility is relatively rare. Only two researchers investigated the relationship between incivility and employee deviance, yet both focused on specific forms of incivility: e- incivility (Lim and Teo 2009) or co-workers incivility (Sakurai and Jex 2012).

In the framework of our study we postulate that if the organization refrains from dealing with the instigators, it is perceived as not providing a supportive work environment as expected by employees (Alias, Mohd, and Abu 2012). Therefore, the employees are likely to retaliate negatively to the organization, via various types of deviant behavior.

**H<sub>2</sub>** Incivility perception will be positively connected to deviant behavior.

In addition, it is expected that solidarity should reduce deviant behavior of employees, since an organizational atmosphere fostering solidarity makes employees feel a sense of belonging to the organization, and they have no incentive to cause harm to the organization's property or production productivity.

**H<sub>3</sub>** Organizational co-workers' solidarity will be negatively connected to deviant behavior.

Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical model of our research.

## Method

### Participants

We collected the data for our study in 15 organizations of various types sited in Israel. We engaged undergraduate students enrolled in three colleges located in the south, north, and center of Israel who participated at the time of data collection in seminars on organizational behavior. The students approached working adults at their own or their parents' work place from different industries and occupational status to take part in our study. The survey questionnaire was administered to the respondents via a Web link in 2014. The survey file was accompanied by a cover letter to the participants stressing the importance of the research, encouraging them to respond truthfully, and assuring their complete anonymity. The students administered the survey via their own mail

accounts, and the survey results were concentrated in a central data file handled by the researchers. Answering the Web link did not require identification of the surveys' participants, thereby ensuring complete anonymity.

The initial sample for this study included 739 persons. We removed data from about 8% (54) participants who answered to less than 30% of the survey items from the analysis. After this procedure, the final sample for our study consisted of 684 persons. Although we are aware of the limitations of our sampling method, leaning on the argumentation of Lim and Lee (2011), we maintain that data collected from a wide range of industries in such a way (e.g., Brotheridge and Lee 2002; Eddleston, Veiga, and Powell 2006) are of suitable quality for quantitative studies (e.g., Smith et al. 1997).

Of the sample population, 60% was male and 40% female, with an average age of 35 ( $SD = 10.1$ ) ranging between 19 and 70 years of age. Eighty-four percent were employed on a permanent basis and 16% were temporary employees. The mean years of employment of the survey participants was 6 ( $SD = 6.4$ ) ranging from 1 to a maximum of 45 years.

### **Instrumentation**

Principle component analyses using varimax rotation were employed in order to ensure construct validity. In addition, reliability tests using SPSS were employed to all three scales.

#### **Work incivility scale (WIS)**

The work incivility scale (WIS) developed by Cortina et al. (2001) was used in order to measure incivility perceptions. The scale consists of seven items on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Nearly never" to 5 = "Most of the time." Participants were asked "During the past year have you been in a situation where any of your supervisors or co-workers": Sample items were "Put you down or was condescending to you?" and "Paid little attention to your statement or showed little interest in your opinion?"

While the original scale measured incivility in a period of five years, we adopted the approach of Chen et al. (2013); Itzkovich (2014); Taylor, Bedeian, and Kluemper (2012); Walsh et al. (2012), and Ferguson (2012) of measuring incivility in a period of one year. The final Cronbach alpha of the WIS scale was equal to .870.

#### **Organizational horizontal solidarity**

The items measuring solidarity toward co-workers are based on Lindenberg (1998) and the measurement refers to consistent cooperative behavior across the following five social dilemma situations (Koster and Sanders 2004; Sanders, Schyns, and Koster 2003): common good situation, sharing situation, need situation, breach temptation, and mishap situation (Lindenberg 1998). Based on Koster (2005), we used the following five items to measure solidarity toward co-workers: (1) "I help my co-workers to finish tasks"; (2) "I am willing to help my co-workers when things go wrong unexpectedly"; (3) "I apologize to my co-workers when I have made a mistake"; (4) "I try to divide the pleasant and unpleasant tasks equally between myself and my co-workers"; and (5) "I live up to agreements with my co-workers" (Koster 2005:127). The Cronbach's alpha of the constructed horizontal solidarity index was .815.

#### **Employee deviance**

Bennett and Robinson's (2000) organizational workplace deviance scale was used to measure workplace deviance. The scale consists of twelve items on a seven point Likert scale. The scale range from 1 = "never" to 7 = "every day." Participants were asked, "During the past year how often have you?" Sample items were "Taken property from work without permission" or "Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorized person."

Principle component analyses produced two separate sub-factors. Four items collapsed into the property deviance sub-factor. A sample item for this sub factor is "Falsified a receipt to get

reimbursed for more money than you spent on business expenses.” Four additional items pertain to the second factor, which could be identified as production deviance. A sample item for this factor is “Spent too much time fantasizing or daydreaming instead of working.”

Four items were redundant due to insufficient loading to one of the factors or due to lack of consistency with the content of the factor. Items that were excluded are: “Used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job,” “Put little effort into your work,” “Neglected to follow your boss’s instructions,” and “Littered your work environment.”

Other researches also used a modified version of the scale (Dunlop and Lee 2004; Mount, Ilies, and Johnson 2006) yet additionally for verification we used principle component analysis and confirmatory factor analysis to support the revised version of the scale

Confirmatory factor analyzes (CFA) for the two sub factors yielded acceptable fit results ( $\chi^2 = 89.862$  [ $df = 18$ ],  $p = .000$ ;  $CFI = .920$ ;  $RMSEA = .076$ ). Specifically, the results showed significant but moderate correlation between the two sub factors ( $r = .77$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The generally positive and moderately high correlation between the dimensions suggests that the factors are, to some extent, independent of each other. The final Cronbach’s alpha of the production sub factor was equal to .636 for the production deviance sub-factor and .643 for the property deviance sub factor.

## Findings

Descriptive statistics and correlations are presented in Table 1 which displays correlations between research variables. As shown in table 1, incivility is negatively correlated with horizontal solidarity ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Moreover, horizontal solidarity is negatively correlated with property deviance ( $r = -.26$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and production deviance ( $r = -.08$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Additionally, incivility is positively correlated with both property deviance ( $r = .28$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and production deviance ( $r = .22$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to test the research hypotheses. Data used for the SEM were analyzed with the maximum likelihood method. Three fit indices were computed in order to evaluate the model fit:  $\chi^2$  ( $df$ ) ( $p > .05$ ),  $CFI$  ( $> 0.9$ ), and  $RMSEA$  ( $< .08$ ). The measurement model includes the following factors: The WIS, latent variable with seven observed variables; organizational co-workers solidarity, latent variable with five observed variables; and organizational deviance, general latent factor composed of two sub-factors: *production deviance*, latent variable with four observed variables, and *property deviance*, latent variable with four observed variables.

The path model was constructed as follows: paths were specified between solidarity from co-workers and workplace incivility (latent variable) and between solidarity from co-workers and

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics and correlations.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
(1) Organizational horizontal solidarity	4.12	.64	(.815)				
(1) Incivility	1.72	.70	-.16**	(.870)			
(1) Property deviance	1.34	.67	-.26**	.28**	(.643)		
(1) Production deviance	2.26	1.14	-.08*	.22**	.43**	(.636)	
(1) Gender	1.4	.491	.03	.04	-.00	.02	
(1) Age	35.74	10.13	.6	.04	-.13**	-.12**	.02

$N = 684$ . Gender coded 1 = male, 2 = female. Coefficient alpha for each scale is in parentheses. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

workplace deviance. In addition a path was specified between workplace incivility and workplace deviance.

The goodness of fit of the data to the model yielded good fit results ( $\chi^2 = 413.839$  [ $df = 161$ ],  $p = .000$ ;  $CFI = .940$ ;  $RMSEA = .048$ ). Specifically, the results showed a negative (moderate) significant coefficient between solidarity from co-workers and WIS ( $\beta = -.33$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and a positive (moderate) significant coefficient between WIS and the workplace deviance factor ( $\beta = .39$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

In addition results showed a negative (low) significant coefficient between solidarity and employee deviance ( $\beta = -.12$ ,  $p < .005$ ).

In total, as illustrated in Figure 2, solidarity from co-workers explained 11% of the incivility variances, and both solidarity and incivility explained 20% of the variance of employee deviance.

We added age and gender as control variables to the model. However, for visual clarity the results are presented in Table 2 but not in Figure 2.

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that only age correlated negatively with employees' deviance. Age added only 2% of employee deviance to the variance explained by solidarity and incivility. Older employees conduct fewer deviant acts than younger employees do.

Additional SEM analysis indicated that incivility explained 18% of the variance in the property deviance sub-factor, but only 9% of the variance in the production deviance sub-factor. Specifically, it was found that incivility is significantly positively connected with the property deviance sub-factor ( $\beta = .38$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and positively connected with the production deviance sub-factor ( $\beta = .27$ ,  $p < .0.1$ ),

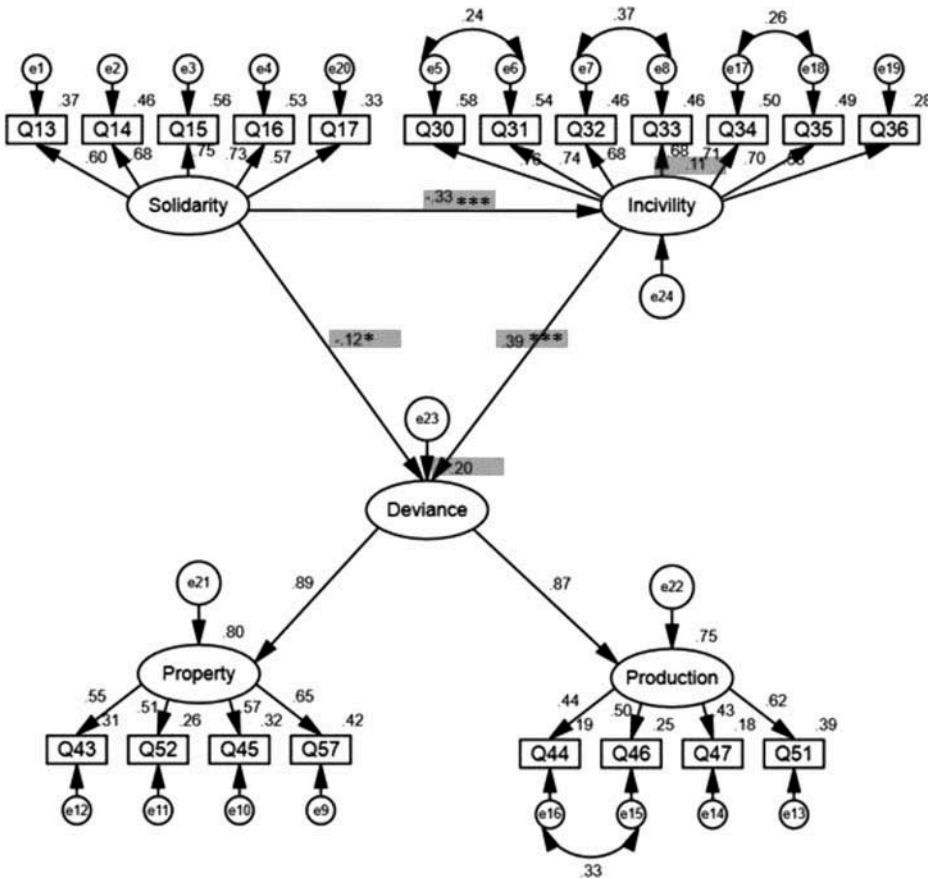
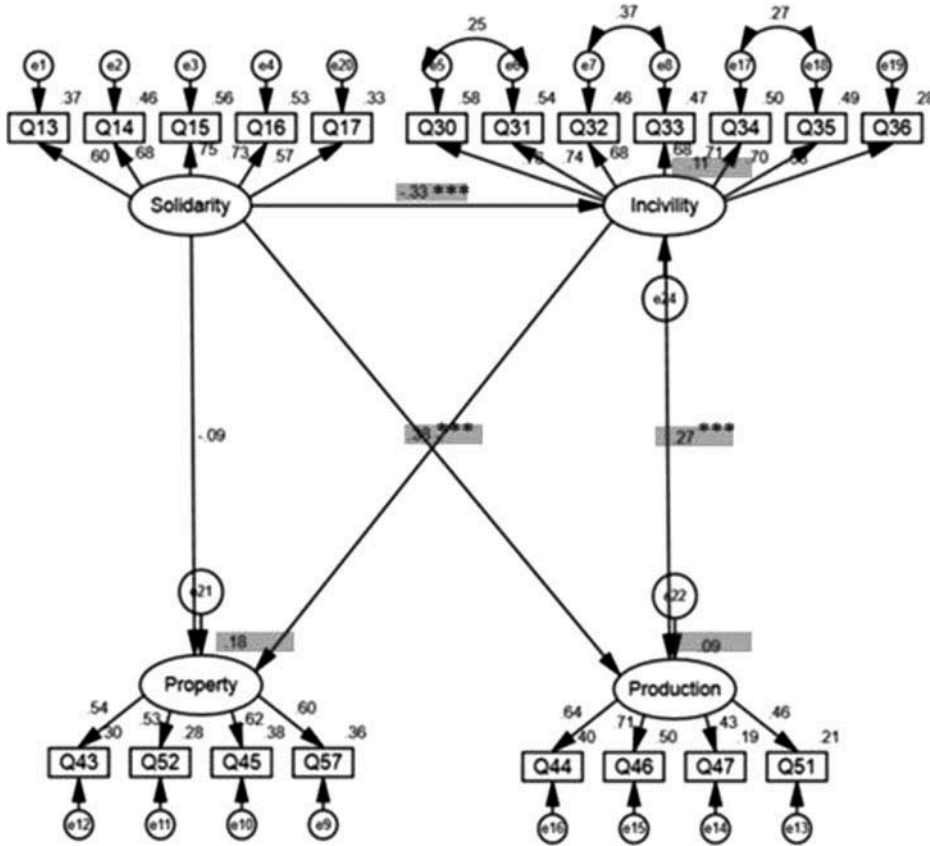


Figure 2. The structural model, with standardized parameter estimates ( $N = 684$ ). \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

**Table 2.** Connections (Standardized estimates) between age, gender, and model variables.

	Age	Gender
Incivility	n.s	n.s.
Deviant behavior	-.17***	n.s.
Solidarity	n.s	n.s.

n.s = not significant.



**Figure 3.** Path model for the prediction of property and production deviance sub-factors with standardized estimates shown. (N = 684). \**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01; \*\*\**p* < .001.

while solidarity is not significantly correlated with either the property deviance or the production deviance sub-factors. These results are illustrated in Figure 3.

The goodness of fit of the data to the model yielded sufficient fit results ( $\chi^2 = 546.815, df = 162, p = .000; CFI = .908; RMSEA = .059$ ).

**Discussion**

The current study was aimed at measuring the relationship between co-workers’ solidarity, incivility and deviant behavior of employees. According to the path model results, increased levels of co-workers’ solidarity were associated with lower levels of perceptions of incivility. An additional path analysis result associated high levels of incivility with increased levels of deviant behavior, and higher levels of co-workers’ solidarity with lower levels of deviant behavior.

One inference from these findings can be that those who experience lower levels of co-workers' solidarity report more incivility. These findings verify the idea of Cropanzano and Mitchel (2005) who suggested that organizational and team support plays an important role in the social exchange process in organizations. In their view, alongside the economic outcomes of social exchange in organizations, there are also socioemotional outcomes. They posit that socioemotional outcomes convey a message that a person is valued or treated with dignity. Drawing on their notion, it is plausible to infer that lack of co-workers' solidarity conveys the opposite message, which is perceived by the target of this message as uncivil behavior.

Moreover, our findings indicate that perceptions of incivility lead targets of the uncivil act to behave in a deviant manner toward their organization. Drawing on SET, targets of incivility are expected to retaliate. Yet our model suggests that those who perceive their co-workers' behavior as uncivil retaliate against the organization. This line of thought is in line with the findings of Sakurai and Jex (2012) concerning the impact of co-workers' incivility on employees' work effort. There are two possible explanations to this finding:

First, according to SET, the exchange process is expected to rely on maximization of value for the different sides of the exchange (Cropanzano and Mitchel 2005; Paillé et al. 2015). Drawing on this logic it is safe to assume that negative and overt reciprocity toward co-workers might jeopardize future value maximization. Therefore, also in accordance with the logic of Andersson and Pearson (1999), retaliation might—in such cases—be directed at a third party as a secondary spiral mechanism (Schilpzand et al. 2015), which reduces the risk embedded in retaliating against the direct offender who was part of the initial exchange. Therefore probably especially in negative reciprocation that involves risk; the reciprocity would be redirected to covert channels, possibly involving additional third parties that were not part of the initial reciprocity.

Another competing explanation might be that co-workers' lack of solidarity is perceived by targets as lack of organizational support. The organization, which is supposed to maintain a positive work environment (Alias et al. 2012), did not supply workers with a defense shield by refraining from dealing with co-workers not behaving in a cooperative manner (i.e., renouncing solidarity). On that basis, the targets of such lack of support choose to reciprocate negatively against the organization. Such conceptualization is also supported by Sakurai and Jex (2012) who found that the willingness to reciprocate co-workers' incivility is channeled to the organization through decreased work effort.

The negative connection between co-workers' solidarity and deviant behavior is explained through the same path but from a different direction. Co-workers' solidarity can be perceived as a valuable socioemotional resource, and therefore those who anticipate such solidarity will not act in a deviant manner, as such deviance reflects inappropriate reciprocity, especially in cases in which the deviance is expressed through reduced work effort (i.e., production deviance). In such cases (i.e., reduced effort), in addition to damaging production, the deviant employee overloads other co-workers who have to cope with the surplus tasks. Such behavior, in turn, might be perceived as lack of solidarity.

Additional SEM analysis indicated that incivility explained 18% of the variance in the property deviance sub-factor, but only 9% of the variance in the production deviance sub-factor. This finding could be explained via the structure of our sample: Nearly half of our sample ( $N = 344$ ) consist of employees who are holding lower employment status in terms of income and job security.<sup>1</sup> This goes along with Hollinger (1986) who posit that employees who have nothing to lose and are less committed to the organization choose property deviance. Therefore, lower employment status employees who have less to lose if caught and are emotionally detached from the organization choose property deviance although it is more risky and can lead to termination of work.

<sup>1</sup>They either answered "no" to the question "Are you a permanent employee in the organization?" and/or "yes" to the question "Are you a working under a contractor?" In addition, they answered and/or answered "much below average, below average" to the following question: "The average monthly household expenses in Israel today amount to 13.800 NIS. What are your average monthly household expenses?"

In addition as a complementary explanation it might be that as property deviance is more covert comparing to production deviance, targets (and not only those holding low employment status) of incivility prefer property deviance as means of retaliation. Taken together these arguments explain the tendency toward property deviance comparing to the option to retaliate by damaging production.

The present work features several limitations and further directions for future research that warrant mentioning. First, it should be noted that the cross-sectional nature of the data can prevent definitive statements about causality. Indeed, some relationships in the model are likely reciprocal. For example, the analysis implies that co-workers' solidarity impact perceptions of incivility, however, it is equally plausible that those who exhibit incivility from different sources are prone to monitor their environment. Rousseau (1995) described a similar mechanism concerning psychological contract violation. Therefore, they perceive their co-workers' behavior as projecting less solidarity.

Second, our model does not relate to vertical solidarity (Koster and Sanders 2006). Incivility is mainly inflicted by managers (Pearson and Porath 2005); therefore, one would expect that it impacts the vertical solidarity, namely the solidarity of employees toward supervisors that in turn demonstrates the opposite side of the above suggested continuum of leader–member exchange. Future studies should investigate the role of vertical solidarity in detail.

Third, this study was conducted in a single country; therefore, the results cannot necessarily be generalized to other cultures. We agree with Schilpzand et al. (2015) who did call for the investigation of incivility in new cultures since it is likely that that cultural differences influence antecedents and outcome of behaviors such as solidarity and work-place deviance.

Fourth, because we used a single-source, self-report survey measures for all of the constructs in the research model; common method variance is a concern. Indeed, as is often the case with cross-sectional designs that employ self-report perceptual measures, it is possible that some of the relationships identified arose from common method variance. Nevertheless, targets of incivility have been identified as a legitimate source for understanding the extent and impact the phenomenon in many academic papers (Aquino and Thau 2009; Keashly 2001)

Fifth, based on factor analysis, we used a shorter version of deviant behavior scale. Future research should utilize this version in order to improve its reliability and validity.

Last, the explained variance of incivility and deviant behavior ranged between 11–20%. Moreover, some of the beta values were relatively small. This may indicate that the model tested here should be expanded in future research by using additional variables that could be related to deviant behavior such as vertical solidarity, solidarity toward co-workers, and additional antecedents taken from the literature focusing on organizational victimization. Organizational victimization theory posits that organizational variables, environmental variables, and personal characteristics can predict victimization (Aquino and Bradfield 2000; Aquino and Bommer 2003). As incivility can be treated as a subcategory of victimization (Aquino and Thau 2009), it is plausible to utilize variables from victimization conceptualization for studying implications and antecedents of incivility.

## Conclusions, practical, and methodological implications

Despite its limitations, this study elaborates on previous studies by showing, for the first time, the potential role of co-workers' solidarity as an antecedent of incivility. As little is known about antecedents of perceived incivility (Schilpzand et al. 2015) this research adds to the understanding of incivility. In addition, our findings illustrate an extended tit for tat exchange relationship between individuals and organization. Moreover, data related to the potential deviant outcomes of incivility are relatively rare. Only two researchers investigated the relationship between incivility and employee deviance, yet both focused on specific forms of incivility: e- incivility (Lim and Teo 2009) or co-workers incivility (Sakurai and Jex 2012).

From a methodological point of view, this study introduced a shorter version of Robinson and Bennett's (1995) workplace deviance scale, which collaborates with the authors' initial division of property and production deviance.

Lastly, this research was conducted in the Mediterranean region. To date, only scant research investigated incivility in a Mediterranean culture (e.g. Itzkovich 2014).

Some studies found support for the value of team-based interference for decreasing supervisory uncivil behaviors (Leiter et al. 2011, 2012; Spence et al. 2012). As the current research investigated perceived incivility from different sources—managers, peers, and subordinates—it is plausible to assume that enhancing solidarity from co-workers would reduce incivility at least to some extent due to two main reasons. First, solidarity from co-workers would eliminate co-workers' incivility, and secondly it would support the targets of customers' and managers' incivility.

Our study demonstrates the need to further investigate solidarity and incivility on one continuum that in turn influence the exchange relations with the organization as well as the potential range of implications. In order to examine the statement that both solidarity and incivility are behaviors located on the same continuum future studies should investigate complementary sources and objectives of these behaviors, thereby allowing to evaluate the actuality of the “continuum notion.” Yet, in order to perform such an evaluation it is necessary to revise the current measurement of incivility allowing for a clear distinction between different positions of perpetrators for all scale items.

Our study focused on the implications of incivility on deviance towards the organization, future study should include also impacts on interpersonal deviance. To date there are commonly used factors in the research of incivility (Schilpzand et al. 2015) yet the range of implications is even wider and this research demonstrates the potential scope.

## Notes on contributors

**YARIV ITZKOVICH** is a Lecturer for Organizational Behavior and Management at the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Kinneret Academic College in Israel. His research focuses on incivility and deviant forms of organizational behavior and management.

**SIBYLLE HEILLBRUNN** is Professor for Organizational Sociology and holds currently the position of Dean of School of Social Sciences and Humanities at Kinneret Academic College in Israel. Her research focuses on entrepreneurship and on forms of organizational behavior including perspectives of diversity and multi-culturalism.

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## Appendix A

### Research instruments.

Item	Scale	Reference
(1) My co-workers help me to finish tasks	(1) Strongly disagree	Koster, F. 2005. For the time being. Accounting for inconclusive findings concerning the effects of temporary employment relationships on solidary behavior of employees PhD Thesis Printed by Universal Press, Veenendaal.
(1) My co-workers are willing to help me when things go wrong unexpectedly	(2) Somewhat disagree	
	(3) Partly agree and partly disagree	
(1) My co-workers apologize to me when they have made a mistake	(4) Somewhat agree	
	(5) Strongly agree	
(1) My co-workers divide the pleasant and unpleasant tasks equally between them and me		
(1) My co-workers live up to agreements with me		
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Incivility		
(1) Put you down or was condescending to you?	(1) Nearly never	Cortina, L. M., V. J. Magley, J. H. Williams, and T. D. Langhout, R. D. (2001). "Incivility in the Workplace: Incidence and Impact." <i>Journal of Occupational Health Psychology</i> 6(1): 64.
(1) Paid little attention to your statement or showed little interest in your opinion	(2) Rarely ever	
	(3) Sometimes	
	(4) Often	
	(5) Most of the time	
(1) Made demeaning or derogatory remarks about you		
(1) Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately		
(1) Ignored or excluded you from professional camaraderie?		
(1) Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you have responsibility		
(1) Made unwanted attempts to draw you into a discussion of personal matters?		

(Continued).

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<p>Workplace Deviance- Property Deviance</p> <p>(1) Taken property from work without permission</p> <p>(1) Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than you spent on business expenses</p> <p>(1) Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorized person</p> <p>(1) Dragged out work in order to get overtime</p>	<p>(1) Never</p> <p>(2) Once in the last year</p> <p>(3) Twice in the last year</p> <p>(4) A couple of times in the last year</p> <p>(5) Once a month</p> <p>(6) Once a week</p> <p>(7) Every day</p>	<p>Bennett, R. J., &amp; Robinson, S. L. 2000. "Development of a Measure of Workplace Deviance." <i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i> 85(3): 349.</p>
<p>Workplace Deviance - Production Deviance</p> <p>(1) Spent too much time fantasizing or day-dreaming instead of working</p> <p>(1) Taken an additional or a longer break than is acceptable at your workplace</p> <p>(1) Come in late to work without permission</p> <p>(1) Intentionally worked slower than you could have worked</p>		

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