Outcomes of Incivility

Antecedents of Incivility

Victim precipitation models maintain that victim traits play a role in the mistreatment process such that certain victim tendencies may directly or indirectly contribute to mistreatment (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). However, incivility and workplace harassment did not demonstrate significant differences in their relationships with physical health (\(z = 1.90, n.s.\)).

When compared to specific forms of mistreatment, incivility demonstrated consistently stronger outcome relationships in comparison to bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination.

Discussion

• Situational antecedents demonstrated more substantive relationships with incivility in comparison to dispositional antecedents, which suggests that environmental factors may contribute more strongly to the occurrence of incivility than individual differences.

• This finding aligns with recent criticisms of the victim precipitation model and argues in favor of focusing on identifying contexts, not people, that provoke uncivil treatment (Ashforth, 1997).

• Incivility was at least equally as harmful as other forms of workplace mistreatment, and, in many cases, incivility had stronger relationships with outcomes than workplace harassment, bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination.

• This finding dispels the notion that the subtlety and ambiguity of incivility make it innocuous and illuminates the importance of taking measures to discourage even seemingly minor forms of mistreatment.

• Encouragingly, one effective path to reducing incivility appears to be fostering a positive climate that establishes norms for respectful treatment.