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Employees Communicating within Transportation and Logistics Organizations: What Studying Stress and Acts of Incivility in the Workplace Reveals About the Industry

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Employees Communicating within Transportation and Logistics Organizations:
What Studying Stress and Acts of Incivility in the Workplace Reveals About the Industry

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Communication

by

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May 2017
University of Arkansas

This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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Abstract

This thesis project investigates the relationship of workplace stress and workplace incivility in the context of transportation and logistics organizations. Informal, one-on-one interviews with transportation and logistics operations office employees are conducted to answer this study's research questions that examine the commonality, perceived norms, and perceived emotional and physical effects of workplace incivility in response to stress within the transportation and logistics workplace. Using grounded theory analysis, it is revealed that acts of incivility amongst transportation and logistics operations office employees communicate the conflict occurring at the industry, organization, and workplace levels of the transportation and logistics industry. The ultimate conflict is at the individual employee level, in which employees must adapt and manage these acts within their daily workplace environment. A model of conflict within the transportation and logistics industry and suggestions for transportation and logistics organizations and leaders are provided for use at the practical level to help improve workplace processes and conditions, which have implications for employee well-being and organizational outcomes (e.g., teamwork, turnover).

Keywords: acts of incivility, transportation employees, transportation and logistics industry, workplace conflict, employee communication, workplace stress

Acknowledgements

My thanks to Dr. Allen, my thesis director, academic advisor, and graduate school student whisperer. I am grateful for her vast organizational knowledge and awareness, and her willingness to share it. I am also grateful for her time, assistance, encouragement, and understanding that helped me academically and personally during the thesis process. To my committee members, Dr. Amason, whose passion for communication research in the health industry helped me better appreciate the relationship between communication and well-being, and Dr. Aloia, who introduced me to the vital importance of stress on our minds and bodies. Together, their knowledge, direction, and research passions have impacted both my education and personal life in a way I will truly be forever grateful and will impact the way I communicate and live.

A huge thank you to my husband, Dean, who sacrificed time and fun along with me over the two years of graduate school. I suffered from bouts of exhaustion and stress, and he was on the other side of those experiences with patience, calmness, and special deliveries of coffee. He is always my biggest cheerleader and right-hand man.

From passing the GRE to arriving at the final page of my thesis, I am not sure how I managed to get it all done. I know that I individually did not, as all great things are truly done through Him. I worked, worked, worked, but I also prayed, prayed, prayed, and He never left my side. I thank God most of all for the opportunity and strength that I have had by His grace.

Dedications

I dedicate this final project and all the time, effort, and dedication graduate school required of me to Dad. By his example in the way he has loved and provided for me in life I have done this. I thank him for more things than I can list and for more than I even know of.

I also dedicate the receiving of my Master's degree to the memory of Grandpa Munyak and his value of dedication, honorableness, and God.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Both the transactional approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) and the theory of allostasis (McEwen, 1998b) emphasize the role of context or environmental factors in the process of stress and coping. In this study, stress is not simply examined in the context of a specific organization, but within the context of an industry in order to better understand and reveal workplace characteristics across similar organizations that may contribute to employee experiences of stress. Chatman and Jehn (1994) found support for a relationship between one's organizational culture and an industry's characteristics, and that organizational cultures will vary more across industries than they will across organizations within the same industry. The cultural characteristics Chatman and Jehn (1994) investigated were based on the seven dimensions of organizational culture that O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991) identified: innovation and risk taking, attention to detail, orientation toward outcomes or results, aggressiveness and competitiveness, supportiveness (respect for people), emphasis on growth and rewards (stability), collaborative and team orientation, and decisiveness. Based on the cultural dimensions of aggressiveness and competitiveness, and supportiveness, and findings that support similar organizational cultures within an industry (Chatman & Jehn, 1994), the current study investigates if a form of low-aggressive communication or behavior between employees known as acts of incivility, which go against typical workplace social norms for mutual respect (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), are likely to occur within a specific type of organization, thus an industry, and have a relationship with employees experiences of stress. Awareness of the likelihood of such behavioral reactions to stress within an industry can prompt individual organizations within it to consider creating appropriate workplace behavior policies and

procedures, providing interpersonal communication training for employees, and examining workplace resources and goals.

Inspired by experience working in transportation and logistics (T & L) organizations, and based on a transactional approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995), this study's researcher is interested in examining the possibility of a cycle of stress that occurs via acts of incivility in the specific context of T & L organizations amongst operations office personnel as they attempt to cope with workplace stress. The following section briefly discusses the characteristics of the T & L industry and its current presence in the literature.

Industry: Transportation and Logistics

Someone working in a different industry might also experience stress, but the reasons for experiencing it will vary, as well as the intensity of the experience due to different characteristics of not only the work that is done, but also the environment or context of the work experience. Researchers have studied stress experiences amongst different professions and industries including medical (Munro, Rodwell, & Harding., 1998; Ray & Apker, 2011), education (Burke, Greenglass, & Schwarzer, 1996), sales and customer service (Brown, Westbrook, & Challagalla, 2005; Grandey, Dickter, & Sin, 2004), military and police (Dolan & Ender, 2008; Thompson, Kirk, Brown, 2005), examining them individually due to the events and experiences characteristic of each which result in common experiences for their employees.

Researchers have investigated employees within the T & L industry (De Croon, Sluiter, Blonk, Broersen, & Frings-Dresen, 2004; Wenger, 2008; Zohar, Huang, Lee, & Robertson, 2014). Highly competitive (International Trade Administration, n.d.), demanding (Pierce, 2012), fast-paced, continually changing and unpredictable (Rodrigue, Comtois, & Slack, 1997), and prone to high turnover (Costello & Suarez, 2015) are characteristics of the T & L industry. These

characteristics also describe workplace environments prone to stress. There are many external sources of stress innate to the T&L industry, such as environmental demands (e.g., weather), government regulations, time constraints (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016a) that regularly impact T & L employees' workdays. These characteristics and factors considered, it can be reasoned that coping in the workplace is a regular experience for this workforce.

Research focusing on T & L industry employees often focuses on the conditions and experiences of truck drivers. Although truck drivers are an important group of workers to study due to high job demands, risk, time away from home, and non-standard work hours (Wenger, 2008), it is important that the office personnel supporting, directing, and managing drivers while responding to customers' demands and needs are also studied. This research is important for the sake of office employee's well-being, as well as for the health of the relationship between T & L office personnel and drivers which has implications for driver job satisfaction (Richard, LeMay, & Taylor, 1994), driver safety performance (Zohar et al., 2014), driver retention (Keller & Ozment, 1999), and driver turnover (Fournier, Lamontagne, & Gagnon, 2012).

Phenomenon: Stress, Coping, and Acts of Incivility

According to the transactional approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987), stress and coping are part of the same process. By examining this process, better understanding can be gained regarding why one feels stress in a particular situation or environment (e.g., workplace) and why one uses particular coping behaviors (e.g., acts of incivlity) in response (Dewe, 1989; Dewe & Trenberth, 2004). The importance of understanding stress and coping lies in the negative effects poor management of stress, or coping, can have not only on the health and well-being of the individual experiencing the stress (Chandola et al., 2006; Cooper & Marshall, 1976; Stansfeld & Candy, 2006), but also in the effects on those with

whom the stressed individual relies on for support and/or shares an environment or similar experience with (Albrecht, Burleson, Goldsmith, 1994), such as co-workers do. Those who provide support for others trying to cope with stress may suffer a drainage of personal resources, be more vulnerable to stresses, and may suffer emotionally and psychologically from a social contagion effect (Albrecht et al., 1994).

This study focuses on stress and coping in relationship to low-aggressive behaviors (i.e., acts of incivility) occurring within the workplace (Morrow et al. 2011; Pearson and Porath 2005). This study builds on the investigating a relationship between experiences of stress and acts of incivility (Beattie & Griffin, 2014; Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout 2001; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012), including the communal effects of these behaviors (Andersson and Pearson, 1999; Lim et al., 2008; Morrow et al., 2011). To help better explain the relationships between stress, coping, and acts of incivility, the following section briefly explains each phenomenon.

Stress. Stress is the outcome of a perceived imbalance in the relationship between an individual and his or her environment (Kinman & Jones, 2005), where what the environment is demanding of the person exceeds the person's available resources and abilities (Lazarus, 1995). Such a definition of stress places the relationship between a person and his/her environment at the center of the stress process, and views stress as dependent on the interplay between the two (Dewe, Cox, & Ferguson, 1993). This view of stress is referred to as the transactional theory or approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). While traditional approaches to stress are concerned with studying and defining specific forms of stress such as those found in the workplace–e.g., occupational stress (Malik & Noreen, 2015), role stress (Stamper & Johlke,

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2003)–such approaches focus on the stimulus-response relationship rather than the overall stress experience which includes the processes of appraisal and coping (Dewe, 1989).

The appraisal process is key to setting the transactional approach apart from traditional approaches, providing cognitive pathways to understanding the relationship between the individual and his or her environment (Dewe & Trenberth, 2004). The appraisal process begins with primary appraisal after an event or situation has occurred. During the primary appraisal process, a person evaluates whether or not there is potential harm or benefit in an encounter with his/her environment and recognizes whether or not his or her resources are going to be taxed (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986). Next, during the secondary appraisal, if a threat is perceived, one evaluates what can be done to overcome or prevent the harm or improve any potential benefits (Folkman et al., 1986). The result of how one appraises an event is key to his or her psychological or emotional state, with the typical emotions in response to stress being fear, anger, guilt, and shame (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, 1990; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). However, because the person-environment relationship is in a constant state of flux rather than static, in which conditions and encounters constantly change including as one experiences stress (Lazarus, 1995), reappraisal also occurs. During reappraisal one reevaluates what the encounter means for him or her, with the possibility of emotions fluctuating and occurring simultaneously as a reaction to the change in perceived conditions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, 1990). Expressing these emotions can then be restrained or expressed based on how one decides to cope (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990).

Coping. Coping is one's cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage the imbalance between environmental demands and personal resources (Lazarus, 1995), or the process of executing a response to a perceived threat (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). How one

decides to cope is influenced by the appraisal of demands specific to the encounter and the resources available for managing them within the environment (Folkman et al., 1986). In other words, coping, such as stress, is contextual (Folkman et al., 1986) and an individual matter, meaning it is specific to a person and his/her environment or to particular groups of people who share a context or environment such as the workplace (Lazarus, 1995). Successful coping, or the restoring of balance between person-environment, is vital to one being able to resolve problems, relieve emotional distress, and stay on track toward his or her goals (Brown et al., 2005).

Coping is vital to one's internal stabilization and health (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). As the theory of allostasis (McEwen, 1998b) explains, the body has a reaction to stress and begins utilizing its personal resources, releasing chemicals (e.g., hormones) in an effort to relieve or suppress the distress sensed physically. The effect of the body's effort during this process can be witnessed or felt through physical experiences such as loss of energy and fatigue, increase in heart rate, increase in blood pressure, or decreased metabolism (McEwen, 1998b). Over time, with a continual need for the body to respond to stress, effects can become more severe: increased risk of obesity, hypertension or stroke, and heart attack (McEwen, 1998b). The body's ability to cope can be further influenced by the behavioral habits one adopts while trying to manage their experience with stress (McEwen, 1998b). Adopted physical behaviors such as smoking, increased drinking, increased eating, or decreased physical activity are examples of negative or counterproductive coping behaviors that can make it harder for the body to function under and respond to stress (McEwen 1998b), contributing to the ultimate effect of long term stress and coping: disease, aging, and mortality (Juster, McEwen, & Lupien, 2010).

In addition to physical coping behaviors, there are also verbal coping behaviors (Carver et al., 1989), including seeking social support, venting, and gossiping. Social support is a form of

interpersonal communication, used to help one reduce an uncertainty about him/herself or another person, a situation, or a relationship (Albrecht et al., 1994; Cahill & Sais, 1997). Social support is typical amongst any people who share a network, in which one relies on others for socioemotional aid and/or instrumental aid (Shumaker & Brownell, 1984). Social support has been examined in a variety of other industries, such as those considered high-risk or high-stress in which support is often utilized and considered important because of the dependence on teamwork and coordination of activities, and the emotional efforts required of such industries' employees (e.g., Baker, Day, & Salas, 2006; Munro et al., 1998; Ray & Apker, 2011; Thompson et al., 2005). The T & L industry is just such a high-stress environment. Venting, the use of vocal expression to discharge one's negative feelings by expressing them to others, can include forms of emphatic and inelegant language (Brown et al., 2005). Venting is typically viewed as a type of emotion-focused coping behavior that can occur when someone seeks out social support for the purposes of receiving moral support, sympathy, or understanding (Carver et al., 1989). Although venting can provide momentary relief, allowing one to proceed with behaviors that are focused on resolving the problem causing the stress, venting can also cause distraction or exacerbate the distress (Carver et al., 1989), and become counterproductive to one's staying on track and reaching their goals within the workplace (Brown et al., 2005). Gossiping is another type of verbal behavior that has been associated with venting and seeking social support in the workplace that can help one gather information and form relationships (Blithe, 2014). However, gossiping is typically associated with the type of talk that occurs behind a co-worker's back, characterized by snide remarks and the sharing of another person's confidential information (Martin & Hine, 2005). The behaviors of venting and gossiping are two examples of low-

aggressive behaviors that can be classified as acts of incivility (Martin & Hine, 2005; Morrow et al., 2011).

Acts of incivility. Acts of incivility are defined as low-intensity aggressive behaviors with ambiguous intent to harm that go against typical social norms or standards and are in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Behaviors or acts of incivility are characteristically rude, discourteous and lack regard for others (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Examples of such behaviors include: raising voice, yelling, using profanity, telling of inappropriate jokes, saying demeaning or derogatory comments about others, participating in malicious or false gossip about co-workers, using negative gestures or facial expressions, or disrespecting others property (Martin & Hine, 2005; Morrow et al., 2001). Because these behaviors are less intense acts of aggression, more often verbal and passive rather than physical and direct (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), they are sometimes dismissed by others, including supervisors and employers, as temporary and trivial behaviors, personal matters, or may be considered a sign of competitiveness which can be viewed as an advantage in certain organizations (Pearson & Porath, 2005).

Research shows acts of incivility can result in negative effects for not only the direct targets of these acts (Cortina et al., 2001; Porath & Pearson, 2012), but also witnesses (Lim et al., 2008; Morrow et al., 2011). The effects for both include: lower job satisfaction, lower supervisor and co-worker satisfaction, higher turnover intentions, and reduced mental health (Morrow et al., 2011). Research suggests the climate and culture of an organization can also suffer by organizations allowing such behaviors to go unaddressed and unpunished, giving the perception they are tolerated behaviors thus allowing a cycle of such behaviors to ensue (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Porath & Pearson, 2012). For the organization, this can result in increased

employee absenteeism, loss of employee productivity, employee turnover, and in severe cases of incivility where an organization might have failed to respond, lawsuit and damaged reputation (Pearson & Porath, 2005). Researchers have examined the relationship between stress and incivility in the workplace (Cortina et al., 2001; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012).

Acts of incivility as result of stress. Personal factors such as personality type (Taylor & Kluemper, 2012), self-efficacy and esteem (Beattie & Griffin, 2014), and power or position (Cortina et al., 2001; Porath & Pearson, 2012) are examined when studying the likelihood of someone engaging in acts of incivility in the workplace. However, such factors are often examined as mediators in the relationship between acts of incivility and situational or social factors. Neuman and Baron's (1998) theoretical model of workplace aggression illustrates such a relationship. Within their model, what occurs at the social or situational level is an event or experience that begins a process that involves personal factors and cognitive processes leading to a response to the event (Neuman & Baron, 1998). Although Neuman and Baron (1998) do not elaborate on the cognitive process in their model, explaining its steps and the possible outcomes of emotions that lead to one engaging in an aggressive act or not, their model does illustrate what research supports, that social and situational factors one encounters in his/her work environment that can result in stress can lead to one engaging in aggressive behavior such as acts of incivility (Penney & Spector, 2005; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012). This study furthers research supporting acts of incivility in the workplace as a response to stress experiences in the workplace, but is also interested in a second phenomenon which is acts of incivility as a source of stress in the workplace.

Acts of incivility as source of stress. Cortina et al. (2001) found that personal experiences with acts of incivility in the workplace can be daily hassles that over time with

frequency can result in increased psychological distress with the potential to have more of an effect than a major life stressor. Beattie and Griffin (2014), with the use of a diary survey method allowing participants to record short term experiences with being the target of acts of incivility, revealed that on days when incivility is experienced, higher levels of stress are also experienced. Examining the communal or shared effects of acts of incivility in the workplace, Lim et al. (2008) found that although the mental health effects are stronger on the personal level (target), there is a significant effect on the group level (witnesses). Although research on the communal effect of incivility is minimal (Schilpzand, De Pater, Erez, 2016), research is beginning to examine and show effects on witnesses (Lim et al., 2008; Morrow et al., 2011; Totterdell, Hershcovis, Niven, Reich, & Stride, 2012), finding that those who perceive or witness this type of low-aggressive behavior occurring in their work units experience similar personal, organizational, and behavioral effects (Schilpzand, et al., 2016).

Research shows that acts of incivility are being experienced at a high rate (Morrow et al., 2011; Pearson & Porath, 2005), are often unreported (Cortina & Magley, 2009), and most employees are not satisfied with their organizations' handling of such behaviors (Pearson & Porath, 2005). One reason for lack of satisfactory action on the part of organizations is believed to be the nature of these acts. They are often verbal instead of physical, passive instead of direct (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), which therefore make it more likely an employer might think these acts are temporary, trivial, and a personal matter, especially since these less aggressive acts are not sanctioned by law (Lim et al., 2008; Pearson & Porath, 2005).

Purpose

The current study seeks to advance research investigating the relationship between stress and coping, and acts of incivility. The focus is on the T & L industry's workforce that is prone to

experience frequent and high-stress. A model illustrating how stress can exist within a cycle in the workplace via aggressive communication is presented to illustrate how acts of incivility can serve as both a coping behavior and stressor in the workplace.

      Model: Cycle of stress in acts of incivility (CSAI). The model presented in this study, the Cycle of Stress in Acts of Incivility (CSAI; Figure 1), incorporates Lazarus and collegues' (Lazarus, 1984; Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) transactional approach to stress and Andersson and Pearson's (1999) interactionist perspective of acts of incivility. Andersson and Pearson's (1999) perspective of acts of incivility emphasizes the interpersonal and situational factors of the event. This is in line with the transactional approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) that emphasizes the relationship between a person and his/her environment, the context of the event, and how the context affects a person's stress experience as well as shapes the environment, an environment often shared with others (e.g., a workplace).

      Being an interactive or interpersonal event means acts of incivility consist of several contributors who are affected by the event: the instigator, the target, the witness, and the environment (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The CSAI incorporates all these contributors, with the environment represented by the workplace in a specific organization that falls under the larger context of an industry. Targets, instigators, and witnesses co-exist in the environment of the workplace. Instigators are the ones who initially encounter a workplace stressor within the environment and follow a path of cognition that can result in an act of incivility. When targets and/or witnesses of an act of incivility encounter the act of incivility in the shared environment, they too follow a cognitive appraisal path which results in them perceiving the act as a threat, thus experiencing stress. They must then attempt to cope with the stressor. According to Andersson and Pearson (1999) one may then choose to continue a pattern of acts of incivility in

the workplace and, if such behavior is allowed to persist without correction but managers and leaders, these aggressive behaviors can, over time, exist as informally tolerated interpersonal behaviors, ultimately affecting an organization's culture.
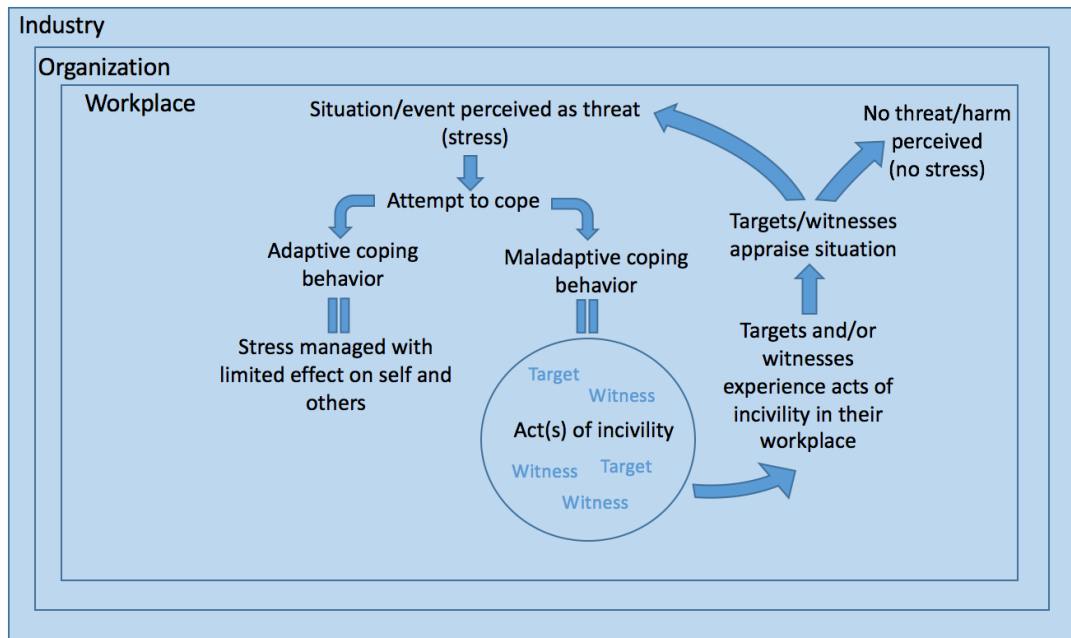
Figure 1. Model: Cycle of Stress in Acts of Incivility (CSAI)

A key element of this model is that acts of incivility are used as means to cope with stress. To understand acts of incivility as a coping behavior and thus their role as an indicator to others of one's need and attempt to manage a current stressor, the reasons or strategies for coping need to be understood. Strategies for coping are typically divided into problem-focused or emotion-focused strategies (Carver et al., 1989; Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Problem-focused coping is when one uses his or her resources to alter the situation, while in emotion-focused coping one uses resources to regulate the feeling of distress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990). These approaches are contextually defined, can occur simultaneously, and are selected based on the environment (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980), and can be adaptive or maladaptive. Maladaptive coping behaviors (e.g., acts of incivility) can influence others in the shared environment

(Albrecht et al., 1994; Zeidner & Saklofske, 1996), and act as warning signs of workplace and employee distress.

Based on the CSAI model, the following research questions are explored in this study:

RQ1: Are acts of incivility common behaviors for the communicating of stress in T & L organizations?

RQ2: Are acts of incivility perceived as norms for how one can respond to their experiences of workplace stress in a T & L organization?

RQ3a: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the witness?

RQ3b: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the target?

RQ3c: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the instigator?

This research adopts a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews. The use of qualitative methods for data collection advances workplace incivility research, which has primarily been quantitative (Schilpzand et al., 2014), and answers the call for stress research to use more contextual measures (Dewe & Trenberth, 2004; Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). According to Dewe and Trenberth (2004), such methods are needed to better capture the complexity of the stress and coping process, what people actually think and do during stressful experiences, and what someone means when they say they are stressed.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The literature review begins by discussing workplace stress, providing an overview of sources and factors of stress in the workplace, followed by sources specific to the T & L industry and the office employee's role. Next, the physiological and mental processes of stress are discussed. This is followed by an overview of coping research including strategies and types of coping (adaptive versus maladaptive). One coping mechanism (i.e., social support) is discussed in terms of its positive and negative effects, as well as the provider role of social support, and two behaviors (i.e., venting and gossiping) associated with social support. This leads into a discussion of the type of behavior that is the focus of this study: workplace incivility. The main construct of workplace incivility will be examined, followed by behaviors or acts of incivility and their effects, and the participants of incivility (i.e., instigators, targets, witnesses). Possible reasons for acts of incivility are then examined with special attention paid to their relationship with stress in the workplace. The context of T & L organizations and the occurrence of workplace incivility is reviewed, followed by an overview of how perceived workplace norms are formed. Finally, the CSAI model is presented along with this study's research questions.

Workplace Stress

The fundamental reason stress is experienced in the context or environment of the workplace is because of the importance of this person-environment relationship to one's fulfilling of personal values and to one's personal well-being (Lazarus, 1995; Levinson, 1965). Workplace stress can be defined as a change in an employee's physical and/or mental state due to an appraised challenge or threat to one's relationship with his or her employer (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Lazarus, 1995). Workplace stress can serve as a motivator to proceed past a

difficult situation and toward a goal, but it can also represent harm to a person and his or her workplace (employer) relationship (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Lazarus, 1995). While an appraised challenge places emphasis on mastering the demand or overcoming the obstacle resulting in growth for the individual, a threat represents perceived harm or damage (Lazarus, 1995). When the latter is perceived, negative workplace stress is the result (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). Workplace stress research is typically interested in the antecedents and outcomes of negative workplace stress, as is this study. Research examining negative workplace stress, referred to as simply workplace stress from here on, reveals various factors leading to its occurrence, which can be grouped into categories. An example of one such categorization is Cooper and Marshall's (1976) sources of stress at work that includes: intrinsic to job, role in organization, career development, relationships at work, and organizational structure and climate.

Overview of sources and factors. The following examines common sources of stress within each of these categories. Employees working within T & L organizations are likely to experience all of these sources of stress. Cooper and Marshall's (1976) first category of sources of stress found in the workplace are those that relate to one's job. Factors *intrinsic to job* refer to working conditions specific to the job being performed. Poor or unpleasant physical conditions such as uncomfortable noise levels and temperatures are included in this category. These conditions also include the need for an employee to expend a high level of physical effort while working, which can occur from being required to work excessive and inconvenient hours or to work at a certain (e.g., fast) pace (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Cooper & Marshall, 1976). One reason an employee might work excessive hours or at a fast pace is to counter one of the next two intrinsic job factors: work overload and time pressures.

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Work overload refers to one having either too much work to do or having work that is perceived as too difficult (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Having a quantitative overload (too much) may not present a threat to employees if it is brief and occasional, but if it is continuous without adequate relief, stress is the result (Anderson & Pulich, 2001). Qualitative overload (too difficult) can be an outcome if employees perceive a lack of necessary ability or training to complete their work, or if they perceive work expectations are too high (Anderson & Pulich, 2001). The next intrinsic to job stress factor is time pressure, which refers to the "perception of insufficient time to complete a task and an awareness of the potential negative consequences of missing a deadline" (Thomas, Esper, & Stank, 2011, p. 415).

Another intrinsic source of stress, although Cooper and Marshall (1976) do not list it, is control. Control, or autonomy, in relation to work stress often refers to one's perceived ability to make decisions and exert control over work tasks and activities (Anderson & Pulich, 2001). Control, however, can also refer to whether or not one has the perceived ability to prevent or alter a situation or circumstance they encounter while performing his or her job. For example, Evans and Carrere (1991) found amongst urban bus drivers that the factor of traffic congestion had a direct relationship on their perceived job control, because it affected their ability to adjust their driving speed and maneuver their vehicle as they normally would in order to stay on schedule and follow procedures. Such lack of control be considered intrinsic to the job of the bus driver considering the likelihood of encountering such a condition due to the nature of the job and work being done.

In addition to working conditions or factors intrinsic to a job, the next set of workplace stressors according to Cooper and Marshall (1976) are those associated with the person's *role in organization*. One's role in his or her organization refers to the level of responsibility the

employee has in the workplace (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). Role conflict is an example of one such source of stress (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Role conflict results when one encounters multiple and incompatible job expectations or demands (Anderson & Pulich, 2001). This includes when an employee is caught between groups of employees (e.g., departments) that demand different behaviors or have different expectations (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Another source of stress related to one's role is being responsible for others. Such a responsibility not only increases interaction with others that can add to one's time pressures and expectations (Cooper & Marshall, 1976), but in certain types of positions, professions, and industries also include being responsible for others well-being. For managers or supervisors this can include being responsible for one's payroll and assisting employees with a healthy work-life balance. For some professions, such medicine, military, public safety (e.g., police, firefighters), being responsible for others is directly related to the others' physical well-being and safety. For people in such professions, work stress can exist due to the high level of responsibility and/or danger and the constraints placed on their operations and tasks (Johnson et al., 2005; Ray & Apker, 2011). Research pertaining to such high-responsibility or high-risk professions or industries places importance on interpersonal communication amongst co-workers to ensuring the successful teamwork needed to carry out critical tasks (Baker et al., 2006), and help manage the stress experienced because of the critical nature of their work (Munro et al., 1998).

Less serious in nature than being directly responsible for others' well-being and safety while at work, but also sources of workplace stress, are Cooper and Marshall's (1976) next group of factors that fall under the category of *career development*. This category includes factors such as promotion, job security, and opportunity (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Such factors are also known as workplace rewards, which can become sources of stress if one perceives a lack of

them, especially if there is a perceived imbalance been work effort and rewards (De Jonge, Bosma, Peter, & Siegrist, 2000).

The next category of sources of stress found in the workplace derives from *relationships at work* (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). This category includes problematic interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates, and between co-workers (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Characteristics of such relationships include low trust, low supportiveness, and low interest in listening to and trying to manage problems (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Anderson and Pulich (2001) discuss these stressful relationship dynamics as group-related demands, dividing them into intragroup and intergroup demands. Intragroup demands are those that require co-workers to coordinate their work tasks (Anderson & Pulich, 2001). Stress can arise from these demands due to conflict related to different or opposing goals, attitudes, or behaviors amongst the co-workers involved (Anderson & Pulich, 2001). Intergroup demands are similar except that they involve coordination and possible conflict between groups within the workplace (Anderson & Pulich, 2001) such as between departments or groups of like-positions.

The last workplace stressors category according to Cooper and Marshall (1976) pertains to *organizational structure and climate*. Cooper and Marshall (1976) refer to factors of this category as aspects of an organization that can result in a satisfactory or stressful working life. Factors include communication patterns, management styles, and workplace restrictions, rules, and politics (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Cooper & Marshall, 1976). More specifically, climate refers to the ways in which these factors affect individual perceptions of the organization and how it feels to be a member of the organization (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988).

Cooper and Marshall (1976) did not include organizational culture in their categories of workplace stressors, but current research does by supporting a relationship between factors of culture and workplace stress (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Therefore, this study includes culture as a sixth category stress sources in the workplace. Factors that relate to *organizational culture* include the emphasized values, thinking styles, and behavioral norms in the organization (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). One behavioral norm dimension includes a concern for people (Balthazard, Cooke & Potter, 2006). These factors comprise the direction of a culture, whereas intensity of a culture refers to it strength or degree of influence on the organization's members (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). Intensity is established by the degree of consensus amongst organization or unit members regarding what is emphasized by the culture (or sub-culture), along with the strength of the relationships between expectations, rewards, and behaviors (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). In the workplace, professional behavioral norms and practices can differ across organizations and industries, but there is more variance between industries than organizations (Chatman & Jehn, 1994). Together, workplace behavioral norms and practices create a culture one must adapt to during a working day (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, & Plamondon, 2000).

In relation to behavioral norms, Balthazard et al. (2006) identified two types or styles of organizational cultures, constructive and defensive. Constructive cultures have positive implications for an organization and defensive cultures have negative implications (Balthazard et al., 2006). Which one an organization is, is based on the various combinations of twelve behavioral norms that can be found within an organization (Balthazard et al., 2006). When a culture is defensive, it has created pressures for dependent and avoidant styles of behaviors (passive) and/or power-oriented and internally competitive styles of behavior (aggressive;

Balthazard et al., 2006). Behaviors that can result in a passive/defensive culture are ones that are conflict avoidant and produce superficially pleasant interpersonal relationships (Balthazard et al., 2006). With this type of culture, the acceptance and approval of others is important enough to go along with (follow) others, and there is a failure to reward success while punishing mistakes, which can result in people shifting responsibilities onto others in an attempt to avoid blame for mistakes (Balthazard et al., 2006). Behaviors that can result in a passive/aggressive culture include ones that are strong in confrontation and reward negativism with members gaining status and influence by being critical, making opposition to others' ideas likely (Balthazard et al., 2006). Perfectionism, persistence, and hard work are valued, with members feeling they must avoid mistakes and work long hours to attain work objectives (Balthazard et al., 2006).

Adaption and socialization to one's organizational culture includes doing so as well to socially recognized workplace behavioral norms, such as the use of certain communication styles or language specific to the work and workplace (Chao et al., 1994; Pulakos et al., 2000). When a behavioral norm such as an aggressive communication style (e.g., acts of incivility) exists within a culture that can pose a threat to organizational members, then the result can be an organizational culture that causes employees workplace stress (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). This study examines the existence of workplace behavioral norms promoting a low-aggressive communication style (i.e., acts of incivility) that can act as stressors for employees.

Although organizational culture along with Cooper and Marshall's (1976) five categories of sources of workplace stress can be experienced amongst a variety of jobs, the degree to which they are experienced varies depending on the type of work performed and the conditions and characteristics of the environments (e.g., workplaces and industries) in which they are performed. This study is interested in T & L organizations. In order to better understand how the

wider context of the T & L industry can affect employees, the following section explores

characteristics and conditions of this industry and the work done within it.

In the transportation and logistics industry. According to the United States

Department of Transportation (DOT) (2016b), in 2015, the United States transportation network

moved approximately 18.1 billion tons of freight, with an approximate worth of $19.2 trillion.

Daily, this amounts to 49 million tons of freight, and a worth of $53 billion (U.S. Department of

Transportation, 2016b). This freight consists of the commodities and goods the nation's

households, businesses, and government units rely on (U.S. Department of Transportation,

2016a). Over the next three decades, the DOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

project that the tons of freight moved by the United States transportation network will grow 40%

and freight value will increase by 92% (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016b). Out of the

five modes of transportation that comprise the United States transportation network–air, vessel,

pipeline, rail, truck–truck is the most utilized (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016b). In

2015, trucks moved 64% of the freight tonnage in the U.S., and 69% of its value (U.S.

Department of Transportation, 2016b). The DOT (2016b) forecasts these amounts will grow by

44% and 84%, respectively, by 2045. Currently, trucks are responsible for the largest amount,

weight, and value of freight moved 750 or fewer miles (short-haul) across the United States

National Highway System (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016a). By 2040, the amount of

trucks moving long-haul freight, 750 to 2,000 miles, across the National Highway System (NHS)

is expected to increase dramatically (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016a).

The interstates and highways that run across the United States, connecting and allowing

access to water ports, airports, and intermodal (rail) facilities comprise the NHS (U.S.

Department of Transportation, 2016c). According to DOT (2016a), in 2011, approximately

14,530 miles of the NHS carried more than 8,500 trucks per day, and on its busiest sections at a minimum every fourth vehicle was a truck. By 2040, the busiest segments of the NHS are predicted to reach 42,000 miles (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016a). The busiest segments of the NHS often provide the simplest route between destination points for travelers, and between shippers and receivers for truck drivers. However, because they are the busiest, they are prone to congestion which can delay travel and increase the risk of accidents (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016a). Factors such as inclement weather, work zones, time of day, and the rules to travel on the NHS system that not only limit one's speed but also access to and ease of certain routes and roads especially for large trucks, can further delay and complicate a driver's travel (Florida Department of Transportation, 2014; U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016a).

For truck drivers who encounter these factors, the effect is not simply a nuisance or a delay in personal plans, but these factors can also result in an effect on job performance and pay, which is typically by mile with drive time per day limited by DOT rules and regulations. In addition to these personal consequences, drivers are aware that the late delivery of the freight they haul can result in consequences for the operations of shippers and receivers and the commerce of customers. These consequences include the loss of sales through a lack of inventory and missed promotions (Chatur, 2005), which can have an effect on customer loyalty (Ramanathan, 2010). Perishable goods such as chemicals and agricultural products may be at risk for reduced quality and value when delayed Chatur, 2005; Florida Department of Transportation, 2014). Factories and plants may be at risk for costly plant shutdowns if the shipments they depend on to keep production running are delayed (Chatur, 2005; Florida Department of Transportation, 2014). Considering trucks carry the commodities and goods the

United States economy depends on to keep factories running, stores stocked, and commerce steady, there are high expectations for how safely and timely trucks are driven, managed, and maintained.

The office person's role. Hewlett and Luce (2006) argue there are certain jobs whose employees encounter stressful situations regularly due to their innate characteristics. Such characteristics include fast-paced work under tight deadlines, responsibility for mentoring and recruiting, responsibility for profit and loss, 24/7 availability and/or long hours, large amount of travel, and unpredictable work flow. These are characteristics associated with working in the T & L industry (Fournier, 2012; Rodrigue et al., 1997; Florida Department of Transportation, 2014). Although the large amount of travel characteristic only applies to drivers, other characteristics are shared by drivers and the office personnel (e.g., fast-pace, tight deadlines, unpredictable work flow) or only apply to the office personnel (e.g., responsible for mentoring and recruiting, being responsible for profit and lost).

Although truck driver is the most fundamental person in the transportation process, office personnel in regular contact with drivers, monitoring their progress on the road, assisting them with any questions or concerns they may have or issues they may encounter, and managing what freight drivers are assigned to haul as well as their pay. The office personnel answer to customer representatives who arrange and monitor their companies' freight needs, as well as to their own organizations' leaders who monitor the T & L companies' overall customer service and driver safety (Fournier et al., 2012). There may be other positions that play a role in the movement of freight within a T & L organization, however fleet managers and load planners are arguably the key operations office positions due to their direct relationships with drivers, customers, and the management of freight.

The person in the office who the driver has the most contact with is the driver's manager, often referred to as a fleet manager (or dispatcher). For drivers and fleet managers employed by a large T & L organization, the physical separation between driver and fleet manager may be great because the driver's hometown may not be the same city as the fleet manager's office. This means the driver and fleet manager may conduct all their business long distance and they may never meet in person. This makes the fleet manager's role unique, challenging, and stressful. A great deal depends on a positive working relationship between the driver and manager, including customer service and satisfaction (Fournier et al., 2012), driver job satisfaction (Richard et al., 1994), driver safety performance (Zohar et al., 2014), driver retention (Keller & Ozment, 1999), and driver turnover (Fournier et al., 2012). Driver retention and turnover are expected to continue to be a major concern for the T & L industry due to factors such as an aging workforce, a failure to attract diverse segments of the population, and a struggle to find qualified drivers based on safety and experience (Costello & Suarez, 2015; Popkin, Morrow, Di Domenico, & Howarth, 2008).

Fleet managers face multiple job pressures. A fleet manager must make sure his or her drivers not only have the resources they need on the road and can meet driver service and safety goals, but they must also manage their own work goals while being sensitive to the high turnover trend that exists amongst drivers in the T & L industry (Costello & Suarez, 2015; Fournier et al., 2012). Depending on the size and structure of the organization worked for, fleet managers may be responsible for supervising a large number of drivers daily, increasing the complications and their felt stress. Also depending on the size and structure of the T & L organization, fleet managers may be responsible for assigning what shipment or load the driver will pick up and deliver.

Sometimes load assignments are the responsibility of a load planner, sometimes referred to as a freight coordinator or area service manager. The title may change by organization, but the principle duty of aligning drivers based on their positions and on their available drive hours according to DOT rules, with customer load pick up appointments and delivery expectations to meet customer service standards. Although load planners are not physically present where the freight is picked up or delivered at, they are often in contact with customer representatives over the phone and email who frequently remind them of the impact of their service and reprimand them if service expectations are not met.

Being the contact for driver and customer, balancing the needs and expectations of both, can leave those in operational roles in the office feeling "…always caught between a rock and a hard place, with customers at one end and drivers at the other..." (Fourneir et al., 2012, p. 272). Ultimately, what occurs on the road for drivers, including uncontrollable factors and events, impacts the work and stress of the fleet managers and load planners in the office. Research regarding the workplace experiences and well-being of these employees is scarce.

What research is available often focuses on the workplace stress and health of drivers (e.g., De Croon et al., 2004; Orris et al., 1997). This focus is understandable considering the characteristics and conditions of this job: time away from home, long and irregular working and sleeping hours, physical strain, mental stress, and the physical risk involved (Popkin et al., 2008; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). However, considering the interdependence of the work performed by drivers and office operations personnel, the experiences of both warrant attention. Therefore, this study will help fill the gap regarding the experiences of operations office personnel in the T & L industry, specifically those experiences

regarding workplace stress and interpersonal communication within their workplace environment.

Before this group of employees' experiences of stress can be explored, the fundamental process of stress must be understood. The next section reviews the stress research from both physical (McEwen, 1998b) and mental approaches (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus, 1995), recognizing that there are demands and effects on both one's body and mind during the stress process.

Physical and Mental Processes Associated with Stress

When someone experiences stress, both his or her body and mind work to understand what is occurring and attempt to manage, or alleviate, the felt stress. The following begins with an examination of the physical or physiological processes that affect the body during the stress process known as allostasis (McEwen, 1998b). The mental processes are then examined through the transactional approach to stress, which combines psychological and cognitive processes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987; Lazarus, 1995).

Physiological process: Allostasis. Research and everyday conversations well acknowledge a relationship between stress and health effects. However, as Selye (1950) explains, it is not stress that harms us, but rather the failure of one's body to adapt or cope. Therefore, it is important to understood how the body responds during the stress process. Selvy (1950) explains how vital organs respond to stress, consuming energy and impacting the nervous and hormonal systems. He refers to this physiological process as the general adaptation syndrome, calling the negative effects or outcomes of the body trying to adapt the disease of adaption.

The physiological process is more recently explained by the theory of allostasis (McEwen, 1998b). Allostasis refers to the key adaptive systems of the body–cardiovascular,

metabolic, immune, nervous–working to respond to stress in an effort to restore its balance or its state of homeostasis (McEwen, 1998b). The way in which the systems of the body do this is by altering their normal processes to produce and activate chemicals or hormones after a threat has been perceived (McEwen, 1998a; 1998b). Examples of what might be perceived as a threat include experiences with hunger and infection, or noise, crowding, and danger in one's environment (McEwen, 1998a). Should such experiences result in felt stress and the body respond to the feeling, then heart palpitations, surges in blood pressure, and sweating are a few possible signs of such altered processes and hormone activation taking place within the body (McEwen, 1998a). Once the perceived threat has passed, allowing inactivation of the body's adaptive responses and a return to base-line levels of hormones, these signs should dissipate (McEwen, 1998a). Both processes, having to work to respond to stress (activation) and having to readjust after stress (deactivation), require work for the body (McEwen, 1998a). According to McEwen (1998b, 1998a), there is a price to such work for the body.

Over time with repeated or continual need for the body to respond to stress, such as the case with chronic stress, which is cumulative minor and daily experiences of stress, the systems of the body can become overworked or overloaded (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). A condition referred to as allostatic load (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). The consequence of allostatic load is a long-term imbalance in the adaptive systems of the body so they no longer respond as they once did to stress (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). The adaptive systems of the body now either experience stress more frequently (e.g., increased/prolonged anxiety), fail to shut off after stress as they should (e.g., hypertension), fail to respond when they should to stress, or do not respond appropriately to stress (McEwen, 1998a). Not responding appropriately means an adaptive system that would have previously responded to the stress now inadequately responds to it,

leading to another system now responding to compensate (McEwen, 1998a). As a result of allostatic load, the initial effects of stress on the body such as an occasional headache or a temporary increase in heart rate or blood pressure progress into more severe and possibly long-term symptoms or effects such as risk of anxiety disorders, depression, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and implications for advanced aging and mortality (Juster et al., 2010; McEwen, 1998a, 1998b).

The effects of stress and allostatic load on the central nervous system, specifically the brain, are especially important to understand because the brain is where the stress process begins, it is where the initial determination or perception of a threat occurs (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). The part of the brain that plays a key role in the adaptive process is the hippocampus (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). The hippocampus's main brain function relates to memory and learning regarding time, place, and facts of events and the emotional valence associated with events (McEwen, 1998a; Richter-Levin & Akirav, 2001). Repeated stress can have important consequences for the hippocampus regarding memory, especially memory as it is tied to emotion, so that once non-threatening circumstances are now more readily perceived as threatening (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). A more serious example of the result of allostatic load on the brain is post-traumatic stress disorder (McEwen, 1998b). Aggression may also be a sign of chronic stress experienced by or on the brain (McEwen, 2008), which can be expressed physically and/or verbally.

The hippocampus is not the only part of the brain that is effected by stress and shown to have a relationship with aggression. The amygdala, although responsible for its own independent functions, is linked to and interacts with the hippocampus (Phelps, 2004). Together as part of the limbic system they manage emotionally charged experiences and emotional learning (Richter-Levin & Akirav, 2001). Fear, panic, and aggression are related to the amygdala (Davis &

Whalan, 2001). Scans of the brain show that the amygdala becomes activated when one is exposed to words considered threatening or aggressive (Isenberg et al., 1999). Although the words Isenberg et al., (1999) used to test this effect were threat valence words such as harass, punish, accuse, swear words or profanity are another type of verbal communication that could be considered threatening (Jay, 2009). Swear words are used to convey strong feelings, express and alleviate pain, frustration, stress, or regret, and to incite strong feelings in another person (Jay, 2009).

Ultimately, the relationship between the hippocampus and the amygdala, and their key roles in the body's processing and managing of stress, explain how over time these parts of the brain are at risk of losing some of their inhibitory mechanisms that help regulate adequate emotional responses (McEwen, 1998a, 2008). The result is then that a person no longer responds as he or she once did, with the possibility of the resulting stress response being an emotional (e.g., aggressive) inclination. Understanding how allostatic load affects and alters the way parts of the brain respond and process chemicals, and how this can occur due to experiencing verbal aggression, helps explain that it is not only the person experiencing the initial stress who can adopt a more aggressive response to stress. What can be concluded from Isenberg et al. (1999) is that it is not just the one expressing aggressive or threatening words who experiences the result of a stressor on the brain, but also the ones receiving or witnessing the aggressive or threatening communication. Stress can be incurred by a person exposed to aggression, because his or her brain must now respond.

Although understanding this physiological change to stress is not the focus of this study, it is important to understand the body's role in the stress process because recognizing how aggressive words trigger stress responses helps one recognize that he or she is experiencing

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stress and may need help coping. The physiological process also emphasizes why it is important to help prevent/avoid or at least lessen factors that result in aggressive words, as well as better manage long-term stress in response to aggressive words for the sake of one's physical and mental health.

The next section furthers understanding of the role the brain, or mind, has in the stress process, discussing the mental process involved in the stress process. The mental process is important to the physiological process because how one choices to behave in response to stress and how the body responds to stress (e.g., calmness versus elevated heart rate) is dependent on whether or not one first perceives a situation to be a threat (McEwen, 1998a). As McEwen (2008) states, "stress begins in the brain and affects the brain, as well as the rest of the body" (p. 174).

Mental process: Transactional approach. The transactional approach is referred to here as a mental process of stress because of the use of psychological factors (e.g., emotions) and cognition (e.g., appraisal) in explaining how one experiences stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). As Dewe and Trenberth (2004) explain, it is the psychological process at the heart of the transaction between person and environment that links the two and gives meaning to their relationship, as well as gives structure to the stress process. However, it is the cognitive process that results in one perceiving a threat or harm, thus experiencing stress or not (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). By explaining these processes that occur to bring about stress and coping within a specific relational context (e.g., the person and his/her environment), and the dependence and interplay between the two, the transactional approach differentiates itself from traditional approaches (Dewe & Trenberth, 2004). According to Dewe and Trenberth (2004), traditional approaches to stress that focus on the stimulus (stressor) and the response as different

components of stress, creating an artificial separation between context and the experience of stress. With the transactional approach, there is no separation, and the key element to this process is the unit of analysis of appraisal (Dewe & Trenberth, 2004).

 Appraisal. During appraisal, one evaluates what is happening in relation to his or her well-being, asking what the experience means for him or her personally (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Should the result be an evaluation of threat to one's well-being, thus the experience or feeling of stress, appraisal also provides the motivation and direction for resolution of the stress (Dewe et al., 1993). Appraisal occurs in several steps. The first step of appraisal is referred to as primary appraisal. During primary appraisal, a person evaluates whether or not there is potential harm or benefit in an encounter within his or her environment and recognizes whether or not personal resources will be taxed (Folkman et al., 1986). If the result of this appraisal is the perception that the demands of one's environment will challenge or exceed personal resources that allow him or her to cope, then a threat to the one's well-being is perceived and individual effort is now required to resolve the problem or threat (Dewe et al., 1993). The next step is secondary appraisal, where one evaluates what can be done to overcome or prevent the potential harm or improve any potential benefits (Folkman et al., 1986). In secondary appraisal, coping options (cognitive and behavioral) for managing the person-environment encounter are evaluated (Folkman et al., 1986). How much control over the threat is perceived in secondary appraisal affects whether the threat can be minimized or not (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). As events unfold and circumstances within the person-environment relationship change, influenced by natural changes in the environment as well as through one's coping efforts that attempt to change circumstances, reappraisals must occur (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; 1990). Reappraisals can result in fluctuating emotions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987).

Throughout the appraisal process, how one appraises a situation is key to his or her emotional state, with emotions such as anger and anxiety being common to an evaluation that results in a perceived threat (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990). Expressing, even feeling, these emotions can be restrained or not depending on how one approaches coping (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Carver et al., 1989). Emotions are also transformed by coping since coping behaviors alter a situation and can lead to reappraisal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990), meaning that emotions and coping occur simultaneously. Because of the key role of emotions in the stress process and experience, according to Lazarus (1999) stress, emotion, and coping form a conceptual unit. Given the significant role of emotion in the stress process, the next section further discusses emotions as they relate to one's experience of stress.

Emotions. Emotions are intense but typically short lived affective states (Brown et al., 2005). More than one emotion can occur, or be perceived to occur at a time (Brown et al., 2005). Such an occurrence is referred to as an emotional episode, which includes what occurred to trigger the initial emotion, the resulting complex of emotions, the person's coping responses, and the outcome of the situation (Brown et al., 2005). Which emotions a person experiences are the outcome of how a situation or event is appraised (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). An event can be appraised in four ways, or types: as a threat, challenge, harm, or benefit (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). These types are further classified as either anticipatory or outcome appraisal, referring to whether the appraisal is an evaluation of an upcoming event or of an event that has already occurred (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

In the anticipatory stage, an appraised challenge can result in the emotions of confidence, hopefulness, and eagerness, whereas an appraised threat can result in worry, fear, and anxiety (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). In the outcome stage, if one looks back at an event and at what has

already transpired and perceives a benefit to be the result, then emotions can include

exhilaration, pleasure, happiness, and relief (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). If one perceives the

result of the passed event to be harm, then emotions include anger, sadness, disappointment,

guilt, and disgust (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). In administering their Stress Questionnaire to

college students at three different time periods, Folkman and Lazarus (1985) found support for

not only the existence of certain anticipatory and outcome emotions during these time periods,

but also for the change in emotions over time as events unfolded and were appraised/reappraised.

Although, as Folkman and Lazarus (1985) point out, stress experiences can include

positive emotions such as hopefulness and relief depending on the changing meaning and

significance of an event as it develops, often stress is associated with negative emotions.

Lazarus (1999) refers to these as stress emotions, which include anger, envy, jealousy, anxiety,

fright, guilt, shame, and sadness. Other emotions related to stress are aggression, frustration,

disappointment, disgust, hostility, impatience, and worry (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Folkman &

Lazarus, 1985, 1990). Different levels of stress are associated with different negative emotional

symptoms (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). Acute stress, which has reversible and short-lived effects

(McEwen, 1998b), is attributed to new demands or pressures placed on the person-environment

relationship (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). Emotional symptoms of this level of stress include

increased anxiety, worry, frustration, hostility (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). Episodic stress entails

acute stress, but is experienced more frequently and consistently resulting in multiple episodes of

stress, and with which more severe physical symptoms and risks can occur (Colligan & Higgins,

2005). Emotional symptoms of this level of stress include displaying aggression, low tolerance,

impatience, and a sense of time urgency (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). The most severe level of

stress and symptoms is chronic stress (McEwen, 1998b), which is an accumulation of persistent and long-standing stress (Colligan & Higgins, 2005).

Considering the role of emotion in the stress experience, the regulation of emotions associated with stress serve as a focus of coping (Carver et al., 1989; Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Coping is the process of executing a response to a perceived threat to oneself (Carver et al., 1989). What this definition, along with the examination of emotions tied to stress, tells us is that if a threat is not perceived or appraised, the negative emotions of stress would not occur nor will coping behaviors be necessary. However, if one perceives that coping is necessary in order to restore balance between one's environmental demands and personal resources (Lazarus, 1995), then a variety of cognitive and behavioral coping strategies can be utilized, including ones that regulate emotions (Carver et al., 1989; Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). What the literature tells us about coping with stress, including strategies and behaviors of coping and types of coping, is now reviewed.

Coping with Stress

When someone experiences stress, they often express or communicate the feeling or emotion of stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus, 1999) and manage the stress through behaviors that take shape based on one's current environment (Folkman et al., 1986). Although stress is typically an internal experience, one's experience with stress can have effects on others when it becomes part of a shared environment. This shared experience, or communal effect, is based on what behaviors a stressed individual participates in when trying to manage his or her experienced stress and what the behaviors demand of others in the environment (Albrecht et al., 1994). How such communal effect can occur is better understood by examining the behavior strategies of coping and the types of coping.

Strategies. Why one chooses one behavior over another during coping is often divided into two approaches or strategies: problem-focused or emotion-focused coping. Problem-focused coping occurs when one uses his or her resources to alter the situation causing the stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Emotion-focused coping occurs when one uses his or her resources to regulate the felt distress or stressful emotions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Folkman and Lazarus (1980) found that during stressful daily events of living (as opposed to unusual or special events) people tend to use problem-focused coping more frequently during events appraised as changeable, and emotion-focused coping during those events appraised as unchangeable. The context of the event, what the stressful episode is primarily about (e.g., work, family matters, health), influencing this assessment. However, the purpose or strategy (problem versus emotion focused) behind a behavior does not have to occur in isolation of the other (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Coping behaviors and strategies can be used simultaneously, and most often are (Lazarus and Folkman, 1980). Out of the 1,332 day-to-day coping episodes they analyzed from 100 middle-aged participants over approximately one year, Lazarus and Folkman (1980) found that in less than 2% of the episodes only one type of coping was used. Furthermore, because the process of coping is contextual, meaning situation-specific, a person does not always employ the same coping behaviors or strategies, and the same behavior can serve either an emotion-focused or problem-focused function depending on when and how it is used (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). For example, Folkman and Lazarus (1980) looked at a cognitive coping behavior where one repeatedly goes over a problem in their mind. When this was done before a perceived stressful event (threat), it was problem-focused, but when this was done after an event perceived as harmful, then the behavior was emotion-focused. In addition to different strategies of coping that refer to how one approaches management of a stressor, there

are also different types of coping that refer to the effect one's management of a stressor has on him or her.

Types of coping: Adaptive versus maladaptive. Adaptive coping refers to effective management of one's environmental demands (Zeidner & Saklofske, 1996). Maladaptive coping therefore can be defined as ineffective management of one's environmental demands. Maladaptive coping behaviors in the workplace are those that interfere with one effectively resolving problems, relieving emotional distress, and staying on track toward achieving his or her work goals (Brown et al., 2005). Coping behaviors effectiveness can also be determined by whether or not the behaviors hinder the physiological processes of the body that help restore balance and calm to the body during stressful experiences (McEwen, 1998b). With this in mind, maladaptive behaviors consist of behaviors such as smoking and increased drinking or eating, which are typically associated with negative coping because of their impact on one's physical health (McEwen, 1998b).

As Zeidner and Saklofske (1996) point out in accordance with the transactional approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987), behaviors can not be prejudged as one or the other. For whom and under what circumstances the coping behavior occurs helps determine its effectiveness or not (Zeidner & Saklofske, 1996). Generally considered to be an adaptive coping behavior, exercise can become maladaptive to one's body depending on factors such as level of intensity and current conditions of one's body. Social support is another example of a behavior that typically promotes the positive side of coping behaviors. However, research also attests to a negative side (Beehr, Bowling, & Bennett, 2010; Deelstra et al., 2003). The following section discusses the seeking of social support during one's attempt to cope, as well as the negative side of social support and behaviors that are engaged in while seeking social support.

Seeking Social Support

The behavior of seeking social support is a common example of a coping strategy with dual purpose (Carver et al., 1989; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). Broadly defined as a "fundamental form of human communication, transacted between people within structures of their ordinary and extraordinary relationships and life events" (Albrecht et al., 1994, p. 419), social support is a form of interpersonal communication used to help one reduce an uncertainty about him/herself or another person, situation, or relationship (Albrecht et al., 1994; Cahill & Sais, 1997). In seeking social support, one may do so for instrumental reasons or for emotional reasons; the former defined by one seeking advice, assistance, or information, and the latter occurring when someone is seeking moral support, sympathy, or understanding (Carver et al., 1989). Arguing the division of coping strategies into two categories (emotion or problem focused) as being too simple considering the complexity of coping, Carver et al. (1989) developed the COPE measure recognizing thirteen total dimensions of coping, two of which focus on social support. The items used to test for instrumental social support include asking others who have had a similar experience, trying to get advice from someone about what to do, talking to someone to find out more about the situation, and talking to someone who can do something concrete about the problem (Carver et al., 1989). Emotional social support items include talking to someone about how one feels, trying to get emotional support from friends or relatives, discussing feelings with someone, getting sympathy and understanding from someone (Carver et al., 1989).

As with all coping behaviors, the reason for seeking social support varies depending on the demands of the stressful experience and the changes in the experience over time. Testing for such a difference, Folkman and Lazarus (1985) found amongst undergraduate students that they were more likely to use informational or instrumental support prior to taking an exam, measured

as others giving information, suggestions, guidance, or tangible assistance. Students were more likely to use emotional support, measured as others boosting one's spirts or expressing care, after the exam while awaiting results.

Social support is important in the workplace for its effects on workplace stress (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000; Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999), especially support from supervisors (Ganster, Fusilier, & Mayes, 1986; Thompson et al., 2005). How social support affects one's experiences of workplace stress is typically divided into two perspectives or models: a stress buffering model in which it is the strain experienced that one is protected against, and a direct or main effects model in which social support has an effect on a person's well-being regardless of the presence or absence of stress (Albrecht et al., 1994). The direct effects model suggests that lack of or a negative experience of social support can have a direct effect on stress. Research found support for both the direct and buffering effects of social support on stress (Cohen & Willis, 1985; Schmider & Smith, 1996).

Viswesvaran et al. (1999) divided the effects of social support into three categories, dividing what is typically known as the buffering effect so that along with direct effects, both moderator and mediational (suppressor) effects were examined. By making this division, Viswesvaran et al. (1999) further examined the effects of social support, finding that it can not only intervene or prevent the stressor-strain relationship, but that social support also has a direct and mediational (what is typically associated with buffering) effects. These effects appear to co-exist and are threefold: social support's primary effect being a reduction of strains, and its secondary effects being a reduction of the stressor strength and an alleviation of stressor effects on strain (Viswesvaran et al., 1999). This co-existence supports what Cohen and Willis (1985) concluded, which was that one type of effect of social support does not need to be dismissed for

the sake of the other. The possibility that social support has a direct relationship with stress does not dismiss that it can also have a buffering effect.

Recognizing this supports what the transactional approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) tells us. Coping and its effects are as contextually and independently based as the experience of feeling stress is, allowing for one to at times to feel the direct effects of social support, while allowing for another or for one at another time to experience a different sort of effect or possibly no effect. The difference in social support and its effects on stress are further supported when one examines the research regarding the difference between the positive or adaptive effects of coping and the negative or maladaptive effects of coping. The following section examines the maladaptive or negative side of social support.

Negative side of social support. Leavy's (1983) definition of social support as not simply the availability of helping relationships, but also their quality reflects what research shows regarding social support: its relationship with stress varies (Viswesvaran et al., 1999), and social support can both help (Beehr et al., 2000; Ganster et al., 1986; Thompson et al., 2005) and hinder the stress experience or process (Beehr et al., 2010; Deelstra et al., 2003). The maladaptive side of social support that can hinder one's coping can occur when the support is perceived as absent, weak, or considered harmful or ineffective (Beehr et al., 2010). An example of the latter is when it exacerbates one's problems, is perceived as critical or inappropriate, or the risks or costs of the support outweigh the benefits (Albrecht et al., 1994).

Measuring stress physiologically by heart rate and respiratory changes, Deelstra et al. (2003) found that when instrumental social support is imposed or given when it is not asked for, the support increases one's stress. They predicted this effect based on theory that such support can affect one's self-esteem, or feelings of inferiority and incompetence. Using the conditions of

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no problem, solvable problem (resource provided), and unsolvable problem (resource not provided) in a workplace setting within a lab, Deelstra et al. (2003) found that even though imposed support is associated with less stress when the problem is unsolvable versus solvable, overall, imposed support is more stressful than being faced with an unsolvable situation without the presence of imposed support.

Deelstra et al.'s (2003) findings suggest support for the transactional approach to stress (Lazarus 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) that says not only will the specific situation/context of the event and the available resources in it effect the perception of stress (e.g., solvable versus unsolvable problem), but also situation specific is the value or effect of the coping behavior (e.g., imposed social support). Deelstra et al.'s (2003) findings also support the factor of an attack (threat) to one's sense of self in regard to his or her capacities as stress inducing in the workplace setting. This perceived attack can occur even within an informational social support interaction, which by nature is meant to assist someone with resolving a problem. Threat to self through invalidation of one's personal capabilities is especially important considering it could signify or draw attention to an imbalance, actual or not, between one's personal resources and the demands of the environment (e.g., workplace). The result, therefore, is a stressful workplace experience.

Beehr et al. (2010) also examined the relationship between social support and stress in the workplace. Examining instrumental and emotional support, with the use of self-report measures for stress, social support, strain, and a desire for support, Beehr et al. (2010) found a positive relationship between social support and strain (i.e., the result of workplace stressors) when interactions with others in the workplace unintentionally drew and increased attention to the stress in the work situation. Beehr et al. (2010) formed their hypothesis for the relationship between social support and strain around social information processing theory, which according

to Beehr et al. (2010) says that through social interactions people receive much of their information and form beliefs about their work environment. They reasoned that because support conversations often involve the providers of the support agreeing with the support receivers regarding the stressfulness of a situation, these interactions can lead receivers of support to receiving and processing information that makes them perceive the situation more stressful than they already did (Beehr et al., 2010). Strain is the result of such social interactions, even after other stressors (i.e., role ambiguity, role overload, interpersonal conflict) were controlled for. Beehr et al. (2010) argued that the supportive conversation itself can become a stressful situation, especially if one is aware of the impact such an interaction can have or is having on him or her.

Both Deelstra et al. (2003) and Beehr et al. (2010) focus on the possible negative effects for receivers of social support. They both focus on the interpersonal nature of social support. This means that more than just the person experiencing the original cause for stress is a factor in the overall experience. The other person involved in the social support interaction is the provider of support. A person can be intentional in his or her provision of support such as the helpful co-workers were in Deelstra et al.'s (2003) experiment, but a person can also serve as an unintentional source of support. Unintentional support, as well as negative effects from, are more likely to occur in situations where the persons involved are bound in some way that is hard to escape or avoid, and in situations where the persons are affected by the same stressors (Albrecht et al., 1994), such as a workplace. The following section discusses social support from the provider's perspective.

Providers of support. Although originally and still often defined from the recipient's perspective in relation to acceptance and caring, researchers have come to accept social support as a broader phenomenon, seeing it not as an individual experience, but as an exchange between

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people within a social network that is both support-seeking and support-giving (Albrecht et al., 1994). Beehr et al. (2010) provided a definition of emotional social support (i.e., expressions of sympathy with the negative emotions the focal person is feeling) that draws attention to not only what the provider gives, but also to what the provider is exposed to during the transaction. Shumaker and Brownell (1984) through their review of social support research defined social support as "an exchange of resources between two individuals perceived by the provider or the recipient to be intended to enhance the well-being of the recipient" (p. 13). Although this definition gives attention to both parties in the social support transaction, it also draws attention to the fact such support typically has a purpose of positive effects for the support receiver, leaving the possible effects on or risks to the provider seemingly overlooked. There are provider effects, though, as both Albrecht et al. (1994) and Shumaker and Brownell (1984) found.

One effect Albrecht et al. (1994) found is Coyne's (1976) social contagion effect. Examining the effects of depression not only on the person who engaged in conversation with the depressed person, Coyne (1976) found that subjects who engaged with a depressed target individual experienced more depression, anxiousness, and hostility following the interaction than those who interacted with a non-depressed target. In other words, negative affect was induced in others by engaging in social interaction with the person on the receiving end of the need for social support. The feelings experienced by the support providers are some of the same emotions associated with the experience of stress. Other provider effects found by Albrecht et al. (1994) and Shumaker and Brownell (1984) include a drainage of resources such as effort, emotion and time, increased vulnerability to stresses in the providers' own lives, feelings of obligation, frustration, or responsibility, and negative evaluations of self by self or others if perceived as unable to provide adequate support.

The seeking of social support in response to experiences of stress may not always be a direct or conscious action. As Shumaker and Brownwell (1984) point out, people are not always thinking about what they are doing or why, and automatic exchanges are possible. For example, when someone experiences stress due to a personal conflict between herself and what the environment (e.g., workplace) is demanding of her and spontaneously communicates the feeling or emotion associated with the stress, due to the person's proximity to co-workers, the co-workers can easily become targets or witnesses to a person's communication. That communication now becomes a part of the others' social context fundamental to how they perceive or interpret their own situations (McEwen, 1998b, Lazarus, 1995). Two behaviors in which a sporadic or unconscious seeking of social support is likely to take place are the interpersonal communication practices of venting and gossiping. Because of their role in the coping process (Carver et al., 1989) and their use amongst co-workers in the workplace (Blithe, 2014; Brown et al., 2005), they will both be explained further.

Venting. Carver et al. (1989) define venting as the using of others as an outlet for one's feelings, and classify it as an emotion-focused form of social support used in the coping process. Cahill and Sias (1997), in their definition of emotional social support, give a main role to this specific behavior, saying "emotional support refers to venting or providing consultation to someone" (p. 232) and providing the example of listening and offering consolation to a co-worker. The type of emotions typically referred to in relation to venting are the negative (Brown et al., 2005) including distress, anger, and aggression (Bushman, 2002; Carver et al., 1989). The language used in venting can be characterized as emphatic or inelegant (e.g., profanity), and what those on the receiving end experience referred to as "an earful" (Brown et al., 2005, p. 794). Venting is also referred to as a way to practice behaving aggressively (Bandura, Ross, &

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Ross, 1963; Bushman, 2002). Furthermore, venting can be a form of maladaptive coping in the workplace because it can be counterproductive to one's staying on track and toward achieving one's goals (Brown et al., 2005), therefore preventing one from effectively restoring a balance between themselves and what the environment is demanding of them (e.g., performance).

Venting following the experience of a negative work event, operationalized as a major sales loss, was found by Brown et al. (2005) to amplify the adverse effects of negative emotion on work performance, resulting in a negative moderating effect. The measured emotions associated with the major sales loss were fear, anger, sadness, guilt and shame. Although such emotions were explained by Brown et al. (2005) as being responsible for an interruption in goal-directed behaviors due to the attention they require, they argued venting was what prolonged the interruption and could amplify the negative affects by making the situation appear worse. When self-control, the restraining from indulging in negative tendencies (Brown et al., 2005), was utilized following the major sales loss, then the negative effects of the emotions were protected against. However, although Brown et al. (2005) found the use of self-control was useful in regard to venting and negative emotions, the use of self-control had direct negative effects on work performance. Brown et al. (2005) reason this may be due to the consumption of the personal resources that self-control requires, taking away from personal resources that would otherwise be used in reaching one's performance goals. What these results tell us is that although self-control can be effective in avoiding the maladaptive coping behavior of venting so that one's work performance is not negatively affected by venting, the need for self-control comes at an expense of its own. In a workplace where stressful situations can occur and employees may need to utilize self-control to avoid negative coping behaviors it is not only the stress producing factors that should be examined, but also conditions and factors shaping employees' responses to stress

and coping. Another type of verbal behavior that is associated with venting and the seeking of social support in the workplace is gossiping (Blithe, 2014).

      Gossiping. Kurland and Pelled (2000) define it as an informal and evaluative talk amongst no more than a few co-workers, about another non-present member of the organization. Although gossiping amongst co-workers can help one gather information about the workplace (e.g., increased understanding of office politics) and form relationships with co-workers (Blithe, 2014), gossiping is often associated with the type of talk that occurs behind a co-worker's back that includes rumors and unfavorable news (Blithe, 2014; Kurland & Pelled, 2000). In development of the Uncivil Workplace Behavior Questionnaire (UWBQ; Martin & Hine, 2005), gossiping emerged as one of four factors or subscales along with hostility, privacy invasion, and exclusionary behavior. The behaviors associated with gossiping (Martin & Hine, 2005) include discussing another person's confidential personal information, making side remarks about another person, and talking behind another person's back. Gossiping can become a negative form of workplace behavior (Martin & Hine, 2005).

      Whereas Martin and Hine (2005) focus on the behaviors of gossip, others such as Blithe (2014) focus on the reasons employees utilize gossip in the workplace. Through interviews with sixteen virtual workers (i.e., organizational workers who worked remotely at least 50% of the time), Blithe (2014) found the main reasons for gossiping amongst co-workers was to gather necessary information, build relationship, and release emotions. The first reason of gathering information supports gossiping as a potential coping behavior that can be classified as seeking social support for instrumental reasons, assuming that the information gathered while gossiping helps one manage a stressful work situation (Carver et al., 1989). The last reason for gossiping, the releasing of emotions, emerged from participant explanations such as "It's usually just

somebody needing to vent…they're upset…" and being explained as "a natural way to blow off steam" (Blithe, 2014, p. 63). This supports gossiping as the seeking of social support for emotional reasons, as one is looking to gain moral support, sympathy, or understanding from a co-worker during the interaction (Carver et al., 1989). However, when venting is done in a way that hinders the gossiper by distracting him or her from staying on track with his or her work goals, it can become a negative coping strategy (Brown et al., 2005).

Martin and Hine (2005) found support for the negative effects of gossiping on targets of gossip. Gossiping had a negative association with co-worker satisfaction and health satisfaction, and a positive association with work withdrawal (Martin & Hine, 2005). Furthermore, gossiping can enhance coercive power in the workplace between not only the gossiper and the intended target, but also between the one gossiping and the one witnessing it, and it has the ability to harm the target's reputation in the workplace (Kurland & Pelled, 2000). This has negative implications for one's relationships with co-workers who are sources of social support in the workplace.

Essentially, venting and gossiping are two forms of interpersonal communication between co-workers that can become a concern for various persons in the workplace and their organizations. Venting and the behaviors associated with doing so (e.g., gossiping, profanity) hinder one's management of stress when they do not aid in the resolution of the problem causing the stress. This occurs when the behaviors address the emotion rather than the issue, when they are counterproductive to achieving a goal, or when they negatively affect one's relationships with co-workers. This makes venting behaviors maladaptive coping behaviors in the workplace. These behaviors also illustrate low-aggressive behaviors classified as acts of incivility (Andersson & Pearson). Research finds that aggression in the workplace (Chen & Spector, 1992) and incivility in the workplace (Cortina & Magley, 2009; Penney & Spector, 2005; Roberts et al.,

2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012) are related to stress in the workplace. The following section further explains incivility, behaviors referred to as acts of incivility, and what current research tells us about the relationship between workplace incivility and workplace stress.

Workplace Incivility

According to Schilpzand, De Pater, and Erez's (2016) review of the workplace incivility research, which included articles published between 2001 and 2014, this topic began growing in popularity in 2007, with 2012 being an especially rich year. The most widely accepted definition for workplace incivility is Andersson and Pearson's (1999). They introduced the concept of workplace incivility as a type of negative workplace behavior (Schilpzand et al., 2016). This study defines workplace incivility based on Andersson and Pearson (1999) as a low-intensity aggressive behavior with ambiguous intent to harm that goes against typical social norms or standards and are in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Behaviors of incivility, or acts of incivility, are characterized by rudeness and a disregard for others in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The following further explains and differentiates this form of aggressive behavior from others researchers have discussed as occurring in the workplace.

Form of aggressive behavior. Workplace aggression can take the form of incivility, bullying, and violence (Namie, 2003). In the literature, workplace aggression often coincides with terms such as workplace bullying, workplace violence, workplace or employee deviance, antisocial behaviors, and workplace incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, & Alberts, 2007; Neuman & Baron, 1998). Although the behaviors that comprise each category of aggressive behaviors can overlap (Andersson & Pearsson, 1999), researchers attempt to draw a more definite line between them (e.g., Namie, 2003; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007).

Namie (2003) placed the categories of acts of incivility, workplace bullying, and workplace violence on a 10-point continuum, based on their level of "interference with the accomplishment of legitimate business interests" (p.1) (i.e., organizational disturbance). Acts of incivility are on the lower end of the scale, followed by bullying between the scores of four and nine, and ten indicating the most severe form of workplace aggression, workplace violence. Although they distinguish workplace aggression from workplace violence, Neuman and Baron (1998) seem to similarly view workplace aggression as a broader category, defining it as "a general term encompassing all forms of behaviors by which individuals attempt to harm others at work or their organizations" (p. 393). At the time of Neuman and Baron's (1998) research, Andersson and Pearson (1999) had yet to introduce the concept of acts of incivility and its defining characteristic of ambiguous intent to harm. Therefore, Neuman and Baron's (1998) definition of aggression does not allow for the inclusion of acts of incivility. However, Neuman and Baron (1998) do allow for a general category of aggressive behaviors which smaller constructs can fit into. Lutgen-Sandvik et al. (2007) also agree with a broader scope of negative workplace behaviors, listing workplace aggression as a superordinate phenomenon, workplace bullying as an intermediate phenomenon, and incivility as a subordinate phenomenon. Workplace incivility is an example of a subordinate phenomenon according to Lutgen-Sandvik et al. (2007) because incivility has characteristic elements of intermediate phenomenon behaviors, with the higher phenomenon level absorbing the lower level phenomenon. Namie (2003) simply explains this as an escalation of behaviors, with workplace incivility having the potential to escalate into workplace bullying, but not the reverse. To better understand what separates workplace incivility from the other aggressive workplace behavior phenomena, acts of incivility will be further discussed.

Acts of incivility. Acts of incivility are the least intense aggressive behaviors found within the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Namie, 2003). They are more often verbal than physical, passive than active, and indirect than direct (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Acts of incivility can be further differentiated from the next level of workplace aggression, workplace bullying (Namie, 2003), by examining the four factors that define bullying: intensity, repetition, duration, and power disparity (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007). With workplace bullying, at least two negative behaviors (intensity) must occur weekly or more often (repetition), for six or more months (duration), with targets finding it difficult to defend themselves or stop the abuse (power disparity) (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007). Although, more than one act of incivility can occur at a time–for example, one slams down the phone and yells a profanity out loud at the same time– each acts is an act of incivility (Martin & Hine, 2005; Morrow et al., 2011). Behaviors of incivility can be characteristic of bullying, but the frequency of the behavior from the same instigator toward the same recipient, and the intentional infliction of harm (e.g., emotional, psychological) are the major differences between the two categories of behaviors.

These examples highlight a key factor in acts of incivility: the ambiguousness of their intent to harm another person in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Even though others might witness them, there is not necessarily anyone on the receiving end, no intended target, of these acts in the workplace. When one is on the direct end of one of these behaviors (e.g., a co-worker directly curses at another), the intent to inflict harm or ill-will on that person is less discernable (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Schilpzand et al., 2016). With bullying and more aggressive acts, there is an intentional recipient of harm or ill-will, and the target often feels powerless to stop it or stand-up to the instigator because of a power difference (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007; Namie, 2003).

Whereas with acts of incivility the behaviors can occur between people of equal power (e.g., co-workers) as well as between subordinates and supervisors (Schilpzand et al., 2016); incivility transcends hierarchies and is irrespective of rank (Martin & Hine, 2005). This is further illustrated by the fact targets of acts of incivility feel capable of reciprocation and may do so (Anderson & Pearson, 1999; Ferguson & Barry, 2011). With bullying, aggressive behaviors are typically one-way, and others are in fear of and controlled by the instigator (Namie, 2003).

Focusing on acts of incivility, another way to describe these acts are as behaviors that are characteristically rude and lack regard for others, including discourteous acts such as failing to say thank you or please and being loud in a typically quiet environment (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). However, according to Andersson and Pearson (1999) acts of incivility carry more meaning than a simple lack of courtesy. They violate mutual respect for people in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The principle of workplace incivility is easier to understand when one understands the principle of civility. Andersson and Pearson (1999) explain civility as transcending the intent to benefit one's organization and as transcending work value concern for others. The latter meaning it concerns more than just what is right or wrong in the work setting (Anderrson and Pearson, 1999). Workplace civility is what preserves norms for interpersonal mutual respect and is concerned with others in the workplace, versus simply with what is considered right or wrong in a particular workplace setting (Andersson and Pearson, 1999). Workplace incivility violates such norms.

Although, Andersson and Pearson (1999) acknowledge that workplace norms differ across organizations and industries, they argue that there still exists shared moral understanding and sentiment about what behaviors hamper cooperation amongst an organization's members. The following section reviews those behaviors appearing in different measures of workplace

incivility (Cortina et al., 2001; Martin & Hine, 2005; Morrow et al., 2011) that serve as examples of acts of incivility for this study.

Behaviors of. Acts of incivility in the workplace can include rude comments, negative gestures, sarcasm, disparaging tones and remarks, hostile stares, and the intentional exclusion of others (Lim et al., 2008). Measuring the frequency of such experiences of disrespect is the focus of the seven-item Workplace Incivility Scale (Cortina et al., 2001). Items on the WIS (Cortina et al., 2001) put the participant on the receiving end of acts of incivility, with statements asking if in the last five years a superior or co-worker has "put you down or was condescending to you," "made demeaning or derogatory remarks about you," "publically or privately addressed you in unprofessional terms," "doubted your judgment on a matter over which you have responsibility." Although the WIS is the most widely used measure of workplace incivility (Schilpzand et al., 2016), Martin and Hine (2005) developed the Uncivil Workplace Behavior Questionnaire (UWBQ; Martin & Hine, 2005) consisting of twenty items, derived from a list generated with the help of twenty-four adult participants employed in various industries and five experts on the topic of workplace mistreatment. Exploratory factor analysis resulted in twenty items tapping four factors: hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping. Examples of hostility items include one raising his or her voice when speaking to another and the rolling of eyes at another. Privacy invasion includes interrupting one while he/she is on the phone or taking items from someone's desk without permission. A person being excessively slow in returning a message is an example of exclusionary behavior. Gossiping includes a person making snide remarks about another and talking behind some someone's back.

In examining the current state of employee morale and in response to a perceived decline in interpersonal relations within a large state transportation organization in the Midwest, Morrow

et al. (2011) developed and administered a measure for perceived work unit incivility. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements such as "People in my work unit sometimes engage in name calling or inappropriate behaviors that make others feel uncomfortable", "I have heard comments that are personally derogatory or demeaning about people in my work unit," and "I sometimes hear profanity in my work unity." What Morrow et al. (2011) seek to examine with the phrasing of their statements is not only one's personal or direct (i.e., target) experience with incivility, similar to the WIC (Cortina et al., 2001) and the UWBQ (Martin & Hine, 2005), but also the experience of those witnessing incivility in the workplace. Like Andersson and Pearson (1999) and Lim et al. (2008), they are interested in the communal effect of workplace incivility.

Andersson and Pearson (1999) in their proposing of an escalating spiral of incivility in the workplace adopted an interactionist perspective. The interactionist perspective of incivility emphasizes the interpersonal and situational factors of the event. As Andersson and Pearson (1999) explain, it is important to consider the situation (e.g., context) and conditions of it (e.g., behavioral norms) in which exchanges between people occur because they can influence instigators perceptions of their incivilities as being legitimate or moralistic and can perpetuate exchanges of negative behaviors. The interactionist perspective falls in line with the transactional approach to stress (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) which emphasizes the relationship between a person and his/her environment, the context of the event, and how those things affect a person's experience of stress and coping, as well as shapes the experience of others in the shared environment. Being an interactive event, this means incivility consists of several contributors who are also affected by the event: the instigator, the target and/or the witness, and the social context (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The following section discusses the roles and effects of

the people involved, while the social context specific to this study, the T & L industry, will be discussed in a later section.

      Instigators, targets, and witnesses. An instigator of an act of incivility refers to the one acting out or perpetrating the aggressive behavior. This person may or may not be intending to harm another individual, accounting for ignorance, oversight, and lack of consciousness (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The person who is the direct receiver of the aggressive communication or behavior is the target. However, the use of this word does not imply intentional harm by the instigator, accounting for misinterpretation or hypersensitivity of a target resulting in accidental harm (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al., 2001). Witness refers to a person in the workplace who is not the direct recipient of the aggressive behavior, but whose perceptions and expectations can be changed as a result of being indirectly exposed to the behavior (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007). The instigator, target, and witness share the same work environment and can each be affected by incivility in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Most research regarding workplace incivility focuses on the relationship between instigators and targets and the effects on targets (Schilpzand et al., 2016). However, research has begun to examine the effects on witnesses (Morrow et al., 2011; Lim et al., 2008; Totterdell et al., 2012).

      Lim et al. (2008) extended the research on the effects of incivility that had focused primarily on those directly involved (i.e., instigators and targets) to include others (i.e., witnesses) in the workplace that comprise a workgroup. Workgroups consisted of participants who fit all three criteria of working in the same division, in the same department, and on the same shift. Using the WIS (Cortina et al., 2001) along with various other measures for job related and health outcomes, Lim et al. (2008) tested their model of the effects of workplace incivility.

For both individuals and workgroups, their model proposed direct effects of incivility on job satisfaction and mental health. Lim et al.'s (2008) model also examined indirect effects, proposing job satisfaction mediates the relationship between incivility and turnover intentions, and that mental health mediates the relationship between incivility and physical health. Furthermore, they hypothesized that there is also a relationship between job satisfaction and mental health, leading to mental health not only having a direct relationship with incivility ,but also an indirect one by way of job satisfaction.

To collect scores for workgroup incivility, Lim et al. (2008) used participants' workgroup members' scores, excluding the participant's scores for whom they were measuring. According to Lim et al. (2008) this allowed them to capture the workgroup's climate without the participant's individual biases and better capture vicarious exposure to incivility. They modeled this procedure from previous research examining workgroups and interpersonal aggression and sexual harassment. Lim et al.'s (2008) procedure was supported by significant between-group differences and within-group agreement.

To test their hypotheses, structural equation modeling was used, which resulted in Lim et al.'s (2008) model being fully supported for personally experienced incivility. In addition to the proposed and supported indirect links to turnover intentions and physical health for personally experienced incivility, testing also revealed significant direct links to these outcomes. For workgroup experienced incivility, there was also a negative impact on job satisfaction and mental health, but no direct paths to turnover intentions and physical health, emphasizing the mediating role of job satisfaction and mental health and their relationship with workgroup incivility. Lim et al. (2008) suggest possible theories of co-victimization, fear of becoming the next target, or

perceptions of incivility indicating a negative work environment as possible reasons for the workgroup effect.

What research such as Lim et al. (2008) ultimately reveals is that there are effects for both targets and witnesses of incivility. Although targets may be more likely to experience more direct effects (Lim et al., 2008), witnesses can suffer from a range of effects including reduced task performance, reduced creative performance, higher negative affect, reduced helpfulness toward others, dysfunctional ideation, and emotional exhaustion (Schilpzand et al., 2016).

Those instigating acts of incivility do not go without effects themselves, although they are not given as much attention as target effects or witness effects (Schilpzand et al., 2016). Researchers instead primarily looks at antecedent factors to instigating workplace incivility which includes characteristics of the perpetrator, his or her attitudes and perceptions, and situational factors (Schilpzand et al., 2016). However, if an instigator engages in an act of incivility such as venting or gossiping, there can be negative effects for him or her including a distraction from work, decreased performance, increase of negative emotions (Brown et al., 2005), and interpersonal effects such as others fearing the perpetrator and losing trust in the perpetrator and a loss of credibility (Kurland & Pelled, 2000). These effects can further affect an instigator and his or her person-environment relationship with the workplace by bringing more attention to a stressful situation, distracting him or her from moving forward to the next situation that awaits, and taking time and energy away from accomplishing the next situation (Brown et al., 2005), which could result in another stressful experience, especially if the next situation's outcome is negatively affected because of the delay or lack of attention. The loss of credibility (Kurland & Pelled, 2000) might affect the instigator's ability to seek others as a source of support at a later time when support is needed in a demanding situation within one's workplace,

leaving the instigator with limited resources which can result in an imbalance within the person-environment relationship, the key element of stress (Lazarus 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Therefore, acts of incivility can harm and threaten an instigator in the workplace.

In summary, what research regarding acts of incivility in the workplace tells us is that these behaviors have the ability to affect a wide range of people (i.e., instigators, targets, and witnesses) because of their unavoidable interpersonal connection in accomplishing work tasks within a shared work environment that makes what one does has the opportunity to affect another's environment thus experiences in it. Current research proposes as one of the effects of incivility in the workplace is workplace stress (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Penney & Spector, 2005). The following section examines the relationship between acts of incivility and stress in the workplace, and how research supports this relationship from both an antecedent and an outcome perspective.

Acts of Incivility and Stress

In development of the most widely used measure of workplace incivility (Schilpzand et al., 2016), Cortina et al. (2001) tested the WIS alongside measures of employee well-being. Since then, research has continued to examine the psychological and physical effects of workplace incivility, with such effects usually measured in order to examine one's experience of stress (Beattie & Griffin; Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008; Totterdell et al., 2012). However, stress is also examined as the reason for the acts themselves (Chen & Spector, 1992; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012). The next section reviews research supporting the latter relationship between acts of incivility and stress, where workplace stress is an antecedent of acts of incivility in the workplace.

Stress as an antecedent. More research examines the effects of incivlity in the workplace than causes of incivility in the workplace (Roberts et al., 2011; Schilpzand et al. 2016). However, Roberts et al. (2011) state that antecedents may be especially important regarding this type of aggressive workplace behavior because its ambiguous, sometimes mild and passive nature makes it hard to detect and punish. Identification and reduction of what may lead to such behaviors is especially important in order to reduce them (Roberts et al., 2011).

Finding that previous research had suggested a stress-incivility relationship, but had failed to test it, Roberts et al. (2011) examined the direct relationship, with psychological capital (i.e., one's positive psychological state of development) as a moderator. Roberts et al. (2011) support their argument for a direct relationship between higher stress levels and acts of incivility based on Spector and Fox's (2005) stressor-emotion model of counterproductive workplace behaviors. Spector and Fox's (2005) model illustrates how an employee may first encounter a situation (e.g., overwhelming job demands, interpersonal conflict) that he or she may appraise as a threat. Roberts et al. (2011) explain that an appraised threat can result in stress, which can result in an emotional response, leading to a behavioral reaction. Acts of incivility (e.g., yelling) being a possible reaction to negative emotions such as frustration and anger, in an attempt to reduce those emotions (Roberts et al., 2011). One's perceived control over a situation and personal factors such as personality moderate the outcome of a behavioral reaction, but the process begins with an environmental stressor, defined by Spector and Fox (2005) as "an objective feature of the workplace that tends to be perceived as a stressor by people" (p. 159).

Using the UWBQ (Martin & Hine, 2005), along with measures for job stress and a psychological capital, Roberts et al. (2011) find that job stress is positively related to incivility, but that one's psychological capital can buffer the outcome of acts of incivility. Their results are

similar to Taylor and Kluemper (2012) who found that although personality traits (i.e., neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness) can moderate the effects, job stress (i.e., role ambiguity, role conflict) and perceptions of being a target of incivility in the workplace are related. Examining perceived incivility using the WIS (Cortina et al., 2001), Taylor and Kluemper (2012) found one is more likely to perceive experiencing workplace incivility under higher stress conditions, and as a result are more likely to engage in aggressive workplace behaviors. Ultimately, Taylor and Kluemper (2012) argue that a person's aggression felt toward job stress is displaced on co-workers, with perceptions of incivility or mistreatment toward him or her moderating enacted aggression on others.

Based on prior research regarding experienced workplace frustration resulting in aggressive workplace behaviors, and research regarding workplace stress, Chen and Spector (1992) reason that the experiences of stress and frustration in the workplace are not so different considering their like conceptualizations, and shared factors such as role conflict, role ambiguity, situational constraints, interpersonal conflict, and workload. Using a measure of interpersonal aggression with items regarding sabotage, hostility and complaints, alongside measures for the mentioned work stressors, Chen and Spector (1992) found all work stressors except for workload were related to the aggressive acts of sabotage, interpersonal aggression, hostility and complaints. Workload was only modestly related to hostility and complaints (Chen & Spector, 1992). Regarding interpersonal aggression and affective reactions, Chen and Spector (1992) found a significant relationship between negative work related emotions (i.e., frustration, stress, and anger) and interpersonal aggression, hostility and complaints.

Although, research is scarce regarding the antecedents of workplace incivility (Schilpzand et al., 2016), there is a foundation of research that theorizes (Anderrson & Pearson,

1999) and supports (Chen & Spector, 1992; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012) a connection between the experiences of workplace stress and the outcome of acts of incivility. The next section reviews the opposite relationship, stress as an outcome of acts of incivility, which more of the workplace incivility research has examined (Chen & Spector, 1992; Roberts et al., 2011; Schilpzand et al., 2016; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012).

Stress as an outcome. Although most researchers investigating acts of incivility in the workplace study behaviors, factors, and outcomes quantitatively, more recently research has incorporated qualitative methods (Beattie & Griffin, 2014; Totterdell et al., 2012). For example, Beattie and Griffin (2014) and Totterdell et al. (2012) had participants record their experiences and respond to measures of acts of incivility in the workplace throughout their workday, so that levels of stress and emotions in relation to these experiences could be examined.

Combining the longitudinal diary method with survey research, Beattie and Griffin (2014) sought to capture the within-person effects of workplace incivility on a person's well-being and work attitudes over a period of time. Using Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli's (2001) job demands-resources model for stress, Beattie and Griffin (2014) categorize workplace incivility as a possible job demand one encounters in the workplace. Defining job demands as the physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of one's job that require a person to use his or her physiological and/or psychological resources, Beattie and Griffin (2014) argued that involvement in interpersonal experiences of incivility as a result of work tasks is a psychosocial job demand. Having to use and deplete one's personal emotional resources to manage experiences with incivility in the workplace ultimately results in an experience of stress on an employee, which Beattie and Griffin (2014) tested for, along with effects on one's work engagement. Regarding the main effect of experiences with workplace incivility on one's stress

level, Beattie and Griffin's (2014) study revealed that on the individual level one did experience higher levels of stress on those days respondents experienced incivility in the workplace. The significance of the effect was greater than between-person effects of incivility on general stress levels, data that were collected from an initial survey administered to participants (Beattie & Griffin, 2014).

Researchers investigating workplace incivility and stress suggest such behaviors serve as daily hassles and, if they occur frequently enough, can result in effects of chronic stress (Cortina et al, 2001; Lim et al, 2008) and have physical and mental effects (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). Lim et al. (2008) found, after controlling for job stress, that targets of acts of incivility and indirectly exposed workgroup members experienced a direct negative effect on mental health, measured by symptoms of increased anxiety and depression. Cortina et al. (2001) revealed the same relationship between targets of incivility and psychological distress. Lim et al. (2008) also revealed that for targets, there was a direct effect on physical health. Martin and Hine (2005) found relationships between certain factors of incivility and health outcomes. Gossiping had a negative relationship with one's health satisfaction, and exclusionary behavior was negatively related to psychological well-being (Martin & Hine, 2005).

Researchers also examine the role of emotions in response to acts of incivility in the workplace (Penny & Spector, 2005; Porath & Pearson, 2012; Totterdell et al., 2012). Porath and Pearson (2012) examined the emotions of anger, fear, and sadness in relationship to acts of incivility. Reasons for anger in response to incivility might include having interpersonal norms of respect violated, or having one's identity or self-esteem threatened or challenged (Porath & Pearson, 2012). Fear can be the result of one feeling threatened or discomforted by the perception that there is impending danger, and sadness may be the result of appraisals of

powerlessness in a situation, hopelessness, and damage to expectations and relationships (Porath & Pearson, 2012). Porath and Pearson's (2012) main purpose was to examine how emotions moderate the relationship between targets' perceptions of incivility and their behavioral response to those acts. They found that levels of anger, fear, and sadness increase along with increases in perceived workplace incivility (Porath & Pearson, 2012). The emotions associated with acts of incivility are the same emotions that can indicate someone is experiencing stress.

For witnesses to workplace incivility, emotions can also be experienced (Totterdell et al., 2012). Over time, these experiences can become a drain on personal resources through the psychological toll managing and regulating emotions can take (Totterdell et al., 2012). This taxing effect is what Totterdell et al. (2012) examined amongst workers' experiences with witnessing acts of incivility. Witnessing negative interpersonal interactions between co-workers can carry personal significance and evoke unpleasant emotions for witnesses (Totterdell et al., 2012). A witness may try to understand the target's thoughts and feelings, including in a situation where the witness perceives the target is exerting self-control. Ultimately, it is the appraisal process Totterdell et al. (2012) are referring to, reasoning that a possible outcome of the appraisal process is not only one's own emotional reaction to what his or her co-worker is experiencing, but also a reaction to the need to regulate those emotions. Having to exert personal resources on self-control regarding negative behaviors or tendencies has been shown to cost employees in regard to work performance (Brown et al., 2005). Totterdell et al. (2012) found that employees felt more emotionally drained after witnessing unpleased interactions (e.g., a rude comment) compared to pleasant interactions between co-workers, and that this effect was moderated by the witness taking the perspective of the target of the behaviors. Considering that co-workers often share similar responsibilities and tasks throughout the day, with one's work having the ability to

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affect another's, these results have important implications for the how the stress experienced by one employee who is a target of incivility in the workplace, might have a similar stressful effect on his or her co-worker.

This means acts of incivility can become stressors in the work environment for various people (Andersson & Pearson, 1999) by negatively affecting their person-environment relationship (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Furthermore, acts of incivility are workplace stressors with the potential to create a pattern of behavior that leads to further acts of incivility or more severe forms of aggressive workplace behavior (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Penney & Spector, 2005), thus creating further issues for the person-environment relationship in the workplace.

The research on workplace incivility has occurred in a wide variety of jobs and professions, but very little looks at the T & L industry (Schilpzand et al., 2016). The following section reviews what research there is regarding incivility in this industry.

Context: Transportation and Logistics Organizations

Researchers have examined the effects on drivers of negative dispatcher (i.e., fleet manager) and driver communication behaviors (Fourneir et al., 2012; Sarbescu, Sulea, & Moza, 2017). Undermining is a form of interpersonal mistreatment from co-workers or supervisors that hinders positive interpersonal work relationships (Sarbescu et al., 2017). Sarbescu et al. (2017) found a relationship between supervisor (i.e., fleet manager) undermining a driver and driver errors, but that driver burnout partially mediates the relationship. Undermining behaviors are also examples of acts of incivility (Cortina et al., 2001) such as talking down to someone and belittling someone. The mediating role of burnout suggests undermining and interpersonal mistreatment are workplace stressors. Burnout appears in the stress literature as a reaction to

work related stress (Burke et al, 2007; Sarbescue et al., 2017). Turnover is another negative effect that has been associated with driver work stress (De Croon et al., 2004) and with incivility (Lim et al., 2008; Morrow et al., 2011; Pearson & Porath, 2005). Forunier et al. (2012) found negative communication between a fleet manager and driver can affect driver turnover intention. the mental and cognitive step prior to the act of quitting that involves conscious and deliberate desire to do so. Morrow et al. (2011) examined the negative interpersonal behavior of incivility between co-workers in a state transportation organization and found support for its communal effects on lower job performance.

Forunier et al. (2012) interviewed dispatchers (i.e., fleet mangers), truck drivers, and management and labor representatives to better capture attitudes, perceptions, and operational insights. Analysis revealed various issues emerged including the interdependence of the dispatcher and driver, and the important role of listening and mutual respect (Fournier et al., 2012). Although Fournier et al. (2012) did not specifically investigate negative interpersonal communication behaviors, examples emerged during the interviews including dispatcher failure to give adequate time and attention to drivers, being dismissive of driver issues and refusing to help, and giving orders in lieu of listening and explaining. Due to the high-volume and high-stress work environment of transportation, operational demands took precedence over interpersonal demands or needs including instrumental and emotional support for the driver (Founier et al., 2012). Founier et al.'s (2012) study laid the foundation for exploring negative interpersonal communication behaviors between transportation employees, partly due to job-related pressures.

Currently, there is a lack of research investigating the experiences of operations office employees (e.g., fleet managers, load planners) in the high-stress T & L industry, and the impact

stress can have on them (e.g., Juster et al., 2010; McEwen, 1998b) and their organizations (e.g., employee absenteeism, loss of productivity, turnover) (Pearson & Porath, 2005). Furthermore, considering what research is beginning to reveal regarding a relationship between workplace incivility and workplace stress (Beattie & Griffin, 2014; Cortina et al, 2001; Lim et al., 2008; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012), and indications in current research that incivility exists in the T & L industry (Forunier et al., 2012; Morrow et al., 2011; Sarbescu et al., 2017), investigation into the topic of incivility amongst transportation employees is warranted. However, the acts of incivility do not occur because of stress alone. Workplace norms permit such behaviors to not only occur, but also continue.

Perceived Workplace Norms

Workplace norms consist of moral standards that have arisen from a workplace's community tradition, which both formal and informal organizational policies, rules, and procedures can influence (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Norms guide a person's behavior, telling him or her what is acceptable and rewarding within asocial environment, and are revealed or communicated through others' actions with whom they share an environment (Bandura, 1971, 2001). Therefore, it is important to examine the norms employees have regarding common and acceptable behaviors for communicating stress in the workplace. Perceived norms guide behaviors as employees encounter both familiar and new situations within their environments.

Andersson and Pearson (1999) discuss how a spiral of incivility can emerge in a workplace. Although their spiral of incivility allows opportunities for incivility to be diverted so acts of incivility do not continue and/or intensify amongst employees in their shared work environment, incivility also has a chance of continuing in reciprocal acts of incivility and of reaching a tipping point in which the spiral and aggressiveness escalates (Andersson & Pearson,

1999). Eroding of norms of civil behavior can help facilitate the continuation of incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). When acts of incivility occur on a regular basis between employees and are not formally sanctioned through policies, rules, and procedures just as regularly, cues are offered to employees regarding what are tolerated workplace behaviors and what are not. Bandura's theory of social cognitive learning (1971, 2001) explains cues and how they are provided through the process of modeling.

Modeling provides a symbolic representation that transports one's experiences (the model's), including the person's thoughts, actions, and feelings, into the lives of others (Bandura, 2001). Modeling makes observational or vicarious learning possible (Bandura, 1971). A person is able to avoid learning by personal trial and error, and instead learns from others' trails and errors. Cues within modeling not only warn others of danger or harm, they also offer incentives for behaviors through perceived rewards which condition and reinforce actions (Bandura, 1971, 2001). If one performs a behavior and another observes it and sees no negative outcome, it can reinforce that behavior even if the behavior is an aggressive behavior one might not otherwise perform (Bandura 1961, 2001). This explains how acts of incivility can come to be perceived as desirable or at least tolerated in one situation or environment, while they might not in another environment. The more tolerated a behavior is perceived to be by a group of people, the more likely an informal behavioral norm can emerge that allows the behavior to continue in that environment or in similar situations.

The informality of an organization's climate plays a key role in the social interactionist perspective of workplace incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Andersson and Pearson (1999) define an organization's climate as the observable practices and procedures that result in the surface level of life in an organization. Examples of such practices and procedures include word

choice, conversational patterns, nonverbal cues, and emotional expression (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). A climate's informality can unintentionally encourage disrespectful behaviors amongst people in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). This is attributed to the ambiguity informality allows for regarding what is or is not acceptable in a workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999).

In regard to the likelihood of acts of incivility occurring in response to stress, if a climate of informality in an organization includes relaxed rules and procedures when it comes to interpersonal communication amongst employees, allowing aggressive behaviors, no matter how mild, to be tolerated, then norms are being set or modeled (Bandura, 1971, 2001). The norm being set is that aggressive behaviors are okay when dealing with stressful workplace situations. This can affect current employees as well as new employees who go through socialization (Chao et al., 1994) and adaption (Pulakos et al., 2000) processes in the workplace and learn or relearn skills for formal and informal communication within their work environment.

Summary

In line with research regarding the workplace stress and workplace incivility relationship (Beattie & Griffin, 2014; Cortina et al, 2001; Lim et al., 2008; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012) and the importance of context in the experience of stress (Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987), this study researches the phenomenon of workplace stress and incivility in the environment of T & L organizations. This study proposes a model for the perpetuation of stress in the workplace through acts of incivility, and examines incivility as a group experience, adding to a line of research similar to Andersson and Pearson (1999), Lim et al. (2008), Morrow et al. (2001), and Roberts et al. (2011). The experiences of instigators, targets, and witnesses are investigated. At the organizational level, if such acts are allowed to

become a part of the perceived behavioral norms of the workplace, then they can signal that a culture does not value and respect the well-being of its employees. Such a culture can impact the well-being of individual employees, as well as the health of the organization through effects such as lower job satisfaction, increased absenteeism, loss of productivity, and turnover (Lim et al., 2008; Morrow et al., 2011; Pearson & Porath, 2005). For this reason, the stress and incivility experiences of employees within organizations must be examined. This study seeks to do this for the organizations in the T & L industry. The following section presents a model and the research questions that will be used to test it.

Chapter 3

Presentation of Model and Research Questions

A cycle of incivility is presented by Andersson and Pearson (1999), in which incivility occurs and is perpetuated in a work environment in part due to an organization's climate of informality. They argue that acts of incivility in a workplace can be a stressor in the work environment by presenting a threat on one's self or an attack to one's identity, which can then result in an affective response of anger (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Roberts et al. (2011) also support a cycle, where stressful environments increase acts of incivility, and acts of incivility increase a stressful work environment. However, Roberts et al. (2011) examined and supported only one aspect of this cycle showing workplace stress as an antecedent to acts of incivility. They rely on Penney and Spector's (2005) findings to support the cycle regarding workplace stress as an outcome of acts of incivility amongst co-workers. In order to test and support such a cycle, both aspects need to be examined together. The current study does this by presenting the model for the cycle of stress in acts of incivility (CSAI), shown in Figure 1. One-on-one interviews were conducted amongst full-time employees to examine whether acts of incivility in the workplace can occur because of stress, as well as produce stress.
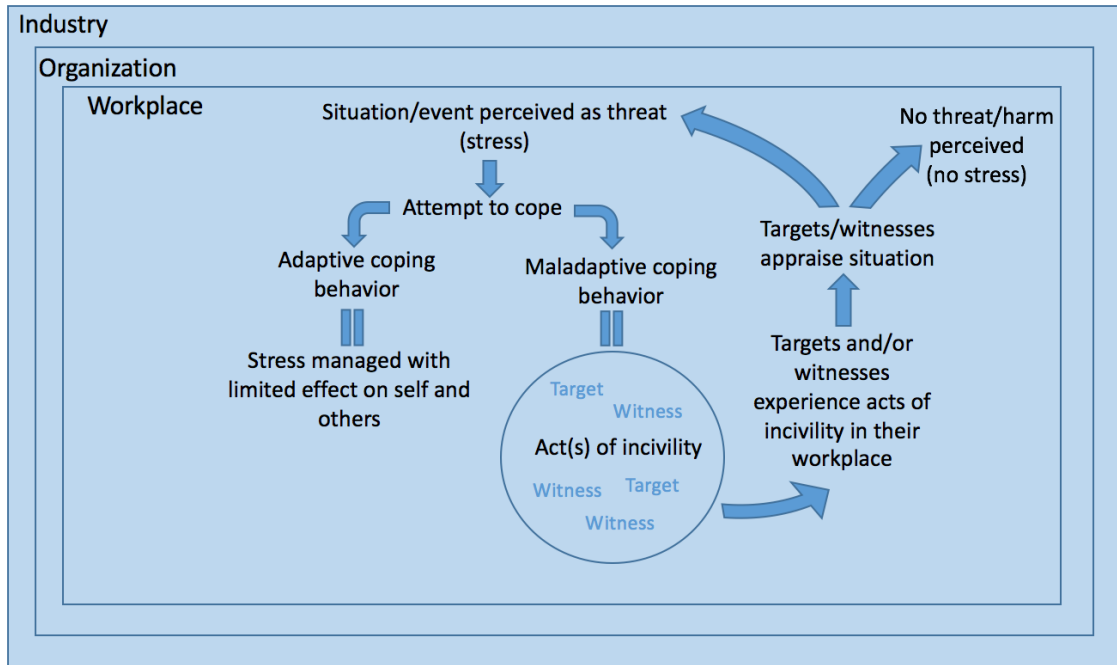
Figure 1. Model: Cycle of Stress in Acts of Incivility (CSAI)

The flow of the CSAI model begins after the appraisal process, with a perceived threat to

one's person-environment relationship (Folkman et al., 1986; Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus &

Folkman, 1987). This is followed by an attempt to manage the stress or cope (Folkman &

Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus, 1995). In attempting to cope, one choices behaviors that can help

(adaptive coping) or hinder (maladaptive coping) their situation (Brown et al., 2005; McEwen,

1998b; Zeidner & Saklofske, 1996). If one choices behaviors that help reduce the experienced

stress, then the stress is managed with limited effect on the person and on others whom the

person might have sought out social support (Carver et al., 1989; Folkman & Lazarus, 1980)

from during the coping process. If one chooses behaviors that hinder the process of reducing or

managing stress, a possible behavioral outcome could be that of acts of incivility. Acts of

incivility such as gossiping or the use of profanity (Martin & Hine, 2005) can be used to vent or

release one's emotions (Blithe, 2014; Brown et al., 2005). Venting is a means to emotionally

cope with stress by releasing the distress, anger, and aggression commonly associated with stress

(Brown et al., 2005; Bushman, 2002; Carver et al., 1989). However, acts of incivility can have negative effects for both the one engaging in the behavior, the instigator, and the others with whom the person shares an environment (i.e., targets, witnesses) (Albrecht et al., 1994). If these others experience a co-worker's acts of incivility, they are now confronted with a situation in their person-environment relationship within the workplace that requires them to appraise the situation in regard to their own well-being (Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). All of this occurs within the context of a workplace, which exists as part of an organization, which exists as part of the larger context of an industry. Since stress is the main factor of this study, the sample studied comes from a high-stress industry (i.e., the T & L industry). This study examined the truck or over the road (OTR) operations office personnel, focusing on their experiences of stress and coping, and acts of incivility in the workplace.

To begin examination of this group of employees' daily workplace experiences regarding stress and coping in the workplace, and a possible relationship with acts of incivility in the workplace, the first question asks:

RQ1: Are acts of incivility common behaviors for the communication of stress in T & L organizations?

The communication of stress is important for three reasons: it indicates one's need to cope and represents one's mental and physiological attempts to do so (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus, 1999; McEwen, 1998a, 1998b), it serves as a sign to others (Bandura, 1971) of a perceived stress in this shared environment that they must now appraise (Lazarus, 1995), and it can have effects for all parties in the shared environment (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Lim et al., 2008; Morrow et al., 2011). Common ways of communication stress are important to examine because a trend in these perceptions can reveal a norm of how a group of people are not

only allowed to behave, but also how they are taught to behave (Bandura 1971, 2001) in similar stressful workplace experiences. The workplace behavior this study is examines is low-aggressive behavior in the form of acts of incivility occurring within T & L organizations. Examining the occurrence of such behaviors in the everyday work life of those in the T & L industry can reveal characteristics of this workforce's communication that tell us more about the environment in which the employees work, the stress they experience, and the norms they perceive as existing that help shape their communication or behaviors specifically in response to stress.

One of the ways to better understand this is to ask about perceptions of what behaviors are accepted or seen as behavioral norms within the workplace. Therefore, the second research question asks:

RQ2: Are acts of incivility perceived as norms for how employees can respond or cope with their experiences of workplace stress in a T & L organization?

Predicting that acts of incivility will emerge as a behavioral norm amongst this specific workforce, the next set of questions this study focuses on investigate the possible effects such behavior has on employees. These effects can include negative emotional and physical outcomes of exposure to acts of incivility. The emotional effects of coping behaviors that exhibit emotions are important to study for two reasons. First, feelings and emotions are part of the appraisal process, during which one determines if there is a reason to feel stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). The experience of emotions such as anxiety, fear, anger, worry, frustration, guilt, and shame can occur (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Folkman & Lazarus, 1990). Emotions also play an important role in what behaviors are enacted to manage the stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990), with common coping strategies being both problem focused and emotion focused (Carver et al.,

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1989). Second, emotions can be shared and reinforced within an environment. Someone who might not have originally felt a negative emotion related to stress (e.g. frustration, anxiety) may develop such an emotion through observing cues in the behaviors of others (Bandura, 1971, 2001). Emotions are not only important to the instigator's evaluation and experience of stress, but also to the target's and/or witness's subsequent evaluations and coping experiences.

Researchers investigating stress reactions identified physical implications physical implication due to the effects of negative or maladaptive coping behaviors (McEwen, 1998a, 1998b). Negative coping behaviors contribute to the overworking of a person's body (i.e., allostatic load) by exasperating the experience of stress, placing more pressure on the systems of the body, making it harder to function and respond to stress (McEwen, 1998b). McEwen (1998a, 1998b) did not list aggressive communication or behavior as a maladaptive coping behavior, but he did recognize the impact hostility and social instability had on the cardiovascular system. Other research connected the experiences of aggression with responses of the brain (Isenberg et al., 1999), increased heart rate (Honeycutt, Keaton, Hatcher, & Hample, 2014), and hormone production (Aloia & Soloman, 2015), indicating the body is experiencing stress. The result of these physiological experiences of stress over time may manifest themselves in more obvious symptoms that can range from mild to severe. Responding to accumulated stress, one may have experienced and/or sought medical attention for conditions such as headaches, increased blood pressure, weight gain, anxiety disorders, or increased risk of heart attacks or stroke (Chandola et al., 2006; Juster et al., 2010; Stansfeld & Candy, 2006). In addition, counterproductive coping behaviors further contribute to one's allostatic load (McEwen, 1998), thus contribute to the ultimate effect of long term stress and coping: disease, aging, and mortality (Juster et al., 2010).

Given the nature of a shared workplace environment, it is important to not only examine the emotional and physical effects on the one experiencing an initial stressor and attempting to manage it through acts of incivility (instigator), but also those who are on the receiving end of the behaviors (target) and who witness them (witness). For these reasons, the next set of research questions ask:

RQ3a: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the witness?

RQ3b: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the target?

RQ3c: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the instigator?

Asking the research questions presented in this study will help examine if acts of incivility are commonly used by office employees within the T & L industry in response to stress, and if such behaviors perpetuate the experience of stress for the instigator of the behavior, as well as co-workers who share the same work environment. If this is revealed, that acts of incivility are both coping behaviors and stressors, then the CSAI can be supported.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Sample Recruitment

This qualitative study focuses on individuals who work or have worked in operations office roles within a T & L organization. Individuals in such roles are responsible for the planning of freight and/or managing of company drivers and were often referred to as load planners and fleet managers. Another position often found working alongside load planners and fleet managers is an account manager. Account managers are responsible for managing the service and request needs of customers, and are in constant communication with customer representatives. Because account managers often share a work environment with load planners and fleet managers, and the work of all three positions is interdependent, they too may be considered part of an operations department. Nineteen people who held one of these positions participated in this study.

In order to recruit people in such positions for this study, the researcher used personal contacts made from working in the T & L industry to begin the snowball sampling technique. The process began with the researcher calling or texting seven personal contacts, each with varied T & L experience who knowingly fit the participant criteria. They were provided with a description of the study's focus, informed of interview procedures, and asked for their willing participation. Six of these contacts participated in interviews. All contacts were also asked for their participation in recruiting other willing participants. Six more participants were recruited through snowballing.

In addition to personal contacts, the professional social media site LinkedIn was utilized to recruit participants. Over a period of approximately two months, the researcher made a total of

three posts to her LinkedIn page, which were sometimes reposted by her LinkedIn contacts to their pages. The posts explained the research being conducted was for a University of Arkansas Department of Communication graduate school thesis, that participants needed to have experience working in operations at a T & L company, and that they would be asked about their workplace experiences within the industry. They were also informed of their right of confidentiality to the extent allowed by applicable State and Federal law and University policy, the chance to win a $30 Visa gift card for participating (a drawing was conducted following the completion of interviews), and asked to contact the researcher if interested in participating or for further details via LinkedIn or her provided school email address. The researcher also recruited participants by reviewing the LinkedIn contacts of her LinkedIn contacts who worked in the industry, reviewing profiles of people and determining based on their listed experience if they fit the sample criteria. If it appeared they did, then the researcher sent them a private email explaining why they were being contacted, the purpose and focus of the study, details of the interview process, and asking for their willing participation. Seven participants were recruited through LinkedIn.

Sample

The technique of purposeful sampling (Palinkas et al., 2015) was utilized to gain better understanding of the conditions under which acts of incivility occur in the T & L workplace amongst a select group of employees (i.e., operations office employees). Since those in positions of account manager, fleet manager, and load planner are often part of each other's experiences of acts of incivility in the workplace and are knowledgeable about this phenomenon, people working in one of these positions were recruited. Seventeen out of nineteen total participants held past or present experience in a corporate office setting, with some now in field offices

managing dedicated fleets, working for smaller T & L companies, or working from home in an operations role. With the exception of one, all were still employed in the T & L industry, most still in operations with the exception of two who were now in sales or training. Thirteen participants still managed and/or planned over the road (long-haul) or dedicated (medium to short-haul) company drivers, which are referred to as being in the truck sector of the industry. Three participants were managing drivers or monitoring and planning freight for brokerage or rail, two other T & L sectors. All participants were full-time employees of T & L organizations during their discussed time within the industry, with at least six month's experience in the industry. The shortest amount of time in the industry was a year and a half. The shortest amount of time in a truck operations role was six months. The greatest amount of experience in the industry was approximately thirty years. Eleven men and eight women were interviewed.

Since the researcher was examining the relationship between workplace stress and acts of incivility within the T & L industry, participants were purposely recruited who had varying company experience. The use of LinkedIn in the recruitment process helped gather participants with such experience. Although many participants overlapped sharing a common employer within their overall experience, many also have experience at more than one company. The breakdown of experiences is as follows.

Seven participants were from one publicly-traded T & L company (A) located in the southern United States. Four were current employees of company A, with only T & L experience at A. Two previously worked for A, but were now with different T & L companies. One worked for A, but quit and was no longer working in the industry. Six participants worked for a second publicly-traded T & L company (B) located in the same southern state as company A. Three were current employees of company B, with only T & L experience at B. One had previously worked

for another T & L company, but was a current employee of company B. Two were past employees of company B, and were currently employed by different T & L companies. Four participants worked for a third publicly-traded T & L company (C) located in a southern state, but in a different state than company A and B. One was a current employee of C with T & L experience only with C. Two participants no longer worked at C, but were employed with other transportation companies. One had previous T & L company experience as a truck driver, but was a long-standing office employee of company C. Two additional participants worked for neither of the above companies. One had previously worked for two different T & L companies, the first being a large privately held company in the northeast United States. The other had worked for various smaller privately held T & L companies across the United States and was currently working in the southern United States. The following discusses how data was collected from the nineteen total participants.

Data Collection

Informal one-on-one interviews were the primary tool for this study's data collection. Depending on the geographic proximity of the researcher to each participant and convenience for the participant, interviews were conducted in person or over the phone. Seven interviews were conducted in person, and twelve were conducted over the phone. Both were recorded for transcribing purposes. Before meeting with participants or conducting phone interviews, the researcher communicated with them either by phone or email to again briefly review the research topics that would be discussed, answer any questions they might have, and confirm a date, time, and location (if applicable) to meet. Since stress and acts of incivility could be considered sensitive subject matters, participants were made aware in these pre-interview communications of the type of questioning that would take place to avoid any discomfort or surprise for them

during the actual interview. The following discusses the measures for data collection and the procedures for data collection.

Survey. To prime participants on the specific type of communication or behavior being studied and asked about, before interviews were conducted a survey of perceived workplace incivility was administered. The survey was based on Morrow et al.'s (2011) original survey consisting of six statements of agreement. To provide participants with a more complete list of behaviors that can be considered acts of incivility, nine more questions formed from the acts of incivility list provided by Martin and Hine (2005) were added to the survey for a total of fifteen statements of agreement (Appendix A).

For participants who were met in person, after reviewing and signing the participant consent form, the survey was administered. They were advised to ask any questions regarding the behaviors and survey. After completion, the survey remained in front of participants so they could reference it if needed during the interview, and it was collected after the interview. For participants interviewed on the phone, the consent form and survey was emailed to them a few days before the interviews. They were informed of the forms beforehand and in the email each form was briefly explained and participants instructed to complete both before the interview and email them back to the researcher. They were advised to ask questions regarding the forms, and to keep a copy of both forms to reference if needed during the interview. All forms were completed and received from in person and phone participants.

Interviews. Conducting interviews provides qualitative data investigating acts of incivility in the workplace, which currently is predominately measured quantitatively (Schilpzand et al., 2016). During interviews, participants were asked to reflect on and discuss their experiences with workplace stress and acts of incivility in the T & L workplace, the possible

relationship between the two, and their perceptions of the effects of these behaviors. A set of fourteen questions developed by the researcher (Appendix B) was utilized to help guide the discussion and ensure data were collected to investigate each research question. Interviews averaged approximately an hour and a half, and were informal, allowing for natural conversation and details to emerge. This informality was necessary to allow for the interrelation of data collection and analysis that is a characteristic of grounded theory, with analysis of previous interviews helping direct following interviews, so that as related details revealed themselves they continued to be examined in the following interviews if necessary (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). How grounded theory was utilized in this study's data analysis is discussed further in the analysis section.

Analysis

Since the purpose of administering the survey to participants was to prime them on the definition of acts of incivility and the behaviors that are examples of such acts, analysis of the surveys was not deemed necessary in examining the phenomenon this study is interested in. Therefore, only the data collected from the interviews was analyzed. The following discusses the procedures for interview analysis.

Interviews. According to Corbin and Strauss (1990), generalizing findings to a broader population is not the goal of grounded theory analysis, but rather it is to specify phenomena in order to build a theoretical explanation of a higher-level phenomenon (e.g., workplace stress and incivility in the environment of T & L organizations). This is done by examining conditions that give rise to the phenomena, examining how the phenomena are expressed through action or interaction, and the various consequences or effects that result from the phenomena (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). In other words, although one may be examining a specific sample or group of

people (e.g., T & L operations office employees), it is not about prescribing a specific behavior or event to the group (e.g., acts of incivility in the workplace), but rather understanding if such phenomenon occurs amongst them, how often it does so, under what conditions, and to what effect. Considering the aim of grounded theory and that of this study, to better understand the daily workplace experiences of T & L operations office employees and the relationship between stress and acts of incivility in this environment, grounded theory was utilized to analyze this study's interview data.

In accordance with the grounded theory procedures outlined by Corbin and Strauss (1990), analysis began at the time of data collection, so that subsequent interviews could be directed by cues found in previous interviews. According to Corbin and Strauss (1990), the attention to and use of cues is important to ensure that possibly relevant issues are explored throughout collection. Therefore, along with the planned interview questions, the researcher expanded on or asked additional follow up questions based on details previous interviews revealed that seemed appropriate to further explore. To help with the discovery of cues, interviews were typically transcribed within two days of the interview, before the next interview if time allowed. The researcher took notes during transcription, recording details that seemed especially interesting and prompted another thought or question, or revealed a possible theme. Hand notes were also taken during phone interviews, which became a part of the analysis process. However, these hand notes occurred only during phone interviews because the act of taking notes might have distracted from the natural flow of conversation between interviewee and interviewer. Researcher rephrasing of interviewee statements was also utilized as a way for participants to confirm their thoughts and experiences, as well as indicate to the researcher when she transcribed that it had been an interesting point made during the interview. The last few

interviews were not transcribed as closely to their collection time due to time constraints. However, these were phone interviews so hand notes were taken. By then cues needing further exploration had been narrowed down and saturation was occurring. Notes primarily identified recurring patterns and especially interesting comments regarding the interviewees' experiences.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim, with the exclusion of sounds or expressions that were not relevant to the data and without strict attention to proper spelling and with the use of abbreviations, so long as their use would not lead to possible misinterpretation or confusion in later readings of the text. As interviews were transcribed into individual Word documents, the researcher would highlight text that presented interesting points or cues. The researcher would insert notes between the question asked and the response given identifying the researcher's interpretation of the response. This helped the researcher become better familiar with the text, make comparisons and see differences between each interview regarding interviewees' workplace experiences and perceptions of these experiences (e.g., reasons for, consequences of). All interviews were transcribed in this manner, beginning what Corbin and Strauss (1990) refer to as the open coding process, in which the data is broken down analytically to allow the researcher better insight into what the data reveal versus what the researcher may be judging is happening, which could be influenced by his or her own subjectivity.

After transcriptions were complete, continuing in the open coding process, beginning with the first six interviews, each interview was reread in full, with the comment feature of Word used to highlight individual pieces of the text, segment by segment. This step allowed the researcher to take thicker pieces of the text and break them down to better reveal what participants were explaining and expressing throughout their interviews. In-vivo code phrases, which use key phrases from the data and capture the main idea of what is said (Eaves, 2001),

were made alongside each highlighted piece in the right-hand margin of text to help the researcher. This step was especially valuable for the researcher considering her experience in the industry. The breaking down of text forced her to step back from the general complexity of the situations expressed in the text, with many being personally familiar to the researcher, to better see the individual components of the participants' experiences that were personal to them. This allowed the researcher to follow the participants along their expressed journeys. After using Word for this step following the first six interviews, the researcher decided to begin organizing the data in an Excel workbook. Removing segments of data from the individual transcripts and placing them together in Excel allowed the researcher to further break down and better compare the text.

Five worksheets were created in the workbook, each worksheet tab labeled for one of the research questions. Data from each of the first six interviews was moved over into the workbook and placed in the appropriate spreadsheet. Next to the text was a column for the interview number so the quote could be referenced later in its original context if needed, followed by a column for the in-vivo coding. During this process, the researcher shared with her thesis committee chair and one of her thesis committee members this spreadsheet to confirm her analysis procedure. Receiving both their confirmations, analysis and transfer for the remaining thirteen interviews was completed. Although the researcher did not reduce the coding further at this point, an idea of emerging concepts did begin forming and these were kept within the hand notes of the researcher.

Next, to help organize and better visualize the scope of the data, the researcher printed out the in-vivo code phrases for each research question. Beginning with the first research question (RQ1), these phrases were cut into individual slips of paper and arranged on the floor of

the researcher's home workspace. Each phrase or slip of paper was read and placed on the ground one-by-one with similar code phrases being grouped together. Maijala, Paavilainen, and Astedt-Kurki (2004) used this technique of manual sorting data to allow all phrases to be visible at once. Following a similar manual process allowed this study's researcher to review each phrase, compare phrases, and confirm each applied to the research question being analyzed for, or if it better revealed something in regard to another question. If the latter was determined, the slip of paper was put aside for when data analysis began for that research question. Once all phrases were placed on the floor and in like-code groups for RQ1, these groups were examined to see which ones might create larger groups or clusters, and these clusters then sorted to form meta-clusters (Eaves, 2001). The mix of major and sub-steps (i.e., restating phrases, creating and reducing of clusters, labeling of meta-clusters) of grounded theory analysis used in this study is in accordance with Eaves's (2001) synthesis approach that is based on procedures outlined by prior grounded theory researchers, including Strauss and Corbin (1990).

In order to answer RQ1, the initial plan for examination of the data was to examine what behaviors (e.g., acts of incivility) participants associated with their stress and when. During the manual sorting of the data in regard to which behaviors occurred, the concepts of who and why also emerged, adding to the complexity of the data, and further revealing the context or situations in which these acts were occurring. At this point, the researcher decided to transfer the RQ1 related data back to a new Excel workbook to help with organization of the data, dividing the data into four worksheets labeled what, when, who, and why. Transferring the phrases on the slips of paper back into a new Excel spreadsheet allowed the researcher to reread the data and again work with it manually, which helped her to stay engaged and immersed in the data. The researcher loaded phrases one worksheet at a time.

Once all phrases were loaded into their corresponding worksheet, the phrase or data in each worksheet was analyzed by further breaking down the phrases so main ideas became more concise. Phrases typically ranged from two to six words and captured a complete thought, description, or perceived explanation/reason. The rephrasing and breakdown process was continued until the main idea of the phrase resulted. Some phrases required two rounds of analysis after the initial phrase entry, while others could take up to four rounds of analysis. Phrases in regard to the second research question (RQ2) required the most rounds of analysis because of the complexity of the process involved in norm creation and the richness of the data in regard to this question. During these rounds of analysis, categories and sub-categories began to emerge. Throughout the rounds of analysis, data were constantly compared to help ensure similar data were assigned to the same category, and non-similar data were provided with or grouped with another category, as well as helped ensure data and categories continued to be assigned appropriately throughout this process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

As an example of the coding process, the following is a section of data collected in response to asking a participant to give an example of a behavior he engaged in while at work because of stress that would not have been acceptable outside of the T & L workplace. This piece of text was broken down into the underlined phrases. The first underlined phrase helped answer RQ1. The phrase was initially coded as making a demeaning comment which was then placed in the *behavior* category and the sub-category *verbal*. The phrase was also coded as *what* about (i.e., What is the subject surrounding the act of incivility?), and then coded as *performance*. The second underlined phrase helped answer RQ2, and was rephrased as "some people make it and are successful, but some people don't survive." This was then rephrased as "you won't be successful" and "you won't stay," which were coded as two consequences of *not*

being able to adapt. The category they were placed in was *adaption*, and the sub-category of

consequence (e.g., outsider, exit).

> Sometimes in language <u>questioning their work ethic, questioning their manhood</u>. Some it worked out real well for, <u>they become director or CEO of companies</u> and others well, they found a different niche in life and <u>they are no longer in the transportation field</u>.

As concepts, categories, and sub-categories emerged, so too did the links between them.

These possible links were repeatedly examined as analysis continued, as were any questions that

emerged. This process allowed the researcher to exhaust any further questions and begin to

narrow in on the emerging central theme referred to as the core category (Eaves, 2001). The

following section provides the results of the analysis.

Chapter 5

Results

The following reviews the results of the performed grounded theory analysis. The categories, concepts, and subcategories that further our understanding of the everyday workplace experiences of operations office employees in T & L organizations as they relate to experiences of stress and acts of incivility are provided. After this study's research questions' results are reviewed, results regarding the proposed CSAI model are provided, with a new model presented in its place. A new model was necessary after the core category or central phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) of this study was identified. Results begin with the first research question.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked: Are acts of incivility common behaviors for the communicating of stress in T & L organizations? To begin answering this question, the research located in the data and examined what specific behaviors or acts of incivility were occurring amongst T & L office employees according to participants. Although the survey utilized as a prompt could have helped with this examination, the interview was a better tool for this analysis because in addition to being verbally listed in response to interview questions, acts were also provided in real scenarios or events, thus in the context of participants' everyday workplace interactions. This context became key as the situations in which the acts were occurring revealed the complexity that surrounded them in relation to others and the environment. In breaking down this complexity, not only were the behaviors (what) revealed, but so too were the commonality markers of why, who, and when. The what is reviewed first.

What.

Behaviors. Various behaviors emerged and resulted in five sub-categories: verbal, physical, style, mediated, and descriptors. Verbal acts of incivility included public scolding or berating, profanity, raised voices, yelling, excessive questioning, telling inappropriate jokes, making snide remarks, name calling, and making demeaning comments. Profanity, raised voices, and yelling were especially prevalent, with such behaviors referred to as "everyday language" and as a normal means to emphasize what one is trying to communicate within the workplace. In addition to verbal behaviors, there were also physical acts of incivility. Physical behaviors included: throwing headsets, slamming keyboards, slamming desk mouse, slamming phones, throwing pens or pencils, slamming or banging one's fist or hand on the desk, and eye rolling.

When asked to list some of the behaviors seen or heard in the T & L workplace that were thought to be co-workers' reactions to stress, participants often mentioned several of these verbal and physical behaviors.

> There was a lot of profanity. That's probably the biggest and most reoccurring one is profanity. Just hanging up the phone and saying mean things about a planner or an account rep or driver. Anyone really, it could happen literally with any job that competes with what you are doing, saying things like that. There's a lot of phone slamming, pencil throwing, slamming something down. Mouse is a big one. There was one guy that always slammed his mouse on the table. There was a lot of headsets being slammed down pretty hard.

Although many of the behaviors described were often ones experienced in person, participants also reported acts of incivility using work email and instant messaging programs. Computer mediated behaviors were often described as passive aggressive in nature and where one avoided the use of profanity, even though profanity was the most often heard and used behavior in person. Refraining from profanity in mediated messages was attributed to the fact participants were aware their emails were permanent and monitored. However, these type

messages were seen as a way for co-workers to respond to someone when "they need someone to

yell at right now" and to do what one might not do to someone if they were face-to-face with that

person. Acts of incivility in workplace emails were prevalent enough for one participant to state

within her workplace they were currently "trying to get out of that culture of just sending a hate

email about it." Examples of behaviors considered acts of incivility occurring in mediated

messages included excessive back and forth questioning, unnecessary remarks, the use of all

caps lock indicating one is yelling, and unnecessarily copying in managers, which was referred

to as "throwing someone under the bus."

Behaviors involving emails often included the next category of behaviors that was

formed to incorporate the verbal and physical acts that could be less direct and less obvious, and

harder to explain with exact behaviors: styles of behavior. The category of style included:

shortness or directness, dismissing others needs, a lack of patience with others, being critical,

displaying a condescending attitude, belittling, a lack of assistance, and being passive aggressive.

An example of how the style and mediated categories might intertwine comes from an example

one participant gave of an email sent that "didn't have any profanity in it but the wording, the

meaning behind it, wasn't very good":

> I should have done something on my end to alleviate the situation right then rather than
> dragging it out. I could have fixed that problem right then, but I don't remember the exact
> situation, I was probably behind, I probably had customers calling me, I probably had
> thirty other emails to look at. When it gets like that, that's when I'm sometimes short to
> or easy to say stuff like that. Basically, I was saying that's not my problem. I don't have
> time to deal with it.

In addition to specific behaviors or acts of incivility, participants also used terms or

phrases to refer to these acts. These terms described not only the acts, but also indicated these

acts represented more than the behaviors themselves. These terms and phrases formed the

category descriptors. Descriptors included: snapping, attacking, battling, freaking out, lashing

out, losing one's mind, and venting. The use of these phrases represented the possible occurrence

of more than one act of incivility during an event, and the complexity surrounding such

behaviors. When a participant was asked what "freaking out" meant, the following example was

provided:

> Working with account reps, they work directly with the customer so they are in contact
> with the customer, so if the customer is yelling at them, they are going to be yelling at us,
> and then I'm like 'I don't have a truck at 7 a.m. to pick up this load,' and they don't
> understand. They are like 'Why? Are you not doing your job correctly?'

> This event included not only the acts of yelling and criticizing, it also included an

external factor, the customer, and revealed details regarding internal job structures and conflicts.

To break down the complexity of such data, in order to better understand participants'

experiences in the workplace, the data were returned to with the question: What subjects

surround acts of incivility? Another way to state this question is: What does the act of incivility

seem to be about? Analyzing data that helped answer that question resulted in two categories that

revealed what was often the subjects of these behaviors: performance, and abilities or

knowledge.

What about. As in the above quote (i.e., Why? Are you not doing your job correctly?), a

person's performance was often the subject of acts of incivility. Performance included one co-

workers evaluation of another co-worker's job or work task performance. Abilities or knowledge

included implied perceptions or implications another person was not capable of successfully

performing a job or task. An example of one of these interactions came from asking a participant

what had occurred during the interaction she witnessed between two co-workers before the target

of the act of incivility "ran out of the room crying":

> Just a comment about how they didn't think she was doing a very good job and to her
> abilities she feels like she's doing the best she can and it's not good enough and someone
> is being rude to her and not even saying it in a nice way to where it is constructive

criticism, it's just criticism.

Other examples included a participant being called an amateur when she was unable to reach a driver for a co-worker, and co-workers screaming back and forth "telling someone to pretty much fix their stuff." Although the emergence of these subjects did not explain the reason for an act of incivility, they were important to analyze because they lead to questioning why another's performance would be important enough to his or her co-worker for an act of incivility to occur.

Why. Asking why acts of incivility occurred was important to answering RQ1 because this research question was not simply asking if acts of incivility are common in T & L organizations, but rather are they common in response to stress. Therefore, the researcher needed to determine factors that might lead to one engaging in an act of incivility, and whether these factors had a relationship to why one might experience workplace stress. Three categories emerged from this examination and are discussed: workload unfairness, self-defense, competing goals and priorities.

Workload unfairness. Issues with workload unfairness emerged as a reason for tension between co-workers that could result in acts of incivility between co-workers. Workload unfairness included one having too much work, the perception of unequal work amongst co-workers, and one's workload being negatively affected by fault of another co-worker.

Too much work (work overload). Regarding amount of work, participants stated that their workloads resulted in a lack of time to be tactful, courteous, or helpful in response to co-workers' questions and needs, resulting in behaviors such as "barking" at co-workers when they approached them with a need or the co-worker's need being dismissed. Workload also increased the likelihood of acts of incivility by leading workers to feel bound to their desks, not affording

them the opportunity to leave their desks and take breaks to help relieve their feelings of stress and frustration. Being able to remove themselves physically from their workplace environments and take breaks, go on short walks, or sit in their cars were mentioned as key to allowing participants the opportunity to "go gather your thoughts and go back professional instead of attacking somebody" and to not "unleash on someone who probably doesn't deserve it." Over time in their positions, participants stated that workload seemed to increase, with more drivers to manage, more safety issues to monitor, and being put in positions to handle the work of two jobs rather than one. Not everyone was perceived to have as much work as others, though, leading to another source of tension: unequal work.

Unequal workloads. Ones who were perceived to not have as much work were those who despite being in the same position as others had easier fleets to manage due to their number of drivers and/or the experience of their drivers, or those whose assigned territories were considered easier for planning and managing freight in. The inequality between workloads would become even more apparent to participants when it was perceived that those who had the easiest workloads were the ones being rewarded even though "they are probably the worst employee on the floor. They fail every single load, they never take calls, and they are always behind, but they always have great numbers because they have a great fleet." The inequality of workload in relation to recognition was also perceived by the giving of more work to the ones who were continually doing a good job despite their heavy workload, while those with less work continued to have less.

Participants recognized that a reason for the unequal workloads could be a matter of "luck of the draw." However, unequal workloads were also created by the business strategy implemented by management at a particular time. Recalling when a new team was created within

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the operations department of her company and was allowed to "cherry pick" their loads and

"steal freight" from co-workers, resulting in co-workers having to book more freight to replace

or redo what had already been done, a participant described an interaction that occurred between

co-workers on opposite sides of the situation:

> The load coordinator noticed that her fright was disappearing off her load board and was like 'What is going on here?' and the other guy was like 'I rolled this one, it's only going to West Memphis,' and the coordinator stood up, called him by name in front of everyone and said, 'I don't care if the load is going to hell, never take a load from my area without checking with me.'

Unequal workloads essentially lead to tensions between co-workers because they lead to

some having natural advantages over others, making it easier for them to perform their work and

reach their work goals. This inequality resulted in further tension between co-workers when it

was perceived that issues with workload fairness were due to other's not performing as much or

not exerting as much effort (versus not being given or having as much work). The last concept of

workload unfairness, other's fault, emerged from perceptions of the actions of others causing

more work and stress for their co-workers.

Other's fault. When one co-worker perceived another was possibly causing more work

for him or her, the result could be an act of incivility through which the co-worker confronted the

other about his or her work performance or efforts. The result could also be one making rude

comments, demeaning or snide remarks, or name calling behind the backs of a co-worker. Next,

one participant explained the impact of a co-worker's efforts on the workgroup, and another

provided an example in which acts occurred as a result of a perceived difference in co-worker

efforts.

> Her slacking off and having social hour with the drivers puts more phone calls on everybody else in the group. There's nine of us in the group now, so each of us having seventy drivers, out of nine people and her having a forty-five minute conversation about her dog, it tends to set people off. I'm having serious conversations over here and you

are talking about your dog. So it puts stress because we get more phone calls and we have certain duties we are suppose to get done each day.

I worked with him in a group and he was constantly leaving the group, roaming around the building, flirting with the girls, whatever he was doing when he was gone. I started keeping track of the times he was gone from his desk and it was adding up, building frustration for me, and when he came back once I said, 'Where have you been?' and he got angry and said, 'I've been in the bathroom if that's okay with you.' I said, 'For thirty-seven minutes, you might have a problem.' The fight started, he took his headset, threw it down and it busted all over and he yelled at me, 'Out in the hall!' He wasn't going to beat me up, but he wanted to argue with me.

Because co-workers often used acts to address the issues of workload fairness amongst themselves, this naturally lead to another reason as to why acts of incivility could occur, in self-defense.

Self-defense. Confronted by acts that question their work performances and efforts, participants often felt attacked in their workplace, felt the need to defend themselves and their work, or perceived the need to avoid or assign blame for an issue. Although participants expressed their efforts to not take acts of incivility in the T & L workplace "personally," many of them struggled with doing so when it came to co-workers in other positions questioning their work and work efforts.

You are working your butt off just to get yelled at by someone who doesn't really understand. They look at it as you are not very good at your job or whatever the case is and that's what I mean by take it personal because it's like 'No, I am working my butt off. You just don't see that.'

Excessive questioning or berating, or the style (e.g., condescension) in which a co-worker approached another co-worker were examples of acts of incivility which occurred leaving participants to feel they or someone else was being attacked. Participants explained that over time these types of interactions built up resulting in "the stress of constant nothing was good enough, what you were doing." In response, employees who were the targets of these behaviors might also engage in acts of incivility. These acts could be less direct, such as failing to take the

time to explain a situation or giving another the needed help, affecting teamwork which is vital to

successful operations in T & L organizations. These acts could also be of equal or greater

aggression, especially when an employee felt they had to respond because by not doing so they

"sit there like a moron and let someone yell" at them.

> The account manager did not like that answer and came over to my desk. I'm not going to say was yelling, but it was obvious we were not having a 'Hey, how are you?' conversation. She was a bit loud and I am sitting at my desk and she is standing up at my desk and it was awkward for me anyway because I don't like those situations, but I felt like I was in the right….I just stood up and told her you need to move away from my desk, you do your job, I'm doing mine, if you don't like the way I'm doing my job, I have a manager, and she yelled 'That's crap!' and walked off. I did get a little loud. I don't think I cussed but I got loud and told her to never walk over to my desk that way, that I had a phone and email.

Being in an environment where one was on defense regarding his or her work also led to

the likelihood of blame being assigned for issues amongst co-workers. The blame could be in

response to issues that had occurred such as a failed load or a driver not following a load

assignment correctly, or it could be blame placed in anticipation of issues to come with a co-

worker.

> You get to the point where you are like 'Oh, this fleet manager is on this load, it's going to fail.' You might have a negative idea of this person already, that something is not going to get done or something is going to get done wrong because this person is handling it. It's gotten to that.

These negative ideas about others were not kept private. They were shared amongst co-

workers, labeling or name calling certain people lazy, or their work (e.g., load) as failed work

before it had even been performed or occurred. Placing blame and defending one's work or self

emerged to be important in this context because it was how employees helped ensure they got

their way, putting them closer to achieving their goals and priorities. When a co-worker

presented a threat to other co-workers' goals, the one who perceived the threat could become

frustrated and angry, leading to the questioning, berating, raised voices, and other various acts of

incivility that could occur in these moments of confrontation between co-workers. However, these acts were not because of issues between co-workers themselves. Participants explained that they liked their co-workers and that they understood what was occurring between them was "business." Many explained that it was the conflict between their goals that often put them in direct competition with one another instead of working toward one common goal. The following explains the next category, competing goals and priorities, that emerged from further examination of why acts of incivility occurred amongst T & L office employees.

Competing goals and priorities. There were three different situations in which goal and priority competition took place that affected office co-workers interactions. They were customer versus driver, co-worker versus co-worker, and expectations versus reality.

Customer versus driver. Starting with customer versus driver, participants stated that what customers needed and demanded was often not what the drivers needed and demanded, and visa versa. An example of this is a customer wanting a load picked up or delivered at a time that interferes with the best utilization of a driver's DOT regulated driving time. Although a planner tries to align the two, they often do not line up perfectly and issues at the customer (i.e., shipper or receiver), such as production delays, or customers not following the proper protocol or plan, can affect the driver greatly when it comes to being loaded and unloaded in a timely manner. This can then affect the driver being able to best utilize his or her allowed daily driving time and impact his or her future load plans. This creates issues for current and future customer product needs, and affects the driver's pay which is typically based on mileage.

> We work with our customers from a production environment so you have a lot of things that go wrong in their four walls. Now your loads aren't ready and your drivers are upset because they are sitting there because they aren't making any money on down the line, and now they are fussing at a dispatcher who is looking to a planner to get another load and maybe there isn't another load or if they don't wait for the load then no one else can get it.

Being the ones most aware of the wide-ranging implications and being the ones held

responsible for both the customer and the driver needs can create tension between office

employees, with the source of the tension being the differences between what is best for the

customer versus what is best for the driver. Balancing the needs of the two is further complicated

by what is described as a current driver market and customer market in which the industry

suffers from a shortage of qualified drivers and companies struggle to keep the ones they do

have, making it important to keep drivers as happy as the customers the revenue depends on.

Position versus position. The positions and goals of office employees in T & L

organizations reflect the competing sides that exist within the industry, but outside of the

workplace. The fleet manager represents the needs of the driver, while the load planner is

accountable for all the loads in a territory making him or her the customers' internal

representative. Sometimes, a third office employee assumes the responsibility of representing the

customer, placing the planner's priorities mainly on all the loads within an assigned territory.

The bonuses and jobs of the employees in these varying positions depends on them reaching

their individual work goals. These work goals often directly compete with one another. For

example, one factor the load planner is scored on is empty miles, with fewer empty miles being

best. A couple factors a driver manager is graded on are helping a driver have a certain amount

of miles per week and getting the driver home on his or her planned home time. When the load a

driver needs to be assigned in order to meet one of the fleet manager's goals to be met does not

coincide with the load planner's goal, then issues between co-workers can arise and acts of

incivility occur.

> The planner for my trucks was not getting my trucks home, so I let him know you got to
> get them home, and he was pretty much 'Well, this load has to deliver,' and I was like 'I
> understand that but we are going to have to find a different option.' And they don't want

to change that. They want to keep that and let us deal with it on our own, and that's unacceptable because they are the planner, they are the ones that get to put the load on the drivers, so they are the ones that have to come up with that option. And if they start yelling, then the next person does, and that's pretty much what happened to me and this other person.

In addition to varying and competing goals amongst positions in the T & L workplace, the expectations placed on employees also compete with the reality of the industry and the daily tasks and control of the office employees.

Expectations versus reality. Despite the fact participants stated that issues are constant and inevitable in transportation, employees are held to expectations that do not necessarily consider this fact or the constraints employees face. There are many factors out of employees' control, such as environmental (e.g., weather), road issues such as traffic, mechanical breakdowns and accidents, customer delays, driver behaviors, and another employee's quality of work. Despite these factors, many people within the office come in contact with others who do not know or understand them, thus they have expectations that are often not realistic when it comes to the chance of avoiding issues and delays.

> We are in a very high-tense industry where deadlines have to be meet. If deadlines get missed, we are punished. There is a lot of stress. We have to spend a lot of our time. In our industry there is a lot of pressure to get things done and get them done in a timely manner and nothing is ever suppose to go wrong and when those things go wrong they get highlighted overnight and it just becomes so aggressive and people freak out. It's very interesting. You see people at their best and you see people at their worst.

The main constraint that is often not understood by customers is that of DOT driver regulations. The results for a company or driver not adhering to these regulations can be a large penalty and the loss of a license or job. Failure to meet DOT driver regulations can also put the safety and lives of drivers and others on the road at risk. That safety aspect makes the lack of understanding and concern on customers' parts especially frustrating for office employees, and keeps customers from truly understanding what they were asking T & L employees to do or

preform. However, it was not only customers whom participants felt lacked awareness regarding the impact of DOT regulations on their daily work. Employees felt expectations placed on them by management are not realistic considering the various reports, reviews, and monitoring that are required of office employees to ensure DOT safety standards are upheld, in addition to the monitoring of load progress, proper assigning and dispatching of drivers, and tending to any issues or needs of drivers that might occur on the road. One participant explained what she described as a "disconnect" between management and the daily reality of employees:

> You are getting yelled at constantly by the people who have been displaced from those positions so long they imagine that position should be easier than it is because they did it but when they did it they managed fifty or sixty drivers no problem, but at that time there was not a huge DOT safety and records system in place. Electronic logs were not a thing.

Essentially, employees felt placed in workplace situations which led them and others to engage in acts of incivility. These situations occurred because workloads varied creating a sense of unfairness and inequality amongst co-workers, employees felt forced to defend themselves and their work in an effort to prove they were performing their jobs as they should or could, and they felt set up to compete with one another for their jobs and livelihood.

When. Establishing the commonality of acts of incivility in response to stress within T & L organizations was the main concern of RQ1, however examining the factor of how often these acts were occurring was also necessary. How often became a part of the commonality marker of *when*, along with location, used for answering RQ1. Examining for the frequency of participants' experiences with stress and acts of incivility in the T & L workplace, both were often described as daily and throughout the day occurrences.

> Shouting at each other, the cursing another person out. If you are out in public trying to be a peaceful, a decent human being, you are not going to be acting like that around people. A lot of that had to do with the stress people were involved in, had to deal with at the time, whatever the situation was that they were having to handle at that time. It was a daily basis that we dealt with things like that. There was always something, some little

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blow up, some little issue, problem that got out of hand.

Although typically described as daily occurrences, participants noticed differences in frequency either between different T & L organizations they had worked for or within one T & L organization. Changes within the same organization while working within operations departments were perceived as related to changes in leadership, fluctuations in workload, and fluctuations in stress. Amongst different organizations, fluctuations were attributed to leadership and company mission or culture, company size, and mode of transportation (e.g., dry van, reefer, flatbed). Whether drivers were driving dedicated routes or OTR, long-haul routes also seemed to affect the office employees' experiences with stress and acts of incivility.

In addition to frequency, the position or location of interactions involving acts of incivility was an important attribute of their occurrence. These locations included at a co-workers' desk, after phone calls with others, and in a chain reaction. Approaching another at one's desk to clarify an issue needing what one co-worker perceived as an immediate need could be seen as a way to avoid further misunderstanding, better clarify an issue at hand, resolve differences, and avoid the back and forth or escalation of emails participants said sometimes occurred when co-workers did not agree on a work-related issue. Approaching another at one's desk, however, also emerged as a frequent location for acts of incivility to occur. An act could occur with one's approach, the person approaching upset about an issue, instigating an act of incivility toward the co-worker seated at the desk. An act could also occur after someone has approached, and was instigated by the employee at the desk. The person approaching bringing a need or issue to the person at the desk, compounding the workload the employee was trying to manage:

A gentleman came up to my desk. I was stressed out, I was busy, it was horrible. I had just

gotten a new area, I was wound up, it was wicked busy. He came up and gave me a truck number. It was the wrong truck number. He walked away. He came back again, interrupted me, gave me a wrong truck number again a second time and I looked at him and said, 'If you can't remember from over there to over here, write it down. Stop interrupting me with stupid crap.' I yelled at him.

Before this example was given, the participant had given the following description of her workplace environment:

I work in a room with about 120 people. It's very noisy all day long and the planners in our company are the go to people. We put all the freight on the truck, so if there's a problem with the freight, a problem with the driver, they come to us and I am going to describe this bluntly, I consider my job like a big pile and you have flies coming at you all day interrupting you and stopping you, frustrating you. You are trying to do a job and keep a happy attitude and some days it's fine, you don't have a lot of going on. People I work with are great I think, most of them, but it can be rough. Constant aggravation, swatting flies. That's what it feels like, 'Get away from me, leave me alone for five minutes!'

This example illustrates how location can be an important factor in examining acts of incivility in the T & L workplace in order to better understand the stressors that are upon a person in a specific moment or context. Examining this helps to identify why an act of incivility toward a co-worker might occur, avoiding the assumption that it was simply the co-worker's approach or simply the issue presented by the co-worker.

One did not have to be approached at his or her desk, though, for an act of incivility to occur. At one's desk is also where participants expressed their personal frustrations and witnessed others doing so as well, regardless if someone else had approached them. Such acts did not necessarily have an intended or present target. These could be in response to a discovered work related issue or unpleasant phone conversations with customers or drivers that transpired while one was working at his or her desk on the computer or while on the phone at one's desk. After phone calls is often when acts of incivility occurred. Examples of common behaviors in these instances were slamming a phone down, throwing a headset, profanity, and name calling or

insulting the person who had been on the phone. These acts were described as ways to express frustration and relieve stress.

> You see a lot of headsets thrown because we use headsets and we get calls all day. They never quit, they're constant, so some people have just flat out had enough and they get up from their desk, even if they are going to help the person on the phone, they will throw their headset just to make them feel better. Then I do know a girl that sits next to me who when the drivers make her mad she puts them on mute and then mouths them and gets back on the phone.

Sometimes the person on the other end of the phone call is the one engaging in the act of incivility. That person was often an external person, a customer or driver, who was upset and his or her reaction was directed toward the office employee. The use of yelling and profanity were the most common acts of incivility that occurred during these phone calls, along with the receiving of many phone calls and questions regarding an issue, referred to as "blowing up". This often resulted in a chain reaction effect that influenced interactions between co-workers within the office. Participants were aware of this effect, understanding that if a fleet manager was getting "chewed out" by a driver, or an account manager was getting yelled at by a customer, then often the planner or the person in the office position who was part of the issue and part of the possible solution would be "who they feel they need to pass it on to."

> She responded very negatively like 'Oh my gosh' is a very common one like to make it clear things aren't right, which I already knew because I am the one giving her that information. 'Oh my gosh, need to reiterate this is a plant shut down load. How could this happen?' Stuff like 'My customer is blowing me up.' They said that one a lot. There could be some account reps who could be kind of annoying but a lot of them the way they do it is they are not going to send me multiple messages in a row unless their customer is calling them multiple times in a row so in that case her customer might have been calling her every 30 seconds or emailing her 'Where is this driver at? We need him right now. We need an ETA.' So I am not saying it was just her being annoying, it could have been her customer hammering her on the phone and she is just trying to get an answer from me.

Understanding the location of acts of incivility, identifying these locations as in chain reactions, while at employee desks, and after phone calls, helped discover who was typically involved directly or indirectly with acts of workplace incivility in the workplace.

Who.

Anyone. The three subcategories of in the middle, co-worker and co-worker, and management and employees emerged when analyzing the data to determine who the participants in acts of incivility typically were in T & L workplaces. Because these revealed that anyone, regardless of position or level, could instigate, be a target of, or witness these behaviors within the T & L workplace, they were listed under the category of anyone. Each subcategory was necessary to explain that despite any person or employee in the workplace being able to be involved in an act of incivility, the data revealed that they existed in the context of three types of relationships.

In the middle. In the middle emerged from participants often describing themselves or their co-workers as being in the middle of others with competing needs and demands. During such interactions, employees were not only representing others' interests (e.g., drivers, customers), they were also often in between others who were instigating acts of incivility.

> Everyone is between people in every position. As a planner, I felt I was between driver managers and account managers and trying to manage this middle piece and keep them away and explain things when I could, when I had time, if I wasn't overwhelmed. As a driver manager, being yelled at by the drivers and having this mean planner putting this terrible load on me, or I'm in between as an account manager between the planner and customer. There is always a battle in between that you are facing and someone is always yelling at you from one side.

Regardless of one's work position, everyone was placed in the middle position at one point, with the typical scenarios being the following: load planner in the middle of the account manager and the driver manager, the account manager in the middle of the customer and driver manager or load planner, driver manager in the middle of the driver and the planner or account manager. This made it more likely for certain positions to be the ones most at odds with each other, with goal structuring not helping to ease this conflict between co-workers.

Co-worker and co-worker. The co-worker and co-worker sub-category emerged from it

not being the needs or behaviors of those others one represents in a situation being the source of

tension between co-workers, but rather between co-workers' personal needs and goals. One

example is a co-worker trying to protect him or herself from being blamed for a load failure by

attacking another co-worker's performance. Another example is a co-worker trying to have his or

her driver assigned to a particular load because it is getting close to bonus time for the office

employee and that load is needed to help him or her reach the driver mileage needed for bonus,

but assigning the driver to the load is counterproductive to the planner reaching his or her empty

mile goal for receiving a bonus. Close to bonus time was when some participants noticed co-

workers in the office becoming more aggressive with their requests and needs.

Managers and employees. In addition to co-workers in opposite, but yet similar or equal

positons, acts of incivility could also occur amongst those with varying hierarchical power.

Behaviors such as yelling, public scolding, belittling actions (e.g., pointing in someone's face),

and negative toned emails occurred between managers and employees, and not necessarily with

one's direct manager. An example of an email might be a manager sending his team an email in

which he or she praises certain employees for hitting their goals, but also includes remarks that

send the message "the rest of you get your shit together you are embarrassing me." Participants

also recalled situations where they reached a point of tension in which they were yelling at a

manager to address an issue, or "end up yelling back" because a manager is yelling at them and

the employee is feeling attacked. One participant described a situation in which a manager

openly reacted to a difference in their current work priorities.

> We had to call each driver and personally show the load confirmed. Well, I had loads in
> there not confirmed yet and I was being told to get off the phone because I needed to get
> these loads confirmed. I was on the phone at the time with a driver and it upset me the
> fact I was being disrespected while my driver was on the phone, and it wasn't just that,

when I told him okay I will be off in a moment, I'm trying to over this. It was 'You better get off the phone right now and get this taken care of.' And when I hung up and let him know that was wrong to disrespect me like that was told if I don't like it I can get my stuff and go.

In the T & L workplace environment, anyone could experience acts of incivility. These behaviors were not dependent on who was more powerful than another. They could occur in response to any situation or anyone with which it was perceived there was a conflicting interest. This supports one of the key characteristics of acts of incivility, a lack of power differential, that according to Martin and Hine (2005) sets this group of behaviors apart from more intentional aggressive and harmful acts such as workplace bullying.

Although examining the what, why, when, and who of acts of incivility in the T & L workplace allowed categories to emerge that could help answer RQ1, suggesting that acts of incivility are a common way in which employees in T & L organizations communicate their experience of stress, they do not help establish such behavior as being the norm within T & L workplaces. Another set of questions helped collect the data that was needed to answer the second research question. The following examines what emerged from the analysis regarding RQ2.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked: Are acts of incivility perceived as behavioral norms for how one can respond to their experiences of workplace stress in a T & L organization? The data revealed three categories that support such a perception, explaining the process of workplace adaption in this context, how such behaviors are allowed, and how the creation and perpetuation of such behaviors in T & L workplaces occurs.

Adaption. Many participants were able to recall experiences they had with acts of incivility as a new employee within the T & L industry. Although less experienced T & L

employees could recall in greater details what their experiences were like, more experienced

employees were also able to recall experiences as far back as when they first began in the

industry twenty or more years ago. Such stories and participants' descriptions of their feelings

and thoughts during and regarding these experiences revealed not only the adaption process they

experienced as new employees, but also the experiences they continue to have within their

workplaces. The sub-categories that emerged as part of the adaption process were: new person

experience, acceptance, desensitization, and behavior change. Consequences for not being

successful in this adaption process also emerged: exit and outsider.

New person experience. Although the new person experience to the industry could not be

had again, one could be new to a different T & L organization. Several participants had

experience with more than one T & L organization. No participant stated that they had not

experienced frequent acts of incivility in the workplace while working in a T & L operations

department, and for all this was the experience with at least the first T & L organization they

worked for. While participants reported acts of incivility occurring less often in some of their

experienced T & L organizations, they perceived the likelihood of their occurrence as not

unusual within the industry and not uncommon within its organizations:

> Every person I have dealt with in transportation seems like they all have developed the
> same type of habits. They all feel very stressed. I think maybe it's something unique to
> the transportation field as far as operations goes.

The frequent experiences with acts of incivility in the workplace lead to them not being

seen as unusual behaviors within T & L organizations. One participant who had worked for three

T & L organizations, two larger (one truck, one reefer) and one smaller (flatbed), described what

it was like as a new employee in the smaller company in which considerably fewer acts of

workplace incivility were experienced compared to in the other companies.

I was totally shocked. I thought it was weird for the first couple months. I barely talked because I didn't want to let a cuss word slip. I've been accustomed to if something went wrong, 'Oh f-bomb.' So you are in a new environment, you feel like you are being watched because you are a new employee because you are being watched. You are on this trial run some might say. You don't want to do anything to mess up, so it's a culture shock that doesn't go on there. Then you have to watch yourself because you have been in that situation and you have gotten use to being in a situation like that, so you definitely have to watch yourself that you don't let any of your past behaviors slip.

Although this participant recalled what it was like adapting to a T & L organization where acts of incivility were not common, the adaption process that the majority of participants could recall was the opposite, and was one that included feelings of shock, disappointment, disbelief, and sadness in response to what was perceived at the time as unprofessionalism and meanness. A couple likened their first impression of working in the T & L industry as an office employee to their military experiences: "It was just like another day being in the Marine Corps. You fight, you get it over with, and you're friends again."

Within the new person experience, in addition to the feelings and thoughts one had during that time, there are two concepts that developed to explain patterns within the experience that supported acts of incivility as a workplace norm: same treatment and coaching. Same treatment referred to the new people in the workplace not being sheltered or spared from acts of incivility. They were not only witnesses to these acts, but they were often targets. New people were exposed directly to snide comments, belittling remarks, name calling, and blame.

The first week I was just so mind blown by it. I think one day I almost even cried because people were so, not cruel but I think I took it too personally when they were like "This is your fault."

They witnessed the same, as well as reported co-workers yelling at each other and confronting each other at their desks as early as their first week on the job. Employees who were not new to the industry, but who had moved to a new company or role within the company, but whose new co-workers were unaware of their past T & L experience, also recalled being

targeted, hearing others make snide comments about them in regard to not understanding or trying to blame them for issues that had occurred.

Not all experiences with co-workers were negative. Another pattern that emerged during the new person experience was the support or coaching sometimes offered by more experienced co-workers. This coaching was instrumental in helping the new person understand the work environment and understand the responses of others within it, and could be a mentor type relationship or a single lesson in how to handle a situation. Essentially, more experienced employees helped the new person understand that the acts of incivility they were experiencing were considered normal for the environment, behaviors one needed to get used to and learn to not take personally. The same participant as before continued:

> I feel like operations just likes to be blamed for a lot of things. So now I just know not to take anything personal. So, it kind of got me upset but now that I have been in the role, I have a better understanding and expect people to react that way, so I just can't take it personal.

The lesson and effort made to not take someone's act of incivility in the workplace personal was something that not only occurred during the new person experience, but was also an informal motto repeated by many well-experienced T & L participants in explaining how they managed their workplace experiences with acts of incivility. Not taking acts of incivility personally became an example of the processes involved in the next adaptation sub-category, acceptance.

Acceptance. The ways in which one accepted the occurrence of acts of incivility in the T & L workplace included justifying the behaviors, understanding them, ignoring them, and seeing them as part of the business or part of the way things were done when performing one's daily work. When one participant was asked if he ever saw or heard any behaviors that would be considered unacceptable outside of his T & L workplace, he responded:

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They are far and few between, a situation that is not acceptable, because sometimes heated passion is okay and it is healthy because it means you have passion and you are wanting to take care of something or someone, and so sometimes that's okay.

Acceptance proved important for people in order for them to be able to continue working and not let a witnessed or experienced act of incivility distract them from what needed to be accomplished. Many reported that while acts occurred around them, they and their co-workers would continue to work. If time allowed or a situation looked like it was escalating to a more serious level, then someone might intervene, ask them to calm down, or make a joke. However, for the most part, participants said they ignored the situation as best they could, dismissing it as nothing unusual. When one was directly involved in an act of incivility, acceptance was also important, knowing the co-worker would be someone whom they would have to continue to rely on: "You still have to use them to do your job, and they have to use you to do their job, so you can't hold that bitterness forever."

Desensitization. Desensitization was characterized by the growing of thick skin, being numb, or failing to notice acts of incivility where one might normally expect one to. An example of desensitization came from a participant reflecting on a recent observation of a new employee's experiences with acts of incivility in their workplace:

> It was so interesting to see her new to that department and role and the way she reacted to things, and I looked back at her realizing I use to react that same way. Things use to get to me so much. I was that person and I wanted to change it and I was so naïve on how it all worked.

Desensitization to acts of incivility in the workplace helps one find and use humor to diffuse situations amongst co-workers in response to such experiences, and helps keep one from also engaging in an act of incivility after being the target of one. Desensitization was also important for one's ability to do well within the workplace and be looked at favorably, to be seen as someone who could handle working in the organization and industry.

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Behavior change. Along with acceptance and desensitization, many people acknowledged personal behavior changes over time working in T & L organizations. One of the main behavior changes was the likelihood of also engaging in certain acts of incivility in the workplace. Although many admitted to having made snide comments, name calling, sending negative toned emails, and having been involved in confrontations with co-workers during which one or both engaged in acts of incivility, the most common behavior changes were the increased use of profanity and the increased likelihood of slamming phones or throwing headsets, with negative comments possibly being made afterward about a person or situation. However, over time, working in a T & L organization, behavior changes also included attempting to break the habit or inclination of engaging in acts of incivility, regardless of them still occurring around the person in the workplace. This was harder for some, especially those who had been in the industry longer. Regardless, all expressed that they sometimes if not regularly struggled with using what could be considered an act of incivility during stressful or frustrating experiences while working in a T & L organization. Both types of behavior changes emerged as serving important purposes. The first can help one stand up for himself or herself when confronted with similar behaviors and can be seen as a useful way to help one accomplish his or her work in the T & L workplace. The second can help one avoid the job consequences that were perceived risks associated with engaging in acts of incivility long term.

Consequences. The main consequences regarding one's job that emerged if one failed to adapt to the T & L workplace environment that included acts of incivility were exit and being an outsider. The consequence of exit included one voluntarily quitting.

> The stress inside operations she didn't like as much. She thought everyone was just mean to each other and so she had a hard time. She had moved in the same time I did. They rearranged our department and they moved her and I both in at the same time in operations and she was not someone who I would consider could not handle stress, but

she just did not like that environment and how people treated each other sometime, so over time, I would say she worked there six months or so, she found a way to get back into the marketing division and that is where she stayed from then on. But I know she had a hard time moving into there, but I didn't. I pretty much adapted to it.

Being fired, although it was not seen as a regular consequence, was known as a possibility. However, it was seen as one that required receiving many warnings for and/or there had to also be other reasons (e.g., office politics) in order to occur.

The other work related consequence was being an outsider within the workplace, which had implications for how one was perceived and for one's success. Although an outsider was not one who would likely participate in acts of incivility, the defining characteristic was a person who was likely to report acts of incivility or who was not able to handle being in an environment with them well. Others would be concerned with how they behaved around this person, keeping the person from being able to fully socialize with co-workers, and could possibly lead to others holding a grudge against the person if it was someone who reported the act. This outsider view could even effect management's perception and treatment of them, thus their success.

> You don't talk about it. You talk about it to each other but you don't report it and she's the one who will report it. But like I said, she is not one who will ever be mentored or sought after by anyone because no one is going to touch her because she is known to be this way, but no one is going to seek her out or move her up. It kind of harms you in your career pathing in the company because this culture is still in play. The amount of upper management meetings I have been in and they make so many jokes about people, about other people, they do impersonations make fun of the way they speak, just them in general. They can't afford to bring someone like that in with them because then they will be liable themselves just on the behavior they act.

Allowance. The adaption process T & L employees experienced explained how they became a part of their workplace community amongst acts of incivility and learned to manage these acts in order to perform their work. The process of allowance emerged explaining what day-to-day informal practices within T & L organizations occurred to create the perception of

acts of incivility as an allowed means to behave when one encountered a stressful workplace experience.

Lack of consistency. Participants described a lack of consistency regarding how acts of incivility were regulated within the workplace. This lack of consistency was due to two primary perceptions regarding regulation practices. They were seen as political and by manager discretion. Examples of political practices included the perceptions that only those whom management wanted to fire were the ones given the toughest punishment.

> There was a whole lot you could get away with, a whole lot. It was really, that one girl who got fired there for what I told you about, she had been there a long time but apparently they had been piling things on her for a while because they were tired of her so apparently that was the last straw, but had that been a situation where it had been someone else, I don't think anything would have happened. I think the management team let things happen.

Top performers were an example of those who management would fail to reprimand for acts of incivility. The term "good old boy system" was used regularly by male and female participants to describe the politics of their organization and the industry, which they said impacted how behaviors were responded to.

Manager discretion also resulted in a lack of consistency in establishing what was acceptable and unacceptable regarding acts of incivility in the workplace. Examples of manager discretion illustrated the differences amongst managers in the same department in what and when they choose to intervene in acts of incivility, as well as how one manager could vary his or her intervention practices not based on politics but rather whether they considered the behaviors a priority at that time. Participants explained that manager intervention depended on the situation.

Level of okay. Participants recognized that acts of incivility were typically allowed until they reached a certain point. That certain point was a moment of escalation. Until then, there was what appeared to be a level of okay. The escalation point was when either it appeared a person or

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persons were not capable of resolving the issue without furthering tension within/between

themselves or if it appeared the situation might turn violent.

> I remember a couple situations where there were fleet managers and load planners toe to toe at a desk and a couple operations managers stepping in and pulling them into an office because it was getting so load and uncomfortable on the floor. That's an awkward situation. You have a couple grown people standing there and you wonder if they are going to go to blows.

Even when things did escalate and managers intervened, their handling of the situation

often did not address the behaviors in a way that discouraged the perception of allowance of the

acts of incivility that occurred leading up to the escalation. Rather they continued to appear as

tolerated behaviors.

Tolerated. The perception of tolerance for acts of incivility occurred through

management ignoring behaviors, a lack of consequence for behaviors, and a lack of resolution

after an intervention. Participants stated not perceiving known consequences (excluding the

possibility of termination) for engaging in acts of incivility. Those whose company did have a

formal consequence plan in place said it included multiple types and rounds of warnings, and

admitted that it had been redefined and inconsistently used over the years making it lose

effectiveness. One participant saw it as a means to be used against employees when it came time

for a bonus or raise. In addition to a lack of consequences, managers were perceived as ignoring

behaviors to avoid having to correct them, possibly due to a lack of time or lack of desire to put

forth the amount of effort it would take to correct the issue of acts of incivility in the workplace.

When management did intervene and pull two employees aside, the intervention was seen more

as a way to diffuse the situation and remove them from further disturbing other employees. The

behaviors themselves were not necessarily discussed or the issue between co-workers resolved in

a manner to help prevent such behaviors in the future.

It's more how do we resolve the issue, not so much on the behaviors. I don't think it gets much attention as it should sometimes because they know stuff like that just happens. They don't do a whole lot to direct, to lead us in that type of manner to where they look at stuff like that. I just think they think it's going to happen so when it does they just try to resolve the issue.

One participant after being called into a room with another co-worker after someone reported an argument between them described how the situation was handled by their managers:

There were not really any consequences to either party. It wasn't handled very well. There was really no solution, this is how we are going to avoid it moving forward. It would have been a good moment to have said this is what caused the issues. Maybe I can take some work load off him since he is having a bad day. Maybe you two sit together so you can see what the other is going through. There was no point to it. It was just like let's rehash what happened and that's not good, let's not do that, okay guys, good job, let's go back to our desks.

Creation and perpetuation. Although allowance for acts of incivility could be attributed to management's day-to-day styles and processes of correcting the behaviors, the source of acts of incivility acceptability as daily occurrences within T & L workplaces was attributed to tradition and leadership practices. These factors were what appeared to help create and perpetuate the acts as the standard within the T & L workplace environments. Those who had experience with T & L organizations that did not allow such behaviors also attributed tradition and leadership to why their new experience was unique in comparison to the one they had before within the industry.

Tradition. Participants often referred to acts of incivility and people's responses to them in the workplace as the way it had always been done. Some even referred to it as part of the culture that had been created in the organization or as the culture of the industry. Participants were referring to what they perceived as the history or tradition of the T & L industry and their organization being a part of that tradition. Source of pride and lack of diversity were the ways in which this tradition was upheld within organizations.

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A perceived source of pride for those working in the industry was the toughness and roughness it took to work in the industry and within operations departments.

> It was a joke, we were operations, we were a lot rougher, we were a lot whatever, and because we were a corporate office, we had a marketing team, a safety team, we had all these other departments in the building and it was a completely different world. You would be in there and it would be all chaos and crazy and different things going on which was fun for me in a lot of ways, but you would go into another department and it would be like a library. It was a completely different world and I'm not saying they didn't happen there, I'm just saying I don't think it happened as often and I don't think they were tolerated, that's for sure.

One who could not handle the roughness was not the type of person who would be expected to last in the T & L workplace environment. One participant recalled co-workers making bets on new employees as to which ones would be able to handle working there. He was later told by co-workers that he had been one they did not think would last because of his quiet demeanor. Another participant explained how he could tell which employees would remain or not:

> I hate to say this but after sixteen, seventeen years of doing this you can tell the people who are going to make it or not. Just after that first week or two, after they spend time in the trenches, you can tell because after the first two or three days everyone is hesitant, but by the end of the first week, if they are kind of settling in with the drivers and settling in with the office banter. Some people are way better at it than others and you can just tell. You can see the ones who are 'Glad I am getting out of here.' Pretty quickly they are going to be saying the same thing about the whole company and probably the whole industry.

Hiring practices helped organizations hire the type of person they saw fit for working within the industry, thus creating a lack of diversity within the workplace. One participant recalled only being asked a few questions during her job interview, one being if she had thick skin because that was what was needed to work there. T & L workplaces that employ mostly men and being in a male dominated industry are other ways participants saw a lack of diversity affect what behaviors occurred in their organizations. Many participants referred to the "good old

boys'" mentality or way that remained. Being a member of the good old boys' club within a T &

L organization was also seen as why some people were not punished for their behaviors, while

others were, further promoting a lack of diversity within the workplace.

   Leadership practices. Leadership played a prominent role in the creation of an

environment in which acts of incivility were a part. Through leadership's tone and behaviors, and

direction given, they were seen as the ones who not only allowed behaviors to continue, but were

also the ones who engaged in them and led others to do the same. Leadership's tone and

behaviors were described as negative, lacking concern, and aggressive. Companies that

experienced changes in leadership somewhat frequently over time, thus changes in leadership's

style, noticed the occurrence of behaviors would fluctuate with the changes. They reported

seeing top management "get into arguments like that themselves with other people out on the

floor" or coming out of their offices using profanity in reaction to an issue and demanding

answers. One participant said a new president had recently told the company that "My job is to

make you all uncomfortable at your job." Participants saw this type of leadership as problematic

because they recognized that many people looked up to leadership as role models and would be

prone to copy them. They also questioned management's right to reprimand them for acts of

incivility if management was engaging in them as well. In addition to being aggressive

themselves, leadership was also seen as not caring for employees. This was in regard to not only

the behaviors occurring, but also the signs and indications that there were issues underlying the

behaviors.

> I witnessed a guy a month ago just stand up and say, 'I can't take this shit no more,'
> slammed his phone down, I don't know how it didn't break, and turned around and the
> director of operations was standing right there and all he did was say, 'You having a
> rough day?' And that was all the reaction he got.

I did tell one of my managers, the VP, I can name four people right now who have medication literally from their doctors, they have told me they have prescriptions to work here because they can't handle the stress. You know what he said to me? 'Well, this job ain't for everybody.' Well, I'm one of those people and I think this job is for me and has been for a long time and I hate to sound cocky but I'm pretty good at what I do and I think that's one of the reasons I still have a job because I guarantee you I've had some incivility behaviors. I've done it and that's all he says to me, 'Well, this job's not for everybody.' Really? That's your answer to four people in your room that are medicated to keep their job and you are okay with that? There's a problem.

In addition to a perceived lack of concern for employee well-being, the negative and competitive tone set by leadership left participants feeling "beat up" at the end of their days and created amongst co-workers a sense of competition "to not suck the most." There was also a purposeful creating of tension and encouragement of these behaviors through training and direction. Employees had been told that unless they fought for their drivers they were not advocating for them, or told "I don't care if you have to stand up on your desk to get your freight covered, do what you got to do." Although the explicit direction was not something currently occurring, it was recent enough and embedded enough in the environment that it was seen as habitual amongst employees and there was doubt it could be fixed amongst more senior employees.

There were companies seen as recently trying to make changes to the conditions and behaviors within the workplace. Participants attributed this to a company's realization that it needed to do so in order to stay competitive with other possible T & L employers. However, companies that had tried to correct the issue still did so with a tone that was counterproductive. Leadership and management during this time was described as hypercritical, and using fear as the means to detour the behaviors. Companies fired people, including managers, who they may have given warning to, but were viewed as not having corrected their behaviors. Training and programs for correcting these behaviors were not reported.

For those who reported a difference (a lack of incivility in a T & L organization), it was also leadership's tone and direction they attributed this to, amongst other possible factors such as organization or office size, publicly versus privately traded, the type of fleet managed, and the type of material shipped.

> With the smaller company, it's known their mission, it's the whole mission the whole goal of the company. It's very different. It's no nonsense, none of your typical good old boy transportation cussing. It's something that is known you don't do there, and with the bigger transportation companies it's, I don't know if it's because the workload and it's more, so people tend to, I don't know, it's just not as strict maybe. I think that's one of the bigger factors, and I have noticed with the smaller company it's definitely more one on one with employees, they want to make sure you are in an environment where you are not going to feel stressed out by the next person who is yelling in your ear, the work environment is definitely more professional.

However, there was no clear pattern to the company characteristics (e.g., size), as participants came from a combination of T & L organizations and had experience with workplace incivility and high-stress in all of them. No one reported having been an employee at a T & L organization in which acts of incivility in the workplace had been an issue and had successfully been addressed.

Research Question 3a, 3b, 3c

The last research questions asked what the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility were for witnesses, targets, and instigators of these behaviors. The data collected in response to the interview questions asked to help answer these questions was not as rich as the data for RQ1 and RQ2. However, there were other patterns of effects that emerged from analyzing the overall data, which are discussed.

Witness. Witnessing acts of incivility in the workplace had emotional effects for participants. These emotions included embarrassment for the target, sympathy for both target and instigator, aggravation because of the distraction, worry about their own co-worker relationships,

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anger toward the instigator, and concern for co-workers' safety or jobs. Anticipation was also experienced. A witness might anticipate a possible escalation of behaviors between co-workers, or one might anticipate a future work issue of his or her own recognizing what co-workers were experiencing. One's stress level could also be affected by others' acts of incivility

> I can tell when stuff like that happens, if I am here on my stress level, it just goes up, no matter if I had to do with it at all. If it's the person next to me, it makes me go from here to here. I don't know why but I can tell that it does.

Other possible effects or potential outcomes for witnesses could be suggested through the actions they took in response to witnessing acts of incivility in the workplace. When acts of incivility occurred between co-workers, it was a witness who typically reported it. The one reporting it was either a friend of the one targeted, or an unknown person who had been nearby and felt compelled to report it. Sometimes a witness might also have the desire to intervene and do so, if they felt the person being attacked did not deserve it. Other witnesses would use humor sometimes to help their co-workers calm down after witnessing their behavior, which they saw as having the potential to help or hurt the situation depending on how the upset person received the joke at the time.

Another effect that was revealed was a contagious affect felt throughout the work environment because of acts of incivility occurring within it. Participants described the acts of incivility as breeding stress and negativity in the environment. The behaviors were referred to as poisonous and compared to cancer. One participant described the effects of acts of incivility in the workplace environment as "like a black hole, like gravitation drags everything in to that stress. It's kind of like that. Gravitation to the black hole."

Lastly, there were perceived work and job implications for witnesses. Witnesses could find it hard to concentrate and continue working while acts were occurring around them. They

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would have to try to ignore the disturbance in order to retain their work focus, and depending on how loud the others became or how close they were, it could be possible someone the witness was on the phone with could hear. Being in a workplace where acts of incivility often occurred and effected the way participants felt and acted in response also made some consider quitting and/or quit.

> I wanted to quit because, my house, we don't argue like that as often and I come to work and I argue almost every day or snarky comment, unnecessary comments, and I hear it and it's not, I was not happy with some people I see and the environment.

> Why would you want to be around someone who is always like that, always mad? Could that job have completely driven her to that? Absolutely, it was doing that to me. That's why I left. It would make me angry, and I was so tired of being angry all the time, and stressed, and taking it home and being angry at things at the house with my kids and my wife that I shouldn't be angry about. It was all coming from the stress I had at work. I would hear people complain and cuss at you every day on the phone, and you are talking with people all day and the last thing you want to do is converse. So I'm neglecting my wife and my kids because I don't want to talk to anybody. I just had enough of it. That's not the life I wanted to live. I wasn't doing myself or my family any favors so I removed myself from it pretty abruptly, and there were people right behind.

Target. Data regarding the effects on targets was the weakest. This might have been because in many situations described in which acts of incivility had occurred, it was hard to understand who was the target and who was the instigator. Often, participants involved in the interaction had engaged in acts, and participants had a hard time considering themselves targets, especially when both participants had been experiencing a work related issue leading up to the behaviors and possibly emotions such as stress and frustration. The possible effects that did emerge from being a target of an act of incivility included stress, emotional effects, and health implications.

Most of the perceived target effects, especially the association with stress, was experienced during the time participants considered themselves to be new employees. The behaviors they felt directed toward them they perceived were another work stressor they had to

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manage along with the stress of the job. Although emotions are indicators of stress, many participants described the effect of being a target of incivility as an emotional effect or response rather than stress. These included feeling of needing to cry (sadness), experiencing confusion as to why the acts were occurring or how to respond, feeling shock and disappointment toward what was occurring, and experiencing nervousness during interactions with co-workers. These situations could also make someone doubt how well he or she was doing in the new work role. In addition to stress and emotional effects, a couple of participants associated experiences of long-term exposure to direct acts of incivility in their workplace to health effects such as weight gain and a lack of sleep, and medical leave following being a target of an act of incivility after years in the environment.

Instigator. Participants were aware of the effects of being an instigator of acts of incivility in the workplace. They noticed emotional effects, the need for restraint, possible job effects, and knew the health risks of the stress they tried to manage. They recognized engaging in acts of incivility could contribute to the health risks.

Emotionally, instigators experienced shame, disappointment, regret, shock and embarrassment. The experience one participant had made him feel as though he "was a crazy person with anger issues." The hindsight of emotions and perceiving that their behavior was not how they should have responded to someone or something is one reason instigators might understand the need for restraint in the workplace. However, they found it hard to sometimes refrain from responding using an act of incivility when the relationship between stress and acts of incivility seemed to be part of the environment.

> After it happens, I don't like to be like that at all, to be ugly. I feel like it just comes back to a toxic work environment, I feel like it seeps into your very soul. You don't notice that you are doing these things and then you come back and are like 'Oh man, I really need to

stop doing that because it's not appropriate.' It's just, again I reiterate, it's being under a lot of stress and a bad work environment.

In addition to emotions such as regret and disappointment in oneself, another reason instigators perceived the need to restrain themselves from engaging in acts of incivility was due to the fact that regardless of how much allowance there seemed to be for this behavior within an organization, one could lose his or her job for them. Factors such as lack of consistency, a level of okay, and management's tolerance might only make the situation more unpredictable for employees. One participant had lost his job at a previous T & L organization for yelling at a co-worker, even though it had been behavior he had done before and was still at the time common within his workplace.

Regardless of the time one spent working in the industry, there seemed to be a constant struggle with trying to restrain one's responses within the T & L workplace when acts of incivility appeared to be the norm for responding to stressful situations. The participant with the newest and shortest amount of time working in an operations department in a T & L organization, and the one with the longest, both spoke to the struggle of managing the stress alongside managing how they responded to the stress.

> You know, it's not really your fault. They just need to have someone they think they should blame. So right now I just don't take it personal, I just know it's business, it's not my fault. I try to stay calm. Not say things that aren't tactful. So it's something I am working on. It's something I think I have gotten a lot better at because now I see people sending messages that I think are out of character. I just don't want to be that person. (newcomer)

> I increased my own medication. I went to the doctor and I told my husband and this was just this past Christmas, 'I'm serious, if I die of a heart attack, sue their ass,' and I'm not kidding. I was that stressed out, just sick, my stomach hurt, acid reflex flared bad, and I increased my happy pills. I told him I feel like I'm going to have a nervous breakdown and I'm getting too old physically to take the stress and I'm way out of shape, but I'm too tired to react as violently as I use to or to deal with it as easily. (veteran)

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The second participant's quote illustrates what participants perceived as another effect of engaging in acts of incivility, health risks. Although such effects were in combination with the effects of high work stress, participants were able to connect the two: "people have heart attacks all the time, people have stress levels where they have headaches all the time, have all kinds of medical issues because they don't know how to deal with stress." Acts of incivility were seen as a negative way to respond to their stress because of the implications such acts have for raising one's blood pressure, causing them to feel physical drained after getting "wound up", or needing time to cool down or calm down afterward. Many were also aware of the health effects others' behaviors or habits (e.g., taking medication, smoking, eating, drinking) were possibly having on them, habits they saw as related to work stress, and in an effort to restrain one's self from engaging in behaviors that he or she knew were ultimately unacceptable.

> There is one guy who never says anything and I said to him the other day, 'Are you okay over there?' And he's like yep, and I said, 'You've been awful quiet over there today,' and he's like, 'I have to be or I'll get fired,' and that's how he deals with it, and he drinks outside of work. It's sad because these guys are young. They are in their twenties. It's sad to see if they don't do something different what's going to happen to them over the years.

Chapter 6

Discussion

This study asked five research questions investigating the perceived relationship between employee stress and acts of incivility in the T & L workplace, and the perceived emotional and physical effects of incivility on employees. Although the answers to these questions do not support the original proposed model that explained acts of incivility in the workplace as an outcome and factor of workplace stress, they do confirm the use of these behaviors as a norm within T & L organizations, a norm with implications for employees and organizations. By examining the use of incivility in T & L organizations, this study reveals the issues or conflicts occurring amongst employees in the T & L workplace, within a T & L organization, and within the T & L industry that result in and perpetuate such behaviors. To better explain the acts of incivility and conflict that exist in the T & L industry, the following discusses the findings for each research question, followed by the discussion and introduction of the conflict and acts of incivility in transportation and logistics (CAITL) model that illustrates the levels of conflict that T & L employees encounter during the work day.

Research Question Findings

To help guide the following discussion of research question findings, and to help illustrate how the categories and sub-categories that emerged from the data support these findings, Figure 2 provides a chart of the T & L workplace acts of incivility categories and sub-categories that were revealed during analysis.

RQ1	**What**	Behaviors	verbal, physical, style, mediated, descriptors
		Subjects (what about)	work performance, abilities and knowledge
	Why	Workload unfairness	too much, unequal, other's fault
		Self-defense	attack, defend, blame
		Competing goals and priorities	customer vs. driver, position vs. position, expections vs. reality
	Who	Anyone	in the middle, co-worker and co-worker, managers and employees
	When	Frequency	daily, often
		Location	at co-worker's desk, after phone call, in chain reaction
RQ2	**Adaption**	new person experience	same treatment, coaching
		acceptance	justification, understanding, part of it, ignored
		desensitization	numbness, thick skin
		behavior change	start to do, management of (self-control)
		consequences	exit, outsider
	Allowance	lack of consistency	political, managers descretion
		level of okay	has to escalate
		tolerance	management ignores, lack of consequence, lack of resolution
	Creation and perpetuation	tradition	pride, lack of diversity, lack of change, the way it has been
		leadership practices	tone and behavior, direction
RQ3a, 3b, 3c	**Witness**	emotions, action, contagious affect, job/work implications	
	Target	stress, emotions, health implications	
	Instigator	emotions, need for restraint, job effects, health implications	

Figure 2. Transportation and logistics workplace acts of incivility categories and sub-categories.

Research question 1. In regard to RQ1, which asks if acts of incivility are common in response to stress within T & L organizations, the answer appears to be yes. During interviews, participants were not asked simply if acts occurred, but rather what behaviors they saw or heard occur within their workplaces that they perceived were their co-workers' reactions to stress. They were also asked about their own reactions to workplace stress. The next section discusses the what, why, who, and when of acts of incivility in the T & L workplace.

Responses to this question lead to various acts of incivility that are divided into the categories verbal, physical, style, mediated, and descriptors. The variety of ways in which acts of incivility are experienced in T & L workplaces allows ample opportunities for the ambiguity, indirectness, and passiveness characteristic of acts of incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). However, in the T & L workplace, there are frequent direct (e.g., yelling at a co-worker), as well as physical acts such as the throwing or slamming down of objects (e.g., pens, phones). Although Andersson and Pearson's (1999) definition of acts of incivility does not exclude such behaviors,

it emphasizes that they are often verbal, passive, and indirect. The findings of this study suggest that acts of incivility occurring within the T & L workplace are more openly aggressive. In regard to Namie's (2003) 10-point continuum of workplace behaviors, this means that acts of incivility within T & L workplaces are more closely associated with a higher level of organizational disturbance.

Employees perceive these behaviors to be results of work related issues, frustrations and stresses, rather than co-workers' intent to harm them. Despite the acts of incivility not being perceived as intentionally harmful, because the acts themselves occur in response to a co-worker's experience of stress, they can represent a possible harm or threat within the workplace for other co-workers who share similar circumstances and experience similar situations within the shared T & L workplace environment (Albrecht et al., 1994). Why acts of incivility occur in the T & L workplace, as well as what harm they represent for other employees who are targets or witnesses of these behaviors, are revealed through the categories *workload unfairness*, *self-defense*, and *competition of goals and priorities*. According to Cooper and Marshall (1976) the categories that answer why these behaviors occur are sources of workplace stress. Two sub-categories of workload unfairness, *work overload* and *unequal workloads*, are characteristic of Cooper and Marshall's (1976) 'intrinsic to job' category of work stress. Intrinsic to job includes time pressures (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Their category of 'career development' (e.g., overpromotion, underpromotion, thwarted ambition) (Cooper & Marshall, 1976) also applies because unequal workloads in the T & L workplace context are sometimes perceived as due to inadequate and unfair rewarding of hard work, wherein those who work harder are given more work, while those who have easier or lighter amounts of work are able to reach their goals and be rewarded.

The third workload unfairness sub-category *other's fault*, and the next why category of *self-defense* relate to Cooper and Marshall's (1976) source of work stress category 'relationships at work'. Relationships at work include poor relationships with supervisors or co-workers, and difficulties in delegating responsibility (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). The present study's *other's fault* sub-category and *self-defense* category represent sources of tension and strain between co-workers in the T & L workplace that are caused by issues with workloads and the perceived need to defend one's self against other co-workers' accusations or criticisms and to assign or avoid blame for a work issue.

The last why category of *competing goals and priorities* aligns with Cooper and Marshall's (1976) work stress categories 'role in organization' and 'organizational structure and climate'. T & L employees are assigned to represent the needs of conflicting external parties (i.e., *customers versus drivers*). This results in role conflict for employees (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Role conflict is when one encounters multiple and incompatible job expectations or demands within his or her own role (Anderson & Pulich, 2001), or when an employee is caught between other work related groups that demand different behaviors or have different expectations (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). As internal representatives for customers and drivers, who are external to the T & L workplace but are fundamental to the T & L industry, T & L operations office employees are continually having to try to respond to both parties needs and demands while also trying to coordinate the two in a way to resolve those needs and demands. However, because of factors such as lack of understanding of DOT driver regulations and the need for fast and on-time customer service, there is often conflict between the priorities of customers and drivers. This external conflict becomes an internal conflict between those co-workers who represent them in the T & L workplace.

Further role conflict is created when it is not just for the sake of customers and drivers that co-workers are competing, but also for their own sakes. Employees are placed in positions within the workplace that clearly align them with the driver or with the customer and their loads. Employees are then responsible for work goals based on these alignments, which often conflict as much as the competing goals of external parties do, resulting in the sub-category of *position versus position*. Instead of office employees' goals representing a larger, unifying company goal, positions within the T & L workplace are essentially forced to compete in order for those in each position to achieve their personal work goals on which their jobs and livelihoods depend.

There is also a conflict between what is expected of those in their roles and the reality of what they are being asked to do considering the industry restraints (e.g., DOT regulations) and the competing priorities of customers and drivers. The conflict between *expectations versus reality* exists for T & L operations office employees regardless of their positions, though, and is therefore a work stress due 'organizational structure and climate' (Cooper & Marshall, 1976), rather than just conflicting roles. Organizational structure and climate refers to factors (e.g., lack of participation in decision-making, lack of effective consulting) that influence employees' perceptions of the organization and how it feels to be a member of it (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Although some of the expectations placed on employees do not align with the reality of their day-to-day work tasks because of external parties' expectations and factors beyond their control (e.g., weather, mechanical issues), T & L office employees were seemingly most frustrated by the conflict between expectations and reality due to a perceived disconnect between management and employees. The disconnect is attributed to management's lack of knowledge regarding the current conditions and factors affecting employees, and management's failure to listen to employee concerns which is interpreted as a lack of concern for employees.

An issue between management and employees is not only present in the conflict between expectations and reality. *Managers and employees* also exists as a sub-category that reveals who is often involved in acts of incivility in the T & L workplace. The other sub-subcategories that result in the category of *anyone* along with managers and employees are *in the middle* and *co-worker and co-worker*. Together, these sub-categories reiterate 'role in organization' and 'relationships at work' as sources of stress at work (Cooper & Marshall, 1976) in T & L organizations.

In addition to details regarding the what, why, and who of acts of incivility in the T & L workplace, when also emerged. Participants were asked about the frequency of witnessing or experiencing these behaviors. Although some said they currently did not experience these behaviors nearly as frequently, or at all, as they had while working for previous T & L organizations, most still experienced some acts of incivility in the workplace. All had worked for at least one T & L organization in the past or present in which they experienced these behaviors daily. Many participants reported experiencing them daily and often throughout the day. Therefore, collectively, acts of incivility were common experiences amongst T & L employees in what was perceived to be employees' responses to workplace stress.

With Cooper and Marshall's (1976) sources of stress at work categorization as a framework, the categories and sub-categories that emerged in this study in response to RQ1 reveal what acts of incivility in the T & L workplace are communicating to be the issues or conflicts that regularly cause work stress and incivility. Whether these acts of incivility in response to stress can be considered a behavioral norm, rather than simply a commonality, is asked by the second research question.

Research question 2. According to Andersson and Pearson (1999), workplace norms develop from a workplace's community traditions that are influenced by formal and informal organizational policies, rules, and procedures. These workplace norms guide an employee's behavior by communicating to him or her what is acceptable and desirable in his or her workplace environment (Bandura, 1971, 2001). How others in the environment act and are responded to or rewarded/punished following their actions symbolizes these norms, with other employees serving as models for workplace norms (Bandura, 1971, 2001). Behavioral workplace norms do not necessarily imply one is impervious to the effects of these behaviors, especially since behaviors may change meaning or be appraised differently based on the situation or context in which they occur (Folkman et al., 1986). Rather, workplace behavioral norms set a standard for employees by which they can judge whether their behaviors are allowed and whether or not these behaviors can help them accomplish a desired outcome such as reaching their work goals. This standard is not influenced by a few employees' or leaders' examples, but instead on perceived traditions amongst a collective workgroup within the workplace that many employees and leaders serve as examples or models of. These traditions are not evident only in the behaviors or thoughts of employees, they are also evident in organizational structures or systems that guide, monitor, reward and punish.

Several categories and sub-categories emerged in response to RQ2. They revealed how a combination of informal and formal reinforcements, punishments, and practices within T & L organizations result in the perceived behavioral norm of incivility when managing stressful or potentially stressful workplace issues within a T & L workplace. Data also revealed how employee and leadership behaviors, and organizational and industry traditions help employees adapt to their workplace environment, as well as perpetuate the norm of incivility. Within the

adaption process there exists a struggle or conflict for the employee, and within the *allowance* of

incivility there exists a conflict between employees and management. There appears to be

conflict as well within T & L organizations, revealed through *creation and perpetuation*, as T &

L organizations recognize the need to compete with other employers who might offer better

workplace environments.

The conflict for the individual employee begins during the *new person experience*, in

which one is not sparred from similar or *same treatment* involving acts of incivility. A new

person may even be mentored or *coached* by other employees regarding how to accept the acts of

incivility he or she encounters in the workplace. During the new person experience one is

essentially adapting to the T & L workplace as they learn the communication style or language

used amongst co-workers to accomplish their work (Chao et al., 1994; Pulakos et al., 2000). A

common communication style between co-workers within the T & L workplace is that of

profanity, raised voices, and yelling. However, one not only learns how to directly communicate

or respond to situations, new employees also learn how one can individually voice frustrations

and attempt to self-manage stressful situations by slamming of the phone, throwing of a pen,

name calling and/or demeaning an absent other. In response to being on the receiving end of such

frustrations, one learns how to receive the communication. The new person also learns vicarious

strategies for *acceptance* (e.g., *justification, understanding, ignoring*) and *desensitization* (e.g.,

thick skin, numbness) from co-workers. A common lesson is to not take the actions of co-workers

personally and to understand that the behaviors are simply a part of how the work gets done

within a T & L workplace environment. Adaption, though, is not a new person only experience.

Although over time an employee can learn strategies for acceptance of acts of incivility,

one is not always able to ignore or not care about such a behavior occurring. Experienced

employees must also sometimes use personal effort to manage experiences with these behavior so they are able to proceed with their work, to avoid in engaging themselves in behavior they may later regret, and to avoid the workplace *consequences* of not being able to adapt (i.e., *exit*, *outsider*). The adaption sub-category of *behavior change* most exemplifies the internal struggle and consequences the employee faces while working for a T & L organization where he or she regularly comes in contact with acts of incivility.

There are two main ways one's behavior changes over time while working in a T & L workplace in which acts of incivility are perceived as a norm: *one starts to do* acts of incivility, and one learns *management of* acts of incivility. They are not exclusive and can occur in varying degrees amongst employees. Most participants admitted to some behavior change in which they were more inclined to use acts of incivility during occasions of frustration or stress while working within a T & L environment where such behaviors were a perceived norm. Some employees struggle more than others with the possibility of engaging in acts of incivility. The difference between the two being one's admitted natural inclination to use similar behaviors (e.g. profanity) outside of work, and whether or not they perceive the behaviors affect their personal character. All seem to recognize that the behavior change involving management of acts of incivility (i.e., self-control) is necessary while working within an environment in which such behavior is perceived as allowed and accepted, for one's own job security.

Despite it being a perceived norm to engage in acts of incivility in the T & L workplace, the possibility of losing one's job is a known consequence within T & L organizations. However, there is a certain level (i.e., *level of okay*) that exists in this environment that offers more *tolerance* than other workplace environments may for such behaviors. Adding to the complexity and *allowance* of acts of incivility in the T & L workplace are the informal and formal ways

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these behaviors are addressed and managed. The way acts of incivility are managed leads to conflicting messages for employees, as well as reveals the conflict leadership and the organization experience between maintaining status quo or *tradition* versus making a *change* in order to stay a competitive employer.

Within the T & L industry there exists the tradition of being a male-dominated industry. This tradition is one of the reasons why acts of incivility including inappropriate jokes and demeaning comments are the norm and continue (i.e., *creation and perpetuation*). The tradition continues with practices that uphold the good old boys' system and the behaviors associated with it. This includes hiring practices that look for a certain type of person who can tolerate and accept working in such an environment. Hiring a specific type of person leads to a *lack of diversity* amongst the T & L operations office workforce which helps ensure less pressure to change *the way it has been* traditionally done within the T & L workplace. This applies not only to the behaviors of employees who are in equal but conflicting positions. Engaging in acts of incivility also occurs on the T & L management and leadership levels.

Leadership is especially influential regarding norm creation and is instrumental in a *lack of change* occurring in regard to acts of incivility in the T & L workplace. *Leadership practices* that contribute to a lack of change include leadership's *tone and behaviors* and leadership's *direction*. The tone of leadership that contributes to T & L workplaces in which acts of incivility are the norm is negative, displaying a lack of concern for employees, aggressive, and creating a sense of fear amongst employees. Leadership behaviors that exemplify these tones are the use of profanity, public confrontations with others, and a demanding style of questioning. When leadership engages in such behaviors, they set an example for employees, modeling (Bandura, 1971, 2001) what is acceptable and allowed within the T & L workplace. Although co-workers

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also serve as models, because of their level of power and influence in the T & L organization, leadership sets the ultimate organizational example to which all others are likely to conform.

T & L leadership behaviors may show that acts of incivility are acceptable ways to accomplish one's work goal. This is done through informal training that encourages tension between employees and motivates employees to do whatever they find necessary within the workplace to ensure their goals or work tasks are accomplished. Such direction from leadership means employees are not only being given direction to engage in acts of incivility, but may be supported, praised, or rewarded for performing incivility if such acts help them meet a work goal. The fickleness of consequences regarding who is reprimanded or punished also creates a limitation on efforts to change behaviors amongst employees, as well as reinforces the traditional good old boys' system.

The influence of leadership's example is especially noticed during leadership changes within T & L organizations. When more aggressive style leaders are brought into a T & L organization, they are often counterproductive to previous efforts to reduce and change the normalcy of acts of incivility in the workplace. They minimize the efforts made by others in the organization (e.g., managers) who have tried to prohibit certain behaviors amongst co-workers. They do this by engaging in acts of incivility themselves. When they do so, it makes what procedures and policies that may be in place for discouraging acts of incivility ineffective. In addition to behaviors, the tone of leadership guiding efforts to reduce acts of incivility in the T & L workplace can further the ineffectiveness of such efforts.

There are T & L organizations in which a norm of incivility does not exist amongst operations personnel. Although further research is needed to understand all the factors that allow for the differences amongst them, leadership played a central role. The T & L organizations in

which acts do not regularly occur are also ones in which employees say intolerance for these behaviors was always present. This creates a sharp divide amongst T & L organizations: those representing the perceived traditional way of behaving in the industry and those representing a change to the tradition. As need for and competition within the industry grows (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016b) and the industry continues to face conditions of high-turnover (Costello & Suarez, 2015), T & L organizations that have typically followed the traditional way appear to be taking notice, with some participants acknowledging recent efforts of T & L organizations to address issues of workplace conditions pertaining to negative workplace behaviors and lessened employee well-being.

Although the sample size of nineteen does not allow for widespread support of a norm existing within T & L organizations and the T & L industry, especially since in some participants experiences there were T & L organizations that did not support acts of incivility as a workplace behavioral norm, every participant had experience with at least one T & L organization in which it was a perceived norm. Other common perceptions included a lack of incivility in the T & L workplace as being atypical for the industry, other T & L organizations experiencing a greater degree of incivility amongst employees, and that the incivility was an effect of the characteristics innate to the industry. Based on these perspectives and the processes and systems in place within several of the experienced T & L organizations, it can be concluded in response to RQ2 that within T & L organizations there is a perceived workplace norm of acts of incivility as being a behavior used in the managing of workplace issues and stress. Larger, quantitative studies examining the extent to which this norm exists amongst T & L organizations may therefore be advantageous.

Research questions 3a, 3b, 3c. The last set of research questions examines the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on witnesses, targets, and instigators. The reason for doing so is to examine if T & L employees are experiencing stress in these participant roles. Although emotional and physical effects are perceived amongst T & L employees who regularly experience incivility in the workplace, there are additional effects that were revealed including job implications, the need for restraint, and a contagious affect. The following discusses these along with the emotional and physical effects.

Witnesses, targets, and instigators all experience *emotional effects* from indirectly or directly participating in acts of incivility in the T & L workplace. Paying attention to emotional effects is important because emotions indicate that one is experiencing stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Emotions also help guide what behaviors one will engage in while attempting to cope (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, 1990; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Many of the emotions experienced by witnesses, targets, and instigators are associated with stress (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, 1990; Lazarus, 1999). For witnesses, emotional effects include sympathy, aggravation, worry, anger, concern, and anticipation. Targets experience sadness, confusion, shock, disappointment, and self-doubt. Instigators experience shame, disappointment, regret, shock, and embarrassment.

In addition to these individual emotions, all three types of participants perceived experiencing *stress* because of acts of incivility in the workplace. Even though witnesses could not necessarily explain why such a situation was stressful for them, anticipation was often a closely associated emotion. The anticipation was due to the possibility of an escalation of behaviors between co-workers, or because of the possible like-situation the act represented for the witness (Porath & Pearson, 2012). The like-situations that acts of incivility represent for

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witnesses are the work issues that create the tension between employees, rather than the acts themselves. For targets, the stress experienced because of acts of incivility directed at them is associated with their ability to hinder one's work, and their perceived attack on one's self and work, against which targets may feel they need to defend.

The stress instigators feel is associated with the *physical effects* they perceive from engaging in acts of incivility. During experiences in which T & L employees are instigators of acts of incivility in the workplace, they are aware that behaving in such a way reinforces one's experience of stress in the workplace to a point that it can be felt physically through high blood pressure effects and the need for the body to calm down afterward. According to the theory of allostasis (McEwen, 1998b), when one engages in behaviors that do not help him or her successfully manage a stressor, the resources of the body that are utilized during experiences of stress are at risk for being excessively taxed. This means that instead of helping the body manage and adapt, the person is participating in behaviors that hinder its management of stress and recovery, making the behavior a form of maladaptive coping (McEwen, 1998b).

Along with emotional and physical indications of stress, participants perceive acts of incivility as having a *contagious affect* within the T & L workplace. During such an effect, acts of incivility are seen as sources of further negativity and stress within the T & L workplace as they create an environment in which further acts of incivility can occur (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). For this reason, employees in the T & L workplace may perceive the need for restraint during experiences with acts of incivility. The *need for restraint* was closely associated with the need to avoid possible health risks associated with instigating acts of incivility and because of possible *job risks* (e.g., termination) associated with participating in acts of incivility in the workplace. The need for restraint is an effect that some participants spoke of needing to exercise

more frequently the longer they had been working within the T & L industry for not only

personal reasons, but also due to industry changes as some T & L organizations are trying to

make changes. New employees also experience the need for restraint as they learn to adapt to

how others in their workplace respond to issues and stress and decide how they want to manage

these experiences given the resources and models available within their environment.

Model Findings

In the literature review, the CSAI model was presented to explain the relationship

between stress and acts of incivility. According to Corbin and Strauss (1990), a question the core

category that emerges from grounded theory analysis answers is "What does all the action or

interaction seem to be about?" (p. 424). When this study began, the relationship between stress

and acts of incivility in the T & L workplace was the primary phenomenon of interest. This

perceived relationship does appear to be supported by the data. That relationship was not strong

enough to warrant or support the proposed CSAI model. Although perceived stress and the

emotions associated with stress were outcomes of experiencing acts of incivility in the T & L

workplace, experiences of stress that often preceded employees engaging in acts of incivility in

the T & L workplace were better understood as employees' experiences of conflict in this

context.

Conflict emerged as the main phenomenon or core category of this study, which

examined T & L office employees' workplace experiences with stress and acts of incivility.

Because the acts of incivility occurring within the T & L workplace often occurred amongst co-

workers faced with conflicting goals and priorities, arguments often developed, placing these

acts of incivility within the context of actual (e.g., verbal, physical, mediated) co-worker conflict.

The ultimate conflict occurred on the individual employee level in which he or she was

frequently faced with experiences of acts of incivility within the workplace and had to adapt to these experiences, choosing to either react to them or allow them to occur, even if that meant allowing an attack on one's self. The following explains the levels or layers of conflict present in the T & L industry that result in this ultimate conflict. Figure 3, presents the various conflicts within the T & L industry that emerged and in what layer they exist (i.e. industry, organization, workplace, employee).

Industry		Organization	
Customer	Driver	Tradition	Change
On-time service	DOT regulations	Workplace acts of incivility allowance	Workplace acts of incivility intervention
Loading/ production delays	Mileage	Good ole boys / Male-dominated	Diversity
Fast service	Safety		Pro-active, employee-concerned leadership style
		Aggressive leadership style	
Lack of DOT regulation knowledge		High, outdated expectations	Realistic, factor-considerate expectations

Workplace		Employee
Co-worker	Co-worker	Adaption vs. consequences
Heavier workload	Lighter workload	Self-defend vs. allow
Greater work effort	Less work effort	Ignore vs. report
More load miles (goal)	Less empty miles (vs. goal)	Engage vs. self-restraint/control
Driver representative	Customer representative	Adaptive vs. maladaptive coping

Figure 3. Conflicts within the transportation and logistics industry

Industry. The daily workplace experiences of T & L operations office employees were greatly affected by the daily experiences and needs of external T & L industry stakeholders. For office employees, the most important industry stakeholders are customers and drivers, who are fundamental to the employees' daily work tasks. The overall purpose of the operations office employees' jobs is to collectively coordinate and manage the needs and resources of the two in a manner that profits their employer and meets the employees' work goals so as to maintain their

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jobs and support their livelihoods. However, the coordination and management of the two is a complicated process due to the conflicting needs, desires, and understandings of these two stakeholders.

Customers' expectations are based on their freight shipping and receiving needs. They value on-time service and fast service. Drivers may understand customer service needs and the importance of them. However, their needs include loads that provide them adequate mileage (i.e., pay), do not cause delays that can affect future pay, and can route them to desirable or needed locations. Customers are not perceived as concerned with driver mileage, and should an issue occur that might greatly affect the driver's ability to earn money (e.g., loading/unloading delay), the customer would more than likely not be as concerned with that as they are their freight needs.

Another factor further complicating the situation between customer and driver is the DOT regulations placed on drivers that customers are not responsible for understanding or for assisting in compliance of. Since customers' priorities do not include DOT regulations, their needs and requests conflict with what a driver can or cannot do according to government regulations that limit driving and working hours (i.e., service hours) for drivers. If regulations are not followed, the result can be fines and penalties for drivers and the T & L companies they work for, and place the driver's job at risk. The most serious risks that DOT regulations are perceived as helping to avoid are the physical and fatal risks of truck driving for the driver and other motorists on the road. Understanding the risks involved in the jobs of drivers and being responsible in their positions for monitoring drivers' safety practices and service hours, T & L office employees have concern for, as well as personal (job) interest, in the safety of drivers. In their positions, they are also responsible for customers, with personal interest and company revenue at risk in that

relationship, as well. This makes the conflict between customer and driver needs, regulations, and understanding a sometimes difficult one to manage.

> I think the industry itself needs to figure out how to make goals align and when I say the industry itself, for example, 'Hey, I need a load and I need it this time and if not then you're going to be fined or if not we're not going to give you business anymore.' And you have people in different seats have to come from the standpoint we could be financially harmed if we do take the load on, or we could be financially harmed if we don't take the load on. So for example, let's say a driver is tired and he really doesn't need to drive, whereas the customer says we've got to have this load here or you're going to sit for two days and we're not going to give you a new appointment, so the driver thinks, 'Hey, I need to get there even though I'm tired,' and so from an industry standpoint, from a customer itself understanding we can't punish them for this because it could be causing more harm, could cost somebody's life on the road.

Regardless of the T & L company one works for, DOT regulations of drivers are a factor and the conflicting needs of customers exist, making this conflicting relationship the overarching one, representative of the T & L industry.

Organization. In the organization layer exists the conflict that a T & L organization experiences being a member of an industry with a long-standing history that includes ways of working and behaving that are not conducive to staying competitive as an employer. Those organizations that follow the traditional way run the risk of new employees having negative impressions of the organization deciding to quit.

> I didn't come from an environment where cussing is a rarity so it wasn't like, 'Oh I can't believe people are cussing,' but it was like in my mind since this is my first full time job, I built it up in my mind to be so professional and cliché, guys walking around in business suites everyone is just really good at their job and it's nothing like that so it's a bit of shock. The professionalism I thought I would see is not quite what I walked into. It's pretty unprofessional.

> I had a baby so me holding on to something was diff then someone else. Other people who got there and didn't like the environment had quit in less than one week, two weeks, three week. It was a revolving door because of the attitude and the way some coworkers would treat each other and the managers.

Some T & L organizations have tried in the past or are currently trying to make changes to negative behaviors occurring in the workplace amongst employees. However, the changes have typically been made by trying to warn and then terminating employees, with no perceived attention paid by leadership to the underlying issues that might have resulted in acts of incivility. The systems in place for warning and terminating have not been effective because they were inconsistently enforced. One of the inconsistencies is who is punished and who is not. Many see their organization's punishment as a consequence for those who are not part of the "good old boy system." This system is perceived as the tradition within the T & L industry and its organizations, a system that continues to be upheld through hiring practices that seek out a certain type of "thick skinned" person who can handle the "roughness" of working in the industry and the T & L workplace. Another issue with enforcement is leadership's behavior style and the conflicting messages leadership sends. Managers and leadership engage in acts of incivility sending a consistent message to participants who experience them doing so, one that reinforces the tradition of acts of incivility in response to work situations or issues, conflicting with attempts for change:

> We had a manager that was like, 'There will be no profanity on the floor, there will be no this, no that, no negativity,' and then this new president came in and he's 'F this, F that,' and we are sitting there like, 'Really? What are you going to do now? You aren't going to write us up when he walks there, here, f-bombing everything.' So that's let up a little.

Essentially, organizations are conflicted with realizing a change needs to occur, but are not necessarily ready to commit to leaving a tradition of aggressive leadership styles and behaviors, nor to hiring people (diversity) that could disrupt that tradition. The conflicting stance and direction of leadership is representative of the organization level of conflict, not only because leadership is often the representative of an organization for employees, but also because they are perceived as the ones who ultimately allow and uphold the traditional way of behaving

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by modeling how to behave in the workplace and by leading the enforcement of consequences for acts of incivility. Leadership is also perceived as the ones with the power to correct the likelihood of these behaviors in the workplace by listening and addressing employee concerns regarding the perceived conflict between the expectations placed on them and the reality of the modern T & L industry.

Workplace. The conflict that exists in the workplace layer is that which places co-worker against co-worker in their daily workplace environment. Issues that are categorized as workload unfairness (i.e., work overload, unequal workloads, other's fault) in the T & L workplace are part of why the conflict between co-workers exists. Unequal work efforts are especially problematic for co-workers because they work in teams, and someone perceived as not working at the same level of efficiency or speed as others is perceived as adding to others' workloads. Therefore, if a co-worker is perceived as not exerting as much effort as other co-workers, thus adding to the other co-workers' workloads, the others' work overloads could be perceived as the fault, at least partially, of their co-worker. Workloads are an issue because work overload is common amongst participants' daily work experiences, leaving them feeling like they sometimes do not have time to be nice or explain important details to others, resulting in shortness, directness, and behaviors described as snapping and barking at others.

The most frequent type of conflict experienced between co-workers is because of conflicting work goals. Day-to-day employee work goals within the T & L workplace are often individually based, with one employee's goal compromising another employee's goal. Considering the teamwork that is necessary within T & L operations department, this creates an interesting paradox. Instead of one common goal that teamwork is necessary for accomplishing, employees have competing goals that teamwork is necessary for. The result of the paradox is

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often expressed frustrations in the form of acts of incivility directed toward a co-worker whose goal or work is perceived as a threat to another co-worker's goal. The co-worker conflict is intensified by the meeting of these goals having a direct impact on bonuses and employment eligibility.

Co-workers are also put in positions of conflict as representatives of the external stakeholders (i.e., customers and drivers). Although this is somewhat similar to the goal conflict between co-workers, as representatives for others, co-workers are put in a position to represent the goals and priorities of others rather than their own. This places co-workers in the middle of external others, serving as representatives of their conflict within the T & L workplace. The overall co-worker versus co-worker conflict within the workplace layer is created by the goal systems, and the direction and training practices found within the workplace.

Employee. The process of adaption and the examination of effects of workplace incivility on T & L employees leads to the emergence of the employee's conflict layer. Within this layer, the employee is conflicted by what is required of him or her for successful adaption to the T & L workplace, an adaption that requires one to manage experiences of acts of incivility in the workplace on an often daily basis. However, it is not only new employees who experience a conflict in trying to manage ongoing acts of incivility in the workplace. Experienced employees also have to manage and adapt to situations at hand that involve acts of incivility, despite the acts' familiarity or commonality to them in the workplace environment, or because of the situation's commonality.

> For the most part I would just get quiet and internalize but there were times when that was the norm. It's me coming back to that it's the work environment, that's the norm of like yelling, cursing, saying something like that. It's easy to get caught up and start doing something like that especially if your peers are, it's kind of silly but it's true what they say, it's easy to fall into that. You hear it all the time, you hear people cursing daily and

suddenly you are in high stress and you try to internalize, you try to deal with it another way but sometimes it just comes out.

The conflict occurs for employees in part because of messages within all the other layers, the workplace, organization, and industry, that appear to communicate that conflict is the norm, whether it be between the needs and demands of important external stakeholders, organizational culture, workplace goals and processes, or co-workers. The specific points of conflict an employee encounters in the employee layer are based on the defense of self and work (self-defend versus allow), the conformity to allowance (ignore versus report), engaging in acts of incivility in response to work issues that threaten one's goals and priorities (engage versus self-restraint or control), and the utilization of coping behaviors one has available within the work environment. The ultimate conflict for the individual employee is of reaction versus allowance. Neither option is easily defined as right or wrong for the employee during an experience of workplace conflict. The employee has to decide for him or herself which one is right based on the situation at hand, the resources available to him or her, the perceived consequences and rewards, and the norms that exist within the environment for accomplishing one's goals. Essentially, the employee conflict is contextually based, and the contexts of the T & L industry often allow acts of incivility in the workplace to be perceived as the right way to respond, at least in the moment of conflict.

In summary, the conflict the T & L employee experiences within his or her day-to-day work occurs within three shared contextual levels or layers: T & L industry, T & L organization, and T & L workplace. At the T & L industry layer conflict exists between customers' goals and priorities versus drivers' goals and priorities. The next layer is the T & L organization. This layer represents the conflict organizations within the T & L industry currently face in trying to improve their processes and relations regarding employees versus following the practices and behaviors

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that have been a part of the industry's tradition, and has molded organizational employees and leaders. Within the next layer, the T & L workplace layer, co-worker versus co-worker conflict exists. This conflict represents the competing goals and positions co-workers are placed in by the organization that affects the employees' daily tasks and behaviors. What occurs as a result of these three compounding layers of conflict are various acts of incivility in the T & L workplace that occur within the shared environment and communicate the presence of stress associated with these conflicts. Having to encounter these acts on a regular basis while performing one's daily work in the T & L workplace adds further conflict. Experiencing this conflict on the personal employee level means an employee must decide between reacting (and how) to conflict and stressors within the environment, or allowing such behaviors to occur and finding other means to cope with the conflict and stressors, with or without having adequate resources within the workplace to do so.

To illustrate this overall layering of conflict within the T & L industry that funnels down to the employee level in the workplace, the Conflict and Acts of Incivility within Transportation and Logistics (CAITL) model is presented (Figure 4).
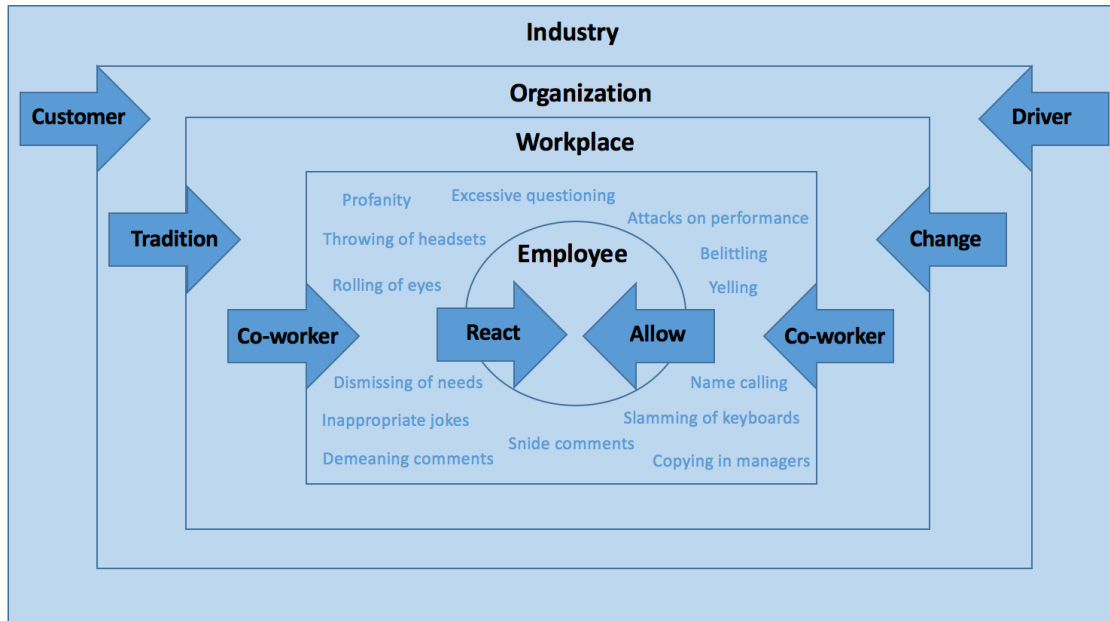
Figure 4. Conflict and Acts of Incivility in Transportation and Logistics (CAITL) model

Limitations

When asking participants to reflect on and recount past experiences, they were recalling stories spanning years of experience. Some participants recalled occurrences from twenty years ago. Despite the time lapses, experiences with stress and acts of incivility appeared to strongly resonate with participants and they were able to provide ample examples of their experiences over their time in the T & L industry, possibly attesting to the strength of the experiences' effects. However, as with all qualitative studies that ask participants to reflect on past experiences, especially ones that are not recent, there can be questions regarding participants' accuracy in recalling details, effects, and reactions.

Qualitative research allows us to better understand the details and complexity that occur in real life situations. Although qualitative studies may lack the typically larger sample size of quantitative studies, they are valuable in situations in which the phenomenon being studied may not be fully realized. Had a quantitative study been performed in this study, the emergence of

conflict as the main phenomena might not have emerged, depending on the survey or questionnaire measures utilized. Therefore, although this study does not provide a large sample, or support a cause and effect relationship, it is able to reveal real life experiences of T & L employees in their everyday workplace environments. The findings provide valuable insights to guide future research and have important implications for practical practice.

Scholarly Contribution, Practical Application, and Future Research

This study adds to the current and growing research regarding acts of incivility in the workplace (e.g., Schilpzand et al., 2016). This study also adds to workplace incivility research that examines these behaviors as a communal experience amongst co-workers sharing a work environment (e.g., Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Lim et al., 2008; Morrow et al., 2011). Furthermore, it adds to research that combines workplace incivility research and workplace stress research (e.g., Beattie & Griffin, 2014; Cortina et al., 2001; Roberts et al., 2011; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012). Two areas of research that according to Trudel and Reio (2011) have not been linked prior to their research are conflict management and workplace incivility. Scanning the literature since Trudel and Reio (2011), research regarding this relationship appears to still be lacking examination. This study helps support the link between the two.

Lastly, regarding scholarly contribution, this study adds to research regarding the T & L industry, specifically the workplace experiences of operations office employees. These experiences are grossly underrepresented in the research, especially considering the importance of the industry to the United States economy and to peoples' ways of life (U. S. Department of Transportation, 2016b). From a health of the industry standpoint, research regarding possible issues amongst its workforce is important considering the expected growth of the industry and the current and expected shortage of personnel (Costello & Suarex, 2015; Popkin et al., 2008;

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U.S. Department of Transportation, 2016b). Researchers can assist with identifying areas of improvement that affect employee hiring and retention. Future research should examine the daily work experiences, environments, and relationships amongst leaders, co-workers, managers and subordinates, and top-down. Attention should also be paid to the relationships between those industry stakeholders who are external to the office environment (e.g., customers, drivers) and the internal stakeholders (i.e., employees). Participants experienced incivility in their customer and driver relationships, which often occurred prior to or in conjunction with acts of incivility amongst co-workers. Therefore, these relationships are especially important to examine for effect on the work relationships, work outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, work performance), and well-being of T & L office employees.

Future research should also examine the previous work experiences of T & L employees and how those experiences may influence their perceptions of acts of incivility within the T & L workplace and their ability to cope. Four participants lacked work experience outside of the T & L industry. The fifteen other participants had a variety of experiences: restaurant management, mechanical/automotive, customer service, sales, military, retail, banking, factory, funeral services, HR, and insurance. Research should examine how new T & L employees with no previous work experience and employees with previous non-T & L industry work experience adapt to the T & L workplace and the acts of incivility that occur within it. The continual adaption process of employees who are veterans of the T & L industry should also be examined, including leadership.

On a practical level, the emergence of conflict as the core concept within this study is important because it explains that acts of incivility in the T & L workplace are not necessarily reasonless, rude and disrespectful behaviors amongst employees. They have a reason behind

them. Although this study was interested in examining stress as a possible reason, it reveals various types of conflict occurring within layers that result in acts of incivility. Despite the researcher's personal experience in the T & L industry, the emergence of conflict as the main phenomenon associated with acts of incivility in the T & L workplace was surprising. The revealing of multiple layers of conflict provided reason for both workplace stress and acts of incivility. The layers of conflict revealed are illustrated in the CAITL model. The model remains true to the transactional approach to stress in that it is contextually based, dependent on the person-environment relationship specific to those in the T & L industry, and illustrates that factors within the T & L employee's immediate and wider environments impact his or her experiences with stress and acts of incivility in the workplace. Future academic and practical research (that which is done amongst organizations themselves) can use this model to examine the issues confronting their employees so as to make changes to help reduce or manage problems and improve the well-being of T & L employees.

Conclusion

Occurring in the context of conflicts that could be actual such as in-person or mediated arguments between co-workers, or symbolically represented through individual employee reactions (e.g., name calling and demeaning comments behind someone's back), acts of incivility within the T & L workplace amongst office employees communicate the conflict that occurs at the workplace level, organizational level, and industry level. These layers of conflict were revealed in response to this study's research questions and through analysis of occurrences of acts of incivility as they were described by T & L office operations employees. From experiences participants shared with the researcher emerged the contextual markers of what, why, when, and who of acts of incivility in the T & L workplace. These markers revealed characteristics, subject

matter, participants, and reasons for acts of incivility in this context. Next, emerged the individual employee processes that occur through which one adapts to the workplace, the management practices that allow acts of incivility to occur, and the factors of tradition and leadership that are perceived as sources of their occurrence in the T & L workplace. Lastly, perceived effects of acts of incivility on witnesses, targets, and instigators revealed that in addition to effects such as stress and affect, and consequences for one's job and health, there is also an effect of internal struggle or conflict for the employee. Within this conflict, an employee must adapt to the T & L workplace environment which may include managing frequent acts of incivility, and learn how to conform to workplace norms and expectations in order to achieve one's goals, while trying to not compromise what is important for/to the self.

Although acts of incivility are not considered isolated or solitary behaviors, the pattern for these behaviors to occur regularly in the form of arguments or conflicts amongst T & L office employees increases their severity and possible effects. Furthermore, the emergence of layers of conflict reveals that actual conflict, and the acts of incivility that comprise these conflicts, represent the compounding of the industry, organizational, and workplace layers of conflict on T & L employees. These acts of incivility, or conflict, are occurring frequently, daily and often, and exist as behavioral norms within some T & L organizations, resulting in T & L employees having to adapt, manage, and cope with these acts and the conflict they represent just as frequently. Having to do so often, with such vital implications of work conflict on one's livelihood and well-being, results in employees experiencing internal conflict. They are faced with the conflict of whether or not to react or to allow these behaviors. The resolution to the conflict in the moment of the experience may not be clear or easy due to examples provided throughout the industry, organization, and workplace that may inevitably contradict and conflict with what the employee

personally feels is the right way to respond. When employees are placed in situations on a regular basis within their workplace environment in which such personal and work conflict exists, there could be implications for their mental and physical health. Organizations should take notice that these behaviors can not only affect employees' work focus and reduce teamwork, but also their voluntary turnover.

T & L organizations should not simply try to stop acts of incivility within the workplace by telling employees they can not use profanity, raise their voices and yell, or engage in behaviors that ultimately lead to verbal and mediated conflict amongst employees. Several participants stated that if the issues or the stress within the workplace were eliminated, then so too would the acts. Eliminating all stressors as well as acts of incivility experienced within the T & L industry is not feasible. However, steps can be taken, processes and resources introduced and integrated that can help reduce and better manage stressors. Examining and restructuring goals within organizations would be one way to reduce tension between co-workers. At an industry level, key stakeholders in the industry such as leaders of T & L organizations and driver associations might call for improved education amongst other stakeholders (e.g., supply chain partners, shippers and receivers) to help narrow the gap of understanding between customer demands and driver needs. Furthermore, the processes for correcting such widespread and engrained conflict will take time and be a continual and adaption process due to many factors within the industry (i.e., change and growth). There must be resources in place, including conflict resolution and stress management, to help better the skills and well-being of individuals and the organizations they work for.

If stopping behaviors overnight is not practical on the organizational level, that is true on the individual employee level as well, especially when employees have been molded to behave

aggressively and to fight amongst themselves for their goals, jobs, and livelihoods. T & L leadership must understand the role they play and examine their own conflicts, including the one between tradition and change. Leaders often come from tradition. They too have been molded by organizational and industry systems. Leadership must realize that the old ways of doing in regard to employee management and well-being are not going to allow them or the organizations they work for to continue to survive in today's social climate. They must realize that conflicts within the industry and within their organizations can not be ignored and employees must be provided proper resources to manage them, especially when the signs of conflict are permeating the workplace.

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Perceived Work Unit Incivility Measure

Acts of Incivility

Acts of civility are a type of non-violent, low-intensity aggressive behavior sometimes found in the workplace. When a person engages in an act of incivility, he/she may or may not have the intent to harm others. However, these behaviors go against typical social norms or standards and are in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. These behaviors are characteristically rude, discourteous and lack regard for others. The below survey asks you to reflect on experiences you have had working in a transportation and logistics organization, in the workplace (office) amongst your co-workers, and indicate your level of agreement with behavior you have either experienced or witnessed amongst employees.

1 = Strongly Agree   2 = Agree   3 = Don't Know   4=Disagree   5 = Strongly Disagree

1. People in my work unit sometimes engage in name calling or inappropriate behaviors that make me feel uncomfortable.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I have heard comments that are personally derogatory or demeaning about people in my work unit.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Within the last ten months, I have observed coworkers purposely excluded from work activities and information that affects their ability to do their work.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Within the last ten months, I have been purposely excluded by my co-worker from work activities and information that affects their ability to do their work.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I have heard comments or seen behaviors made by people in my work unit that could be considered threatening, intimidating, false or malicious toward coworkers or supervisors.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I sometimes hear profanity in my work unit.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Jokes which some employees might find offensive are told in my work unit.	1 2 3 4 5

1 = Strongly Disagree   2 = Disagree   3 = Don't Know   4=Agree   5 = Strongly Agree

8. Sometimes co-workers in my work unit raise their voices and yell at one another.	1 2 3 4 5
9. People in my work unit often engage in gossip that is false or malicious.	1 2 3 4 5
10. When speaking with one another, people in my work unit use negative gestures of facial expressions toward one another that are disrespectful. (e.g., finger pointing, eye rolling)	1 2 3 4 5
11. In my work unit, people purposely excluded others (cold shoulder) from personal conversations.	1 2 3 4 5
12. People in my work unit often make snide remarks about one another to or behind others' backs.	1 2 3 4 5
13. I have experienced someone being excessively slow, without good reason, in returning my phone call or emails, or in taking care of matters my work depended on.	1 2 3 4 5
14. People in my work unit often make excessive or loud noise that is inconsiderate of others around them.	1 2 3 4 5
15. Being rough with office equipment (e.g., throwing it, slamming it) is not uncommon in my work unit.	1 2 3 4 5
16. Being disrespectful of other people's property at work (personal or work-related) is not uncommon in my work unit.	1 2 3 4 5

Interview Questions

Demographic Questions
- What is your current position? How long have you been in this position?
- How long have you been with your current company? Have you had other jobs in the same company? If so, was it similar to your current role?
- Have you worked for any other T & L organizations?
- How long in industry all together?
- Have you worked for any non-T & L organizations?
- Pretend I know nothing about what you do, describe to me what your job and working in transportation is like.
- Think about your current workplace (or past operations workplace), and put yourself back at your desk during a typical day, how would you describe your work environment? (e.g., noises around you, activities, co-workers' activities)
- Focusing just on things that happen at work, what are some things that occur within your workplace that cause you to feel stress?
  - Why do those things tend to cause you stress?
  - Have you felt this type of stress in other workplaces?
  - How often do you feel this type of stress in the workplace?

Story Telling
Now I am going to ask you to reflect back on a recent stressful experience you had at work or one you can remember well. Please tell me the story about this experience.

RQ1: Are acts of incivility common behaviors for the communicating of stress in T & L organizations?
At work, people can respond to stress in both positive and negative ways. I am going to ask you next about both verbal and non-verbal responses to stress:

    1) Starting with co-workers, tell me about some behaviors you see or hear in the workplace that you think are your co-workers' reactions to stress.
        a. What are some verbal behaviors?
        b. Non-verbal?
        c. Why do you think these are related to stress?
    2) Do you ever see or hear any verbal or non-verbal behaviors that you would consider not acceptable outside of your current place of work?
        a. Which behaviors?
    3) What about in a different type of industry altogether – do you see or hear any verbal or non-verbal behaviors at work that you think would not be acceptable in a different type of company, one not in transportation?
        a. Which behaviors?
    4) While at work, when you become stressed over something that has to do with work, how do you typically respond to that feeling?
        a. Why do you think you respond that way?
    5) Have you ever used any behaviors you feel were because of stress while at work that

you would not consider acceptable outside of work?
> a. Which behaviors?

RQ2: Are acts of incivility perceived as norms for how one can respond to their experiences of workplace stress in a T & L organization?
> 6) Would you say that low-aggressive behaviors, or acts of incivility, are typical or normal in response to stress in your specific workplace?
>> a. What about at other workplaces…
>>> i. Non-T&L organizations
>>> ii. Other T & L organizations
> 7) What do people do or say when they see or hear such behavior?
>> a. Managers or supervisors
>> b. Co-workers
>> c. You
> 8) Think about when you first began your working in a T & L organization – and you were first around this sort of behavior, can you remember what you thought about it?
> 9) What about how it made you feel?
> 10) Do you think those are typical responses from someone who is new to a T & L workplace?
> 11) What about changes in behavior over time…
>> a. Since starting in a T & L organization, has your reaction to such behavior in the workplace changed over time? How so?
>> b. What about your own behavior in response to stress, do you think it has changed over time in a T & L organization?

RQ3a: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the witness?
> 12) Have you seen co-workers be targets of others co-workers' aggressive behavior in what you think was the aggressors response to stress?
>> a. Can you give me an example?
>> b. What did you think when you saw that interaction?
>> c. How did seeing it make you feel?
>> d. Would you say it is a stressful experience for you?
>>> i. Why or why not?

RQ3b: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the target?
> 13) Have you ever been on the receiving end (the target), whether intentional or not, of an act of incivility due to someone else experiencing stress?
>> a. Can you give me an example?
>> b. How did you feel during that experience?
>> c. Would you say it was a stressful experience for you?
>>> i. Why or why not?

RQ3c: What are the perceived emotional and physical effects of acts of incivility on the instigator?

14) Have you ever been under stress at work and engaged in what you think was an act of incivility because of the stress?

        a. Can you give me an example?

        b. What were you thinking or feeling while acting that way?

        c. What about physically, did you feel anything?

        d. Would you say communicating or behaving that way was stressful for you?

                i. Why or why not?

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Elizabeth Munyak Smith Myria Allen
FROM:	Ro Windwalker IRB Coordinator
RE:	New Protocol Approval
IRB Protocol #:	16-12-355
Protocol Title:	*Employee Communication within Transportation and Logistics Organizations: How Stress Goes Around*
Review Type:	□ EXEMPT ☒ EXPEDITED □ FULL IRB
Approved Project Period:	Start Date:01/13/2017 Expiration Date: 01/05/2018

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (https://vpred.uark.edu/units/rscp/index.php). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 30 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

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