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Comparing and Contrasting Workplace Ostracism and Incivility

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Abstract

Despite their shared characteristics, the literatures on workplace ostracism and incivility have evolved in different directions. In this review, we discuss the similarities and differences in the conceptualizations of the two constructs and trace the different measures, histories, theories, and topics covered in the two literatures. Although small, we also review the subset of studies that have directly contrasted the effects of ostracism and incivility within the same study. Subsequently, we outline future research areas for both literatures, with a particular focus on research areas that may produce results that help further differentiate the two constructs.

INTRODUCTION

Incivility: low-intensity social interactions that violate norms of respect and whose harmful intent is ambiguous

Ostracism: being ignored or excluded by others; the noninteractive component of incivility

Target: who the incivility/ostracism is directed at; can be an individual or group, but most research has examined individual targets

Within the workplace mistreatment literature, different constructs exist in silos: Research on abusive supervision, incivility, ostracism, bullying, and other constructs exists, but it is rare to see multiple workplace mistreatment constructs within a single paper (Ferris et al. 2016, Hershcovis 2011, Hershcovis & Reich 2013, Lim & Cortina 2005, Tepper & Henle 2011). Although problematic, this is particularly puzzling when it comes to workplace ostracism (Ferris et al. 2008) and workplace incivility (Andersson & Pearson 1999). Ostracism and incivility share a lot in common: Both are focused on low-intensity counternormative behavior of an ambiguous nature (Andersson & Pearson 1999, Ferris et al. 2008); both tend to relate negatively to several outcomes (Robinson et al., O'Reilly & Wang 2013, Schilpzand et al. 2016a); both are argued to be common in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson 1999, O'Reilly et al. 2015). The constructs are so similar that most operationalizations of incivility include "the silent treatment" as a specific type of incivility.

Despite these similarities, we believe there are important differences between ostracism and incivility. In this review, we examine both constructs to compare their similarities and contrast their differences—including differences in their conceptualizations, historical origins, the theories used in each literature, and the topics covered in each literature. Our purpose is not to exhaustively review the empirical findings in both the ostracism and incivility literatures; for recent reviews of incivility and ostracism individually, see Schilpzand et al. (2016a) and Robinson et al. (2013), respectively. Rather, our focus is to demonstrate the utility of reviewing the ostracism and incivility literatures jointly. Specifically, we hope to illustrate how differences between the two literatures highlight potential applications of one literature to the other, as well as highlight incompatibilities between the two literatures that suggest when different findings can be expected for either construct. In this manner, we hope to advance both the ostracism and incivility literatures, as well as research on workplace mistreatment as a whole.

In what follows, we provide a brief introduction to ostracism and incivility, focusing on their conceptual similarities as well as an important difference. After discussing how they are typically assessed in organizational research, we subsequently contrast ostracism and incivility in terms of their historical origins, the theories used in each literature, and the topics examined in each literature, as well as discuss the few studies that have directly compared the effects of ostracism and incivility. We then turn to reviewing the practical implications of ostracism and incivility with a focus on how both can be minimized and close with an examination of future research areas.

OSTRACISM AND INCIVILITY

What Is Incivility?

Workplace incivility has been defined as a subtype of workplace mistreatment that is characterized by low-intensity social interactions that violate workplace norms of respect and yet are ambiguous as to whether they are meant to harm the target of the incivility (Andersson & Pearson 1999). As this definition implies, there are three important characteristics associated with uncivil behaviors: their violation of norms, their ambiguity with respect to the hostile intent, and their general low intensity (Lim et al. 2008). Typical examples of uncivil behaviors at work that meet these three criteria include making demeaning comments to another individual, interrupting someone, and not speaking to—or ostracizing—someone (Cortina et al. 2001). Such behaviors are typically viewed as rude and falling short of people's commonly held expectations for mutual respect at work (Andersson & Pearson 1999).

One reason for introducing the construct of workplace incivility was that such low-intensity and ambiguous behaviors were argued to occur more frequently than, and to be qualitatively different

from, the more overt and aggressive forms of workplace mistreatment studied up to that point [e.g., violent acts, persistent abuse, or sexualized harassment (Andersson & Pearson 1999, Lim & Cortina 2005)]. The three criteria associated with incivility—violating norms, ambiguous intent, and low intensity—are particularly useful in distinguishing workplace incivility from more overt forms of workplace mistreatment that do not match all three criteria.

Perpetrator: the source of the incivility/ostracism; can be an individual or group

To illustrate, consider the uncivil behavior of giving someone a dirty look: If an individual (usually labeled the perpetrator of incivility) looks disgustedly at another individual (usually labeled the target of incivility), it is not readily apparent whether the look is because of something the target did or because the perpetrator is thinking of something else and just happens to be looking at the target. Consequently, the behavior is considered ambiguous as to whether or not it is meant to communicate hostility toward the target. Moreover, receiving a dirty look is not likely to be characterized as a high-intensity event (although the intensity of any aggressive behavior is hard to define and may lie in the eye of the beholder; see Hershcovis 2011). However, being physically attacked at work—a form of workplace violence—is likely to be characterized as being both unambiguous in its (hostile) intent and a high-intensity event. Although both giving dirty looks and physically attacking can be considered counternormative, only giving dirty looks is low in intensity and ambiguous in intent.

What Is Ostracism and How Is It Related to Incivility?

As noted above, a specific form of workplace incivility is workplace ostracism, which includes behaviors such as being avoided at work, being shut out of conversations, or having one's greetings go unanswered at work (Ferris et al. 2008). More formally, ostracism has been defined as either "the extent to which an individual perceives that he or she is ignored or excluded by others" (Ferris et al. 2008, p. 1348) or "when an individual or group omits to take actions that engage another organizational member when it is socially appropriate to do so" (Robinson et al. 2013, p. 206). This latter definition also typically focuses on the omission of positive interactions (e.g., socializing with others), although the omission of negative interactions (e.g., arguing with others) also qualifies as ostracism.

As a specific example of uncivil behavior, workplace ostracism also fits the three criteria associated with incivility outlined above. For example, being the absence of a behavior (e.g., conversing with someone), it is presumably low in intensity as the absence of any action is experienced as low intensity (Ferris et al. 2013). Ostracism also shares ambiguity with respect to whether perpetrators seek to harm the targets of ostracism. For example, if an individual does not return your greetings at work, it is not clear if that individual is ostracizing you or simply failed to hear you. Finally, it is also generally viewed as counter to norms of respect (Robinson et al. 2013). Thus, it is appropriate to view ostracism as a form of workplace incivility.

Indeed, measures of incivility have typically included ostracism items such as giving one the silent treatment and showing little interest in one's opinions (Cortina et al. 2001, Martin & Hine 2005). Given that incivility measures have exhibited high interitem reliability across different work samples (e.g., Lim et al. 2008, Lim & Lee 2011), it is likely that such "noninteractive" ostracizing behaviors included in these measures tend to covary with other "interactive" uncivil behaviors (e.g., making derogatory remarks to the target) captured by the same measures. In line with this argument, Martin & Hine (2005) showed that exclusionary behaviors (a subscale of their incivility scale) correlated substantially (ranging from 0.44 to 0.65) with other subscales measuring hostility, privacy invasion, and gossiping (see also O'Reilly et al. 2015, Sulea et al. 2012).

This is not surprising given that workplaces that allow employees to treat each other in an uncivil manner (e.g., due to a lack of policies governing such behaviors) likely permit the

perpetration of other forms of disrespectful behaviors at work (including ostracizing behaviors). For example, Lim & Cortina (2005) reported that incivility and sexual harassment—two forms of mistreatment that are typically viewed as qualitatively different experiences and examined separately—tend to co-occur in organizations. On the basis of data collected from two samples, they found that almost all female employees who experienced sexual harassment also experienced general (nongender-based) incivility in the workplace. Their paper highlighted that different mistreatment constructs can co-occur, even if the constructs are conceptually or experientially different. Similarly, ostracism and incivility are likely to be highly correlated; however, we argue that the experience of being ostracized is qualitatively different from the experience of being actively subjected to uncivil or disrespectful interactions. Our central thesis is that despite the strong relationship between ostracism and incivility, they possess important differences, and it is important to differentiate ostracism from the other incivility behaviors.

Interactive components of incivility: components reflecting interaction between perpetrator and target (in contrast to ostracism, where they do not interact)

Differences Between Ostracism and Incivility

Following the preceding discussion, we conceptualize ostracism as representing the noninteractive components of incivility or those components where the perpetrator and the target of ostracism do not interact, in either a positive or negative manner (e.g., the perpetrator excluding the target from a social event or conversations, or not even deigning to argue with the target). This is in contrast to the interactive components of incivility or those components where the perpetrator and the target of incivility interact, usually in a negative manner (e.g., the perpetrator being condescending to the target). Interacting and not interacting with a target is the main way to distinguish ostracism from other forms of workplace mistreatment (including incivility), and this distinction has long been used within the ostracism literature (Williams 1997, 2001). The distinction is explicitly mentioned in the definition of ostracism used by Robinson et al. (2013), who argue ostracism involves omitting social contact, whereas other forms of mistreatment involve maintaining social contact (albeit social contact of a negative nature).

It has been argued (Williams 1997, 2007) that the exclusionary nature of ostracism makes it uniquely aversive, threatening in particular basic human needs for belonging, self-esteem, control, and living a meaningful existence. Indeed, as Williams (2001) explains, individuals prefer being argued with or berated, simply because it would acknowledge their existence and give them some sense of control over the situation. Moreover, given the evolutionary importance of belonging to communities, ostracism (versus other forms of mistreatment) may have a disproportionate impact on individuals because ostracism historically has presented a large threat to the survival of the individual (Williams & Zadro 2005). Several studies have tested this idea (see the Direct Comparisons of Ostracism and Incivility section, below).

How Are Incivility and Ostracism Studied?

Both the workplace incivility and ostracism literatures typically use questionnaires to empirically examine either construct.[1] Different workplace incivility measures have been developed (e.g., Martin & Hine 2005, Porath & Pearson 2012), with the most widely adopted measure being the Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) (Cortina et al. 2001), a seven-item measure of incivility

[1] One limitation with both incivility and ostracism questionnaires is that assumptions of the constructs—specifically, that the behaviors are counternormative, low intensity, and ambiguous as to their intent—are not actually assessed by the measures. Hershcovis (2011) provides an excellent discussion of these issues and the challenges they pose to the field of workplace aggression.

that asks respondents to indicate how often they had experienced incivility at work over the past five years. The WIS has been adapted for different purposes. For example, Lim & Lee (2011) revised the items in the WIS to assess the experience of incivility from different sources (superiors versus coworkers). Cortina et al. (2013) expanded it to 12 and 20 items so as to include a wider range of uncivil behaviors that were experienced in the past year. Lim et al. (2016) adapted it to assess day-to-day experiences of uncivil behaviors in their experience sampling study. In addition, this scale has been revised to assess perpetrators' enactment of incivility behaviors at work over the past year (Blau & Andersson 2005). Others have used items from related measures such as the Interpersonal Conflicts at Work scale (Spector & Jex 1998) and the Workplace Aggression Research Questionnaire (Keashly & Neuman 2002). Finally, although most incivility research has focused on the individual level of analysis, a few studies have operationalized the construct at different levels of analysis by aggregating it to the workgroup level (e.g., Lim et al. 2008) or developing items to assess workgroup norms (e.g., Walsh et al. 2012; for an extensive review, see Schilpzand et al. 2016a).

For ostracism, although other measures exist (e.g., Caza & Cortina 2007, Hitlan & Noel 2009, O'Neill & Sevastos 2013, Pereira et al. 2013), the most widely used measure is the Workplace Ostracism Scale (WOS) (Ferris et al. 2008), a 10-item measure of being the target of ostracism behaviors within the past year (e.g., others not looking at you, leaving the area when you enter, not inviting you for coffee or lunch breaks). Although initially developed without a specific reference to the source of the ostracism (i.e., it refers to behaviors from generic others, not from specific coworkers or supervisors), the WOS is easily adapted to assess ostracism from specific sources (see, e.g., Z. Chen et al. 2013, Scott et al. 2014). More recently, revised versions of the WOS have been published that specifically assess being the target of ostracism from a supervisor, as well as assessing being the perpetrator of ostracism (see Wu et al. 2015). Finally, a few papers have also used experience sampling methodologies to assess ostracism (Pereira et al. 2013, Halevy et al. 2014).

Outside of questionnaires, experiments have been used to assess subjects' responses after experiencing or witnessing incivility (e.g., Francis et al. 2015; Giumetti et al. 2013; Porath & Erez 2007, 2009; Reich & Hershcovis 2015; Schilpzand et al. 2016b) or ostracism (e.g., Balliet & Ferris 2013, Derfler-Rozin et al. 2010). Other studies use scenarios asking subjects to recall or imagine incivility (e.g., Bavik & Bavik 2015, Bunk & Magley 2013, Chui & Dietz 2014, Porath & Pearson 2012) or ostracism (e.g., Balliet & Ferris 2013, Hitlan et al. 2006b, Scott & Duffy 2015). Still others used qualitative methodologies (e.g., interviews) to understand workplace incivility (Cortina et al. 2002, Pearson et al. 2001, Scott & Duffy 2015). Thus, although questionnaires remain the dominant methodology, both literatures have some methodological diversity.

CONTRASTING THE LITERATURES

Having established what ostracism and incivility are, how they differ, and how they are typically assessed, we now turn to reviewing the two literatures, with a specific focus on contrasting how the two literatures diverge. Specifically, in what follows we discuss (*a*) differences in how the constructs emerged, (*b*) differences in the theories and frameworks used, and (*c*) differences in the topics examined. Finally, we discuss (*d*) the few studies that have directly compared the effects of ostracism and incivility.[2]

[2]Readers may also note a tendency to discuss the ostracism literature in greater detail than the incivility literature. We focus on ostracism primarily because the incivility literature has had an in-depth (and excellent) review published recently (see

Need to belong: an evolutionary-based framework influential in the ostracism literature positing a fundamental desire to form relationships

Incivility spirals: the notion that relatively minor acts of incivility between people can "spiral" upward into more violent forms of aggression

Interdependence: a series of related theories arguing for greater consideration of how the interdependence among individuals/groups influences interpersonal processes

Although we focus on differences between the literatures, they certainly share similarities. For example, both ostracism and incivility are negatively linked to job satisfaction and well-being, and both frequently use theoretical frameworks focusing on the self and stress (Y. Chen et al. 2013, Cortina et al. 2001, Lim et al. 2008, Robinson et al. 2013, Schilpzand et al. 2016a). Nevertheless, we focus on differences to outline areas where the literatures can learn from each other (e.g., theories and topics used in one literature can be applied to the other), as well as outline areas where the literatures may diverge from each other (e.g., findings from one literature may differ in the other literature, owing to conceptual differences between ostracism and incivility). In this manner, this section also serves to highlight future research directions for ostracism and incivility.

The Emergence of Ostracism and Incivility As Studied Constructs

Research on ostracism and incivility emerged around the same time, albeit in different domains. For incivility, a key initial publication was the 1999 *Academy of Management Review* paper by Andersson and Pearson, followed shortly thereafter by Cortina et al.'s (2001) article published in the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, which described a measure of workplace incivility. In subsequent years, a few empirical papers were published, including two oft-cited papers in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* that focused on explicating the construct of incivility and outlining its negative effects on employee's work and nonwork outcomes (Lim & Cortina 2005, Lim et al. 2008). As can be inferred by the journals these papers were published in, the construct of incivility was rooted in organizational psychology and behavior from its earliest beginnings.

Ostracism, however, primarily gained popularity in social psychology before later crossing over to organizational research. In particular, work by Williams—including an early 1997 book chapter, a 2000 empirical paper in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, and a 2001 book—and work by Twenge, Baumeister, and colleagues—including papers published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* between 2001 and 2007—firmly established ostracism and exclusion in social psychology. Initial survey (Hitlan et al. 2006a) and vignette (Hitlan et al. 2006b) studies followed in organizational research, but it was not until after the publication of a measure assessing workplace ostracism (Ferris et al. 2008) that ostracism research began to appear regularly in organizational research.[3]

We highlight these different historical origins because we believe these differences have influenced the evolution of the two literatures. Specifically, and as we shall point out where relevant in our review, we see the different origins as influencing the theories used and the topics examined in each literature. Although not all differences between the literatures can be attributed to their origins, it is striking how the different origins have (in our view) shaped the fields in different directions.

Theories and Frameworks

As noted previously, the theories and frameworks used in the ostracism and incivility literatures can differ. The different theories/frameworks can be grouped into three categories: the need to belong, emotion/justice/incivility spirals, and interdependence theory.

Schilpzand et al. 2016a); however, although Robinson et al. (2013) provide a (similarly excellent) review of ostracism research, the majority of organizational ostracism research has been published after their review.

[3] Although research on ostracism continues apace in social psychology, we limit the focus of our review to research on workplace ostracism, although we do highlight research from social psychology when useful to supplement our discussion of ostracism in the workplace.

Need to belong. Within the ostracism literature, a frequently invoked theory is the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary 1995). The theory's general argument is that individuals have an evolutionarily derived need to form relationships, as group living facilitated the survival and transmission of genes in humanity's early evolutionary history. Given the importance of groups to our genetic survival, derivations of the theory hold that individuals should be sensitive to being excluded (i.e., ostracism should be readily detected), and being excluded should be extremely stressful for targets of ostracism. A related argument is that being excluded should lead individuals to try to regain entry to the group or to satisfy their need to belong with other groups, to retain the benefits of group living.

Researchers drawing on this theory have argued ostracism should have a negative effect on workplace attitudes, well-being, turnover, performance, and sleep (see, e.g., O'Reilly et al. 2015, Pereira et al. 2013, Renn et al. 2013, Thau et al. 2007). Other researchers use the theory to examine moderators of ostracism: For example, Scott et al. (2014) argued ostracism thwarted the need to belong, but satisfaction of the need via other sources (e.g., perceived organizational/family support) may mitigate the negative effects of ostracism. Finally, research has also shown that the threat ostracism poses to the need to belong can motivate attempts to connect socially with others (Derfler-Rozin et al. 2010) or cause an individual to provide benefits to his/her group (even via unethical behavior) to highlight his/her value to the group (Thau et al. 2015).

The prominent use of the need to belong in the ostracism literature stands in contrast to the incivility literature, where it is rarely invoked. This disparity likely stems from ostracism's historical origins within an evolutionary framework (e.g., Williams 1997), which drew in part on the need to belong.[4] Moreover, Baumeister's influence on both literatures—having coauthored the seminal paper on the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary 1995) and coauthoring several early studies on ostracism—likely also played a role. Nevertheless, the need to belong clearly holds relevance for incivility as well. Being the target of incivility likely threatens one's sense of belonging to a group, although perhaps not to the same extent as actually being excluded from all group interactions. Recognizing this threat may lead to insight and—as we discuss later—different research questions than typically examined in the incivility literature (e.g., the notion that incivility may spur prosocial behavior).

Emotion, justice, and incivility spirals. Andersson & Pearson's 1999 paper outlined the concept of an incivility spiral, wherein small acts of incivility between perpetrators and targets can spiral up into more explicit and violent forms of mistreatment toward each other by engendering feelings of unfairness and negative emotions. This theoretical framework had a significant impact on the incivility literature, especially in terms of papers seeking to test elements of the incivility spiral (see, e.g., Foulk et al. 2016, Meier & Gross 2015, Meier & Spector 2013, van Jaarsveld et al. 2010, Walker et al. 2014). This framework also contributes to the relative prominence of theories associated with two elements of the incivility spiral: emotion and fairness. Emotion is an important focus for incivility researchers, as can be seen in the use of emotional well-being outcomes in both Cortina et al.'s (2001) scale development piece and Lim & Cortina's (2005) construct validation piece, as well as the use of affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano 1996) and affect-related mediators (Lim et al. 2008, 2016; Meier & Semmer 2013; Porath & Pearson 2012; Sears & Humiston 2015). Similarly, in line with Andersson & Pearson's (1999) framework, numerous

[4]Williams also focused on how ostracism threatens needs for control, self-esteem, and a meaningful existence in addition to the need to belong (see Williams 2007). However, most research in organizational psychology and behavior has focused on the need to belong.

articles argue that incivility should be negatively related to perceptions of interpersonal fairness (e.g., Caza & Cortina 2007, Griffin 2010, Lee & Jensen 2014).

As with ostracism's focus on the need to belong, incivility's focus on emotion, justice, and incivility spirals likely stems from incivility's historical origins [specifically, the prominence the topics had within Andersson & Pearson's (1999) theory]. Lacking such origins, it is perhaps not surprising that the ostracism literature focuses less on fairness and emotion (but see Ferris et al. 2016). Similarly, the concept of ostracism spirals, where what starts as ostracism spirals up into more violent behavior, has (to our knowledge) not been suggested or investigated. Nevertheless, emotion, fairness, and spirals may also apply to ostracism as well. Indeed, from a fairness perspective, it is possible that ostracism is viewed as violating not only rules for interpersonal fairness (e.g., for respect and propriety) but also rules for informational justice (e.g., by not providing justification) and procedural justice [e.g., by not providing voice as the target is ignored (Colquitt & Zipay 2015)].

Interdependence theory. Although not tied to its historical origins, articles in the ostracism literature frequently adopt —either explicitly or implicitly—an interdependence theory framework; this is relatively less prevalent in the incivility literature (although exceptions exist; see, e.g., Lim et al. 2008, Lim & Lee 2011, Miner-Rubino & Reed 2010, Porath & Erez 2009). Interdependence theory is not a single theory, but rather a framework connecting several related theories that argue for the consideration of interdependencies among individuals and groups. Such theories can range from discussing the level of interdependence (e.g., being independent or interdependent with another), to distinguishing the type of interdependence (e.g., being in competition or in cooperation with another), to discussing interdependence associated with specific situations (e.g., social dilemmas such as the prisoner's dilemma), to individual differences in how people approach interdependence (e.g., attachment styles; for a review of interdependence theories, see Rusbult & Van Lange 2003).

As one example of how interdependence is used, Wu et al. (2015) investigated the type of interdependence—cooperative or competitive—as an antecedent of ostracism. They found that competitive goal interdependence—i.e., when one person's success comes at the expense of another person—fosters ostracism, presumably as a way to thwart others, whereas cooperative goal interdependence—i.e., when one person's success assists another person—reduces ostracism (see also Halevy et al. 2014), with social skill—i.e., one's ability to handle interdependent situations—moderating these effects. The consequences of ostracism have also been viewed through an interdependence lens: Balliet & Ferris (2013) used a social dilemma framework to examine the relation between ostracism and citizenship behaviors. Arguing that helping others represents a social dilemma (wherein one makes a short-term individual sacrifice—i.e., lost time—for a long-term collective benefit—i.e., better outcomes for the organization), they found that ostracized individuals did not decrease their citizenship behaviors if they had a long-term orientation (and presumably recognized their interdependence with their colleagues).

Other studies have been less explicit in their adoption of interdependence theories, but draw on related arguments in their hypothesizing. For example, Wu et al. (2016) argued that increased job mobility decreased one's interdependence with others in the organization, freeing an individual to disidentify with the organization when ostracized. Relatedly, Whitson et al. (2015, p. 26) argued that low job mobility should reduce the ostracism of deviant employees, because "social exclusion cannot be accomplished when one is continuously brought into contact" with another employee. Finally, Dotan-Eliaz et al. (2009) found that individuals subjected to linguistic ostracism performed better when they expected to interact again with (i.e., they were interdependent with) another individual.

As these studies show, interdependence seems to play a critical role in determining both whether to engage in and how to react to ostracism. This is also likely to be the case for incivility. Although not explicitly relying on interdependence theories, a few incivility studies have applied related theories in their arguments. For example, drawing on social power theory (e.g., Raven & French 1958), Lim & Lee (2011) proposed and showed that the experiences and outcomes of incivility are likely to differ depending on the relative status of the perpetrator. This is because the power relationship and interdependencies are different depending on whether the perpetrator is a superior, coworker, or subordinate.

Secondary spirals: the notion that observing incivility can lead the observer to treat other people in an uncivil manner

We highlight these studies because it should be readily apparent that interdependence itself is an inherent characteristic of the workplace: Employees rely on other employees for support and cooperation on tasks and also compete with other employees for resources. It is therefore surprising that interdependence is not recognized more frequently in the study of workplace ostracism and incivility. Given the rich tradition of interdependence theories, and their clear relevance to the workplace in general and to the topics of incivility and ostracism in particular, we believe researchers would do well to pay more attention to the role of interdependence in both the incivility and ostracism literatures.

Topics

In addition to the different theories used, the ostracism and incivility literatures have also examined different topics, or taken different approaches to the same topic (i.e., examining antecedents of ostracism or incivility). Again, we suspect these differences may follow from the historical origins of the two literatures. Below, we review four topics—third-party reactions, spurring prosocial behavior, gender, and antecedents—where these differences are apparent. After briefly summarizing the research on each topic, we discuss how the topic may fruitfully be integrated with the literature where the topic has not received attention.

Third-party reactions to incivility. Within the incivility literature, several studies have examined the effects of incivility on those individuals observing, but not being the target of, incivility—referred to as third-party reactions to incivility (e.g., Chui & Dietz 2014, Foulk et al. 2016, Miner-Rubino & Cortina 2004, Porath & Erez 2009, Reich & Hershcovis 2015, Totterdell et al. 2012). The popularity of this topic again likely owes a debt to Andersson & Pearson's (1999) original work, which highlighted observing incivility as a topic worthy of investigation. In general, the empirical results suggest that observing incivility is stressful to the observer: Observing incivility at work leads to negative moods, burnout, less satisfaction with health, and a need to regulate emotions (Foulk et al. 2016, Totterdell et al. 2012, Miner-Rubino & Cortina 2004); observing incivility toward women also relates to greater withdrawal in male-dominated groups (Miner-Rubino & Cortina 2004). Observing incivility can also negatively affect an individual's performance [although such effects are mitigated if the observer is in a competitive relationship with the target (Porath & Erez 2009)] and even lead the observer to engage in uncivil behavior toward other, unrelated parties (Foulk et al. 2016)—what Andersson & Pearson (1999) referred to as "secondary spirals" of incivility, where merely observing incivility leads individuals to treat unrelated others in an uncivil manner. Finally, observers are also likely to view the perpetrator negatively, with one study showing that perpetrators are given poor evaluations and punished in other ways as well (Reich & Hershcovis 2015).

Although third-party reactions are a topic of interest within the incivility literature, this is not the case for workplace ostracism. This is unfortunate, as we believe this is one area where

the findings from the incivility literature may not extend to the ostracism literature, owing to differences between the constructs. In particular, it is possible that reactions to perpetrators of ostracism differ from reactions to perpetrators of incivility, and secondary spirals of ostracism may be less likely to occur. For reactions to perpetrators, consider the evolutionary roots of ostracism: It has been argued that ostracism arises because the ostracized individual is a threat to the group, with the nature of the threat ranging from the ostracized individual simply being an untrustworthy social exchange partner to the ostracized individual having a communicable disease or parasite (Kurzban & Leary 2001). Within this framework, ostracism acts as a signal to others to avoid the target of ostracism. As a result, observers may (presumably at a subconscious level) view ostracism as benefiting the group and perpetrators of ostracism as good group members—rendering the group unlikely to punish the perpetrator [in contrast to what is seen in the incivility literature (Reich & Hershcovis 2015)].

With respect to secondary spirals of ostracism, although it has been argued that observing incivility semantically primes rudeness concepts in the observer [leading them to behave rudely themselves to unrelated others (Foulk et al. 2016)], we believe this is less likely to occur for ostracism. Although observing ostracism may lead to a piling on effect where observers also ostracize the target of the ostracism (to facilitate in-group solidarity), it seems unlikely that individuals would begin ostracizing unrelated others (e.g., coworkers). Ostracizing unrelated others, particularly other in-group members, would violate one's need to belong; moreover, although observing incivility may prime rudeness concepts (which leads to acting rudely), observing ostracism may prime existential threats of being excluded—which may lead to acting more prosocially, at least to in-group members. Overall, we see examination of third-party reactions to ostracism as being an important avenue for helping to further differentiate ostracism and incivility from each other.

Spurring prosocial behavior. Identifying the conditions under which ostracism leads to prosocial behaviors is one puzzle numerous papers in the ostracism literature have sought to tackle. This focus can again be traced to ostracism's historical origins. From the aforementioned need-to-belong perspective, belonging to a group is critical for one's survival and for access to reproductive opportunities; consequently, the most rational course of action for an ostracized individual is to engage in prosocial behaviors in an attempt to reintegrate with the group (or to find another group to integrate with). However, early social psychology experimental research indicated that ostracized individuals actually tend to be more aggressive (Twenge et al. 2001) and less prosocial (Twenge et al. 2007); this trend has also been observed in organizational research, with such reactions being labeled as self-defeating, as they decrease the likelihood of securing a place within a group (Thau et al. 2007).

In their measure development paper, Ferris et al. (2015) did not find a significant relation between ostracism and prosocial behaviors (i.e., citizenship behaviors directed at coworkers), and argued that moderators may determine if people are willing to increase or decrease prosocial behaviors following ostracism. Subsequently, several papers have sought to identify moderators. Using a self-enhancement framework, Ferris et al. (2015) found that ostracized individuals were less likely to reduce prosocial behaviors if their self-esteem was predicated on their work performance; Wu et al. (2016) found similar effects for ostracized individuals with low job mobility. However, although these studies demonstrate conditions under which ostracism's negative relation to prosocial behavior is reduced or eliminated, they do not show an increase in prosocial behavior following ostracism. Other studies have demonstrated this effect, however; Scott et al. (2015) demonstrated that being excluded can lead to increased prosocial behaviors for those high

in positive affect, whereas Xu et al. (2015) found similar effects for ostracized individuals who identified with the group.[5]

One limitation of these studies, however, is that they typically do not align the source of the ostracism with the target of prosocial behavior; instead, being ostracized by nonspecified others or generically labeled "coworkers" is related to engaging in prosocial behavior toward similarly nonspecified others or generically labeled "coworkers."[6] Consequently, it is impossible to assess whether the prosocial behavior is actually being directed toward the individual or group that is the source of the ostracism—a critical issue for understanding whether people are trying to reintegrate with the group ostracizing them, or if they are trying to integrate with other individuals. We are aware of only one study that matches the source of ostracism and the target of prosocial behavior: Using vignette and experimental studies, Balliet & Ferris (2013) found that ostracized individuals with a future temporal orientation were less likely to decrease prosocial behaviors in the face of ostracism. However, this work only demonstrates a decreased (vignette study) or null effect (experimental study) of ostracism on prosocial behaviors and not an increase in prosocial behaviors in response to ostracism.

In contrast to the ostracism literature, there has been no equivalent interest in the incivility literature over whether incivility leads to prosocial behaviors. Presumably, this is because although seeing ostracized individuals react in self-defeating ways (Thau et al. 2007) is unexpected within a need-to-belong paradigm, it is expected (and predicted) within an incivility-spirals paradigm; indeed, this is one of the major areas where the paradigms make competing predictions. However, despite this topic not "belonging" (pun intended) in the incivility literature, we believe incivility researchers can examine whether incivility induces prosocial effects.

In particular, although incivility may not be exclusion itself, it is possible that it represents a precursor to exclusion.[7] That is, before being ostracized, individuals may first be argued with, slighted, or otherwise treated in an uncivil manner: These behaviors may represent warning signs that one's relationship with the group is rocky, and one is in danger of being ostracized. Research has shown that those who believe they are at risk of exclusion are more likely to engage in progroup behavior or to reciprocate toward and trust others as a way of fomenting social relationships (Derfler-Rozin et al. 2010, Thau et al. 2015); if incivility is a precursor to ostracism, we may expect to see similar results (see, e.g., Caza & Cortina 2007). Of course, the majority of the literature to date has found that incivility leads to increased antisocial and decreased prosocial behavior; what is lacking—as in the ostracism literature—is the identification of which precise moderators lead individuals to perceive incivility as a precursor to ostracism, and to subsequently engage in prosocial behavior.

Gender. Within the incivility literature, there has been a focus on the intersection of gender and incivility. For example, Cortina et al. (2002), Miner-Rubino & Cortina (2004), Lim & Cortina

[5]Although we have focused on studies examining prosocial behavior as an outcome, other studies have used the notion that ostracism should spur prosocial behavior as a framing device to justify examining moderators of the relation between ostracism and antisocial behaviors (e.g., Zhao et al. 2013).

[6]This is likely a limitation associated with the measures typically used for ostracism and prosocial behavior: as noted earlier, the Ferris et al. (2008) measure does not specify the source of the ostracism, and measures of prosocial behavior often assess prosocial behavior in general and not targeted toward a specific individual.

[7]This is not meant to suggest that incivility always precedes ostracism; it is possible that ostracism is passive and hence may be "easier" to engage in, and as such precedes more active forms of incivility. However, active forms of incivility may represent disinhibited behavior, meaning it is the "easier" behavior to engage in. In our Future Research Areas section, we discuss how little research has examined the effects of ostracism and incivility on perpetrators and hence which is "easier"; resolving this question may also help address when and why ostracism (or incivility) precedes incivility (or ostracism).

(2005), and Miner et al. (2012) all examined the effects of gender-related incivility (e.g., calling women "honey" or "dear"); other work has examined whether being a woman (Cortina et al. 2013) or being a mother (Miner et al. 2014) contributes to being the target of incivility. Much of this work conceptualizes incivility as a form of modern sexism, where—owing to incivility's low intensity and lack of a clear intent to harm—incivility is a socially acceptable (yet ultimately harmful) way to discriminate against others (Cortina 2008).

Although the same logic applies to ostracism, and exclusion is often mentioned as a topic in diversity research (see, e.g., Shore et al. 2011), the ostracism literature has typically not examined the topic of gender in depth (for an exception, see Hitlan et al. 2006a). Here, we see no reason to expect radical differences between the ostracism and incivility literatures: Being treated in an uncivil manner because you are a woman likely leads to the same (negative) outcomes as being ostracized because you are a woman. A larger question is whether distinguishing between general ostracism/incivility and specific types of ostracism/incivility is meaningful; we return to this question in our Future Research Areas section.

Antecedents. The prior three topics represent areas that have generally been the focus of either the ostracism or the incivility literatures; antecedents, however, have been covered in both literatures (albeit more so in the incivility literature; for a detailed review of antecedents of incivility, see Schilpzand et al. 2016a). Nevertheless, we believe surfacing differences between the literatures can highlight future research opportunities for both literatures.

Extant research on ostracism's antecedents can largely be viewed through an interdependence lens. As discussed earlier, Wu et al. (2015) found that cooperative goal interdependence decreased—and competitive goal interdependence increased—relationship conflict with one's supervisor, which in turn led to the supervisor engaging in ostracism toward the employee. Similarly, Halevy et al. (2014) found that a competitive mindset can lead to an individual being ostracized; Cullen et al. (2014) found popular employees were less likely to be ostracized. In a study noteworthy for incorporating both incivility and ostracism in the same model, Scott et al. (2013) argued that individuals who act in an uncivil manner toward their coworkers are more likely to be distrusted and ultimately ostracized by their coworkers; these effects were particularly likely to emerge if the uncivil individual was viewed as a bad exchange partner (something which, we would argue, reduces interdependence with the partner).

This focus on interdependence does not seem to be as prevalent in the incivility literature. Instead, the incivility literature focuses on antecedents that ostracism research has largely overlooked, including workplace stressors, perpetrator job attitudes, and the aforementioned diversity in the workplace (Schilpzand et al. 2016a). Moreover, although both literatures share a substantial focus on victimization perspectives where some personal characteristics of the target make him or her more vulnerable to being ostracized or treated in an uncivil fashion (see, e.g., Kuster et al. 2013, Ramsey & Jones 2015, Scott & Duffy 2015, Wu et al. 2011), the incivility literature generally uses a broader scope than the ostracism literature does: The incivility literature has examined and moved beyond personal characteristics of the target and has also examined how behaviors of the target [e.g., engaging in deviance (Meier & Spector 2013)] or attitudes of the perpetrator (e.g., fairness perceptions) lead to experiencing incivility.

Direct Comparisons of Ostracism and Incivility

Finally, although few in number, some studies have directly compared ostracism and various forms of incivility within the same study, and hence are of particular relevance to our review. These studies typically examine the relative impact of ostracism and other forms of negative attention,

including adapted versions of incivility scales as well as scales assessing similar constructs (Ferris et al. 2008, Martin & Hine 2005, O'Reilly et al. 2015, Sulea et al. 2012, Zadro et al. 2005). In most of these studies, the general argument is that ostracism should have a relatively stronger effect on outcomes than other forms of negative attention, owing to humans' evolutionarily biased focus on ostracism as a great risk to survival. Perhaps the most explicit example of this approach is the paper by O'Reilly et al. (2015), who examined the relative prevalence and impact of ostracism and harassment across three studies. The three studies included various measures of harassment, all of which assessed the more interactive components of incivility, although an important caveat is that these items were mingled with items assessing more overt forms of mistreatment (particularly in studies 1 and 2; see their appendixes for more details), which may affect the extent to which their results comparing ostracism and harassment generalize to comparisons of ostracism and interactive forms of incivility. With that in mind, across the studies, they found that ostracism has a stronger impact on job satisfaction, affective commitment, psychological withdrawal, health problems, satisfaction of the need to belong, turnover intentions, and actual turnover (assessed three years later). Indeed, once the effects of ostracism were controlled for, harassment largely had no effect on the outcome variables.

Beyond the O'Reilly et al. (2015) study, other studies have demonstrated that the experience of arguments followed by ostracism has a greater impact on satisfaction of needs for belonging, superiority, and a meaningful existence than purely being argued with (Zadro et al. 2005) or being undermined (Ferris et al. 2008), and ostracism has a greater impact on burnout than abusive supervision, coworker incivility, and unwanted sexual attention (Sulea et al. 2012). However, although Martin & Hine (2005) found an ostracism measure better predicted psychological well-being than three measures assessing factors of incivility [having one's privacy invaded, being gossiped about, or minor forms of hostility (such as rolling eyes or using an aggressive tone)], ostracism also failed to predict work withdrawal or health satisfaction once the other three factors were taken into account. In sum, extant literature often but not always supports the notion that ostracism has a greater relative impact on outcomes than more interactive forms of incivility or mistreatment.

Beyond differences in relative effects, the perceptions and the relative prevalence of ostracism and various incivility-related constructs have been compared. O'Reilly et al. (2015) found that ostracism was more likely to be viewed as being socially appropriate, less likely to be prohibited, and less harmful than harassment (despite potentially being more harmful, as noted above); they also argued that ostracism may consequently be more common than incivility. This was supported by their findings, which showed that ostracism is more prevalent in both samples. However, this relative greater frequency of ostracism compared to harassment also suggests an important caveat to their findings: It is unclear whether the stronger effects seen for ostracism can be attributed to ostracism having a larger impact given it is more impactful than harassment, or because it happens more frequently than harassment. We return to this issue when discussing future research areas for the ostracism and incivility literatures.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Our review has focused on comparing and contrasting ostracism and incivility, with a focus on differences between the two. Although touched on when reviewing certain studies, what may have been overlooked is the numerous negative consequences associated with being either ostracized or treated in an uncivil manner (for reviews, see Robinson et al. 2013, Schilpzand et al. 2016a). Consequently, organizations should seek to minimize the occurrence of either. Here, the similarities between the two constructs represents an advantage, as advice for minimizing one should also

apply to the other. For instance, both workplace ostracism and incivility breach expectations of mutual respect; consequently, having strong organizational norms for mutual respect and civility may help mitigate the occurrence of ostracism and incivility. Suggested ways to do so include organizations clearly stating and communicating norms to organization members (Cortina et al. 2013, Gallus et al. 2014), or tying evaluation and reward systems to the communicated norms. As one example, employees' performance appraisals can take into consideration their civil behaviors at work and use punishment or rewards accordingly (Cortina et al. 2013, Gallus et al. 2014, Porath & Pearson 2013, Scott & Duffy 2015).

Nevertheless, even strong norms can be violated, and organizations should help employees better deal with workplace incivility and ostracism (Cortina et al. 2013). There are several ways organizations may do so. First, employees should be given guidelines of what to do when workplace incivility and ostracism occur. Because how a target reacts shapes how coworkers assess the harm caused, as well as the necessity to intervene, targets can motivate coworkers to assist them by communicating that they have been hurt and requesting help (Chui & Dietz 2014). Similarly, coworkers should be sensitized to the potential severity of incivility or ostracism (despite its seeming innocuousness), as well as be educated on the necessity to intervene (Chui & Dietz 2014).

Second, organizations can develop civility interventions. For example, a six-month civility intervention labeled the "CREW" (civility, respect, and engagement in the workforce) has been shown to be effective in reducing workplace incivility (Leiter et al. 2011, 2012; Osatuke et al. 2009). Organizational interventions (CREW or otherwise) should aim to deter the occurrence of incivility and ostracism by helping potential perpetrators recognize their tendency to engage in incivility and ostracism and deal professionally and constructively with interaction conflicts (Scott & Duffy 2015). Aside from CREW interventions, an impaired self-regulation ability has been argued to be why targets of workplace incivility or ostracism engage in maladaptive responses such as aggression (Andersson & Pearson 1999, Scott & Duffy 2015, Ferris et al. 2008). Consequently, organizational interventions aimed at helping targets to better self-regulate may also be useful. Along these lines, mindfulness intervention techniques have been shown to be effective in deterring both perpetrators and targets' tendency to engage in workplace mistreatment (Scott & Duffy 2015).

Finally, supervisors also have a role to play. It has been suggested (Harold & Holtz 2015) that supervisors with passive leadership styles (such as ignoring workplace problems and avoiding decisions) may fail to promote civil norms and prevent incivility and ostracism, although they may not necessarily engage in incivility toward their subordinates. Supervisors who actively step in and punish perpetrators of workplace incivility or ostracism may make it less necessary for a target to seek retaliation by engaging in incivility, as well as signal to others that incivility is not tolerated (Harold & Holtz 2015). Thus, organizations may want to examine leadership selection and educate leaders on such issues, in addition to the incivility interventions mentioned above (Hershcovis & Barling 2010). Moreover, since leadership behaviors are argued to be important predictors of workplace aggression (Hershcovis & Reich 2013, Harold & Holtz 2015), supervisors should also be trained to model civil behaviors at work (Cortina et al. 2013).

FUTURE RESEARCH AREAS

We see several opportunities for future research on ostracism and incivility. In keeping with the theme of this review, we focus on areas of research that will help compare and contrast the effects of ostracism and incivility with each other (i.e., calling for more comparative research, examining the effects of engaging in ostracism or incivility on perpetrators, or the role of culture); however, we also highlight select areas where both literatures share similar problems (i.e., linking constructs to objective outcomes, or examining different forms of the construct) that neither literature has

Table 1 Future research areas for ostracism and incivility

Research area	Descriptions and research questions
One literature informs the other	■ Integrating incivility with need to belong/evolutionary frameworks: Does incivility signal the possibility of ostracism? Can incivility spur prosocial behaviors? ■ Integrating ostracism with an incivility spirals framework: Does ostracism spiral upward toward more violent behavior? What role do emotions and justice perceptions play in determining the effects of ostracism? ■ Gender and ostracism: Is ostracism used as a form of sexism?
Topics for both literatures	■ In recognition of the nature of organizations, pay greater attention to the role of interdependence, including (but not limited to) assessing reactions toward the source(s) of ostracism/incivility ■ When does incivility have a greater negative impact than ostracism? ■ What affects the choice to engage in either ostracism or incivility? ■ Do the behaviors that comprise ostracism and incivility vary depending on the culture? ■ What are objective outcomes of ostracism and incivility for teams and organizations? ■ Does the form of ostracism and incivility (e.g., cyber incivility versus regular incivility) matter?
Finding differences between literatures	■ Do third parties react differently to perpetrators of ostracism and incivility? ■ Do secondary spirals of ostracism occur, or are they limited to incivility? ■ Does conceptualizing ostracism as the omission of positive behavior, and incivility as the commission of negative behavior, suggest different moderators of ostracism and incivility? ■ Does engaging in ostracism have more positive effects for the perpetrators than engaging in incivility? ■ Do cultural moderators (e.g., power distance, interdependence) differentially moderate the effects of ostracism and incivility?

addressed (for a complete list of future research areas, including those mentioned in both this section and the prior Contrasting the Literatures section, see **Table 1**).

Engage in More Comparative Research

Aside from the previously reviewed examples, the vast majority of research has examined ostracism and incivility separately, resulting in few studies comparing their effects. We think it is necessary for future research to jointly examine the effects of ostracism and incivility [and other workplace mistreatment constructs (Ferris et al. 2016)], and to this point we have briefly noted areas where divergent findings may emerge for ostracism and incivility. Here, we outline three additional areas where differences may emerge, although others doubtlessly exist.

First, extant comparative work has tended to argue that ostracism has a larger effect on outcomes than more interactive forms of incivility. However, this surely cannot always be the case (see, e.g., Martin & Hine 2005). If, as the saying goes, silence is golden, then there must be situations where being ostracized by another individual is better tolerated than being exposed to interactive incivility from that individual. Future research should determine when this is the case. Building on one of the themes developed to this point, we suspect that when interdependence with the ostracizing individual is low, or when the source of the ostracism is someone who has no use to the ostracized individual, ostracism may well be less harmful than being subjected to prolonged bouts of incivility.[8]

[8]This assertion may seem at odds with arguments that we are biologically biased toward detecting ostracism (Williams & Zadro 2005), even detecting and being affected by ostracism from undesirable groups [e.g., the Ku Klux Klan (Gonsalkorale & Williams 2007)]. However, although we may detect and be initially stung by such treatment (even by those we are not

Second, we see promise in delving into Robinson et al.'s (2013) more formal definition of ostracism as the omission of positive attention, in contrast to incivility and other forms of mistreatment that involve the commission of negative attention. This definition of ostracism suggests parallels to the literature on approach/avoidance, which argues that those with an approach temperament (i.e., extraverts, those high in positive affect, those with power, etc.; see, e.g., Hitlan & Noel 2009) are most sensitive to the presence and absence of positive stimuli (Ferris et al. 2013). Consequently, this suggests the counterintuitive prediction that extraverts and powerful individuals are more affected by ostracism than neurotic individuals or those with low power. If true, this may provide another point of differentiation between ostracism and incivility, as incivility—which involves the presence of negative attention—should be most impactful for those with an avoidance temperament (i.e., neurotics, those high in negative affect or with low core self-evaluations, those without power, etc.; see, e.g., Beattie & Griffin 2014, Lim & Tai 2014).

Finally, given ostracism and interactive forms of incivility cannot be engaged in simultaneously, research is needed to examine what leads individuals to choose to engage in one over the other behavior. This choice may be an important one in that (as outlined next) engaging in either may have differential effects on perpetrators. To date, we have little by way of theoretical guidance for who may be most likely to engage in ostracism or interactive forms of incivility, but—echoing the approach/avoidance elements in the prior paragraph and the regulatory fit literature (Higgins 1997)—those who have an approach temperament may find it more natural to withhold positive interactions (i.e., to ostracize) than to engage in negative interactions (i.e., to be uncivil). Similarly, those who have a high level of interdependence with the target may engage in incivility, as ostracism may not be an option when interdependence is high (Wu et al. 2015).

With that being said, we also sound a general caveat for comparative research: Comparing the effects of ostracism and incivility can be difficult due to the high co-occurrence of these behaviors in the workplace. As a result, attempts to contrast these distinct but related constructs are hindered by the problem of multicollinearity. One possible approach to resolving this issue is to use experiments that create conditions of ostracism versus more interactive forms of incivility to examine the relative effects of each type of behavior. Similarly, in a large population sample, it might be possible to divide respondents into those who have only experienced ostracism behaviors versus those who have only experienced other forms of incivility. Finally, in an experience-sampling study where the timeframe tends to be short (e.g., a few days), there is an increased likelihood that different respondents might only be subjected to one type of mistreatment. This makes it easier to assess the immediate short-term effects of ostracism compared to other forms of uncivil behaviors.

Examine Effects of Ostracism and Incivility on Perpetrators

To date both the ostracism and incivility literatures have focused on consequences of being the target of ostracism and incivility (Bowling et al. 2015, Gallus et al. 2014, Zadro et al. 2005). However, an overlooked topic is the effects of engaging in ostracism and incivility on the perpetrators (Reich & Hershcovis 2015, Schilpzand et al. 2016a; for a notable exception, see Porath et al. 2015). We think this topic is interesting, as these effects may be quite distinct from effects of being a target of ostracism and incivility. For example, there may be positive effects for perpetrators, particularly given it is often argued that perpetrators engage in ostracism or incivility to retaliate or seek justice (Meier & Semmer 2013). For ostracism in particular, it has been argued to empower perpetrators

interdependent with), we believe any negative effects may be short-lived (Zadro et al. 2006) or of a smaller magnitude (Bernstein et al. 2010).

and satisfy needs for control and superiority while unifying the rest of the group by identifying outgroup members (Zadro et al. 2005). In line with our prior discussion of third-party reactions to ostracism, there may therefore be substantial benefits for engaging in ostracism, particularly in comparison to engaging in incivility.

However, both incivility and ostracism could be as stressful an experience for perpetrators as they are for targets. For example, either could invoke ambivalence in perpetrators, as they may feel bad about themselves even if the behaviors are not malicious in nature (Bavik & Bavik 2015, Zadro et al. 2005). Along these lines, confederates in ostracism lab studies report experiencing discomfort when ostracizing participants, even if otherwise feeling a sense of control and superiority (Zadro et al. 2005). Additionally, engaging in ostracism or incivility may require cognitive and emotional effort, such as needing to monitor one's own behavior to avoid any accidental acknowledgment of a target of ostracism (Zadro et al. 2005). In turn, this may negatively affect perpetrators' job performance (Porath et al. 2015). Finally, if incivility is seen as malicious and threatening to the work group's stability, perpetrators may be distrusted, excluded, or aggressed against by other colleagues (Porath et al. 2015, Reich & Hershcovis 2015, Scott et al. 2013, Scott & Thau 2013).

Overall, the effects of incivility or ostracism on perpetrators—and their relative positive or negative effects compared with each other—remains an understudied area. We therefore call for future research to consider perpetrators' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions to engaging in workplace incivility or ostracism. Examples of interesting questions include examining how perpetrators make sense of their own engagement in ostracism or incivility (e.g., their attributions for their behavior and appraisals of the situation; blaming the victim or the role of emotions) and whether there are any changes in their level of perceived fairness, well-being, or emotions (e.g., decreased anger or hostility or increased empathy, regret, or guilt). Finally, research should also consider how ostracism and incivility affect perpetrator's subsequent job attitudes and behaviors (e.g., satisfaction and job performance) and reputation in the organization.

Examine Ostracism, Incivility, and Culture

Ostracism and incivility are universal experiences and can be expected to occur in any culture. However, although studies of ostracism and incivility have been conducted in numerous countries including Eastern and Western cultures (see Li & Lim 2017, for a review of cross-cultural studies in workplace aggression), culture itself is less frequently considered as a factor (for an exception regarding the antecedents of ostracism, see Whitson et al. 2015). This oversight is unfortunate, given we see two ways in which culture can inform research on both ostracism and incivility.

First, the forms of ostracism and incivility may differ across cultures. For example, Xu & Huang (2012) argue that given the high value placed on face and maintaining harmony in Chinese cultures, obvious forms of ostracism such as not talking to an individual may not occur; instead, the ostracized individual may be spoken with but not taken seriously or not involved in decision making. Tying this observation back to Williams' definition of ostracism as being "ignored or excluded," it is possible that being ignored (i.e., listened to but not taken seriously) versus being excluded (i.e., not being interacted with at all) is an important distinction not currently appreciated by Western ostracism scholars. Although the most frequently used ostracism measure (i.e., Ferris et al. 2008) includes items assessing both being ignored and being excluded, it is heavily biased toward assessing exclusion. Consequently, a new measure that better distinguishes between exclusion and ignoring may be more appropriate for the Chinese context. Similarly, although incivility measures have been used in Asian samples (e.g., Lim & Lee 2011), incivility is ultimately about behavior that violates workplace norms for respect (Andersson & Pearson 1999); whether the norms for respect

are the same in non-Western cultures (and hence whether Western measures of incivility are appropriate) needs to be investigated.

Second, cultural dimensions may influence the experience of ostracism and incivility in different ways. In particular, ostracism may be expected to be particularly devastating to individuals from cultures high in collectivism, and collectivism (as a form of interdependence) may also reduce engaging in retaliatory behavior (Xu & Huang 2012). However, given interactive forms of incivility do not connote the same experience of exclusion, collectivism may be less likely to moderate their effects. Similarly, individuals from cultures high in power distance may be more willing to accept uncivil behavior from supervisors as such behavior is viewed as normative for leaders (Lian et al. 2012), meaning incivility's effects are mitigated by high power distance. However, ostracism from supervisors may be particularly devastating for individuals from cultures high in power distance because supervisors play an elevated role and their opinions are given more weight, meaning ostracism's effects are exacerbated by high power distance (for a contrary view, see Xu & Huang 2012). Finally, apart from their effects on the target, collectivism may also differentially influence third-party reactions to incivility and ostracism. In particular, because causing someone to lose face is generally frowned upon in collectivistic societies, observers may judge more negatively those who engage in incivility toward others; however, ostracism may be viewed as a less intense (and hence more "face-saving") way to reprimand someone.

Examine Objective Outcomes of Ostracism and Incivility

Extending ostracism and incivility research beyond examining psychological variables to examining more concrete, objective outcomes represents a promising future direction. For example, Robinson et al. (2013) noted that being ostracized likely results in an individual not receiving tangible resources—e.g., less advice or mentoring due to not being part of social networks, or being left off of email chains. These types of variables can be objectively assessed and are often critical for successfully doing one's job or advancing one's career; we agree that this type of research would be a useful supplement to research examining psychological outcomes such as attitudes, well-being, and motivational processes.

Beyond objective assessments of resources, we also call on ostracism and incivility research to demonstrate effects on objective team and organizational outcomes. For example, do ostracism and incivility degrade team viability, causing teams to prematurely break up? In research firms, is team creativity (assessed, e.g., via patents filed) negatively impacted by ostracism and incivility? Do perceptions of incivility and ostracism have effects on health care costs for organizations? Does incivility or ostracism in top management teams or boards influence turnover or firm performance (e.g., return on investment or stock prices)? Is venture capital funding affected by ostracism and incivility in entrepreneurial teams? Given what we know, there is good reason to suspect ostracism and incivility have negative effects on these outcomes, and such work may be viewed as straightforward or unexciting applications of our knowledge. However, the ability to quantify the costs of incivility and ostracism (e.g., using a utility analysis; Cascio 1980) is critical for convincing decision makers to pay attention to forms of mistreatment that are otherwise easily overlooked or dismissed.

Does the Medium or Basis of Ostracism or Incivility Matter?

Both the ostracism and incivility literatures have examined cyber forms of the constructs—or forms of incivility or ostracism communicated through computer mediums (for cyber incivility, see Lim & Teo 2009, Park et al. 2015; for cyberostracism, see Williams et al. 2000). The ostracism literature

also has a subfield focusing on linguistic ostracism—or being excluded due to not speaking the same language as coworkers (see, e.g., Dotan-Eliaz et al. 2009, Hitlan et al. 2006b, Kulkarni & Sommer 2015)—whereas the incivility literature has the aforementioned focus on gender-based incivility.

Although we believe it is interesting to outline the various mediums and bases of incivility and ostracism, whether or not these differences actually matter is unclear. That is, does it matter if you are being ostracized because you do not understand the language two coworkers are speaking in, or does it just matter that you feel ostracized, period? Does it matter if you are being treated in an uncivil manner because you are a woman, or does it just matter that you are being treated in an uncivil manner, period? If the medium or basis matters, then developing measures to assess different types may be useful; if the medium or basis does not matter, then measures assessing ostracism and incivility more generally may be suitable.

We suspect that the medium or basis of incivility and ostracism can influence outcomes, so they likely do matter: Specifically, they may influence the attributions made for the behavior. For example, an email may sound uncivil but it can be attributed to email being a context-free medium. Similarly, language-based ostracism may not be attributed to ill will. In turn, the attributions made can influence reactions to workplace aggression (Douglas et al. 2008). Alternately, the medium or basis may influence the extent to which norms are violated: For example, gender-based incivility might be more harmful than nongender-based incivility because gender-related incivility violates not only norms for politeness but also norms for equality. However, more research is needed comparing the different forms ostracism and incivility can take to see whether or not the form taken actually matters (for an example of an experimental study comparing "real" and cyberostracism, see Williams et al. 2002).

CONCLUSION

Despite their similarities, there are important conceptual differences between ostracism and incivility. Although researchers should not treat the constructs as being irreconcilably different such that what applies to one literature does not apply to the other, neither should researchers treat the constructs as interchangeable such that what applies to one literature inevitably applies to the other. Throughout this review we have sought to illustrate how considering both ostracism and incivility literatures leads to the cross-pollination of ideas from one literature to the other, as well as how differences between ostracism and incivility can lead to interesting research questions that can illuminate the nature of either construct and serve to distinguish each from the other. We hope this review illustrates to workplace mistreatment researchers how taking a broader view of mistreatment constructs can be informative and ultimately advance the field of workplace mistreatment as a whole.

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Errata

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