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## An Inconvenient Truth?

### Interpersonal and Career Consequences of “Maybe Baby” Expectations

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### **Interpersonal and Career Consequences of “Maybe Baby” Expectations**

We examine a counterintuitive effect of motherhood and parental leave policies: supervisors and coworkers may view early career women who have yet to have children (i.e., childless women) with greater uncertainty and inconvenience than their counterparts (i.e., childless men), especially in organizations offering more maternal than paternal leave. We propose that these “maybe baby” expectations manifest as workplace incivility, which predicts later career withdrawal. In a time-lagged survey study, we examined 474 early career employees’ experiences of workplace incivility and career withdrawal cognitions one year later; we also collected objective data on organizations’ maternal and paternal leave policies. As expected, childless women experienced more incivility than their counterparts, a difference that was greater in organizations with larger differences between maternal leave and paternal leave policies and positively associated with subsequent career withdrawal. Discussion focuses on the importance of examining individual- and organizational-level work-family antecedents for understanding modern workplace mistreatment and its career effects in context, as well as the effective design and implementation of work-family policies.

#### **Keywords:**

gender; parenthood; motherhood; workplace incivility; workplace mistreatment; parental leave

*...pregnancy is...a wonderful thing for the woman, it's a wonderful thing for the husband, it's certainly an inconvenience for a business.* –Donald Trump (2004)

*Parental leave is inconvenient. So are heart attacks. It would be far more convenient if employees had neither babies nor bodies.* –Williams & Massinger (2015)

Women face gender- and motherhood-related biases in leadership positions and promotions, especially in masculine settings (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman & Okimoto, 2008; Hoobler, Lemmon, & Wayne, 2014); however, examining a later stage career position such as leadership or professorship may be too late because the gender gap drastically widens already at the early career phase. Indeed, a significant portion of our trained female talent is already lost shortly after the master's degree or PhD (Catalyst, 2012; 2015a; 2015b). This early career phase also overlays with women's prime childbearing years (Livingston, 2015), which highlights the work-life interface, including the perceived uncertainty and incompatibility between women's private and professional roles (Eagly, 1987; Heilman, 1983; Hoobler, Wayne, & Lemmon, 2009; Hoobler et al., 2011; 2014). Thus, the early career period is a prime point of study and eventual intervention if our aims are to improve gender parity in leadership and professorships.

As illustrated by the quotes above from the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (Vitali, 2016) and work-life scholars Williams and Massinger (2015), we propose that early career working women may face another family-related barrier to career advancement: they are viewed as likely to have an (eventual) pregnancy (i.e., the “maybe baby” effect), a life event that is construed as an organizational inconvenience. Indeed, it is new mothers—but not new fathers—who take leave from work following childbirth due to the physical and health-related issues associated with childbirth, but also because women are generally more eligible for parental leave than men (OECD, 2016). New mothers' colleagues and supervisors may view maternal leave as problematic because they feel ambiguity about the workplace accommodations or plans to cover

this work during the absence and they often shoulder these extra efforts and substitutions (Gueutal & Taylor, 1991; King & Botsford, 2009). For example, upon disclosing her upcoming pregnancy, a university teacher's boss became "upset because he did not want to do the coaching, and he wasn't sure that [the department] was going to hire someone to come in" (Buzzanell & Liu, 2007, p. 476). In discussing employees with potential family obligations more generally, one co-worker reported, "people without obligations are always the first to be asked [to do the extra work]...People are understanding, but in a team it is inconvenient" (ter Hoeven, Miller, Peper, & den Dulk, 2017, p. 207). These anticipated extra efforts could drive (conscious or unconscious) hostility and resentment towards potential new mothers (i.e., childless women) in particular, because pregnancy is the most probable for women who have not yet had children.

Indeed, with today's low and ever decreasing birth rates (Livingston, 2015; Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2016; United States Census Bureau, 2011; The World Bank, 2016), women who are already mothers are relatively less likely to have another child compared with currently childless women. Furthermore, childless women's desire or ability to combine work and family may also be less certain than for mothers who had a child and subsequently returned to work. Thus, young childless women's chances of future pregnancy may be the highest, while their temporary (or more permanent) absences are also the most uncertain, potentially triggering the strongest feelings of inconvenience in their coworkers and supervisors. To illustrate, one female law firm employee reported: "I wasn't even pregnant. I was aged 32 and recently married, so the partners at my firm assumed that I would get pregnant shortly...When I asked about further promotion I was told I might have other priorities shortly and needed to balance work and home life" (Slater Gordon, 2017). Although such sentiments may not always be so explicitly formulated and/or openly shared with female employees, these feelings might consciously (or

subconsciously) manifest as interpersonal mistreatment in the everyday social interactions with supposed new mothers, as previously shown in studies of employment-seeking pregnant women (e.g., Botsford Morgan, Singletary Walker, Hebl, & King, 2013; Hebl, King, Glick, Singletary, & Kazama, 2007).

In the current research, we examine if this “maybe baby” uncertainty manifests as a subtle form of mistreatment (i.e., incivility) towards childless women—especially in organizations with larger differences between maternal leave and paternal leave—and if these negative interpersonal experiences contribute to women’s early career withdrawal. Bridging theories of selective incivility (Cortina, 2008) and family-work conflict bias (Hoobler et al., 2009), with insights from ambivalent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1997; 2001) and lack of fit (Heilman, 1983) theories, we propose and test a conditional moderated mediation model (see Figure 1). Specifically, we propose that childless women experience more incivility than childless men, an effect that increases as the difference between available maternal leave and paternal leave becomes larger, because colleagues and supervisors expect that in the case of childbirth, they will have to shoulder women’s work while on leave and women’s commitment to their careers may change. In doing so, we highlight two possible motives contributing to childless women’s incivility: coworkers’ and supervisors’ ambivalence of concurrent support for organizational work-family resources (e.g., parental leave) yet refusal to offer their personal resources to support new parents and pregnant coworkers (e.g., time and effort), and coworkers’ and supervisors’ ambiguity about women’s continuance commitment after childbearing. We further propose that experiences of workplace incivility are associated with more career withdrawal cognitions, thus highlighting a modern explanation for the persistent and pervasive gender gap in leadership and professorships, while also pointing to a policy implication for

parity. With data collected in Switzerland, a country where organizations often offer varying levels of maternal and paternal leave beyond the legal requirements of 14 weeks and 0 weeks for new mothers and fathers (respectively)—8 weeks of which women are required to take by law—our research context is ideal for empirically testing these propositions.

In the following, we review theory and literature on incivility, selective incivility, gender and parenthood stereotypes, and the work-life interface. We highlight how individual (i.e., employee gender and parenthood) and organizational factors (i.e., parental leave policies) may affect workplace incivility. Finally, we outline how experiences of incivility can shape career-related attitudes and cognitions.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **Incivility as Modern Discrimination**

Workplace incivility refers to “low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect” (Andersson & Pearson, 1999, p. 457). Unlike bullying, mobbing, or blatant discrimination, incivility is inherently ambiguous in nature. Consequently, incivility is exceptionally difficult for target sense-making and attribution, and thus often interpreted at the personal rather than the group-level; for these reasons, it is especially harmful for targets (see meta-analysis by Hershcovis & Barling, 2010).

Even if unintentional, incivility can represent a veiled manifestation of modern discrimination referred to as “selective incivility” if targeted toward certain groups (e.g., women or racial minorities; Cortina, 2008; Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Laskinen, Huerta, & Magley, 2013). That is, despite being facially neutral, generally uncivil behaviors may instead represent covert expressions of gender or racial biases in the workplace. According to Cortina (2008), a critical component in selective incivility theory is the ambivalent and ambiguous nature

of bias and prejudice, which makes it easy for instigators to maintain egalitarian face, but simultaneously difficult for managers to detect and for targets to interpret (see Hershcovis, 2011, for a review of incivility and related concepts).

Scholars suggest that women (rather than men) experience more incivility, in part because women are often stereotyped and perceived as relatively less competent at work (Cortina, 2008). Consistent with selective incivility theory (Cortina, 2008), the majority of incivility research that has examined and reported gender effects finds that women report more experiences of incivility than men (e.g., Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Cortina et al., 2013; Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008; Miner, Pesonen, Smittick, Seigel, & Clark, 2014). Thus, we also propose a main effect of gender on incivility. Formally,

*Hypothesis 1: Working women report more experiences of incivility than men.*

However, a few scholars have found that women reported the same rates of incivility as men (e.g., Krings, Johnston, Binggeli, & Maggiori, 2014) or that men reported more incivility than women (e.g., Lim & Lee, 2011). These results align with a recent review of the broader workplace aggression literature by Aquino and Thau (2009), who found that victimization prevalence rates according to gender were mixed, leading the authors to suggest subsequent research pursue moderators rather than raw demographic effects. In line with this suggestion, we propose that a recent incidental finding from Miner and colleagues (2014) may help to clarify these inconsistent effects in the case of workplace incivility. Specifically, Miner and colleagues found that the gender difference in experienced incivility was double in size for childless employees compared with parents. Thus, using an intersectionality perspective (Crenshaw, 1989), we examine the interaction of gender and parenthood in predicting workplace incivility to further clarify these mixed effects and more accurately construct the meaning and experience of

early career women.

### **Employee Gender, “Maybe Baby” Expectations, and Incivility**

According to social role theory (Eagly, 1987), female employees’ non-work demands tend to be salient to their colleagues, because women are more often and automatically viewed from a non-work or caretaking perspective than men. Previous research has documented that employers have family-work conflict bias (i.e., assumptions that women have family demands that interfere with their work roles; Hoobler et al., 2009) toward female employees, including the perception that women have lower career motivation, dependability, or commitment compared with men (Konrad & Cannings, 1997; Lyness & Judiesch, 2001; Phelps, 1972), regardless of their caretaking responsibilities or their actual family-work conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Hoobler et al., 2009). Although family-work conflict bias has been shown in employers’ perceptions or formal ratings of their subordinates, we propose that this bias is also evident in supervisors’ *and* coworkers’ everyday social interactions with female employees, in particular, early career females. In other words, supervisors’ and coworkers’ “maybe baby” expectations of their female colleagues’ future motherhood may trigger ideas of uncertainty and inconvenience, which can fuel negative emotions (e.g., resentment) because by working in the same team, they would be directly affected in the case of a female colleague’s pregnancy. Furthermore, if the most certain inconvenience is the new mother’s absence from work, then this inconvenience would be greater in organizations with larger differences between maternal and paternal leave. In the following, we describe gender stereotypes, detail the organizational inconveniences of “maybe baby” expectations and new mothers’ maternal leaves, and outline how these individual characteristics and organizational contexts might infiltrate everyday social interactions at work.

First, gendered stereotypes of working women's relatively reduced commitment (Heilman & Okimoto, 2008) or greater family-work conflict (Hoobler et al., 2009) compared with men, fuelled by notions of an "opt out" revolution (Belkin, 2003), may encourage ideas that highly educated women might be waiting to have a child to then drop out of the workforce. Despite their inaccuracy (i.e., mothers report at least comparable work-related attitudes as fathers; King, 2008; and female managers are less likely to resign than male managers; Lyness & Judiesch, 2001), these notions are particularly problematic for early career working women. Indeed, gender stereotypes are automatically activated (Fiske, Haslam, & Fiske, 1991) and further reinforced by the stereotype-consistent information that supervisors and coworkers tend to notice and recall (see Heilman, 2012). Such beliefs highlight women's (potential) family roles, perhaps especially for women at the age when childbearing is most common (i.e., early to mid-thirties; Livingston, 2015; Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2016; The World Bank, 2016).

But beyond gender and parenthood-related stereotypes, these "maybe baby" expectations likely highlight some of the more practical issues that pregnancy often entails. Drawing support from the nascent literature on pregnancy at work, we propose that supervisors and coworkers anticipate two types of organizational inconveniences. First, new mothers will be away from work for at least the length of maternal leave, which is long enough to impact her team beyond the typical vacation-related absence, yet often too short to justify hiring a substitute or replacement. Thus, this leave can create uncertainty about the plans to cover her absence, extra efforts and substitutions that are often shouldered by coworkers and supervisors (Gueutal & Taylor, 1991; King & Botsford, 2009; ter Hoeven et al., 2017).

These extra efforts and uncertainty may motivate negative reactions towards the apparent source of the inconvenience—or even ambivalent reactions—which can be more pernicious than

unilaterally negative emotions. For example, while employees overwhelmingly support organizational policies and assistance for pregnant employees and new parents (Gallup, 2017; Gueutal & Taylor, 1991), they are generally unwilling to offer their time or support to aid pregnant colleagues and new parents (Gueutal & Taylor, 1991; ter Hoeven et al., 2017). This ambivalence of simultaneously supporting organizational resources while refusing their personal resources echoes themes from ambivalent sexism theory in which coexisting feelings of benevolence and hostility maintain modern gender inequalities (Glick & Fiske, 1996; 2001); such reactions can be particularly harmful given that endorsers are often able to maintain egalitarian face or mask their sexism by emphasizing the positive elements of the ambivalence.

Second, coworkers and supervisors may be unsure of the new mother's post-birth career plans, which could further highlight the ambiguity surrounding the length of her leave and the necessary workplace accommodations. According to the lack of fit theory (Heilman, 1983), ambiguity about women's competence is a central contributor to supervisors' unfavorable formal work-related decisions towards women. In the context of the current research, however, we propose that ambiguities about women's continuance commitment (Belkin, 2003; Hoobler et al., 2009)—not just competence—also influence women's work-related outcomes, particularly their informal, social interactions with supervisors and coworkers. Indeed, providing managers with counterstereotypic information about pregnant women's lack of commitment—but not competence—has been shown to reduce interpersonal discrimination and hostility towards job-seeking pregnant women (Botsford Morgan et al., 2013).

Although relatively little research has explicitly examined coworker and supervisor perspectives in the context of workplace pregnancy (for exceptions, see Gueutal & Taylor, 1991; and ter Hoeven et al., 2017), these themes are also prominent in the minds of early career

working women. For example, female professionals have reported the need to “go the extra mile” and “prove they are the same” to calm their coworkers’ and supervisors’ fears about pregnancy-related losses in their dependability (Little, Major, Hinojosa, & Nelson, 2015). A female researcher echoed similar sentiments, which she attempted to ease by reassuring her male colleague that “pregnancy made [her] a mother but the research [still] mattered” (Gatrell, 2013, p. 639). Thus, we argue that these “maybe baby” expectations, paired with the anticipated personal uncertainties and inconveniences of pregnancy, contribute to coworkers’ and supervisors’ hostility and incivility towards early career women.

As previously described, these ambiguities may not be equally applicable to all women. Instead, we propose that “maybe baby” risk and its associated inconveniences are unlikely to be as pronounced for mothers, because a currently employed mother has already had a child and subsequently returned to work. This demonstrates her preference and ability to do so, while ostensibly signalling a low probability of long-term turnover. In addition, because modern fertility rates are low and decreasing, especially for highly educated women (Livingston, 2015; The World Bank, 2016), women who already have at least one child may be relatively less likely to have another child compared with women who do not yet have a child. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 2: Parenthood status moderates the relation between employee gender and workplace incivility, such that women are even more likely to experience incivility than men if they are childless.*

Similarly, if the most central or certain inconvenience from a colleague’s pregnancy is her absence, and her absence is largely determined by the length of offered maternity leave, then childless women should experience more incivility in organizations that have longer parental leave policies. In particular, asymmetrical or lop-sided parental leave policies that award more

leave to women than to men should further highlight women's absence in the case of an actual pregnancy rather than men's absence in the case of a partner's pregnancy. In other words, employees may expect that their young female colleagues will have children soon, and whether cognizant or not, these expectations manifest as selective incivility particularly towards childless women in a way that increases in organizations offering more maternal leave (relative to paternal leave). This would mean that these maternal leave policies, which are ostensibly well-intended to benefit working women (e.g., enhancing their economic returns and employment security; Waldfogel, 1998), might come at the cost of working women's social mistreatment. Formally,

*Hypothesis 3: Childless women experience even more incivility than childless men when the difference between offered maternal leave and paternal leave is larger (versus smaller) in their organizations.*

### **Incivility and Career Withdrawal**

We also aim to extend the implications of our findings by linking gender, parenthood, parental leave policy, and workplace incivility with the particularly important downstream outcome of career withdrawal. Although previous research has shown significant effects of uncivil workplace experiences on several job-related outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction and job withdrawal; Cortina et al., 2001; Lim & Lee, 2011), including the interactive effects of gender and number of children on job-related outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction; Miner et al., 2014), career effects imply broader properties that reach beyond a particular position. Furthermore, in careers with high mobility (e.g., professorships in academia or corporate, leadership-track positions), perhaps especially during the early career phase, career-related outcomes rather than job-related outcomes may be particularly informative for the persistent and pervasive gender gaps in professorships (Wolfinger, Mason, & Goulden, 2008) and leadership positions (Catalyst, 2013;

2015a). Thus, in the following, we describe how interpersonal experiences of workplace incivility may threaten target employees' broader career cognitions.

As previously stated, incivility is an ambiguous and socially isolating phenomenon (Hershcovis, Ogunfowora, Reich, & Christie, 2017). Indeed, regular, ambiguous mistreatment from supervisors and colleagues can signal to targets that they do not belong to the work group or are not welcome in the employment environment (Cortina, 2008). Targets of mistreatment experience more self-doubt when the mistreatment is ambiguous rather than clearly discriminatory (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995), and compared with blatant mistreatment such as sexual harassment, employees are also less likely to attribute blame to the instigator when experiencing ambiguous mistreatment (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). These sense-making processes explain how targets of ambiguous mistreatment such as incivility could feel isolated or excluded from the context where they experienced the mistreatment, thus withdrawing from it.

Theories of interactional justice echo similar sentiments, having long argued that interpersonal treatment plays a central role in career-related attitude formation (e.g., Bies & Moag, 1986). More generally, work situations that are viewed as a personal affront to one's dignity or as a violation of basic norms of respect can also trigger feelings of dysempowerment that reduce targets' career satisfaction in the short term, while increasing career withdrawal behaviors in the long term (Kane & Montgomery, 1998). Formally,

*Hypothesis 4: Workplace incivility is positively associated with career withdrawal.*

Integrating our proposed moderation effects of employees' parenthood status and organizations' parental leave policies on the gender differences in workplace incivility and the proposed career consequence of this interpersonal mistreatment, we formally hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 5: For childless employees, the indirect effect of being a woman on career*

*withdrawal through workplace incivility is larger in organizations with a larger (versus a smaller) difference in maternal and paternal leave.*

Finally, of note: our theoretical framework and hypotheses are largely focused on childless employees; we do not formulate specific expectations for mothers and fathers. However, mothers and fathers are included as comparisons and to create a fully crossed model. We also report results for these subgroups in addition to our results for childless employees.

## **Methods**

### **Sample and Procedure**

To recruit participants, we emailed early career academics, including doctoral students, post-doctoral researchers, and assistant professors from all 12 cantonal (state) and federal universities in Switzerland. Participants were asked to complete a web-based, time-lagged study over a 1-year period. Specific design features were chosen to reduce the threat of method bias as recommended by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003), including temporal distance imposed by a one-year time lag (i.e., the first survey (T1) measured demographics, experiences of workplace incivility, and perceptions of work-family support, while the second survey (T2) measured job-related changes and career withdrawal cognitions), a cover story to reduce the ostensible connection between our mediator and outcome variables, proximal distance imposed by different response scales for our mediator and outcome measures, and assurance of anonymity. Participants were incentivized with the chance to win gift cards for both surveys.

An initial sample of 1,897 scholars agreed to participate in the study and completed the first survey. Of the 604 participants who completed both the first and second surveys (response rate = 31.8%), 57 participants had missing data on our key variables and 73 were excluded due to changing jobs and/or locations between data collections for a final, complete sample of 474.

The final sample comprised 243 women (51.3%) with an average age of 31.07 years ( $SD = 4.64$ , range = 21 to 47 years of age). The number of children per participant ranged from 0 to 3 ( $M = .30$ ,  $SD = .70$ ), with 388 non-parents and 86 parents: 202 childless women, 186 childless men, 45 fathers, and 41 mothers. Although our sample has relatively fewer parents than non-parents, this is representative of the Swiss population whose average age of maternity is 31.7 years (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2016). Furthermore, cell sizes for childless women, childless men, mothers, and fathers were larger than the recommended sub-group sample size of 20 for general estimate stability (Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011).

Only 38.0% of participants were Swiss citizens with the rest mostly of other European descent. Most participants were doctoral students (64.8%), followed by post-docs (26.6%) and assistant professors (8.6%). Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM, 1, e.g., natural and physical sciences, engineering, and mathematics; 55.1%) and non-STEM (0, e.g., education, psychology, literature, and law; 44.9%) academic disciplines were nearly equally represented.

## **Measures**

The measures detailed below were part of a larger survey examining scholars' stressors and supports at Swiss Universities (e.g., stress and mentoring).

**Gender and parenthood (T1).** Dichotomous, self-reported variables indicated gender (-1 = *man*, 1 = *woman*) and parenthood (-1 = *childless*, 1 = *parent*)<sup>1</sup>; no participants selected our third option of *other* gender.

**Parental leave policies.** We measured the parental leave awarded to new mothers and fathers in the case of a new child. Information about paid and unpaid parental leave available to

<sup>1</sup>Some research has shown the degree of caretaking or the number of children predict social mistreatment beyond the dichotomous categorization of parent versus non-parent (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Miner et al., 2014). Hence, we also included caretaking for children and number of children as alternative measures of parenthood status. However, our patterns of results calculated with these variables remained largely unchanged.

male and female employees was collected from the official university websites (e.g., Human Resources). All organizations offered much more paid maternal leave (range = 16 to 20 weeks), than paid paternal leave (range = 0 to 2 weeks), with many organizations also explicitly offering additional, unpaid maternal leave (range = 0 to 20 weeks). However, given our interest in relative parental leave (i.e., the difference in parental leave offered to women and men), our final measure represents the total maternal leave available minus the total paternal leave available as advertised by the organizations (in weeks). Total leave difference ranged from 14 to 34 weeks. However, because this distribution was non-normal and clearly bimodally distributed, we used a dichotomous variable to signify organizations with a smaller (-1 = 14 to 19 weeks, n = 251) or a larger (1 = 28 to 34 weeks, n = 223) difference in parental leave offerings.

**Experienced incivility (T1).** We measured personally experienced workplace incivility with 7 items from the Workplace Incivility Scale (Cortina et al., 2001). Participants reported the frequency with which they had experienced disrespectful, rude, or condescending treatment from *any of your supervisors or coworkers at work during the past 12 months* on a 5-point scale (0 = *never* to 4 = *many times*), then summed across items (not averaged). Sample items include *interrupted or spoke over you and made jokes at your expense* ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

**Career withdrawal cognitions (T2).** We measured career withdrawal cognitions (i.e., turnover intentions related to one's broader career or vocation rather than the more commonly examined turnover intentions, which relates to one's specific job or position) with 3 items from Blau (1985). Items included, *I'm thinking about leaving academia, I have the intention to look for a different position outside of academia*, and *I intend to leave academia*, measured from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*;  $\alpha = .93$ ).

**Control variables (T1).** We measured several job-related characteristics. First, academic

discipline (0 = *non-STEM*, 1 = *STEM*) is associated with gender demography (i.e., there are fewer women in STEM than in non-STEM and fewer women higher up in the organizational hierarchy), which is associated with increased rates of women's reported workplace incivility as gender demography skews male (Cortina et al., 2013). In our research context, graduates from STEM disciplines also tend to find non-academic positions more quickly and easily than non-STEM graduates, which has additional implications for academic career withdrawal. Second, employees who work longer hours may be less likely to have career withdrawal cognitions, because they are investing more time and resources in their work. Alternatively, employees may view longer work hours as a workplace demand, which is associated with reduced perceptions of work-life support and higher withdrawal (Valcour, Ollier-Malaterre, Matz-Costa, Pitt-Catsouphes, & Brown, 2011). Finally, family and/or career goals may become clearer with age, which could influence coworkers' expectations of childbearing (Petit, 2007) and/or our outcome. Thus, we included academic discipline, age, and work hours as control variables.<sup>2</sup> Despite this apriori reasoning, preliminary analyses indicated these variables were not associated with incivility ( $p_s = .06-.27$ ). Thus, they were only included as controls for our outcome.

**Change (T2).** Given the one-year time lag between data collections, we also assessed job-related changes to ensure the validity of our construct referents over time.

**Analytical approach.** We used Hayes' PROCESS macro (2013) to calculate our interactions and our conditional moderated mediation model with heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors and 95% Confidence Intervals (CIs). All continuous predictors were centered prior to analyses. For all continuous variables, higher values indicate more of the construct.

<sup>2</sup>Being in a committed marriage or partnership is also a normative expectation of modern parenthood (King & Botsford, 2009), yet this variable did not significantly predict any of our outcomes nor did it change our pattern of results, and thus, was dropped for parsimony. In our research context of Switzerland, it is common that young couples wait to marry (if ever marrying), due to social norms as well as tax disincentives for couples who marry, which might (partially) explain the lack of effects for partnership.

## Results

Descriptive statistics, correlations, and scale reliabilities are reported in Table 1.

### **First-Stage Moderations**

As predicted, there was a main effect of employee gender in predicting incivility ( $b = .42$ ,  $p = .046$ , 95% CI = [.01, .83]), such that women ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = 4.77$ ) reported more incivility than men ( $M = 3.15$ ,  $SD = 4.33$ ), Cohen's  $d = 0.18$  (see Table 2), supporting Hypothesis 1. We also found no main effect of employee parenthood ( $b = -.33$ ,  $p = .22$ , 95% CI = [-.87, .20]).

We then incorporated the interaction between gender and parenthood, and found that this two-way interaction was significant ( $b = -.53$ ,  $p = .027$ , 95% CI = [-1.00, -.06]). For childless employees, women reported more incivility than men ( $M_{\text{childless\_women}} = 4.28$ ,  $SD = 5.01$  and  $M_{\text{childless\_men}} = 3.07$ ,  $SD = 4.30$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.26$ , effect = .60,  $p = .011$ , 95% CI = [.14, 1.07]), a gender effect that was not significant for parents ( $M_{\text{mothers}} = 2.56$ ,  $SD = 3.02$  and  $M_{\text{fathers}} = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 4.47$ , effect = -.45,  $p = .273$ , 95% CI = [-1.26, .36]; see Table 2), supporting Hypothesis 2.

The two-way interactive effect of gender and parenthood on incivility was then qualified by a significant three-way interaction between employee gender, parenthood, and parental leave difference ( $b = .46$ ,  $p = .041$ , 95% CI = [.02, .90]).<sup>3</sup> Examination of the conditional effects at different values of parental leave difference indicated that there was no difference in childless women and men's reported incivility in organizations with a smaller parental leave difference (effect = .30,  $p = .281$ , 95% CI = [-.25, .84]), whereas childless women reported more incivility than childless men in organizations with a larger parental leave difference (effect = .86,  $p = .030$ , 95% CI = [.09, 1.63]), supporting Hypothesis 3.

<sup>3</sup>Women's total maternity available leave appeared to be the key driver of these effects given that our 3-way interaction calculated with only this variable showed the same pattern of results ( $b = .07$ ,  $p = .03$ , 95% CI = [.01, .14]), whereas this interaction was not significant when calculated with only the paternal leave component variable ( $b = -.18$ ,  $p = .51$ , 95% CI = [-.72, .36]); we return to this topic in the discussion.

Although not predicted, we also found that in organizations with a smaller parental leave difference, fathers reported more incivility than mothers (effect = -1.42,  $p = .012$ , 95% CI = [-2.53, -.31]). However, in organizations with a larger parental leave difference, mothers reported marginally more incivility than fathers (effect = .98,  $p = .052$ , 95% CI = [-.01, 1.96]).

As predicted, we found a positive relation between incivility and career withdrawal cognitions ( $b = .04$ ,  $p = .002$ , 95% CI = [.01, .07]; see Table 2), supporting Hypothesis 4.

### **Conditional Moderated Mediation**

We used Hayes' (2013) Process macro to test our hypothesized conditional mediated moderation model (Model 11). Hayes' macro adopts a bootstrapping procedure to obtain bias-corrected 95% CIs for the conditional direct and indirect effects at different levels of the moderators (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007); we used 5,000 bootstrapped resamples.

The index of moderated moderated mediation was significant (estimate: .08, 95% CI = [.01, .19]), indicating that the indirect effect of gender on career withdrawal via incivility significantly differed according to parenthood and parental leave difference (Hayes, in press). As predicted, we found that childless women reported more career withdrawal than childless men via workplace incivility in organizations with a larger parental leave difference (indirect effect = .04, 95% CI = [.01, .08]), but not in organizations with a smaller parental leave difference (indirect effect = .01, 95% CI = [-.01, .05]; see Table 3). However, the indices of conditional moderated mediation indicated that parental leave difference significantly moderated the indirect effects for parents (estimate = .10, 95% CI = [.03, .20]), but not for childless employees (estimate = .02, 95% CI = [-.01, .07]). Thus, Hypothesis 5 is only partially supported.

Although not predicted, we also found that fathers reported more career withdrawal than mothers via workplace incivility in organizations with a smaller parental leave difference

(indirect effect =  $-.06$ , 95% CI =  $[-.13, -.02]$ ), but mothers reported more career withdrawal than fathers via incivility in organizations with a larger parental leave difference (indirect effect =  $.04$ , 95% CI =  $[.01, .10]$ ). The indices of conditional moderated mediation indicate that parenthood significantly moderated the indirect effects of gender on incivility in organizations with a smaller parental leave difference (estimate =  $-.07$ , 95% CI =  $[-.15, -.02]$ ), however, parenthood did not moderate the indirect effects in organizations with a larger parental leave difference (estimate =  $.00$ , 95% CI =  $[-.04, .07]$ ). Because these effects were not formally hypothesized, and our subsamples of parents were small, we encourage caution in overgeneralizing these effects.

In summary, when parental leave difference was small (i.e., when the difference between maternity and paternity leave was 14 to 18 weeks), there was no difference between men and women's reported incivility among childless employees, but among parents, men reported more incivility—and subsequent withdrawal—than women did. However, when parental leave difference was larger (i.e., when the difference between maternity and paternity leave was 28 to 34 weeks), women reported more incivility—and subsequent withdrawal—whether they were childless or not.

### **Robustness Checks**

First, these patterns of results remain largely unchanged when calculated with or without control variables. For example, workplace incivility is still significantly associated with career withdrawal ( $b = .04$ ,  $p = .008$ , 95% CI =  $[.01, .07]$ ) and the indirect effect of employee gender on career withdrawal via incivility for childless employees remains significant in organizations with a larger parental leave difference (indirect effect =  $.03$ , 95% CI =  $[.01, .08]$ ), but not in organizations with a smaller parental leave difference (indirect effect =  $.01$ , 95% CI =  $[-.01, .05]$ ).

Second, non-random attrition might threaten our findings' validity. Thus, in an attempt to rule out sampling bias, we examined the effects of employee gender and parenthood on workplace incivility using the original, full sample ( $N = 1,897$ ). As expected, descriptive results revealed that childless women still report the most incivility ( $M = 4.65$ ,  $SD = 5.55$ ,  $n = 800$ ). A series of planned comparisons showed that as expected, childless women reported more incivility than childless men ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 5.29$ ,  $n = 710$ ),  $t(1,509) = 2.77$ ,  $p = .024$ , Cohen's  $d = .12$ ; mothers ( $M = 3.55$ ,  $SD = 4.02$ ,  $n = 149$ ),  $t(947) = 2.32$ ,  $p = .021$ , Cohen's  $d = .21$ ; and fathers ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 4.54$ ,  $n = 204$ ),  $t(1,002) = 3.07$ ,  $p = .002$ , Cohen's  $d = .24$ . Binary logistic regression analyses indicated that incivility at T1 negatively predicted representation in our final sample ( $B = -.032$ ,  $p = .002$ , Odds Ratio = 0.97), although the other predictors in our model were not significant ( $ps > .17$ ). This is in line with our previous results, further supporting Hypotheses 1-2.

Third, endogeneity occurs when values of variables correlate with the error values in the structural model; it is problematic because it renders estimates calculated from correlational data biased and inconsistent (see Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart, & Lalive, 2010). In the current research, our predictor and moderator variables are (arguably) objective, exogenous variables (e.g., biological sex is randomly assigned by nature, parental leave policies are objectively defined and obtained from a separate source). However, endogeneity could threaten the pathways between our mediator and our outcome variable. For example, a third factor such as low performance may drive employees' harassment *and* increase their career withdrawal. Thus, we ran an endogeneity assessment (Antonakis et al., 2010; Podsakoff, et al., 2012), first with an augmented regression (i.e., Durbin-Wu-Hausman test; Davidson & MacKinnon, 2003). This analysis indicated that the residuals from the first stage of our mediation were not significantly associated with our outcome ( $p = .221$ ). In other words, endogeneity does not appear to be a

major threat to the validity of our estimated pathway between the mediator and the outcome variable, and thus there is no need for instrumental variable analyses; these results also provide evidence that common-method variance is not a threat to our findings.

## **Discussion**

Despite increasing discussion of employee parenthood, work-life conflict and balance—especially for early career employees and millennials—and the growing number of (ostensibly) well-intended work-life policies—especially for mothers—we highlight childless women as a group of interest in need of attention and intervention. By simultaneously integrating moderating and mediating mechanisms, we show how employee characteristics and organizational parental leave policies paradoxically predict incivility, how and when incivility predicts career withdrawal, and for whom incivility is most prevalent and problematic: childless women in organizations offering more maternal leave than paternal leave. This speaks to the importance of intersectionality perspectives (Crenshaw, 1989), in particular, of examining gender *with* parenthood to advance the understanding of workplace mistreatment and modern discrimination.

Our findings generally support selective incivility theory (Cortina, 2008), given that we found social-group specific patterns of incivility. However, we extend this research by showing that women did not generally experience more incivility than men, but that this effect depended on the target's parenthood status and the organization's parental leave. Our findings also support family-work conflict bias theory (Hoobler et al., 2009), by showing that perceptions of family-work conflict seemed to be evident in the patterns of incivility towards women. However, we extend this research by integrating organizations' family-related policies and showing that this bias might be especially prominent in organizations offering more maternal leave relative to paternal leave. Indeed, we bridge selective incivility and family-work conflict bias theories with

a key tenet from the lack of fit theory (Heilman, 1983), “ambiguity permits [gender stereotype-based] expectations to flourish” (Heilman, 2012, p. 118), by showing that the ambiguity pertaining to women’s potential motherhood, as well as the costs and family-work conflicts it might entail (Hoobler et al., 2009)—rather than just women’s competence (Cortina, 2008; Heilman, 2012)—also influence women’s work-related experiences and outcomes. Indeed, our participants’ colleagues likely did not know how much leave a woman planned to take in the case of pregnancy, only how much leave was potentially possible via organizational offerings. This also aligns with previous research that found providing counter-stereotypic information about pregnant women job applicants’ competence did not reduce the hostility and interpersonal discrimination they faced from potential employers, yet providing counter-stereotypic information about their commitment was an effective strategy (Botsford Morgan et al., 2013).

Finally, our findings also indicate that parental leave policies can create counterintuitive consequences for their intended beneficiaries: working women. A similar proposition was suggested in qualitative interviews with German managers (Peus & Traut-Mattausch, 2008), yet to our knowledge, it has not yet been empirically tested. Indeed, we show that parental leave can motivate interpersonal consequences for working women even before becoming pregnant, rather than in terms of its potential career consequences for women after they have had a child or have taken a leave of absence (e.g., Judiesch & Lyness, 1999; Williams & Ceci, 2015). In the following, we further outline our findings’ implications for theory, provide post-hoc details and discussion of our unpredicted findings, and propose evidence-based practical implications.

### **Theoretical Implications**

A wealth of recent research has examined workplace incivility (Cortina et al., 2001; Cortina et al., 2013; Krings et al., 2014; Lim et al., 2008; Miner et al., 2014) or the gender gap in

leadership (see Eagly & Carli, 2007). However, less often do researchers explicitly combine these two streams of research at the crux of the gender gap: the early career phase and transition to parenthood. In line with Gloor, Okimoto, Feierabend, and Staffelbach (2015) who documented a “maybe baby” effect in gatekeepers’ hiring decisions, our results show that this increased risk of impending childbearing may also manifest in young childless women’s everyday interpersonal experiences at work. Thus, gendered expectations of potential parenthood may not only influence formal organizational decision-making towards early career women (e.g., hiring; Gloor et al., 2015), but these expectations might also infiltrate the informal, social treatment that they receive from other persons. While the former case illustrates how “maybe baby” expectations can influence specific employment opportunities, the latter illustrates how these expectations play a central role in shaping work-related attitudes and cognitions (e.g., through interactional justice; Bies & Moag, 1986). Taken together, these manifestations of bias may contribute to the isolation of early career childless women from the workforce if and when they are physically *and* socially excluded from gainful employment and a healthy social work-life.

Our intersectional approach not only resolves inconsistencies in the existing research, but we also propose a new theory to reconcile these findings by incorporating a contextual barrier that might influence women’s workplace experiences. Germane to the current research, recent and widespread parental leave policy changes at the organizational- or federal-level (e.g., Switzerland in 2005; State Secretary for Economic Affairs, 2014) may have especially highlighted the transition to parenthood as a prominent factor potentially affecting future employee continuity, contingent on childbearing. As women are both allowed to and expected to take parental leave more often than men (OECD, 2016; Ray, Gornick, & Schmitt, 2010; Rudman & Mescher, 2013), even if policies appear equitable, they may inadvertently highlight women of

childbearing age. Indeed, we showed that gender bias is “alive and well” within organizations outside of the formal, visible, and overt manifestations (Joshi, Neely, Emrich, Griffiths, & George, 2015, p. 1471), residing instead in the informal, less visible, and covert manifestations of incivility.

By identifying childless women as a potentially overlooked, yet at-risk group within the early career context, our studies are highly relevant to inform the gender gap in leadership and academia (Catalyst, 2013; 2015). Although previous studies have also linked incivility with stress or turnover intentions pertaining to specific positions (Cortina et al., 2001; 2013; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010; Hershcovis et al., 2014; Lim & Cortina, 2005; Lim et al., 2008; Lim & Lee, 2011), we showed potentially broader implications of incivility on withdrawal from an entire career. This evidence suggests that selective incivility may push young childless women out of the personnel pipeline, potentially contributing to the lack of women professors (Catalyst, 2015) and bringing more barriers to the labyrinth of leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Finally, although our focus was childless women, we also found trends for parents that were not hypothesized, yet some of which further support our propositions. For example, when organizations’ parental leave policies more heavily favored women, childless women *and* mothers reported more incivility than their male counterparts. These findings suggest that mothers might also be subjected to “maybe baby” expectations and inconvenience under these organizational conditions. After all, women who are already mothers have demonstrated their desire and ability to have children, thus sending a signal of fertility (Petit, 2007). In organizations offering much more maternal leave than paternal leave, this fertility would result in a longer leave and a more “inconvenient” pregnancy for her coworkers and/or supervisor. Yet, we advise caution in interpreting this effect, given our small cell sizes for parents.

Surprisingly, when parental leave policies were more equitable, fathers reported more incivility than mothers, which predicted more career withdrawal. This finding runs counter to previous studies that have shown men typically experience a fatherhood bonus from formal treatment and policies (e.g., organizational decisions such as hiring or promotions and organizational policies such as family friendly benefits; Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007; Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004; Wallace & Young, 2008), showing instead that men can experience a fatherhood penalty in terms of informal, social mistreatment. Gender deviants theory can explain these results, such that perceptions of gender deviance (i.e., workers who do not stay within the confines of traditional gender roles or ideals; Eagly, 1987) motivate coworkers' harassment towards women who do not have children and fathers who care for their children (Berdahl & Moon, 2013). Post-hoc analysis supports this by showing 7 out of 10 fathers who reported the most incivility worked in non-STEM fields, which are generally female-dominated and less gender-role consistent for men. Similar evidence of gender deviance-based harassment and subsequent work withdrawal has been shown towards employees in the U.S. (Berdahl & Moon, 2013) and Australia (Majeed, Forder, Mishra, Kendig, & Byles, 2015), countries with asymmetrical policies and norms favoring female employees' maternal leave over male employees' paternal leave. However, our results indicate boundary conditions or moderators of these effects. Specifically, our findings only support this type of harassment in organizations with smaller differences in offered parental leave. Yet, we advise caution in interpreting this effect, given our small cell sizes for parents and our robustness check, which showed lower average levels of incivility for fathers.

### **Practical Implications**

Our results show that incivility is not necessarily a general phenomenon, and instead, can selectively target a particular group. Furthermore, these targets of workplace incivility tend to have more negative career cognitions, which are not only harmful to their own career paths, but are also detrimental to organizations' effective functioning. Hence, it is in employees' as well as employers' best interests for organizations to measure and monitor work culture and civility, intervening when possible. First, supervisors and organizations can reduce the resentment towards (potential) parents by fostering more inclusive workplace climates. For example, family-friendly signals include clearly defined family-supportive policies, but only if complimented by supportive climates (King & Botsford, 2009). These family-friendly signals generate benefits for potential parents and their workgroups. For example, family-friendly signals reduce employees' fears and hesitations about pregnancy disclosures and/or plans for children, which encourages earlier disclosure. Importantly, earlier disclosures benefit young women's health (Jones et al., 2016) as well as aiding organizational efforts to cover new mothers' absences (King & Botsford, 2009), which could reduce perceptions of inconvenience and feelings of resentment.

Similarly, to truly foster more inclusive, family-supportive climates, a key step is to provide benefits for both men and women, potential mothers *and* fathers (see Gloor, Li, & Puhl, under review). Policy provisions for new fathers are especially important to provide at the organizational level given the lop-sided nature of most federal policies (see OECD, 2016). As previously discussed, several organizations have created benefits for new fathers, often in the form of broader policies that are available to either parent (Williams, 2015); Scandinavian countries as well as Germany have also moved towards offering broader parental policies that are available to be shared by both parents. Theoretically, such an implementation would make it less clear to supervisors and employees exactly how long a young female or a male employee might

be away from work in the case of a pregnancy and a new baby, thus reducing the lop-sided “inconvenience” and “maybe baby” expectations for women. However, to move beyond empty words and encourage uptake, fathers must also be explicitly supported. For example, organizations can provide policy coverage and encouragement (e.g., via male leaders’ role modelling), while partners can also encourage fathers’ leave (Sundström & Duvander, 2002).

Third, based on the theoretical model we have advanced in this research, it follows that interventions might also aim to mitigate incivility’s prevalence via targeting the unfair and often inaccurate “maybe baby” expectations. Although the onus should not be on the targets themselves to correct others’ biases, early career women can proactively highlight and ideally, extinguish inaccurate expectations about their plans for children and/or preferences regarding their career. Indeed, addressing commitment and flexibility stereotypes may be particularly effective in reducing interpersonal discrimination (e.g., Botsford Morgan et al., 2013). Such an intervention might be especially important at the transition from childlessness to motherhood in light of the critical employee identity and impression management processes during this time (see Gatrell, 2013; Jones et al., 2016; King & Botsford, 2009; Little et al., 2015).

Finally, employee parenthood is a brief and objective measure. However, it is inconsistently collected and reported in organizational reports, leadership assessments, and empirical research on workplace incivility or related topics such as interpersonal interactions, mistreatment, or discrimination. Thus, we also encourage scholars and managers to collect, assess, and report this information whenever practically possible. After all, parenthood is a common facet of employee diversity that is particularly relevant for early career workers; parents are also often the intended beneficiaries of numerous Human Resource programs and policies

(e.g., Feierabend & Staffelbach, 2016). Thus, it seems to be in the best interests of employees and organizations to include this demographic variable in regular tracking and assessments.

### **Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research**

Key strengths of this research include our diverse sample from a unique country and career context with naturally varying levels of organizational parental leave policies. Indeed, we documented consistent evidence across early-career, highly-skilled European employees from multiple organizations, language groups (e.g., German, French, and Italian), and nationalities, which bolsters our findings' generalizability. Although the academic setting may not be directly comparable with the corporate world, there are strong and clear parallels between today's increasingly individualized career in business and a career in academia (e.g., high autonomy and self-guided career transitions; Baruch & Hall, 2004; Dany, Louvel, & Valette, 2011).

Although some scholars might suggest that our use of largely single-source data might raise concerns of common method bias, we used (arguably) exogenous predictors and objective data on organization's maternal and paternal leave policies. We also collected data for career withdrawal after we collected data on incivility, using different response scales and a cover story as recommended by Podsakoff and colleagues (2003), which further aligns with the temporal order of our theory. In light of these design features and our robustness checks, we provide strong evidence that common method bias is not a threat to our estimates' consistency. These results align with our theoretical reasoning, as well as previous longitudinal and daily diary research, which has shown negative consequences occur because of mistreatment rather than the reverse (e.g., Glomb, Munson, Hulin, Bergman, & Drasgow, 1999; Hershcovis et al., 2017).

Yet, our research is not without its limitations. For example, our sampling procedures only allowed us to calculate response rates from the participants who began our studies, not the

entire eligible sample. Thus, we cannot completely rule out sampling bias. However, we documented our key moderation effect through analyzing the complete, clean sample and the original, full sample. Thus, participant attrition is unlikely to be systematic or non-random (except that employees with the highest incivility were slightly more likely to attrit), as it did not significantly alter this key effect of interest; however, it does suggest that our estimation of the effect of incivility on career withdrawal might be conservative.

To further rule out alternative explanations, future research could assess observations of incivility specifically witnessed towards young childless women in the workplace. This could build on research by Miner-Rubino and Cortina (2004) and Chui and Dietz (2014), who assessed observed incivility towards female colleagues via survey or experimental methods (respectively).

Similarly, Ashburn-Nardo (2017) recently showed evidence of moral outrage towards women who choose to remain childless. Although this social backlash tied to women's abstention from strongly prescriptive gender roles and behaviors (e.g., motherhood and caretaking for children; Heilman, 2012; Okimoto & Heilman, 2012; Prentice & Carranza, 2002) could explain our finding that childless women experienced the most workplace incivility, it does not explain organizational parental leave policies' exacerbating effect on incivility for both childless women *and* mothers. Furthermore, given our sample's relatively young age (i.e., 31 years on average), it is unlikely that these early career females were assumed to have already chosen to explicitly forgo childbearing indefinitely. This idea does, however, highlight an area for future research that would more directly test some core reasoning for our "maybe baby" effect. Specifically, do more generous maternal leave policies highlight female employees' salience, gender and/or family roles? Hoobler (2007) argued similarly for another family-friendly initiative (i.e., company childcare), yet to our knowledge, this proposition remains untested.

Based on our theoretical reasoning and further complimented by our findings, we argued that women's potential motherhood and the costs it might entail for their coworkers and supervisors—not just women's perceived competence (Cortina, 2008; Heilman, 2012)—contributed to women's career withdrawal via workplace incivility. However, we did not explicitly show that targets' competence did not motivate women's uncivil experiences. Indeed, it could be that coworkers and/or supervisors expect women to become less competent after becoming mothers or having more children (Heilman & Okimoto, 2008) or after taking a long break from work, ideas that could also be tested with future research, perhaps especially in fast-paced fields and/or knowledge-intensive professions.

We also operationalized organizational parental leave difference as total available maternity leave minus paternity leave. However, maternity leave appeared to be the key driver of our effects. This was likely influenced by the generally small offerings (and little variation) for men's paternal leave in our context, although future research could also explicitly test this.

Finally, several interventions have been tested to reduce bias and stereotypes for managers and individual pregnant women during hiring processes (e.g., Botsford Morgan et al., 2013; Bragger, Kutcher, Morgan, & Firth, 2002). However, team-based interventions might also be a fruitful avenue to reduce feelings of inconvenience and hostility towards (potentially) pregnant women who are already coworkers or employees. For example, future research could test if more transformational or servant leadership styles emphasizing the greater collective or teams' social and moral obligations might increase teams' organizational citizenship behaviors and willingness to help out while female coworkers are away on leave (e.g., see Ehrhart, 2004).

## **Conclusion**

The current research advanced knowledge and theory on modern discrimination and workplace mistreatment by clarifying the interaction between gender and parenthood in explaining incivility's prevalence and effects for early career scholars, depending on organizational parental leave policies. We found that employee parenthood and organizational parental leave policies moderate the effects of employee gender on experienced incivility, a selective social mistreatment that predicts subsequent career withdrawal. Given that employees will continue to have babies (and bodies), we hope this work supplies a springboard for future research by signalling the value of intersectionality perspectives to highlight the meaning and experience of employees' simultaneous membership in multiple social categories within the local policy context, including how combinations of individual- and organizational-level factors influence modern social mistreatment and contribute to broader career outcomes and patterns.

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Table 1

*Descriptives, Correlations, and Scale Reliabilities*

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Discipline	.55	.50	-							
2. Work Hours	45.02	11.32	.28***	-						
3. Age	31.07	4.64	-.07	.07	-					
4. Gender	.03	1.00	-.10*	-.14**	-.16***	-				
5. Parenthood	-.64	0.77	-.04	-.10*	.54***	-.03	-			
6. PLD	-.06	1.00	.09	.00	-.02	.10*	-.06	-		
7. Incivility	3.58	4.58	.09*	.11*	.04	.09*	-.06	.04	(.89)	
8. Career Withdrawal	3.10	1.30	.20***	-.09*	-.23***	.02	-.20***	-.01	.14**	(.93)

*Note.* Coding is as follows: discipline (0 = non-STEM, 1 = STEM), gender (-1 = man, 1 = woman), parenthood (-1 = non-parent, 1 = parent), and Parental Leave Difference or PLD (-1 = smaller difference, 1 = larger difference). Scale reliabilities reported on the diagonal.

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 2

*Regression Analysis Results*

Variable	Incivility		Incivility		Incivility		Career Withdrawal	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Constant	3.57***	0.21	3.34***	.24	3.26***	.22	2.80***	.09
Discipline	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.54***	.12
Work Hours	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.02***	.01
Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.06***	.01
Gender	0.42*	0.21	0.08	.24	0.18	.22	-0.04	.06
Parenthood	-	-	-0.33	.24	-0.39	.22	-	-
PLD	-	-	-	-	-0.18	.22	-	-
Gender×Parenthood	-	-	-0.53*	.24	-0.40	.22	-	-
Gender×PLD	-	-	-	-	0.74**	.22	-	-
Parenthood×PLD	-	-	-	-	-0.49*	.22	-	-
Gender×PLD×								
Parenthood	-	-	-	-	0.46*	.22	-	-
Incivility	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.04**	.01
R <sub>2</sub>		.01*		.02*		.04***		.13***
ΔR <sub>2</sub>		.01*		.01*		.03**		.13***

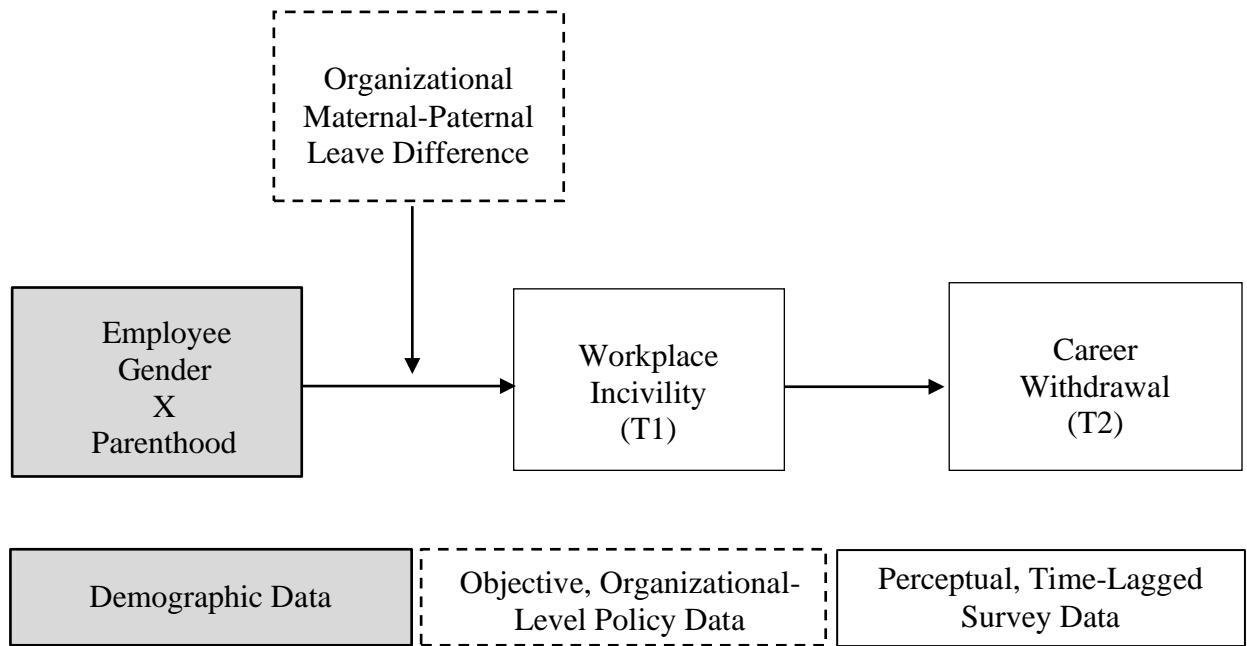
*Note.* Coding is as follows: discipline (0 = non-STEM, 1 = STEM), gender (-1 = man, 1 = woman), parenthood (-1 = non-parent, 1 = parent), and Parental Leave Difference or PLD (-1 = smaller difference, 1 = larger difference). Continuous predictors are centered (i.e., work hours and age, incivility in column 4). Unstandardized coefficients are reported. \* p < .05. \*\* p < .01. \*\*\* p < .001.

Table 3

*Conditional Indirect Effects of Gender on Career Withdrawal via Incivility at Different Values of the Moderators*

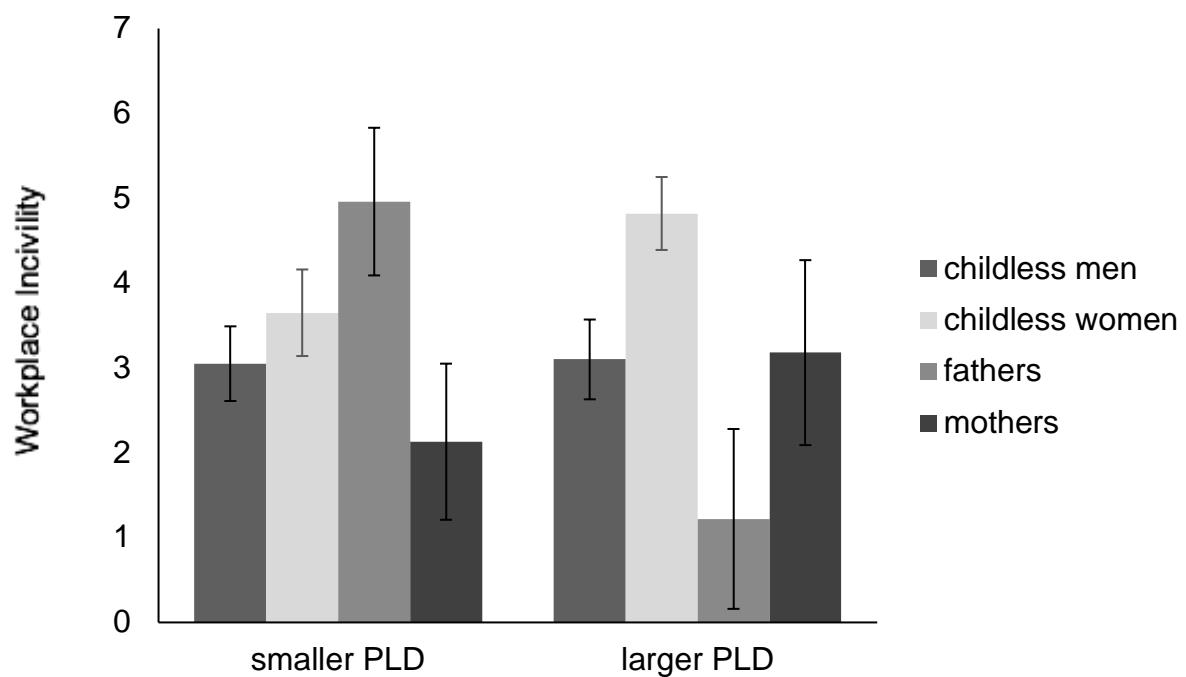
PLD	Value	Career Withdrawal Cognitions			
		Parenthood	Indirect Effects		
		Effect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
Smaller	No	.01	.01	-.01	.05
<b>Smaller</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>-.13</b>	<b>-.02</b>
<b>Larger</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.02</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.08</b>
Larger	Yes	.04	.02	.01	.10

*Note.* Coding is as follows: discipline (0 = non-STEM, 1 = STEM), gender (-1 = man, 1 = woman), parenthood (-1 = non-parent, 1 = parent), and Parental Leave Difference or PLD (-1 = smaller difference, 1 = larger difference). Bias-corrected 95% CIs from bootstrap analyses using 5,000 resamples. LLCI = lower level confidence interval; ULCI = upper level confidence interval. Bolded rows are significant at  $p < .05$ .



*Note.* T1 and T2 data were collected one year apart.

*Figure 1.* Complete Theoretical Model



*Figure 2. First-Stage Interaction of Employee Gender, Parenthood, and Parental Leave Difference (PLD).*