

**Follower Thriving and Job Performance Despite Leader Incivility?
Dual Effects of Coworkers' Support**

ABSTRACT

This study examines the mechanisms through which uncivil leader behavior can still lead to followers thriving and performing well in their jobs. We combine tenets of the conservation of resources, job demands-resources, broaden-and-build, and threat to self-esteem theories to develop the hypotheses. Leader incivility behaviors were expected to reduce follower positive affect and, in turn, to thwart thriving and job performance. To counteract those negative leader effects we derived two other, paradoxical hypotheses about the role of coworkers' support: such support was expected to both intensify and reduce the negative follower effects of leader incivility. On invoking a survey design, we collected data from Indonesian employees ($n = 226$), in three waves (separated by three weeks), and tested the mediated moderation hypotheses with structural equation modeling. The relationship between leader incivility behaviors and job performance was indeed mediated by employee positive affect and thriving in a series. Moreover, we established the intensifying effect of coworkers' support to leader incivility behaviors, and coworkers' support also compensated for the negative leader effect by providing solace to the victimized peer. In the future, similar models need to be examined in actual work settings where coworker relations are outright competitive or otherwise dissimilar.

Keywords: Leader Incivility Behaviors, Coworkers' Support, Positive Affect, Follower Thriving, Job Performance.

Follower Thriving and Job Performance Despite Leader Incivility?

Dual Effects of Coworkers' Support

The topic of abusive, destructive, or uncivil leader behaviors has attracted many management scholars. Non-constructive leader behaviors in organizational settings have been given various labels, including, for example, petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1994), leader psychopathy (Levenson, Kiehl, & Fitzpatrick, 1995), abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000), despotic leadership (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008), bullying (Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009), leader arrogance (Johnson, Silverman, Shyamsunder, Swee, Rodopman, Cho et al., 2010), social undermining (Greenbaum, Mawritz, & Eissa, 2012), toxic leadership (Webster, Brough, & Daly, 2016), and workplace incivility (Zhou, Meier, & Spector, 2019). Our study focus is on workplace incivility, defined as “low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others” (Andersson & Pearson, 1999: 457). Incivility is more prevalent in the workplace than overtly destructive behaviors (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001), particularly from leaders who are known as major sources of incivility (Laschinger, Leiter, Day, & Gilin, 2009).

Employees who became the target of incivility typically experience negative feelings, cognitive and affective emasculations, and the effect may continue long after the unpleasant experience occurred (Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000). Such experiences may curb commitment to the organization, actual work effort or productive working hours. Furthermore, incivility in the workplace decreases job satisfaction and increases turnover intention (Laschinger et al., 2009). Incivility can even increase workplace aggression (Taylor & Kluemper, 2012), psychological distress (Geldart, Langlois, Shannon, Cortina, Griffith, &

Haines, 2018), and revenge intentions (Bani-Melhem, Quratulain, & Al-Hawari, 2020). Just witnessing an incivility may, in itself, reduce task performance (Porath & Erez, 2009). In terms of studies on the impact of leader incivility behaviors on job performance, most of them have been laboratory-based simulations (Giumetti, Hatfield, Scisco, Schroeder, Muth, & Kowalski, 2013). Field studies on the mechanisms of how leader incivility behaviors may impact real followers' job performance are sorely needed.

Porath and Pearson (2012) found that employees who experience incivility at work, mostly from their leaders or higher ups, will report negative affect, i.e., being sad, angry, and fearful. In addition, Giumetti et al. (2013) found that supervisor incivility behaviors were significantly related to higher levels of negative follower affect and lower levels of positive affect. Positive affect increases one's well-being (Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009). Barsade and Gibson (2007) defined affect as a wide range of feelings experienced by an individual. Different from emotion, which is based on a specific event and is brief-lived, affect is much longer in duration (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Gooty, Connelly, Griffith, & Gupta, 2010). Common wisdom would suggest that leader incivility leads to follower negative affect. Given that the relation between leader behaviors and follower job performance is usually mediated (Blickle, Schütte, & Genau, 2018; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990), and that high positive affect tends to lead to high job performance, this study reveals a paradoxical situation under which high *positive* affect mediates between leader *incivility* and follower thriving and performance. We found coworkers' support plays the key role in this frequently occurring organizational situation.

Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, and Grant (2005) defined thriving, which consists of both vitality and learning, as a psychological condition experienced by individuals.

Individuals who are thriving encounter a sense of high energy and feeling alive, and a sense that they are continually developing themselves (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012).

Thriving at work is known to be related to job performance (Paterson, Luthans, & Jeung, 2014).

In the relationship between leader incivility behaviors, follower positive affect, thriving and job performance, we investigated the dual impact of coworkers' support.

Coworkers' support is the extent to which employees believe that their coworkers will help them, if needed, to do their work-related tasks (Susskind, Borchgrevink, Kacmar, & Brymer, 2000; Susskind, Kacmar, & Borchgrevink, 2003, 2016). Such support can act as a buffer for the negative impact of employee strain (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000), so they feel calmed (Beehr, 1995; Kahn & Byosiere, 1992). However, there is inconsistency in the coworkers' support literature. Geldart et al. (2018) established that coworkers' support mitigates the association between workplace incivility and psychological distress. Kim, Kim, and Yun (2015) found that coworker support can *not* moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and employee knowledge sharing while several studies reported that receiving coworkers' support may increase anxiety, negative affect, physical stress, emotional exhaustion, and reduced self-esteem (Deelstra, Peeters, Schaufeli, Stroebe, Zijlstra, & Doornen, 2003; Ray & Miller, 1994; Shrout, Herman, & Bolger, 2006). The 'threat to self-esteem' model could explain such intensifying effects (Fisher, Nadler, & Witcher-Alagna, 1982). This theory assumes that coworkers' support can be a threat to employees as it may imply inferiority on the part of the support receiver which may harm feelings of independence and self-reliance. Recently, Trottier and Bentein (2018) revealed that coworkers' support acts as an intensifier, instead of a buffer, in the effect of daily workload on daily negative affect. In an effort to examine the inconsistent or potentially two-sided, positive and negative, effects of coworkers' support, we aimed to address

this in the context of leader incivility. The present study's core question is: *How can coworkers' support, after leader incivility, result in high follower job performance?*

While answering this question, we derived our hypotheses by combining basic tenets of the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989), the job demands-resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014), the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), and the threat to self-esteem model (Fisher et al., 1982). We conjectured and found that leader incivility behaviors lead to a reduction in positive affect, but that this relation can be moderated by two seemingly incompatible effects of coworkers' support which, in turn, can still lead to follower thriving and job performance.

The present study provides several contributions. First, it does not only test the buffering effect of coworkers' support after leader incivility behaviors but also a so-called intensifying effect of coworkers' support. This is because there are contradictions in the guiding theory as well as inconsistent prior results in the relevant organizational behavior literature. We will show that the potentially negative follower effects of leader incivility behaviors can be both reduced *and* intensified by coworkers' support. Second, two mediating factors are established between leader incivility behaviors and follower job performance in real work-settings: follower positive affect and thriving.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

The Relationship between Leader Incivility and Follower Positive Affect

Hobfoll (1989) noted, in his COR theory, that individuals try to collect, nurture, and preserve things they value. They will feel stressed if their valuable job resources are threatened or if they do not obtain resources after making significant attempts. A loss of resources is typically more significant than a gain of resources. When employees lose resources, employee

desperation can happen. Then, they may fall into a defensive mode or loss spiral: to protect themselves and/or their remaining resources.

Bakker and Demerouti (2014) argued that working conditions or characteristics can be divided into job demands and job resources. Job demands are physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that need to be coped with on a continuous basis, and they are related to both physical and psychological strain. Based on their JD-R theory, these job situations in the workplace are used to achieve work goals, minimize the weight of job demands, and support personal learning, growth, and development (Lee, Rocco, & Shuck, 2019).

Leader incivility behavior, like condescending behavior and addressing an employee in unprofessional terms (Cortina et al., 2001), is a job demand that is found to cause psychological distress (Geldart et al., 2018; Tsuno, Kawakami, Shimazu, Shimada, Inoue, & Leiter, 2017) and negative follower affect (Porath & Pearson, 2012). Those negative forces can reduce follower positive affect because such human incivilities tend to undermine personal resources (Giumetti et al., 2013). Human affect is defined as “a broad range of feelings that individuals experience” (Barsade and Gibson (2007: 38). More specifically, Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) defined positive affect as a high level of enthusiasm, being active and alert. Individuals who feel a high level of positive affect experience energetic, concentrated, and pleasant engagement. Ashkanasy, Humphrey, and Huy (2017) pleaded for much more research attention to the importance of positive and negative affect in organizational settings. The growing body of studies on positive and negative affect cannot be separated from researchers’ awareness that such affect is embedded in everyday human experience, and thus part of any organizational work experience (Barsade & Gibson, 2007).

In line with the reasoning of both the COR and JD-R theories, employees who face incivility behaviors from their supervisor are likely to experience stress as they feel that they lose energy or resources, so their positive affect will be reduced. Based on this, we can hypothesize:

H1: Leader incivility behaviors are negatively related to follower positive affect.

The Buffering Effect of Coworkers' Support on the Relationship between Leader Incivility and Follower Positive Affect

Coworkers' support may moderate between leader incivility behaviors and positive affect. Susskind et al. (2003: 181) defined coworkers' support "as the extent to which employees believe their coworkers are willing to provide them with work-related assistance". Such type of support in the workplace is a part of so-called relational energy, i.e., "a heightened level of psychological resourcefulness generated from interpersonal interactions that enhances one's capacity to do work" (Owens, Baker, Sumpter, & Cameron, 2016: 37). Coworkers' support can thus be a job resource for employees to reach work goals while curbing the effect of job demands, and pushing employee performance and/or growth and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Receiving support from coworkers will boost employees' positive emotions and, in turn, improve their individual cognitive capacity and tendency to act (Fredrickson, 2001). Coworkers' support can also reduce the negative effects of job demands and, as such, decrease the impact of workplace incivility on psychological distress (Geldart et al., 2018) thereby, in effect, buffering the effect of role conflict on strain (Mayo, Sanchez, Pastor, & Rodriguez, 2012). Plus, it can reduce the impact of errors or adverse events on anxiety and depression (Winning, Merandi, Lewe, Stepney, Liao, Fortney et al., 2018). Furthermore, coworkers' support is negatively related to stress (Yang, Shen, Zhu, Liu, Deng, Chen et al., 2015) and emotional exhaustion (Li, Jiang, Yao, & Li, 2013). Thus, coworkers' support can, potentially, buffer the

negative impact of job demands, such as leader incivility behaviors, on followers' psychological conditions such as positive affect.

H2a: Coworkers' support moderates the negative relationship between leader incivility behaviors and follower positive affect, such that when coworkers' support is high, this relationship is less strong than when coworkers' support is low.

The Intensifying Effect of Coworkers' Support on the Relationship between Leader Incivility and Follower Positive Affect

Although many empirical studies reported a buffering effect of coworkers' support, other scholars found a contradicting or intensifying effect of coworkers' support. Employees who received higher social support experienced higher negative affect, emotional exhaustion, and more stress (Buunk & Verhoeven, 1991; Ray & Miller, 1994; Yang & Carayon, 1995). They also reported more somatic complaints and longer sickness absence (Johnson, Thomas, & Riordan, 1994; Rael, Stansfeld, Shipley, Head, Feeney, & Marmot, 1995). Another study revealed that officers with higher social support actually reported a *lower* level of well-being and mental health (Morrison, Dunne, Fitzgerald, & Cloghan, 1992). Explanations for this tend to center on coworkers' support being a threat to people's self-esteem. Fisher et al. (1982) theorized that social support could be harmful and threatening, depending on the recipient's characteristics, the impact of receiving the support, and environmental conditions. Recipients who are highly involved in the job and have a high need for achievement are even more threatened by such support (DePaulo & Fisher, 1980; Tessler & Schwartz, 1972). The recipients of the social support could then perceive themselves as inferior to the donor of support or feel incompetent or inadequate (Trottier & Bentein, 2018) so that the support may even harm the individual's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-reliance (Fisher et al., 1982). Social support can thus be

devastating especially if the individual feels indebted to the donor without having an equal opportunity to repay such support in the future (Fisher et al., 1982; Trottier & Bentein, 2018). Furthermore, the support can have a damaging impact if it is given inadequately (Fisher et al., 1982) whereupon it can be perceived as a threat, a problem, or humiliating, as it can send a message that the donor does not really care for the recipient's situation (Trottier & Bentein, 2018). Thus, based on the threat to self-esteem model, coworkers' support can potentially intensify the negative impact of job demands, including leader incivility behaviors.

H2b: Coworkers' support moderates the negative relationship between leader incivility behaviors and follower positive affect, such that when coworkers' support is high, this relationship is stronger than when coworkers' support is low.

Mediation of Positive Follower Affect between Leader Incivility and Follower Thriving and Job Performance

Affect is a major source of emotional energy at work, thus it could motivate employees (Baker, 2019) and serve as a job resource that can support them to reach work targets and to improve their understanding and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Followers who became targets of incivility in the workplace have been shown to feel anger, fear, and sadness (Porath & Pearson, 2012). Incivility behaviors coming from people in higher organizational ranks or positions can also decrease positive emotions (Giumetti et al., 2013). Hence, positive, and negative emotions can be affected by positive and negative leader behaviors towards employees. Leader incivility is a part of job demands that typically hinders employee positive affect (Abubakar, Namin, Harazneh, Arasli, & Tunc, 2017), and ignites negative affect or emotions such as anxiety and depression (Geldart et al., 2018; Giumetti et al., 2013).

In contrast, experiencing positive emotions should increase other job resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Based on the broaden-and-build theory, positive emotions will build other positive mental characteristics (Fredrickson, 2001), including thriving (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012). Thriving is the “psychological state in which individuals experience both a sense of vitality and a sense of learning at work” (Spreitzer et al., 2005: 538). Decreased positive affect will influence an individual’s resources negatively, because an individual’s energy level is then reduced (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) so that it cannot easily replenish the depleted resources. This can be caused by leader incivility behaviors. A job resource like thriving may then not occur optimally. On top of that, decreased positive affect will also possibly hinder follower job performance because positive affect is a known significant predictor of job performance (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005; Sharma & Levy, 2003; Staw & Barsade, 1993).

Building on the basic tenets of the COR, JD-R, and broaden-and-build theories, we argue that when employees’ energy is focused on replenishing the effect of leader incivility behaviors, they lower their degree of follower thriving. In addition, if employees cannot use their energy optimally to do whatever it takes to perform well in the workplace, their job performance will decrease too. Based on those arguments, we hypothesize:

H3a: Positive affect mediates the relationship between leader incivility behaviors and follower thriving.

H3b: Positive affect mediates the relationship between leader incivility behaviors and follower job performance.

Mediation of Follower Thriving between Positive Affect and Job Performance

A thriving employee is motivated to learn and feel alive at work so that (s)he is open to challenge and is productive (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Thus employee thriving is a predictor of job

performance (Paterson et al., 2014). Thriving is influenced by human encounters that generate positive affect. Experiencing positive affect in the workplace will improve employees' cognitive capability and possibility to act constructively and, in turn, to develop positive behaviors (Fredrickson, 2001), including thriving. Porath et al. (2012) revealed that the positive affect experienced by employees increased their thriving. In line with the JD-R and broaden-and-build theories, we argue that positive affect is a job resource that builds other positive psychological states, such as thriving. Thriving itself can act as another job resource that drives employees to achieve work goals or perform highly in their jobs. Hence, we hypothesize:

H4: Follower thriving mediates the relationship between follower positive affect and job performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A three-wave survey research design was invoked. This design made it possible to divide the measurement of the variables over the three points of data collection (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). At Time 1 (T1), leader incivility behaviors (predictor) were measured. Positive affect (mediator) and coworkers' support (moderator) were measured at Time 2 (T2). At Time 3 (T3), thriving and job performance (the two dependent variables) were measured. The time lag between each of these three measurements was three weeks.

The data was collected from employees in both the service and production sectors because incivility has been found in a broad range of organizations (Reio & Ghosh, 2009), including: postal service (Geldart et al., 2018), healthcare (Guidroz, Burnfield-Geimer, Clark, Schwetschenau, & Jex, 2010), education (Cortina & Magley, 2009), government (Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, & Magley, 2011), property (Miner, Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, & Brady,

2012), hospitality (Nitzsche, Ribeiro, & Laneiro, 2018), law enforcement and military (Cortina et al., 2011; Tong, Chong, & Johnson, 2019), and banking (Sliter, Sliter, & Jex, 2012).

Sampling Procedure and Sample Description

Initially, a theoretical sampling approach was followed whereby we contacted employees in four different organizations in Indonesia who had been working there for at least six months (hence they had experienced ample interpersonal work relationships and the impact of those relationships). Two of the four organizations engaged in manufacturing, the third was a service business, and the fourth one was a public institution operating in the higher education sector. Due to the corona-virus pandemic that unfolded, it was decided to expand the sample size through snowball sampling. This sampling method was carried out by asking all the respondents to recommend other employees with a similar job tenure of at least six months (Goodman, 1961).

Everyone who had agreed to participate in the study had read a cover letter that explained the study's goals; a data-confidentiality guarantee; the time needed to accomplish each survey step (i.e., 5 to 10 minutes); and that the research would be conducted in three separated steps with an interval time of three weeks. They were allowed to withdraw their participation at any point; the letter stated that respondent participation in the research was voluntary and the respondents were encouraged to give honest answers. Respondents who completed the three survey steps were promised a brief report on the research results, and an opportunity to win shopping vouchers that were drawn randomly. The researchers' contact information was put at the end of the cover letter so that the respondents could contact them if they had any questions related to the research.

The T1 survey was completed by 373 employees. Then, 276 of them also participated in the T2 survey, resulting in a response rate of 74%. These 276 employees were invited to participate at T3: 226 respondents did so which amounted to a total response rate of 81.88%.

The employees in the resulting sample mainly worked in the (primary and secondary) educational (22.6%) or governmental sector (14.2%). Some worked in various other sectors, such as manufacturing (13.34%), higher education (11.55%), marine service (8.4%), mining (3.5%), banking (2.7%), consultancy (2.7%), energy (2.7%), construction (1.8%), automotive (1.3%), and not-for-profits (1.3%). The remaining 13.9% worked in other sectors.

Most of them were male (54%). The employees' average age was 36.1 years ($SD = 7.7$). Most of the participants had finished either a bachelor's degree (46.9%) or a master's degree (35.4%). Their work experience averaged 8.7 years ($SD = 6.6$). Furthermore, they were working as non-managerial staff (70%), first-line manager (15.4%), middle manager (9.7%), or top manager (4.9%).

Measures

All the variables were measured using self-report questionnaires. All the survey steps were administered online since there was a concern related to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. The language in the survey was Bahasa Indonesia, the Indonesian national language which is commonly used for communication in the sampled workplaces. Since the original scales were in the English language, we used a back-translation approach to translate them into Bahasa Indonesia (Brislin, 1970, 1980); Bilingual experts, together with the first author, compared the back translated version with the original English version. In case of deviations, the original versions were re-translated and then back translated again. Unless otherwise mentioned, the

questionnaires used in this research were administered using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = 'strongly disagree' until 7 = 'strongly agree'.

Leader incivility behaviors were measured by a 7-item scale developed by Cortina et al. (2001). The respondents were asked to what extent their supervisor had treated them negatively during the past year. An example item is "*My leader doubted my judgement on a matter over which I had responsibility*". Responses were given by choosing one option from a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (almost always). This scale had a Cronbach's alpha of .92.

Positive affect was measured by using short-form positive affect items that were developed and validated by Thompson (2007). It consists of five items, and example items are "*Inspired*" and "*Determined*". The respondents were asked to evaluate their general feelings at work using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always). Its Cronbach's alpha was .70.

Coworkers' support was measured by the 4-item scale of helping behaviors developed by Podsakoff, Ahearne, and MacKenzie (1997). An example item is "*My coworkers encourage each other when someone is down*". The scale's Cronbach's alpha was .84.

Thriving was measured by the Porath et al. (2012) 10-item scale. A sample item is "*At work, I have energy and spirit*". This scale's Cronbach's alpha was .85.

Job performance was measured by the 4-item scale developed by Gibson, Cooper, and Conger (2009) that had been modified to measure individual level performance. An example item included is "*I do high quality work*". This scale had a Cronbach's alpha of .75.

Control Variables

This study found that no demographic variables were related to job performance, thus those variables were not controlled for in the analytical process. However, employee's age and tenure correlated with thriving. Kleine, Rudolph, and Zacher (2019) also established a significant relationship between age and vitality, a component of thriving. Furthermore, Abid, Sajjad, Elahi, Farooqi, and Nisar (2018) and Gerbasi, Porath, Parker, and Spreitzer (2015) suggested to control for tenure when examining thriving and so it was controlled for in all the analytical steps, together with age.

Data Analytical Procedure

Brown (2015) mentioned that confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) can be used to investigate the discriminant validity of the latent constructs. Anderson and Gerbing (1988) recommended a two-step approach when conducting CFA by comparing the single factor model with the designated factor model. We performed three-factor CFA consisting of leader incivility behaviors, coworkers' support, and positive affect because those variables are likely to be working in moderating mechanism and then compared it with a single-factor model. The CFA findings of three-factor model displayed a better fit ($\chi^2 = 157.78$, $df = 84$, $p < .001$; CFI = .96, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05) compared with the single-factor model fit ($\chi^2 = 483.93$, $df = 87$, $p < .001$; CFI = .76, RMSEA = .14, SRMR = .11). Next, we conducted CFA to compare five-factor model with a single factor model. A five-factor model CFA yielded a better fit ($\chi^2 = 596.84$, $df = 308$, $p < .001$; CFI = .92, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06) than the single factor model ($\chi^2 = 1382.73$, $df = 318$, $p < .001$; CFI = .70, RMSEA = .12, SRMR = .11). Thus the discriminant validity of the latent variables in this research was confirmed. Table 1 shows the factor loadings of the items based on the 5-factor CFA.

Insert Table 1 about here

This study used a joint significance test to investigate the mediation effect, as suggested by MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, and Sheets (2002). This test is conducted in two steps: firstly, the relationship between independent variable and mediator is tested. Secondly, the significance of the relationship between mediator and dependent variable should be demonstrated, by controlling for the effect of the independent variable.

In addition, the mediated moderation model was tested using the procedures proposed by Morgan-Lopez and MacKinnon (2006). A mediated moderation model should be reported when the interaction between the independent variable and the moderator is significantly related to the mediator, and in turn, the mediator is significantly related to the dependent variable. In the analysis process, the connection between the independent variable and the mediator should first be established. Subsequently, the moderator and the interaction terms are entered in the regression to verify the moderating effect.

The current study tested two possible opposite moderator effects. Since the variables involved in both hypotheses 2a and 2b were the same, this implies that rejecting one of those effects means that the other effect is supported (Trottier & Bentein, 2018). To gain in-depth insight into the moderation effect, an analysis was conducted using Hayes' (2013) Model 7 in PROCESS. This test uses 95% confidence intervals, 5000 bootstrap samples, and a simple slope analysis with -1 SD, mean, and +1 SD as conditioning values.

The final step was to test the comprehensive model that includes all the research variables. The test is conducted in AMOS by using structural equation modeling (SEM), as

suggested by Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes (2007). Based on Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2009), CFI values of $> .90$ and SRMR values of $< .09$, and a RMSEA value from $.05$ until $.10$, are considered a moderate fit. However, Browne and Cudeck (1993) suggested that the thresholds of a good fit are: CFI $> .90$, RMSEA $< .08$, and SRMR $< .08$.

We applied the common method variance controlling technique to minimize common method bias, as suggested by Lindell and Whitney (2001) and Podsakoff et al. (2003). With this technique, a common latent factor is inserted into the regression equations (Eichhorn, 2014).

RESULTS

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha reliabilities, and the correlations among the variables in this study. We found negative significant correlations for leader incivility behaviors with positive affect ($r = -.24, p < .01$), coworkers support ($r = -.22, p < .01$), and thriving ($r = -.23, p < .01$). The table also shows that the significant correlation between coworkers' support and thriving was positive ($r = .20, p < .01$). Furthermore, positive affect was positively related to coworkers' support ($r = .22, p < .01$), thriving ($r = .46, p < .01$), and job performance ($r = .39, p < .01$). Finally, thriving had a significant positive correlation with job performance ($r = .41, p < .01$).

 Insert Table 2 about here

In hypothesis 1, we stipulated that leader incivility behaviors are negatively related to employee positive affect. Table 3 shows that this relationship was indeed negative ($\beta = -.37, p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2a stated that coworkers' support moderates the negative relationship between leader incivility and employee positive affect, such that when coworkers' support is high, this relationship is less strong than when coworkers' support is low. However, we found that the interaction between leader incivility and coworkers' support, which was included in the second step of the analysis to predict positive affect, was significantly negative ($\beta = -.14, p < .05$). The negative interaction effect indicates that when the coworkers' support was high, the negative relationship between leader incivility behaviors and positive affect was stronger. Hypothesis 2a was thus not supported. Contrarily, coworkers' support intensified this relationship, supporting Hypothesis 2b.

Figure 1 shows the interaction effect between leader incivility behaviors and coworkers' support on positive affect. Obviously, the slope is steep with high coworker support. In that case, the positive affect was generally also high, indicating that the coworkers' support compensated for the negative effect of leader incivility. This is consistent with the direct positive relationship between coworkers' support and positive affect ($\beta = .22, p < .001$).

 Insert Figure 1 about here

Hypothesis 3a stated that employee positive affect mediates the relationship between leader incivility behaviors and employee thriving. The relationship between leader incivility behaviors and positive affect was already supported when testing Hypothesis 1. After controlling for the impact of leader incivility behaviors, coworkers' support, and the interaction effect of leader incivility behaviors and coworkers' support on positive affect, we established a significant

link between positive affect and thriving ($\beta = .53, p < .001$). Based on those results, hypothesis 3a was accepted.

Hypothesis 3b stated that employee positive affect mediates the relationship between leader incivility behaviors and employee job performance. The first step of the analysis showed a significant relationship between leader incivility behaviors and positive affect (Hypothesis 1). We then tested the relationship between positive affect and job performance by controlling for the impact of leader incivility behaviors, coworkers' support, interaction of leader incivility behaviors and coworkers support and thriving. Positive affect positively related to job performance ($\beta = .47, p < .001$) and thus Hypothesis 3b was also supported.

Hypothesis 4 assumed that thriving mediates the relationship between follower positive affect and job performance. We revealed a significant relationship between positive affect and thriving ($\beta = .53, p < .001$). In the second step, the relationship between employee thriving and job performance was tested by controlling for leader incivility behaviors, coworkers' support, the interaction of leader incivility behaviors and coworkers support, and follower positive affect. The results showed that thriving was significantly related to job performance ($\beta = .32, p < .001$), thus Hypothesis 4 was accepted (see, Table 3).

Insert Table 3 about here

Finally, we tested the comprehensive research model with SEM. This model was an expansion of the mediated moderation model since it included all the relationships in one analysis. The relationships between the variables had been established in a previous test. The SEM results showed that all the hypothesized paths were significant and the comprehensive

model had a good fit ($\chi^2 = 22.05$, $df = 12$, $p = .04$; CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05). The mediated moderation model was thus supported: the relationship between leader incivility behaviors and job performance was mediated by employee positive affect and thriving in a series and was moderated by coworkers' support. In addition, we found a positive relationship between coworkers' support and positive affect ($\beta = .22$, $p < .001$). The final model is given in Figure 2.

 Insert Figure 2 about here

DISCUSSION

Although the impact of workplace incivility is less intense than other destructive behaviors in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), uncivil work behaviors tend to be displayed more frequently (Cortina et al., 2001) and their impact can last longer (Laschinger et al., 2009). This three-wave survey study focused on the impact of leader incivility on follower job performance. Despite its generic workplace relevance, this topic has not been examined before using any mediating moderating model with real-life field data (Blickle et al., 2018; Podsakoff et al., 1990), nor has positive affect been often incorporated (Giumetti et al., 2013). By testing our theory-guided moderated mediated model, we come to a new comprehension of human dynamics at work: by combining mechanisms from four theories. By presenting follower positive affect and thriving as mediators in relation to leader incivility and follower job performance, the results expand the COR theory, with the support of the JDR and the broaden-and-build theory. Moreover, the threat to the self-esteem model is illuminated by this study. We found, namely, that the relationship between leader incivility behaviors (in the past year) and follower positive affect is moderated by coworkers' support, whereby coworkers' support seems to intensify rather

than buffer the negative effects of leader incivility behaviors. At the same time, coworkers' support has also got a positive direct relationship with follower positive affect. This dual effect has important implications, as will be argued below.

Previously, the results from studying the effectiveness of coworkers' support as a buffer for the negative impact of leader incivility behaviors have been inconsistent (Geldart et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2015). Instead of a buffering effect, we found an intensifying effect of coworkers' support in the relationship between leader incivility behaviors and follower positive affect. Trottier and Bentein (2018) reported the same type of result when studying the moderating impact of coworker support on the relationship between daily workload and daily negative affect. This intensifying effect could be explained by the threat to self-esteem model (Fisher et al., 1982). According to this theory, support from others could be perceived as a threat, based on the perceived consequences of receiving it, the situational conditions, and particular receiver characteristics. The support can be deemed negative when it signals the donor's superiority and/or the recipient's inferiority. Support may thus threaten one's self-esteem when it harms one's feelings of independence and self-reliance, or when the help comes without an equal opportunity to return the favor, or is given in a potentially (publicly) embarrassing or humiliating situation (Trottier & Bentein, 2018). Being helped by coworkers with a similar level of experience could be felt as more menacing than receiving aid from non-peers with more work experience (Fisher, Harrison, & Nadler, 1978). Furthermore, receiving help from others who have similar characteristics decreases self-esteem and self-confidence (Fisher et al., 1978; Fisher & Nadler, 1974). Hence, receiving support from one's coworkers, after being treated uncivilly by the leader, might be harmful to followers in two ways: 1) it requires followers to open up about being treated uncivilly by the leader; and 2) it implies that the follower is inferior and in need of

support from immediate colleagues. This dynamic situation is sensitive since there is often a (latent) rivalrous relationship among coworkers (Anderson & Haas, 2020). The negative effects might be stronger if the provided support does not address the employee's momentous needs, and thus sends a message that the support donor does not really care about the colleague and is acting in a selfish way. In those situations, coworkers' support may act more as an intensifier than a buffer to leader incivility behaviors.

The influence of leader incivility behaviors on follower job performance could be explained through the mediation of two variables: each of them central to a different Organizational Behavior theory. First, leader incivility behaviors were found to reduce employee positive affect. This result is consistent with previous research (Giumetti et al., 2013); Employees that are treated uncivilly feel stressed as one of their job resources is being threatened (Hobfoll, 1989). In turn, thriving decreases because the job energy is being utilized to overcome the job demands coming from the leader (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014); employees feel less energetic and motivated to learn in the workplace, hence, their job performance suffers as well since positive affect tends to predict achievement in the workplace (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Sharma & Levy, 2003; Staw & Barsade, 1993).

This study answers the call made by Ashkanasy et al. (2017) to incorporate affective variables in the study of management. Affect is known to influence and be affected by important organizational variables, such as decision making, prosocial behavior, leadership, turnover, group dynamics, and performance (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Affect is an inseparable part of human beings when interacting with other people in any environment, thus including it in studies of complex human interactions at work is a necessity. This study reveals the key and complex importance of affect in the relationship between leader behaviors, follower thriving and their job

performance. Affect can, in itself, serve as a mechanism to provide the capacity or energy to work productively (Baker, 2019), and this is shown here to be influenced by leader behaviors.

Even though this study finds an intensifying effect of coworkers' support, the support also compensates the harming effect of leader incivility through a positive direct relationship with follower positive affect. Support from coworkers has been found before to compensate for unfavorable employment conditions (Tews, Michel, & Ellingson, 2013). Coworkers' support can act as a coping mechanism (Aldwin & Revenson, 1987) that reduces or relieves strain (Parry, 1990). This support may provide a kind of affect-based solace that focuses on emotional regulation (Folkman, Lazarus, Christine Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986) in an attempt to minimize the emotional effects of the experienced threat (Hollahan & Moos, 1987). Previously, emotional support in the workplace was found to predict less emotional exhaustion and less depersonalization (Ducharme, Knudsen, & Roman, 2008; Mathieu, Eschleman, & Cheng, 2018). In sum, coworkers' support can have dual effects on employee's affect, which opens plenty of opportunities for nuanced practical implications and future empirical studies, as will be elaborated below.

Practical Implications

Based on the findings of this study, we advise any manager concerned with job performance to try and avoid uncivil behaviors vis-à-vis their followers as it reduces followers' job performance. Even though incivilities are less intense than other destructive behaviors in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), and may be more difficult to detect by others, their impact can be long lasting (Pearson et al., 2000). Furthermore, incivility at work can be a starting point for more uncivil or destructive behaviors in the future, due to habituation (Pearson et al., 2000). Followers tend to utilize their available job resources to cushion the undermining effect of

incivility, rather than using them to increase or maintain their resources which contribute to their vitality, learning, and work performance.

Reducing leader incivility in the workplace could occur through setting and monitoring organizational rules and policies to prohibit such behaviors or, at the individual level, increasing one's psychological resources. This is important because leaders usually underestimate the impact of their own (often unintentional) uncivil behaviors (Pearson et al., 2000). More awareness training among leaders could also help them to notice when they are about to (perhaps unconsciously) harm their followers by acting in an uncivil way, in the eyes of their followers.

Moreover, coworkers must be cautious when initiating collegial support after a leader has behaved uncivilly; they risk intensifying the negative effects of the leader's incivility. Coworkers should use their emotional intelligence first to determine whether help is truly needed by a colleague (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004). They may need to check first whether the colleague needs assistance, thereby avoiding the possibility that the intended help may humiliate instead of being an effective source of positive support. However, if an employee clearly remains stressed, coworkers must offer solace to reduce employee emotional exhaustion (Ducharme et al., 2008). Finally, coworkers who want to provide support should make it clear that they are driven by kindness, since the appearance of an ulterior motive, such as taking advantage of a recipient of support, may turn peer support to a threat (Fisher et al., 1982). Managers' efforts to build open and respectful communications among employees can start by increasing social and performative resources at work (Boies, Fiset, & Gill, 2015; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007; Vogelgesang, Leroy, & Avolio, 2013).

Limitation and Future Research Suggestions

This study was conducted in Indonesia, which clearly has a different (work) culture compared to the Western samples studied in the mainstream literature to date. Indonesia ranks power distance and masculinity highly (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Such a high score may make followers perceive leader incivility behaviors as a regular occurrence which may attenuate the effect of negative leader behaviors (Lin, Wang, & Chen, 2013). Hence, our results may not be generalizable to different Western work culture configurations. Following the Ashkanasy et al. (2017) call for cross-cultural studies on affect at work, this study contributes to this ongoing debate but also calls for more empirical East-West comparisons in the attempt to reconcile the compatibility of the used theories across different cultures.

Our study used a three-wave survey design and a common latent factor in the analysis (Eichhorn, 2014) to minimize the impact of common method bias (Lindell & Whitney, 2001), as suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003). However, all the measurements in this study were based on self-reports, so we have not eliminated common method bias fully. Other methods to curb common method bias, such as collecting data from different sources, may be even more convincing. Obtaining more objective job performance data and using longitudinal research designs, that incorporate repeated measurement over time, are highly recommended.

The fact that the data was collected during the COVID-19 lockdown may have decreased employee positive affect, thriving, and job performance regardless of leader incivility behaviors. Furthermore, since the work was mostly performed remotely, because of the pandemic's strict work-from-home policy, the relationship dynamics among the employees may have affected the results of this study. Future research should be cautious of this potential pandemic effect.

This study found that coworkers' support had an intensifier instead of a buffering effect. Few studies have investigated such intensifier effects (Trottier & Bentein, 2018), so future research should expand this finding. It may be uncomfortable to study the negative impact of what is considered an established positive variable. However, scholars need to identify the various dark sides of organizations to avoid continued misuse of power at work and propose ideas to address them in specific situations (Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, & Harvey, 2013; Liu, Liao, & Loi, 2012).

The competitive nature of the workplace and employee's willingness to become more successful (Alamsjah, 2011) may trigger the here identified intensifier effect of coworkers' support. Receiving support from coworkers who are more successful and resourceful increases the perceived threat of the support (Fisher et al., 1982). Future research may consider the competitive climate in the workplace when studying human interactions at work.

Lastly, there are other resources that might serve as a buffer to the negative impact of leader incivility on followers. Although not covered by this study, a leader's (and follower's) emotional intelligence may contribute to a leader's socio-emotional antenna, and, thus, reduce leader incivility, as perceived by non-managerial personnel. Another future-research implication of this study's results then is to learn more about how an emotional intelligent type of work climate could serve as another resource for coworkers to provide adequate support after witnessing leader incivility vis-à-vis a peer (Ayoko, Callan, & Härtel, 2008). Beyond these psychological resources, Lee et al. (2019) also noted home-life resources, job-type resources, and organization-based resources. It is crucial for managers to learn more about the most significant employee resources that could buffer the negative effect of (unintentional) workplace incivility. Plus, in line with AOM's 2021 conference theme to bring the manager back into

management, we call for studies of managers' own resources, such as their emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and ethical compass, given that these are likely to reduce their displays of harmful and unproductive incivility at work.

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FIGURE 1

**Interaction Effect between Leader Incivility Behaviors and Coworkers' Support to
Follower Positive Affect**

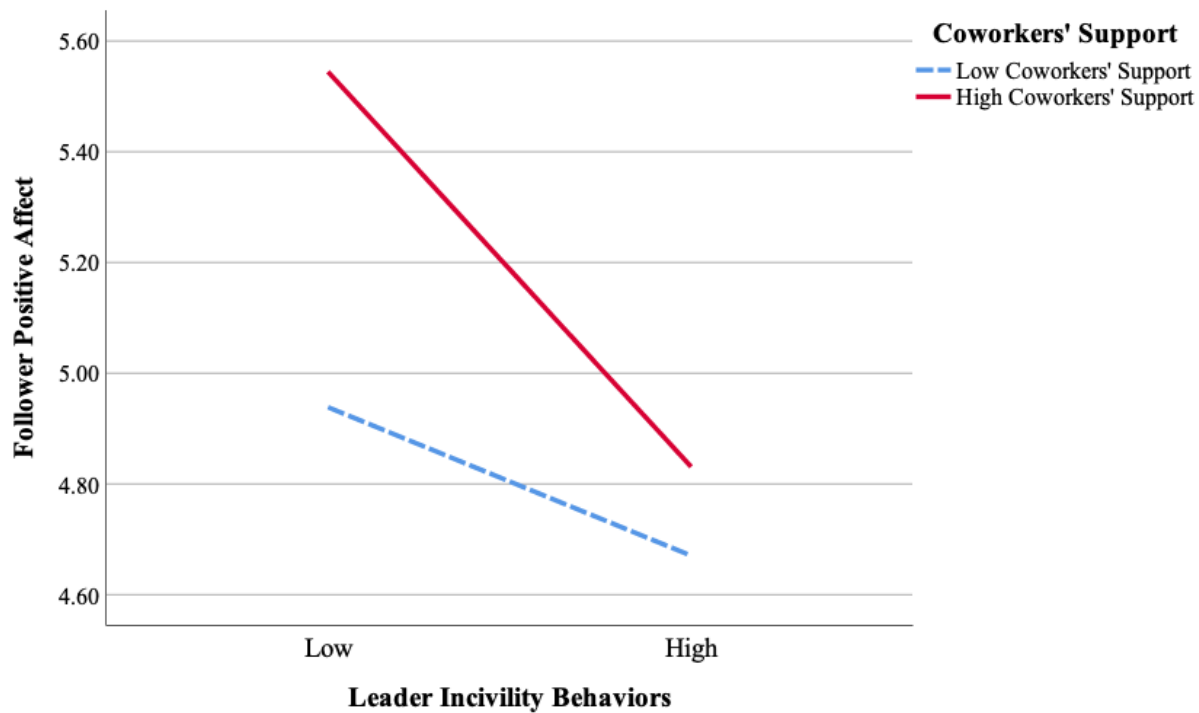
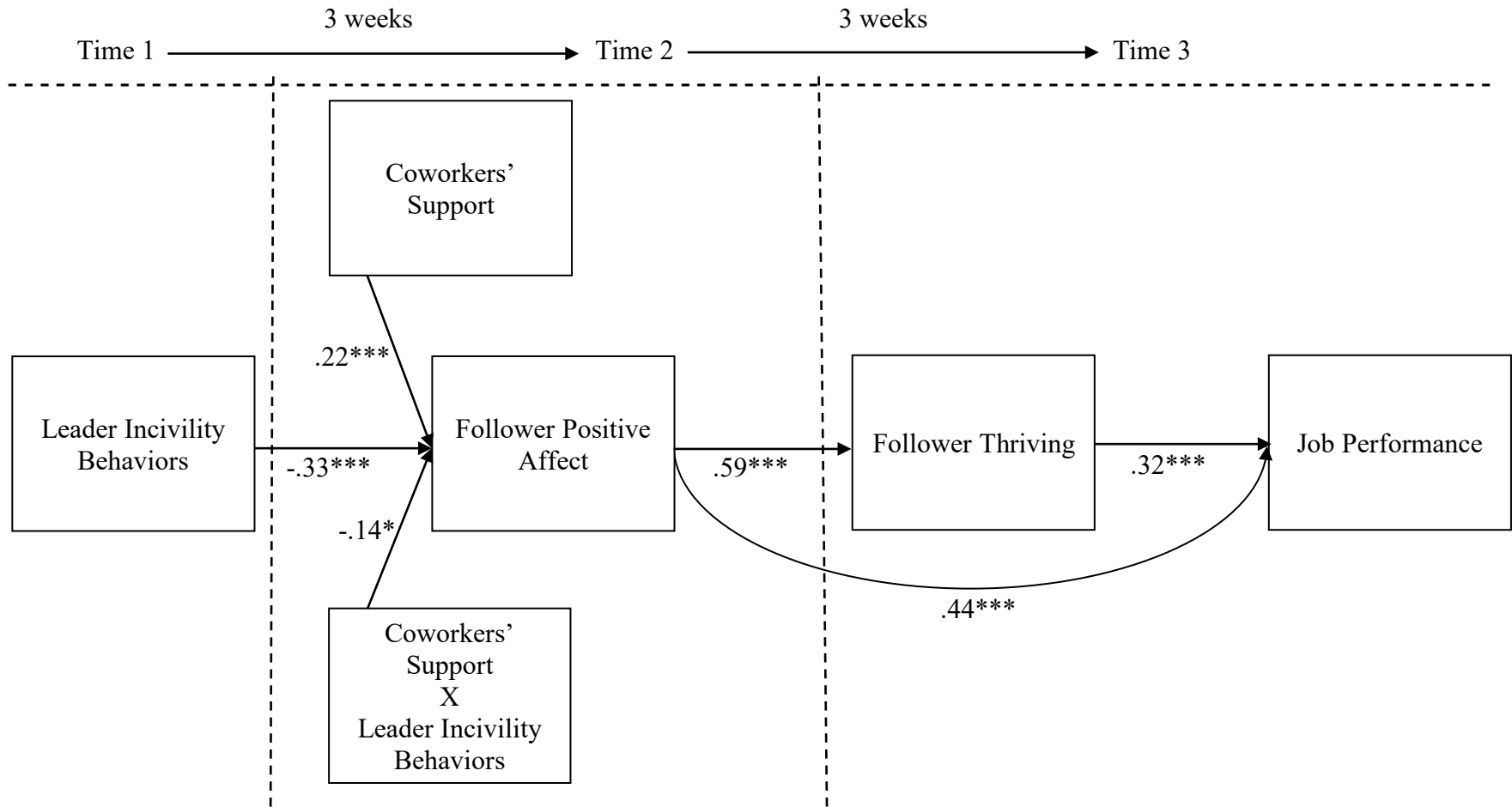


FIGURE 2

The Standardized Path Coefficients Among the Hypothesized Variables



* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

TABLE 1

Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Latent Variable Constructs)

Item Wording	Factor Loadings
<i>Leader Incivility Behaviors</i>	
My leader put me down or was condescending to me	.86
My leader paid little attention to my statements or showed little interest in my opinions	.74
My leader made demeaning or derogatory remarks about me	.85
My leader addressed me in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately	.66
My leader ignored or excluded me from professional camaraderie	.78
My leader doubted my judgment on a matter over which I had responsibility	.80
My leader made unwanted attempts to draw me into a discussion of personal matters	.73
<i>Follower Positive Affect</i>	
Inspired	.67
Determined	.73
Attentive	.76
Active	.79
<i>Coworkers' Support</i>	
My coworkers help each other out if someone falls behind in his/her work	.76
My coworkers willingly share their expertise with other members of the crew	.80
My coworkers willingly give of their time to help crew members who have work-related problems	.76
My coworkers encourage each other when someone is down	.71
<i>Follower Thriving</i>	
At work, I find myself learning often	.70
At work, I continue to learn more and more as time goes by	.75
At work, I see myself continually improving	.78
At work, I am not learning	.63
At work, I have developed a lot as a person	.75
At work, I feel alive and vital	.85
At work, I have energy and spirit	.79
At work, I do not feel very energetic	.50
At work, I am looking forward to each new day	.62
<i>Job Performance</i>	
I am consistently a high performing individual	.85
I am effective	.80
I do high quality work	.73

Notes:

CFI = .92, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06.

One job performance item had been deleted because it had a factor loading of less than .40.

TABLE 2
Means, Standard Deviations, Bivariate Correlations, and Cronbach's Alphas

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Age	36.05	7.69	1						
2 Tenure	8.73	6.64	.70**	1					
3 Leader Incivility Behaviors	1.85	.94	-.15*	-.04	(.92)				
4 Follower Positive Affect	5.03	.71	.29**	.18**	-.24**	(.70)			
5 Coworkers' Support	5.77	.87	.08	.08	-.22**	.22**	(.84)		
6 Follower Thriving	5.56	.72	.24**	.21**	-.23**	.46**	.20**	(.85)	
7 Job Performance	5.48	.76	.13	.04	-.17**	.39**	.15*	.41**	(.75)

Note: n = 226; Cronbach's Alphas are reported in bold and parenthesis

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

TABLE 3

Regression Analysis Results on Follower Positive Affect, Thriving, and Job Performance

	Follower Positive Affect	Follower Positive Affect	Follower Thriving	Job Performance
<i>Control Variables</i>				
Age	.31***	.30***	-.09	.01
Tenure	-.03	-.04	.16*	-.06
<i>Independent Variables</i>				
Leader Incivility Behaviors (LIB)	-.37***	-.33***	-.10	.08
Coworkers' Support (CS)		.22***	.09	.01
Follower Positive Affect			.53***	.47***
Follower Thriving				.32***
<i>Interaction</i>				
LIB X CS		-.14*	-.12*	-.12*
R ²	.25	.29	.38	.49

Notes: n = 226; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$