ABSTRACT

Joshua C. Jones. AGGRESSION, INCIVILITY, FORGIVENESS, AND DEVIANT BEHAVIOR. (Under the direction of Dr. Mark Bowler) Department of Psychology, May 2014.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the incremental validity of forgiveness and experiences of incivility to the prediction of deviant behavior by trait aggression.

Participants consisted of 480 undergraduate students at a large southeastern university. An online survey format measured the two facets of trait aggression (implicit and explicit), forgiveness, experiences of incivility, and deviant behavior. Overall, implicit and explicit aggression interacted in their prediction of aggressive behavior such that higher levels of explicit aggression enhanced the relationship between implicit aggression and deviant behavior. Additionally, individuals reporting more recent incidents of being the target of uncivil behavior were more likely to engage in deviant behavior whereas individuals demonstrating higher levels of forgiveness were less likely to engage in deviant behavior. The study serves to highlight additional variables that influence and potentially decrease the occurrence of deviant behaviors in academic and organizational settings.

AGGRESSION, INCIVILITY, FORGIVENESS, AND DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

A Thesis

Presented To the Faculty of the Department of Psychology East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Psychology

by

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July 18, 2014



AGRESSION, INCIVILITY, FORGIVENESS, AND DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the faculty and staff who have spent many hours sharing their knowledge and insights to better help me understand and increase my abilities to be successful. I would like to thank my Thesis Committee for all the help and guidance they gave and particularly my Thesis Chair for his constant patience with me. Most of all I would like to thank my beautiful wife and sons for the support they gave me which allowed for me to gain this tremendous education and the necessary tools to succeed in life. Many sacrifices were made by them and without them I could not have done it and this experience would not have been as rewarding.

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CHAPTER 1: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Interpersonal aggression in the workplace affects nearly 47 million employees in the United States (Kelloway, Barling, & Hurrell, 2006). Similarly, workplace aggression has been reported as the cause of 30 percent of all business failures (Bolin & Heatherly, 2001). Overall, these figures likely underestimate the true impact of aggression as they neglect to directly evaluate the emotional human toll that it can have on individuals as the effect of aggressive behavior on the organization is often via the employees who are victimized (Brown & Sumner, 2006). Not surprisingly, the role of interpersonal aggression in the workplace has recently received increased empirical attention (e.g., Holtappels, Heitmeyer, Melzer, & Tillmann, 2009) with researchers studying areas such as the impact of aggression on team training (Bowler, Woehr, Rentsch, & Bowler, 2010), the role of aggression in making performance attributions (Bowler, Woehr, Bowler, Wuensch, & McIntyre, 2011), the perception of workplace aggression and subsequent punishments (Brown & Sumner, 2006), and utilizing implicit personality measures to predict aggressive behaviors (Frost, Ko, & James, 2007). Most directly, victimized individuals experience decreases in motivation along with increases in job stress and turnover intentions (Schat & Kelloway, 2003).

Aggressive behavior comes in a myriad of forms ranging from gossiping to physical assaults (Baron & Neuman, 1996). However, as noted by Grumm and colleagues (2011), it is some of the less overt forms of aggression – name calling, swearing, or general discourtesy – that have been observed by a majority of adults. Moreover, many of these less severe forms of aggression, often identified as incivility, are present among all age groups and can be found in schools, on sports teams, and in

organizations (Estes & Wang, 2008; Grumm, Hein, & Fingerle, 2011; Shields, 1999;). Recent changes in the workplace – downsizing, reengineering, budget cuts, overutilization of temporary workers – have brought about a dramatic increase in workplace incivility (Farkas & Johnson, 2002; Gontheir, 2002; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000). Of greater concern is that, with these changes, in addition to the increased incivility, is the subsequent increase in counterproductive work behaviors (Penney & Spector, 2005).

As noted by Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter, and Kacmar (2007), a negative event (e.g., incivility) tends to induce negative emotions in employees. Subsequently, employees who suffer from negative emotions due to an adverse event are more likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs; Spector & Fox, 2002).

Counterproductive work behaviors are voluntary behaviors that adversely affect the job performance of an individual or reduce the effectiveness of an organization (Lau, Au, & Ho, 2003). Exploration into the study of CWB shows that between 33% and 75% of employees have engaged in one of the following behaviors: theft, computer fraud, embezzlement, vandalism, sabotage, and absenteeism (Harper, 1990). Other common CWBs include a decrease in job performance and an increase of absenteeism or tardiness and aggression (Ayoko, Callan, & Hartel, 2003). Thus overall, CWBs have an enormous negative impact on organizational productivity and profits. For these reasons, organizations have a critical need to find effective ways to reduce CWBs.

One potential method is via forgiveness. Forgiveness, along with other positive responses to interpersonal offenses, has been shown to have a significant impact on psychological well-being (Lawler-Row & Piferi, 2006). Similarly, Palanski (2012) noted

that forgiveness can lead to less absenteeism, as well as lower healthcare costs. As forgiveness is governed by how much the victim views the offender as being responsible for the situation (McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003), if the victim feels as though the offender was deliberately uncivil to him or her, then the victim is going to be less likely to forgive the offender. However, forgiveness is also an interpersonal process which is influenced by external factors, such as the transgressor apologizing, which is outside of the control of the victim, yet plays a role in the decision to make amends (Boon & Sulsky, 1997; Darby & Schlenker, 1982; Fitness, 2000; Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994; Weiner, Graham, Peter, & Zmuidinas, 1991). As organizations are beginning to pay more attention to the process of forgiveness and the role it plays in repairing damaged relationships (Struthers, Dupuis, & Eaton, 2005), it is critical to understand how it directly affects the relationship between interpersonal aggression, incivility, and CWBs.

Aggression

Anderson & Bushman (2002) argued that interpersonal aggression is, in its greatest form, a "human tragedy unsurpassed." Whereas it is unlikely that most individuals will witness firsthand an "unsurpassed human tragedy," at the societal level, there has been a general increase in interpersonal aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Studies have shown that factors such as the availability and accessibility of guns (O'Donnell, 1995), more regular exposure to violent media (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001), and an increase of violence against children in school and at home (Straus, 2000) are all, in part, responsible for this increase. With this regularity of visible aggressive behavior in the world it is important that, in addition to our attempts to

improve the treatments provided to victims of aggressive behavior (e.g. Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Borduin, 1999; Bushman, 1995), we also attempt to understand the causes of aggression in order to be able to prevent them from occurring.

Aggressive behavior. There are two primary requirements for an act to be considered aggression. First, it must be a behavior that has the intent to cause immediate harm to another individual (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2008). Second, the perpetrator must believe that the target will be harmed by his or her actions and that the targeted individual or group will attempt to avoid the aggressive behavior (Baron & Richardson, 1994; Berkowitz, 1993; Bushman & Anderson, 2001). If the perpetrator accidentally harms another individual, then it is not considered aggression as the intent to cause harm was not present (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). However, if the aggressive individual felt as though he or she was a victim, then he or she would be likely to retaliate through the use of aggression (Stuckless & Goranson, 1992).

Along these lines, aggressive behavior can take many forms including physical violence, hostility, victimization, purposeful exclusion, and bullying (Cortina & Magley, 2009; Yeager, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2013), with the causes of these different types of aggressive behaviors ranging from frustration, humiliation, setbacks, failures, provocations, and personality traits (Ayoko et al., 2003; Bing et al., 2007). Regarding the latter, Crick and Dodge (1994) noted that aggressive individuals tend to be antagonistic, contentious, unsympathetic, or obstreperous. Similarly, studies have shown that aggressive individuals have a predisposition to retaliate to stressful or provoking situations with anger and have an excessive need to exact harm on the perceived source of the anger (Baron & Richardson, 1994; Berkowitz, 1993). The target

of this behavior does not need be a single individual; rather the target can be groups of individuals or the organization as a whole. Moreover, the aggressor can act out spontaneously with verbal or physical attacks, or use passive indirect aggression (James et al., 2005). Of paramount interest is the fact that, while some aggressive individuals recognize their desire to inflict harm on others, many are unaware of these desires due to the motives being a two-part process (McClelland, Koestner, & Weinberger, 1989; Murray, 1938). Specifically, our motives are a function of our explicit conscious thoughts as well as our implicit unconscious desires (James et al., 2005).

Explicit and implicit trait aggression. Explicit personality is typically conceptualized as the conscious awareness of one's personality (McClelland et al., 1989) and represents the individual's ability to make conscious, controlled, deliberate and reflective decisions (Grumm et al., 2011; Richetin & Richardson, 2008). In contrast, implicit personality is typically conceptualized as an unconscious, automatic, and intuitive process of which the individual is unaware (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2007; Richetin & Richardson, 2008; Strak & Deutsch, 2004). In other words, an individual's explicit personality is available to self-awareness and description whereas an individual's implicit personality is not (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). These two distinct cognitive processes are key to understanding trait aggression (Richetin & Richardson, 2008). Individuals who possess aggressive traits often will attempt to hide that aspect of their nature from others (James et al., 2005). This occurs due to the fact that most individuals are motivated by the belief that they are good. Thus, they are often unable to accurately assess whether or not they actually act aggressively towards others (Cramer, 2000). In an attempt to reconcile these two potentially competing motives, aggressive

individuals often utilize a set of cognitive biases to rationalize aggressive behavior as being normal. James (1998) identified six such implicit biases that influence the reasoning of aggressive individuals in an attempt to justify aggressive behavior. He called these biases *justification mechanisms* (JMs).

The six primary JMs of aggression are the hostile attribution bias, potency bias, retribution bias, victimization bias, derogation of target bias, and social discounting bias (James, 1998). With the hostile attribution bias, the aggressive individual believes that other people share a similar motivation to harm others. Thus, the aggressor will attempt to rationalize interactions with coworkers as being threatening so as to be able to respond in similar fashion (Gay, 1993). Similarly, the victimization by powerful others bias allows aggressive individuals to rationalize aggressive behavior as being a response to those in power inflicting harm on the weak and take advantage of them. Thus the individual would see his or her aggressive behavior as a way to protect himself or herself from those in power and not become a victim (James, McIntyre, Glisson, Bowler, & Mitchell, 2004). The potency bias assumes that interaction among individuals is a constant contest and the goal is to establish dominance over other individuals. Thus, the aggressive individual is constantly assessing individuals in situations to determine whether those individuals exhibit strength or weakness (James & Mazerolle, 2002). The retribution bias holds the belief that it is more important to exact retribution than reconciliation. Thus, the aggressive individual views retaliation as a more reasonable approach than forgiveness and reconciliation (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). The derogation of target bias helps to rationalize aggressive behavior by framing the target as being evil and thus deserving of the attack. Finally, the social discounting bias

allows aggressive individual to view the social customs and norms that normally restrict aggressive behavior as being too constricting in that they prevent him or her from being able to satisfy needs. Thus, the aggressive individual will tend to show cynicism or disdain for societal norms (Finnegan, 1997; James et al., 2005; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1998; Millon, 1990). In their entirety, these justification mechanisms are used by aggressive individuals in order to protect their self-worth while still being able to engage in aggressive behaviors.

Nonaggressive individuals see little need to use JMs as they are not predisposed to react to situations in an antagonistic, unreceptive, contentious, or uncooperative manner (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Aggressive individuals, however, in the same situations feel the need to rationalize the desire to respond to otherwise nonthreatening experiences in a very threatening and hostile manner (James et al., 2005). The aggressive individual views the use of aggressive behavior as justifiable because it can restore respect and exact restitution for the perceived injustices (Laursen & Collins, 1994; Nisbett, 1993). Aggression is typically thought of as being physical, active, and direct; however the aggressor may use more subtle acts of incivility, such as verbal, passive, indirect, and elusive means to achieve restitution (Baron & Neuman, 1996; Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Folger, Robinson, Dietz, McLean Parks, & Baron, 1998).

Workplace incivility is just one of the many forms of interpersonal mistreatment (Lim & Cortina, 2005). However, to distinguish it from many of the other more intense negative interpersonal behaviors, such as violence, aggression, and abuse, Pearson and colleagues (2001) identified three primary characteristics of incivility. First and

foremost is norm violation. A norm violation is said to have occurred whenever an individual or group behave in a way that is contrary to the company's standards. Andersson and Pearson (1999) noted that individuals who violate organizational norms and values are typically discourteous, rude, and have little regard for others. The second characteristic of incivility is ambiguity, namely of the intent to harm. Pearson et al. (2001) said that an employee can act uncivilly in an attempt to harm the organization or another individual to the benefit of himself or herself, or the employee may behave uncivilly with no obvious intent. In other words it is often unclear if the individual participating in the uncivil behavior is trying to cause harm to another person or if there is any real threat at all. Sakurai and Jex (2012) explain ambiguous intent as the victim's inability to conclude what the motivation is for the uncivil action. Finally, incivility must be a low intensity behavior (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Unlike workplace violence and interpersonal aggression, incivility does not include any physical component. Pearson et al. (2001) operationalize low intensity as being a diminished form of aggression. To put it in other words, incivility is often behavior that is not obviously classified as a negative behavior.

Subsequently, incivility can take many different forms, including condescending tones, unprofessionalism, and interruptions during a conversation (Cortina & Magley, 2009). Incivility can also take the form of much less obvious behavior such as avoiding a coworker, using embarrassing remarks to try to motivate or control an employee (Estes & Wang, 2008), ignoring others (Liu, Chi, Friedman, & Tsai, 2009), and the use of crude or inappropriate humor (Bies & Moag, 1986). Zauderer (2002) simply defined incivility as an individual being impolite and demonstrating bad manners. However,

Cortina et al. (2001) proposed that when persons are uncivil they are demonstrating antisocial behaviors. Along these lines, Johnson and Indvik (2001) noted that the most common uncivil behaviors found in the workplace include condescending and demeaning comments, disrupting meetings, ignoring people, as well as insulting and yelling at others.

Over 70% of employees surveyed acknowledged being treated uncivilly at work (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001). Moreover, almost 9 out of every 10 Americans feel that incivility is a serious social problem with 8 of the 10 believing that it is a growing problem in the workplace (Marks, 1996). Andersson and Pearson (1999) describe incivility as behavior that is rude, deviant, and ambiguous in nature, while showing a lacking respect for others and having an overall intent to cause the target harm. Moreover, it can be difficult to identify and prove (Penney & Spector, 2005).

Outcomes of incivility. When incivility is a regular workplace occurrence, it causes stress and worry in the targets (Cortina et al., 2001) as well as long-term emotional harm (Estes & Wang, 2008), both of which in turn can lead to substantial organizational cost. As noted by Pearson and Porath (2005), it costs an organization an average of \$14,000 per year for every employee involved in uncivil behaviors, with the loss most often due to employees intentionally reducing the amount of work they perform and spending more time talking with other coworkers about their experience and how they are being mistreated (Estes & Wang, 2008). Furthermore, employees will also spend more time trying to avoid the individual or group who treats them in an uncivil manner, which places greater focus on the uncivil activities rather than on work tasks (Pearson & Porath, 2005).

Typically, employees look to organizational leaders for cues regarding what is and is not acceptable behavior within their organization (Cortina, 2008). Thus, the leaders of an organization are default examples of the proper ways in which to behave and act. However, as noted by Cortina et al. (2001), organizational leaders constitute the largest portion of the employees who participate in acts of incivility. Deal and Kennedy (1982) suggested that, over time, leaders will pay little attention to how they interact with their employees because over time they grow lax with regard to monitoring their own behavior. When the uncivil act comes from the company's leaders, or comes through the execution of the organization's procedures and/or policies (Cortina et al. 2001), it is typically identified as being interpersonal injustice (Ferris, Spence, Brown, & Heller, 2012). Estes and Wang (2008) demonstrate this concept with an example of a manager who is unskilled and socially inept, purposefully embarrassing an employee in front of other employees in order to insure obedience and compliance. The employees come away from this experience learning that this is an acceptable behavior in the organization or the productivity decreases due to fear of being the next employee to be embarrassed. Moreover, they are likely to engage in this behavior themselves as they now consider it to be acceptable to the organization. Similarly, incivility is likely to occur when there is an overemphasis or incentive to be more efficient, cut costs, and beat the competition, thus ignoring the ethics and principles of a company (Davenport, Schwartz, & Elliott, 2002). Hornstein (1996) called the workplace a "siege mentality," where the goal is to get more production with the use of fewer resources resulting in supervisorsubordinate incivility or interpersonal injustice. Subsequently, as we can see, decisions

which an organization makes to solve one issue can often result in creating new and undesirable results.

Incivility is measured through a target's perceived injustices and therefore is focused on the individual's reaction or attitude towards the uncivil treatment. As previously noted, incivility, if left unchecked, can have lasting consequences on the victim, other employees, witnesses, and the organization (Pearson et al., 2001). Moreover, Andersson and Pearson (1999) demonstrated how a single act of incivility may lead to a second act of incivility, often of greater intensity. Rarely will the injustice stop after the second act, but usually elicits repeated retaliation from both parties, leading to greater and more severe responses. It is in this realm that we often see an increase of counterproductive work behaviors (Penny & Spector, 2005).

Counterproductive Work Behavior

Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) are an ever increasing issue among organizations. Reports show that counterproductive work behaviors such as deviance and delinquency are responsible for anywhere from \$6 billion to \$200 billion in annual losses (Murphy, 1993). On top of these financial burdens are the personal burdens that many face as a result of being a victim of CWBs (Mount, Ilies, & Johnson, 2006). Unlike incivility, CWBs include any employee behavior with the explicit intent of trying to intentionally cause harm to the organization (Gruys & Sackett, 2003). Adding to this, Spector and Fox (2005) noted that more than just the organization can be harmed and that individuals such as customers, stakeholders, and other employees should be included. Furthermore, two additional aspects of CWBs are that they must be voluntarily

carried out by the perpetrator (Robinson & Bennett, 1995) and that they are typically engaged in as an attempt to deal with frustration and stress (Spector, 1997).

Types of counterproductive work behaviors. A multidimensional scaling study on CWBs by Robinson and Bennett (1995) revealed two primary dimensions of CWBs. The first dimension distinguished the target of the behavior – organizational CWBs (CWB-O) versus personal CWBs (CWB-P). The second dimension distinguished the intensity of the behavior – minor incidents versus major incidents (Spector & Fox, 2002). Recently, Bennett and Robinson (2000) suggested that the second dimension (i.e., serious vs. minor incidents) should be discarded as it focuses more on a quantitative distinction rather than a qualitative one (Gruys & Sackett, 2003). Nonetheless, some studies have shown that the different types of CWBs are more closely related with certain types of outcomes (Penney & Spector, 2005). Acts of injustice include behaviors such as lying on a time card, purposely messing up on assignments, and stealing from the organization, and are related with CWB-O, whereas acts of conflict include behaviors such as stealing from someone at work, making someone look poorly in front of others, or insulting someone's performance and are associated with CWB-P (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Penney & Spector, 2005).

In addition to the previously noted two dimensions, Robinson and Bennett (1995) identified four primary categories of CWBs: property deviance, production deviance, political deviance, and personal aggression. Although these four categories are conceptually distinct, they do relate to one another. The first category, *property deviance*, takes place when an individual willfully takes or damages physical property when he or she has not been given permission to do so (Hollinger & Clark, 1982). Next,

production deviance, according to Robinson and Bennett (1995) is rather minor in nature, yet still negatively affects the organization. In this case an individual would do the bare minimum and look for ways to be less productive such as taking many breaks or leaving early (Mangione & Quinn, 1974). Third, political deviance refers to individual attempts to put others at a disadvantage such as showing favoritism, blaming others, and gossiping (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Finally, personal aggression is when a person acts in a hostile manner towards others. This may take a variety of forms ranging from sexual harassment to stealing (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

A wide range of behaviors are generally considered to be CWBs. Liu et al. (2009) included behaviors such as withholding effort, theft, sabotage, incivility, deceiving, refusing to cooperate, and physical violence. Expanding the list, Ilie, Penney, Ispas and Iliescu (2012) added verbal abuse, slowing down production of work, and incorrectly performing tasks. Perhaps the most detailed list of CWBs comes from the research of Gruys (1999) who noted a total of 87 different forms of CWBs, which were reduced to 11 major categories of the before mentioned counterproductive behaviors. In addition to sexual harassment (Robinson &Bennett, 1995), Gruys (1999) added misusing employee discount, destruction of property, sharing confidential information, falsifying records, wasting time, not following the safety rules, being late, using drugs and/or alcohol on the job, and harassment (both physical and verbal).

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the process in which an individual who feels to be the target of an injustice or offense consciously tries to overcome negative emotions he/she feels toward the offender; trying not to cause the offender harm even though his or her

circumstances may merit feelings to do otherwise (Aquino, Grover, Goldman, & Folger, 2003). Forgiveness can greatly benefit an organization and provide a positive alternative to revenge or other negative outcomes as a result to incivility (Bradfield & Aquino, 1999; Thompson et al., 2005; Tripp, Bies, & Aquino, 2007). In fact, forgiveness has been argued to be the best solution to an injustice for an organization (Palanski, 2012). Aguino et al. (2003) echoed this belief, noting that forgiveness has the power to restore and repair a relationship that has been weakened by an offense. According to Enright (1991), forgiveness is a two-part process. The first step involves the initial releasing of negative feelings and resentment toward the offender. Second, the offender must receive compassion and generosity. Furthermore, Cameron and Caza (2002) argued that when a person consciously replaces negative emotions with positive emotions toward the offender – and it is an inherently social experience – then forgiveness has taken place. Similarly, Worthington (2001) stated that in order to forgive one must be willing to experience and acknowledge having been hurt. Thus, based on these definitions, there must be an acknowledgement of an original offense or perceived offense, which is then followed by a change of feelings emotionally toward the offender (i.e., no longer having negative feelings toward the offender).

Research has shown that forgiveness can be linked to desirable outcomes for both individuals and organizations. These can include an increase in psychological well-being, physical health (Cameron & Caza, 2002; Thoresen, Harris, & Larskin, 2000) and a decrease in levels of anger and resentment (Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006).

Furthermore, Struthers et al. (2005) noted that harmony in the workplace may be restored through the act of forgiveness. Trust and cooperation are pivotal parts of a

meaningful and satisfying interpersonal life; however mistakes, betrayals and failures will happen (Levy & Blatt, 1999). Thus, forgiveness is a viable option to restore trust and cooperation and allow for relationships to continue (Fincham, 2000).

Justice and forgiveness. As previously noted, perceived injustice (e.g., incivility) contributes to feelings of dissatisfaction (King, Miles, & Days, 1993), employee theft (Greenberg, 1990b), retribution (Aquino et al., 2006), and – potentially most important – the loss of trust in a leader (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). The reason for this distrust is that it puts the leader's character into question (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Moreover, Lewicki and Bunker (1996) found that once the character of the leader is of concern, employees will distance themselves from the leader. With so many negative possible outcomes from perceived injustice it is imperative to find ways to minimize the gap and achieve a more positive outcome (Andiappan & Trevino, 2010).

Unfortunately much of the uncivil treatment that occurs in organizations comes from a lack of organizational justice, leaving many of the victims longing for justice and fair treatment by the organization (Goodstein & Aquino, 2010). Research by Sayers, Sears, Kelly, and Harbke (2011) showed that organizations in which employees felt they had a just work environment reported having fewer negative experiences such as psychological contract violations and incivility. Along the same lines, Miner, Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, and Brady (2012) found that when victims felt they had received retributional justice the chance of negative outcomes from the injustice was significantly reduced. Thus, organizations that encourage a just environment are less susceptible to undesirable situations and outcomes.

CHAPTER 2: THE PRESENT STUDY

As previously noted, personality traits have been directly linked to CWBs (Bowling & Eschleman, 2010). Moreover, Bing et al. (2000) demonstrated that both explicit and implicit aggression are predictive of employee CWBs. Subsequently, individuals demonstrating high levels of either explicit or implicit aggression will be more likely to demonstrate higher levels of CWBs. Moreover, both Bing et al. (2007) and Frost et al. (2007) further demonstrated that explicit and implicit aggression, in addition to their main effects; interact in their prediction of CWBs. In other words, the behavioral manifestation of aggression is a function of the interplay between explicit and implicit processes. Therefore, I expect that implicit and explicit aggression will interact in their relationship with CWBs.

Hypothesis 1. With respect to their relationship with CWBs, implicit aggressiveness and explicit aggressiveness will interact, such that when implicit aggressiveness is high, the strength of the relationship between explicit aggressiveness and CWB will be greater.

Incivility has been found to lead to a decrease in job satisfaction (Pearson & Porath, 2005), higher levels of resignation (Johnson & Indvik, 2001), decreases in performance (Chiu & Khoo, 2003), higher levels of stress and physical illness (Cortina et al, 2001), and increased burnout (Jex & Crossley, 2005). Andersson and Pearson (1999), summarized the above findings nicely by stating that exposure to uncivil acts will increase the overall likelihood of CWBs. Subsequently, increased levels of uncivil behaviors will be related to increased levels of CWBs.

Hypothesis 2: Incivility will be positively related to counterproductive work behaviors.

As counterproductive work behaviors have serious consequences for both the organization and the individual (Gruys & Sackett, 2003), the actions of an organization's employees are of upmost importance to facilitating a productive and welcoming environment (Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Palanski, 2012). When individuals are treated in a manner that they feel is unfair, their productivity decreases (Chiu & Khoo, 2003; Wells, 1998) and the likelihood that they will participate in CWBs increases. In contrast, as mistreatment has the ability to change the way a person thinks, feels, and behaves; so too does forgiveness (Aquino et al., 2003). Forgiveness has been shown not only to restore relationships, but also to increase mental and physical health (Fincham, 2000; Palanski, 2012). Along these lines forgiveness is expected to reduce the occurrence of CWBs.

Hypothesis 3: Forgiveness will be negatively related to CWB.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Participants

Participants for the current study consisted of 481 undergraduate students enrolled in introductory psychology courses at a large southeastern university. Participants received course credit in exchange for their voluntary participation in this study. The participants included 334 women (69.3%) with ages ranging from 18 to 24 (M = 18.74, SD = .89). Of the participants, 337 were Caucasian (69.9%), 89 were African-American (18.5%), 5 were American Indian or Alaska Native (1%), 5 were Asian Indian (1%), 17 were Asian (3.5%), with the remaining 29 (6%) identifying as being a member of another group. A total of 36 participants described themselves as being of the Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (7.5%). The study was reviewed by the University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A).

Procedure

Data were gathered online via the Qualtrics Survey Software. All participants were required to indicate their consent to participate prior to participating (see Appendix B). The data collection was completed in two parts. Participants first completed the measures of implicit and explicit aggression as well as a short demographic measure. The second part consisted of the participants taking surveys to measure if they had been treated uncivilly, how likely they were to participate in CWBs, and how likely they were to forgive for a wrong doing.

Measures

Implicit aggression. Implicit aggression was measured via the Conditional Reasoning Test for Aggression (CRT-A; James & McIntyre, 2000). The CRT-A consists

of 22 inductive reasoning questions that measured the participants' cognitive readiness to aggress. Each item represents at least one of the six identified JMs and asks the participant to indicate the most logical response to the presented situation. Participants receive a "+1" towards their aggression score if their response endorsed an aggressive alternative and a "0" if the response was nonaggressive (James et al., 2005). Individuals who received a score of 8 or more on the CRT-A were considered to be very likely to utilize the JMs of aggression when trying to rationalize their behavior (James et al., 2005). Additionally, each illogical response was scored +1 towards a total illogical score. Individuals who scored 5 or more on the illogical scale were removed from the analyses as they are considered to not have taken the measure earnestly (only 7 individuals were removed following this procedure). The mean score on the CRT-A was 4.92 (SD = 2.11) and, based on the procedures noted by James and LeBreton (2012), demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$). Participant scores on the CRT-A exhibited no significant mean differences based on participants' age, sex, race, ethnicity, or educational status.

Explicit aggression. Explicit aggression was measured via the Angry-Hostility (A-H) scale from the NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992). This subscale is designed to evaluate an individual's level of trait-based anger, frustration, and bitterness. It is comprised of 8 items that directly address aggressive behavior (e.g., "Do you ever find yourself addressing others in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately?"). Responses are made on a 5-point Likert-type rating scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The A-H scale had a mean score of 22.11 (SD = 4.62) and demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency ($\alpha = .73$). Participant

scores on the A-H Scale exhibited no significant mean differences based on participants' age, sex, race, ethnicity, or educational status.

Incivility. Incivility was measured via the Uncivil Workplace Behavior Questionnaire (UWBQ; Martin & Hine, 2005). The UWBQ included 20 items that measured four subscales - hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping. Participants indicated their level of agreement with each question using a 7-point rating scale ranging from *never* (1) to *very frequently* (7). The hostility subscale demonstrated a mean of 13.23 (SD = 4.48), the privacy invasion subscale demonstrated a mean of 10.20 (SD = 4.19), the exclusionary behavior subscale demonstrated a mean of 16.13 (SD = 7.16), and the gossip subscale demonstrated a mean of 11.27 (SD = 5.16). The UWBQ scales demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency ($\alpha_{hostility} = .90$; $\alpha_{privacy} = .76$; $\alpha_{exclusion} = .90$; $\alpha_{gossip} = .91$). Participant scores on the UWBQ scales exhibited no significant mean differences based on participants' age, sex, race, ethnicity, or educational status..

Forgiveness. The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) was employed to measure forgiveness (Thompson et al., 2005). The HFS was a self-report measure of dispositional forgiveness, that had three subscales (i.e. forgiveness of self, others, and situations; Thompson et al., 2005). It was comprised of 18 items and participants indicated their response using a 7-point Likert scale that ranges from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7) with items 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 being reverse scored. The Forgiveness of Self subscale demonstrated a mean of 25.71 (SD = 4.24), the Forgiveness of Others subscale demonstrated a mean of 24.56 (SD = 3.73), and the Forgiveness of the Situation subscale demonstrated a mean of 25.95 (SD = 4.23).

Additionally, each scale demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency (α_{self} = .75; α_{others} = .78; $\alpha_{situation}$ =.79). Participant scores on the HFS scales exhibited no significant mean differences based on participants' age, sex, race, ethnicity, or educational status.

Deviant behavior. Deviant behavior was measured via the deviant behavior subscale of the Counterproductive Student Behaviors Scale (CSBS; Rimkus, 2012). It consisted of 7 items that were scored using a 9-point rating scale ranging from *never* (1) to *every day* (9). The deviant behavior scale demonstrated a mean of 7.73 (SD = 1.77) and an acceptable level of internal consistency ($\alpha = .71$). Participant scores on the deviant behavior scale of the CSBS exhibited no significant mean differences based on participants' age, sex, race, ethnicity, or educational status.

Data Analyses

After screening the data for missing values and employing list-wise deletion, the final sample consisted of 482 participants. The criterion variable was deviant behavior. The predictor variables consisted of age, sex, explicit aggression, implicit aggression, incivility, specifically exclusionary behavior, and forgiveness of situation. Prior to performing the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, the predictor variables were inspected for collinearity. The results from the procedure demonstrated acceptable variance inflation factors (all had a VIF of 2.4 or less) and collinearity tolerance greater than .43, indicating that multicollinearity was not a problem (Coakes, 2005; Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and scale correlations are presented in Table 1. To test the hypotheses, specifically the impact of trait aggression, forgiveness, and experiences of incivility on the prediction of counterproductive behaviors, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. At each step, a partial F test was employed to determine whether or not the newly added predictors significantly increased the R^2 . Step 1, which included the demographic variables of age and sex, was not statistically significant, F(2, 478) = .29, p = .74. The second step addressed Hypotheses 1, which returned significant results F(3, 475) = 34.82, p < .001, and accounted for an additional 26.8% of the observed variance.

In particular, the interaction between implicit and explicit aggression was significant (see Figure 1 below). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. As implicit aggression increased, the strength of the relationship between explicit aggressive and deviant behavior also increased (and vice versa).

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations of Variables (N = 481).

Variable	М	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Aggression												
1. Implicit	4.92	2.11	1.00									
2. Explicit	22.11	4.61	.21**	1 .00								
Incivility												
3. Hostility	13.23	4.48	.05	.06	1.00							
4. Privacy	10.20	4.19	.06	.08	.39**	1 .00						
5. Exclusion	16.13	7.16	.10*	.12**	.43**	.66**	1.00					
6. Gossip	11.27	5.16	.04	.11*	.54**	.51**	.64**	1.00				
Forgiveness												
7. Self	25.71	4.24	14 ^{**}	15 ^{**}	06	05	.03	.01	1.00			
8. Others	24.56	3.73	10 [*]		05	02	.03	04	.30**	1.00		
9. Situation	25.92	4.23	29**			.05		_	.41**		1.00	
Behavior	_5.0_	0										
10. Deviance	7.73	1.77	.45**	.26**	.13**	.22**	.31**	.22**	08	08	26**	1.00

Note. p < .05 *p < .01.

Step 3 of the regression included the addition of the four factors of incivility - hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping. Overall, this step was significant, F(4, 471) = 25.36, p < .001, and accounted for an additional 5.8% of the variance. However, it was only exclusionary behavior ($\beta = .22$, p < .05) that was significant. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was only partially supported. Having previously experienced exclusionary behavior led to increased levels of deviant behavior; however, hostility, privacy invasion, and gossiping did not make an incremental contribution above trait aggression.

Table 2
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Deviant Behavior

Steps and Predictors		R²	ΔR^2		SE B		β		p
Step 1 – Socio-demographic Age Sex	•	.00	.00	F	.03	r r	01 02	r	.69 .66
Step 2 – Aggression Implicit Explicit Implicit x Explicit	•	.27	.27*	F F	.04 .04 .04	F F	.36 .10 .19	r r	.00 .01 .00
Step 3 – Incivility Hostility Privacy Invasion Exclusionary Behavior Gossiping	•	.33	.06*	F F F	.04 .05 .06	* * *	04 .03 .22 .05	r r r	.34 .50 .00 .31
Step 4 – Forgiveness Forgiveness of Self Forgiveness of Others Forgiveness of Situation	•	.35	.02*	F F	.04 .04 .05	F F	.05 .04 19	r r	.21 .33 .00

Notes. N = 481. Significant results are in boldface. p < .05.

The fourth and final step included the addition of the three factors of forgiveness - forgiveness of the self, forgiveness of others, and forgiveness of the situation. Overall, this step was significant F(3, 468) = 20.94, p < .001, and accounted for an additional 2.3% of the variance. However, of the three factors, only forgiveness of the situation was significant, ($\beta = -.19$, p < .05). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was only partially supported. Specifically, higher levels of forgiveness of the situation led to lower levels of deviant behavior; however, neither forgiveness of the self nor forgiveness of others made an incremental contribution. Taken together, the final regression model accounted for approximately 35% of the variance in deviant behavior. For further information on the statistics for the 12 predictor model see Appendix C.

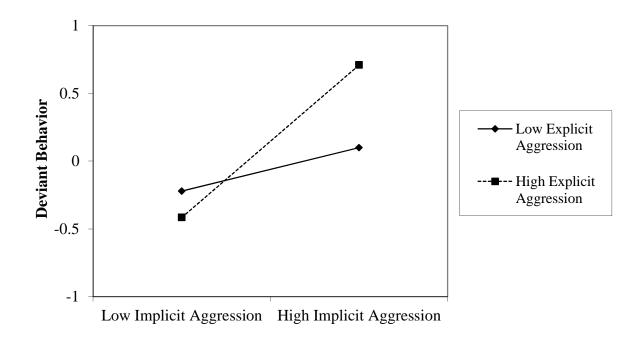


Figure 1. Interaction of implicit and explicit aggression when predicting deviant behavior.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The results from the study indicated that the more implicitly aggressive an individual was the more likely they were to be deviant in their behavior. Likewise, similar results were found when relating explicit aggression and deviant behavior. However it was the interaction between implicit and explicit aggression which was of particular interest. When the individuals have high levels of implicit aggression there is a positive relationships with deviant behavior. The relationship is significantly greater for those individuals who also demonstrated high levels of explicit aggression.

Another interesting finding was that of the 4 factors measuring different forms of incivility, hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping, it was only exclusionary behavior which demonstrated a noteworthy relationship with deviant behavior. The findings indicated that those individuals who have been excluded from situations are also more likely to engage in deviant behavior. An explanation for why exclusionary behavior was the only factor found to be significant could be due to the fact that it is not directly related to the other factors. In other words, gossiping can also be a form of hostility and often requires invading someone's privacy, however excluding an individual does not necessarily relate to overt actions of hostility, privacy invasion or gossiping.

Similarly, of the three factors of forgiveness, others, self, and the situation, it was only forgiveness of the situation that demonstrated a significant relationship with deviant behavior. When taken together with the results regarding incivility, it makes sense that it was forgiveness of the situation which was significant. When an individual feels excluded from participating in something it would be easiest to justify finding forgiveness

of the situation, rather than forgiving themselves for acting in a way in which would encourage others to exclude an individual from something, or for forgiving those that were the reason for not being able to attend. The situation is the easiest way in which one can justify forgiving.

When we look at these findings as a whole, we see that aggressive people, particularly those that are both implicitly and explicitly aggressive are most likely to retaliate by using deviant behavior. Accordingly, the deviant behavior can result from being excluded by others, however the deviant individuals were likely to forgive the situation, but there was no forgiveness of others or of themselves.

Implications

The findings in this research both supports and conflicts with past research's findings. James and colleagues (2005) suggested that individuals, who possess aggressive traits, will most often try to hide their aggressive tendencies from their peers, however from our findings we see that aggressive individuals are most likely to behave in a deviant manner. Physically assaulting someone, making fun of someone based on their religious preference, encouraging other students to cheat, and turning in someone else's assignment as his/her own are all identifiable deviant behaviors, which the aggressive participants in our study admitted to doing and which, obviously is by no means an attempt to hiding their aggressive tendencies. The deviant behaviors in this research represent very outwardly and obvious deliberate forms of CWBs (Rimkus, 2012).

The findings from this research do support the notion that when an employee has been treated unjustly he/she is more likely to look for ways of retribution, most often

through CWBs (Spector & Fox, 2002). When the aggressive individual feels excluded (a form of incivility) from something, they seek retribution most often through acts of deviant behavior. When the aggressive individual perceives himself/herself to be disadvantaged he/she would justify the use of deviant behavior in an attempt to even the playing field. Examples of the exclusionary behavior could include not being informed of a meeting or others taking too long to accomplish a task in which they were relying on them to complete in a timely manner. Past research supports our findings and suggests that the aggressive individuals who have been treated uncivilly use biases, justifying the use of the deviant behavior. Some research would say this is an example of the retribution bias (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; James, 1998) while other research would say this is an example of the potency bias (James & Mazerolle, 2002).

Research in the past has shown that when an individual forgives, this can actually make him/her more vulnerable to retaliation (Katz, Street, & Arias, 1997). This research might explain why our findings suggest that aggressive individuals are only likely to forgive the situation, not themselves or others. They need some form of closure but forgiving someone else or even admitting they were wrong (i.e. forgiving themselves) would make them vulnerable and in the wrong. Other research has been found to produce similar implications. Thompson and her colleges (2005) found that when a negative situation arises (i.e. being excluded from something), if the individual can look at that situation and find the positive in it (e.g. I really did not want to have to sit through that boring meeting anyways), then he/she is able to forgive the situation which was once deemed negative. I suggest that this forgiveness of the situation is a way in which the aggressive individual can justify forgiving because the thing in which he/she

forgave is actually beyond anyone including the offender's control. They can leave the situation feeling good about themselves because they forgave and yet at the same time they did not have to make themselves "vulnerable" to others attacks.

Limitations

One of the limitations of the current study is a lack of diversity among the participants. Participants consisted of undergraduate college students at one university and may not be representative of all people. Another limitation is the use of self-report measures, as it is possible that participants attempted to present themselves in a more favorable manner with regards to the topics at hand. Likewise, the majority of the participants were 18-24 year old, Caucasian women, which limited our ability to examine demographic differences. Furthermore, participants were able to take the measures anywhere they wanted and could have been distracted, or under time pressures while taking the survey, in effect not devoting the necessary resources to accurately depict his/her actual answers.

Future Research

The findings from this research represent a solid foundation for future research to expand upon. One area in which future research could and should expand upon is further exploration into what specific justification mechanisms are being used by the aggressive individual to justify his/her reaction to being treated uncivilly, or the reason for forgiving the situation. Another avenue that future research should look at is if these findings are the same in the workplace, or if such tendencies are found only in a university setting. Likewise, it would be of interest to see if when the age group is

expanded if there are changes as one gets older and if the desire for retribution and retaliation decreases over time.

It would be worthwhile to investigate further the relationship between incivility and deviant behavior. Specifically research is unclear in that if incivility is left unchecked, will it escalate into something more extreme such as sexual harassment, or physical violence. Another avenue, in which further research should look, is to see if forgiveness moderates the relationship between incivility and deviant behavior, such that when experiences of incivility are high, increased levels of forgiveness would be associated with lower levels of deviant behavior.

The findings from this study used only self-report measures and as such are subject to some of the limitations associated with such measures. One of the big limitations is that of social desirability bias. With such topics of aggression, incivility, counterproductive behaviors, and forgiveness, it would be feasible to assume that some participants tweaked their answers in order to appear more similar and desirable to their peers. This being said, it would be wise for future research to look into using other methods for collecting the data and seeing if such issues were present and what the new findings show. This would not only help with the understanding of the topic at hand in this paper, but also the limitations with using self-report measures.

Conclusions

The current study advanced our understanding of CWBs, aggression, incivility, and forgiveness by examining how these four factors interacted with one another.

Specifically, aggressive individuals are likely to participate in deviant behaviors, exponentially when their aggression is both implicit and explicit. The likelihood of

deviant behavior increases when the aggressive individual feels he/she has been purposely excluded from something. However, if the aggressive individual can forgive the situation, then the desire and prospect that the aggressive individual participates in deviant behavior decreases. These findings have helped shed further light on four behaviors, about which we still have much to learn, thus it is important to take what has been learned from these findings and add to them, continuously building upon them.

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APENDIX A: IRB DOCUMENTATION



EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board Office

4N-70 Brody Medical Sciences Building- Mail Stop 682 600 Moye Boulevard - Greenville, NC 27834 Office 252-744-2914 - Fax 252-744-2284 - www.ecu.edu/irb

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB

To: Mark Bowler

CC:

Date: 4/10/2014

Re: UMCIRB 13-002491 Aggressive Behavior

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 4/10/2014. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category #2.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

The UMCIRB office will hold your exemption application for a period of five years from the date of this letter. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond this period, you will need to submit an Exemption Certification request at least 30 days before the end of the five year period.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418 IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT

You have volunteered to participate in a research study titled "Student Personality and Behavior – Part [A, B, C, D]" being conducted by Dr. Mark Bowler, a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at East Carolina University. Please note that you must be 18 years or older to participate in this study. The goal of this study is to survey approximately 1000 individuals at East Carolina University. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete for which you will earn .5 research participation credits. When completing this survey you will be asked to provide your PirateID. However, your responses will be kept confidential and no data will be released or used with your identification attached. Your participation in the research is voluntary and you may choose to not participate in the study at any time. There is no penalty for not taking part in this research study; however, if you do not complete the survey you will not receive any participation credit. It is hoped that this information will assist us to better understand how student personality characteristics relate to behavior. At the end of the semester you will be emailed a summary of the basic findings of this that include further details regarding its overall purpose. Please call Dr. Mark Bowler at 252-328-0013 for any research related questions or the Office for Human Research Integrity (OHRI) at 252-744-2914 for questions about your rights as a research participant.

Part A

This study requires you to complete an online survey that consists of a set of inductive reasoning problem as well as a set of self-report questions and a set of demographic questions. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Part B

This study requires you to complete an online survey that consists of a set of questions regarding morality and ethics. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Part C

This study requires you to complete an online survey that consists of a set of questions regarding forgiveness, academic behaviors, and negative events that you have experienced. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Part D

This study requires you to complete an online survey that consists of a set of questions regarding gossip-related behaviors. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

(Additionally, it should be noted that each listing provides the potential participant with the amount of credits that are awarded for participation.)

APPENDIX C: FULL MODEL STATISTICS

Coefficients^a

	Coefficients										
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
			Std.				Lower	Upper	Zero-		_
Model		В	Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Bound	Bound	order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	.031	.199		.156	.876	361	.423			
	Age	.021	.036	.026	.570	.569	051	.092	.030	.026	.026
	Sex	041	.101	019	408	.683	239	.157	024	019	019
2	(Constant)	031	.172		181	.856	369	.307			
	Age	002	.031	003	072	.943	064	.059	.030	003	003
	Sex	003	.087	002	038	.970	174	.167	024	002	001
	Implicit	.412	.040	.410	10.220	.000	.333	.491	.449	.425	.401
	Explicit	.181	.040	.179	4.473	.000	.102	.261	.259	.201	.176
	Imp_Exp	.197	.041	.191	4.854	.000	.117	.277	.199	.217	.190
3	(Constant)	.025	.167		.152	.879	302	.353			
	Age	005	.030	006	161	.872	064	.055	.030	007	006
	Sex	032	.084	015	382	.703	197	.133	024	018	014
	Implicit	.395	.039	.393	10.126	.000	.318	.472	.449	.423	.383
	Explicit	.152	.039	.151	3.880	.000	.075	.230	.259	.176	.147
	Imp_Exp	.184	.039	.178	4.683	.000	.107	.262	.199	.211	.177
	I_Hostil	038	.046	038	827	.409	127	.052	.130	038	031
	I_Priv	.019	.051	.019	.367	.714	082	.119	.217	.017	.014
	I_Exclu	.215	.057	.215	3.748	.000	.102	.328	.307	.170	.142
	I_Gossip	.046	.054	.046	.853	.394	060	.153	.218	.039	.032
4	(Constant)	.043	.165		.259	.795	281	.367			
	Age	012	.030	016	402	.688	071	.047	.030	019	015
	Sex	037	.083	017	445	.657	200	.126	024	021	017
	Implicit	.361	.040	.359	9.115	.000	.283	.439	.449	.388	.340
	Explicit	.104	.041	.103	2.538	.011	.023	.184	.259	.117	.095
	Imp_Exp	.201	.039	.194	5.133	.000	.124	.278	.199	.231	.191
	I_Hostil	043	.045	043	961	.337	132	.045	.130	044	036
	I_Priv	.034	.051	.034	.671	.502	066	.134	.217	.031	.025
	I_Exclu	.216	.057	.216	3.792	.000	.104	.328	.307	.173	.141
	I_Gossip	.054	.053	.054	1.015	.311	051	.159	.218	.047	.038
	FG_Self	.053	.042	.053	1.257	.209	030	.135	076	.058	.047
	FG_Other	.042	.042	.042	.986	.325	042	.125	078	.046	.037
	FG_Sit	196	.048	193	-4.040	.000	291	101	260	184	151

a. Dependent Variable: Zscore(Deviant)