

**Factors that enable positive organisational outcomes, despite  
senior leader incivility**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Senior leader incivility is on the rise and is expected to increase even further due to the growing pressures senior leaders face. This study seeks to better understand the relationship between senior leader incivility and positive organisational outcomes, as incivility appears to be a common behaviour amongst some of the greatest business leaders of our time, despite the literature affirming incivility results in damaging outcomes. Existing literature to date fails to provide a holistic understanding of the factors that positively influence leader incivility outcomes. The aim of this research study is to explore the factors related to the leader (the perpetrator), the follower (the target) and the context that enables positive organisational outcomes to be achieved, despite senior leader incivility.

A qualitative, exploratory research approach was adopted to explore new insights. In order to obtain an improved understanding of this phenomenon, a total of 18 semi-structured, in depth interviews were conducted with uncivil senior leaders that achieve success and followers (targets) of uncivil senior leaders that achieve success.

With respect to the leader, this research study found positive organisational outcomes are achievable in spite of senior leader incivility, when senior leader incivility is infrequent and impartial and when the leader is a visionary and exceptionally supportive leader, who is highly knowledgeable and has the ability to demonstrate remorse when he or she causes offense. With respect to the follower, this study found positive organisational outcomes are achievable in spite of senior leader incivility when followers possess high social skills, are strongly motivated to perform to avoid the negative consequences associated with not performing, by external rewards and an internal desire for achievement, and when followers' personal values are aligned with the interests of the organisation. With respect to the context, this study found positive organisational outcomes are achievable in spite of senior leader incivility in environments where senior leader incivility is a cultural norm and when the risks associated with not performing could be disastrous. The findings of this study contribute to the extant literature related to workplace incivility.

## **KEYWORDS**

leader incivility, senior leader incivility, supervisor incivility, moderators of incivility outcomes, leader, follower, context

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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Prenila Iyer Heera

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Date

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

SLI - Senior leader incivility

LMX - Leader Member Exchange

KSA - Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

EQ - Emotional Intelligence



# 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

*"Are you lazy or just incompetent?"* - Jeff Bezos (Edwards, 2013).

Effective leadership is vital to the success of any organisation. Leaders drive the organisation by bringing people together, focussing their efforts, and directing resources in a structured manner towards the achievement of organisational goals, with leadership effectiveness evaluated against the achievement of group goals (Behrendt, Matz, & Göritz, 2017; Padilla, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2007). Researchers tend to present the construct leadership using a polarised approach, with leadership being categorised as either 'good' (constructive leadership) or 'bad' (destructive leadership) based on leader behaviours (Collins & Jackson, 2015; Fors Brandebo, Nilsson, & Larsson, 2016; Fors Brandebo, Österberg, & Berglund, 2018; Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

Einarsen, Aasland and Skogstad (2007) described constructive leadership in terms of a leader's behaviour towards followers and the organisation. These behaviours involve acting in the best interest of the organisation with respect to the achievement of organisational goals, and its followers with respect to follower psychology and well-being (Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2010). Constructive leadership involves relations focussed behaviours that include supporting, growing and empowering followers (Bednall, Rafferty, Shipton, Sanders, & Jackson, 2018; Katou, 2015; Yukl, Mahsud, Prussia, & Hassan, 2019), whilst actively driving the attainment of organisational goals (Aasland et al., 2010). This type of leadership has been found to result in selfless pro-organisational follower behaviour (Effelsberg, Solga, & Gurt, 2014), increasing followers' commitment to the organisation (Prooijen & de Vries, 2016), with a positive impact on follower performance (Fors Brandebo et al., 2016).

Destructive leadership encompasses a variety of leader characteristics and behaviours understood from the literature to bring about negative outcomes for employees and/or organisations (Erickson, Shaw, Murray, & Branch, 2015; Thoroughgood, Sawyer, Padilla, & Lunsford, 2018; Van Sebille, 2015) through anti-

subordinate and/or anti organisational behaviours (Einarsen et al., 2007; Hou, 2017). There are numerous studies that have found empirical evidence of destructive leadership being associated with adverse follower consequences, such as impacting followers on a psychological level with direct negative impacts on the organisation i.e. through sabotage and the misuse of resources (Aasland et al., 2010) through to indirect negative impacts on the organisation through counter-productive follower work behaviours (Clive R. Boddy, 2014). These leader behaviours include (but are not limited to) overly ambitious, egotistical, authoritarian leaders engaging in corruption, misuse of resources and sabotage to attacking followers by humiliating, bullying and belittling them, using threats and aggressively driving goals (Aasland et al., 2010; Erickson et al., 2015; Larsson, Brandebo, & Nilsson, 2012).

However, recent studies have shown that certain leader behaviours commonly regarded as destructive according to the literature, are in fact effective in achieving positive outcomes in certain conditions. For example Xu, Xu, Chiu, Lam and Farh (2015) found that autocratic leader behaviours is the most suitable leadership style for revenue growth in difficult economic conditions. Similarly, Harms, Wood, Landay, Lester and Vogelgesang Lester (2018) found that followers who possessed characteristics of high conscientiousness and a need for structure, had a preference for autocratic leaders.

In recent years, well known senior leaders such as Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Larry Ellison, Travis Kalanick, Bill Gates and Andy Grove have all been reported to exhibit leader behaviours which the literature regards as 'destructive'. Yet these leaders have led some of the most successful companies of our time (Biography.com, 2019b, 2019a; Cohen, 2004; Dunn, 2016; Encyclopedia.com, 2005; Hartmans & Leskin, 2019; Newton, 2016; Richter, 2019). These are leaders notorious for being power hungry, autocratic, volatile, highly emotional and abusive. They have been described as perfectionists, having zero tolerance for mistakes, belittling and humiliating employees, using profane language, setting impractical targets and deadlines, and making unilateral decisions (Fairington, 2019; Griswold, 2017; Hofman, 2015; Isaacson, 2012; Leland, 2017; Love, 2011; McGinn, 2013; Rosoff, 2011; Staley, 2016). These are all leaders who demonstrate senior leader incivility.

In this study, the definition put forward for senior leader incivility (SLI) is emotional abuse inflicted by direct and demanding senior leaders who express themselves forcefully, and comprises of a blend of aggressive, intimidating and abusive behaviours (where the leaders intentionality to cause harm to subordinates is irrelevant). This definition builds on previous scholars definition of workplace incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Davenport, Schwartz, & Elliott, 2002; Glendinning, 2001; Zauderer, 2002) and is informed by the behaviours described to be associated with workplace incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Estes & Wang, 2008).

Workplace incivility has been reported to be on a rampant rise as a result of the increase in workplace pressures (Estes & Wang, 2008; Hoffman & Chunta, 2015; Sears & Humiston, 2015; Sharma, 2018). A longitudinal study spanning 14 years found that 98% of workers experienced incivility, with more than 50% experiencing workplace incivility on a weekly basis (C. Porath & Pearson, 2013). This has resulted in a growing body of knowledge related to workplace incivility. Research related to workplace incivility has focussed heavily on the consequences of uncivil behaviours in the workplace. Hoffman and Chunta (2015) reported workplace incivility to be related to counter-productive employee responses such as increased absenteeism and decreased communication. Thompson, Buch and Glasø (2018) found workplace incivility to lead to increased staff turnover and Sears and Humiston (2015) found workplace incivility to be damaging to employee physiological and psychological health, as well as organisational outcomes.

However, a review of the literature related to workplace incivility has found the literature to be incomplete. Until recently, researchers have failed to distinguish between perpetrators, i.e. incivility stemming from co-workers, customers and/or supervisors. Whilst recent studies have explored the unique effects of workplace incivility as a function of the source, there is still relatively little known regarding the unique effects of workplace incivility as a function of the perpetrator (Pauline Schilpzand, Pater, & Erez, 2016), specifically the leader. In addition, there have been few studies that have sought to understand the perpetrator other than antecedents to his or her behaviour. Scholars have not considered what it is about the perpetrator over and above their uncivil behaviour (expressed at a given moment in time), that influences incivility outcomes. In addition, whilst Andersson

and Pearson (1999), positioned the concept of workplace incivility as an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the observer and the context, researchers have mainly studied the construct exploring the perpetrator (i.e. antecedents to uncivil behaviours); or the target/ observer (consequences of uncivil behaviours), with few studies considering the influence of context on the process. In addition, scholars have not considered more than two of these dimensions within a single study. Whilst there is an increasing number of studies exploring the moderating factors that influence the relationship between workplace incivility and outcomes, researchers have just begun to scratch the surface, with most scholars focussing on specific personality traits related to the target (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016). The existing literature fails to provide a holistic understanding of the factors that positively influence outcomes as a result of SLI.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The aim of this research is to explore the factors that enable positive organisational outcomes to be achieved, despite SLI. This study seeks to better understand this phenomenon, since we observe more and more senior leaders in business demonstrating uncivil behaviours and achieving positive organisational outcomes, despite scholars advocating these behaviours result in destructive outcomes (Anjum, Ming, Siddiqi, & Rasool, 2018; Cameron & Webster, 2011; Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Huang & Lin, 2019; Sakurai & Jex, 2012; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Wu, Zhang, Chiu, Kwan, & He, 2014).

The research study aims to:

- Identify the factors related to the uncivil senior leader (the perpetrator) that enables them to achieve positive organisational outcomes
- Identify the factors related to the follower (the target) that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes
- Identify the contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes

It must be noted that this study does not aim to explore the reasons why leaders engage in workplace incivility. Leader motives (antecedents) to workplace incivility fall outside the scope of this study.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PURPOSE**

In a 15 year review of the literature related to incivility, Pauline Schilpzand, Pater and Erez (2016), called for more research exploring incivility by source to provide deeper insights on the varying consequences of incivility based on the role of the perpetrator. Given the fragmented state of the literature related to incivility, and the number of dependencies and variables involved in influencing outcomes Pauline Schilpzand, Pater and Erez (2016) specifically called for more inductive studies in the field of incivility, with the objective of generating new insights based on personal experiences. Additionally, the researchers called for more studies exploring the variables that moderate the relationship between workplace incivility and outcomes and recommended that researchers study the construct adopting a more holistic approach, being mindful that incivility is a function of the perpetrator, the target, the observer and the context.

In line with adopting a holistic approach, this study explores the relationship between SLI and positive organisational outcomes by examining the factors related to perpetrator, the target and the context that influences this relationship with the senior leader being the perpetrator and the follower the target within this study. The influence of the observer on incivility outcomes falls outside the scope of this study. Whilst there is ample empirical evidence that has verified the negative consequences of workplace incivility on organisational and employee outcomes, there has been none found to explore the relationship between SLI and positive outcomes, considering all three dimensions i.e. the perpetrator, the target and the context, within a single study.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to an improved understanding of workplace incivility by extending the theory related to the construct whilst responding to the calls of existing researchers. The study aims to explore SLI in particular as it has been observed that these behaviours are most prevalent amongst senior leaders and it is expected the outcomes will be unique due to the power senior leaders hold. This topic is of particular interest since some believe that it is because of these leaders' behaviours that these leaders are able to achieve incredible success and it is this very type of leadership that is necessary to accomplish pioneering achievements (Kantor & Streitfeld, 2015). Isaacson (2012)

author of Jobs biography explained that it was Jobs's passion, tough nature and intolerance for mediocrity, which created an environment where high performing employees thrived being pushed beyond their limits, driven by the motivation to be part of something revolutionary (Kantor & Streitfeld, 2015). In conducting an inductive study, the researcher aims to provide a theoretical explanation of the phenomenon of SLI and positive organisational outcomes.

## **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE**

### **1.4.1 SIGNIFICANCE FOR BUSINESS**

The importance of this research stems from the fact that some of the greatest, most innovative and most successful organisations of our time have been led by leaders that have been described to demonstrate uncivil behaviours, despite research presenting mainly negative consequences associated with these leader behaviours. With literature providing inadequate insights regarding leader incivility and positive organisational outcomes, this phenomenon is poorly understood and valuable lessons for leaders who find themselves demonstrating uncivil behaviours are lost. The urgency of this study stems from the reported rise in workplace incivility (Estes & Wang, 2008; C. L. Porath, Gerbasi, & Schorch, 2015; Sears & Humiston, 2015; Sharma, 2018) driven by the growing competitiveness of the business environment, with pressures placed on leaders only expected to grow even further in the future. Some leaders may be naturally inclined to react impulsively and express themselves forcefully due to their passion for excellence and/or personal investment and whilst they may be great leaders in all other respects, they demonstrate uncivil behaviours. Thus avoiding uncivil behaviours may be easier said than done. Whilst this study does not aim to promote SLI, it does endeavour to provide insights on how to counter the potential negative effects of uncivil senior leader behaviours by providing leaders with an understanding of the additional elements their incivility needs to be coupled with, to achieve positive organisational outcomes.

### **1.4.2 ACADEMIC AND SCHOLASTIC SIGNIFICANCE**

This study has both academic and scholastic significance as it contributes to a broadened understanding of the construct leadership. With existing literature categorizing leadership behaviours as either constructive or destructive (Fors Brandebo et al., 2016; Thoroughgood et al., 2018), associating specific leader behaviours with negative outcomes; and leadership commonly taught in business schools using theories that emphasize behaviours classified according to the literature as constructive, one may be inclined to believe there is only one way to be effective as a leader. However, in reality it has been observed that this is not the case. Given the fragmented nature of incivility research (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016), the existing literature provides inadequate insights regarding leader incivility and positive organisational outcomes. This study takes steps towards a better understanding of leader incivility, exploring the factors that influence the relationship between senior leader incivility and outcomes from multiple dimensions i.e. the leader as the perpetrator, the follower as the target and the context. In doing so the study extends the literature related to workplace incivility and outcomes over prior work. Moreover this study advances the conversation regarding leader incivility specifically by providing insights not previously explored. These findings will be important for further development of research related to workplace incivility, with future work building on these findings.

The next chapter reviews the academic literature related to the study, providing context of where the study fits into the literature and presents insights that informed the research questions.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the most recent research and debate regarding the factors that influence the relationship between leader incivility and leader incivility outcomes. This chapter starts off with a discussion of well-known leaders achieving positive organisational outcomes whilst demonstrating uncivil behaviours. This phenomenon is contrary to what is expected based on the literature and emphasises the need for the research. This is followed by an introduction to the construct workplace incivility since SLI stems from the construct workplace incivility. The behavioural factors related to the expression of incivility which influences incivility outcomes are then discussed followed by an introduction to the concept SLI. Thereafter the literature related to the factors that influence the relationship between leader incivility and outcomes is discussed. It must be noted that until recently, incivility scholars have failed to distinguish between perpetrators. Whilst recent studies have begun exploring the unique effects of workplace incivility as a function of the source i.e. co-workers, customers and/or supervisors, the existing literature related to supervisor/ leader incivility is limited. Where literature related to supervisor/leader incivility was found to be scarce, the researcher extended the literature reviewed to incorporate literature related to co-worker and/or customer (as the perpetrator) incivility. Where research related to workplace incivility was found to be scarce, the researcher extended the literature reviewed to incorporate related constructs. With workplace incivility described to be an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999) , the presentation of the literature reviewed related to the factors that influence the relationship between incivility and outcomes is structured accordingly, and is presented under the subsections titled The Leader as the Perpetrator, The Target and The Context. The influence of the observer on incivility outcomes falls outside the scope of this study and was therefore excluded from the literature reviewed. The chapter ends with a discussion related to the research lens followed by a summary of the findings from the literature review which informed the research questions in Chapter 3.



## 2.2 SUCCESS IN LEADING WITH INCIVILITY

Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Larry Ellison, Travis Kalanick, Bill Gates and Andy Grove, some of the greatest business leaders in history have all been reported to be demanding and aggressive leaders, demonstrating emotional outbursts, humiliating others, possessing a high need for control, arrogant, and threatening (Fairington, 2019; Finkelstein, 2016; Griswold, 2017; Hofman, 2015; Isaacson, 2012; Leland, 2017; Love, 2011; McGinn, 2013; Mendleson, 2011; Rosoff, 2011; Staley, 2016; Warnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2015). These are all senior leaders who demonstrate uncivil workplace behaviours.

In line with the literature related to workplace incivility, what is expected in these organisations is poor performance, a decrease in employee well-being, motivation and performance, and high employee turnover. However what is observed in Apple, Amazon, SpaceX, Tesla, Intel, Oracle, Microsoft and Uber are organisations that have all demonstrated outstanding organisational performance from a growth and innovation perspective, completely revolutionising their respective industries. Instead of high employee turnover, under Jobs Apple had one of Silicon Valley's highest retention rates (Elliot & Simon, 2011). Instead of poor employee motivation, employees were motivated by their belief in the vision and their desire to be part of creating something great (Isaacson, 2012), with high performers driven by the demanding environment (Kantor & Streitfeld, 2015), and with people having described working with Jobs as both satisfying and exciting (Elliot & Simon, 2011). What we observe is exceptional organisational success which is contrary to what we expect i.e. negative organisational outcomes based on the literature (related to workplace incivility).

With existing literature categorizing leadership behaviours as either constructive or destructive (Fors Brandebo et al., 2016; Thoroughgood et al., 2018), this study sought to understand how uncivil senior leaders, a behaviour regarded by scholars to be destructive (Anjum et al., 2018; Estes & Wang, 2008; Huang & Lin, 2019; Wu et al., 2014), achieve positive organisational outcomes, where positive organisational outcomes refer to the achievement of financial and/or non-financial organisational goals (e.g. innovation, efficiency, knowledge elements in an organisation, employee attitudes and commitment, customer satisfaction and

loyalty, reputation and dynamic capabilities (Mutalib, Sapri, & Sipan, 2018)). Einarsen, Aasland and Skogstad (2007) defined destructive leadership behaviour as “The systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organisation by undermining and/or sabotaging the organisation's goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates” (p. 28), regardless of the leaders intention to cause harm or not, where ‘repeated’ refers to frequency of behaviours and is approximated to be weekly over a period of six months (based on the definition of ‘bullying’ and in line with European research tradition).

## **2.3 WORKPLACE INCIVILITY**

SLI stems from the construct workplace incivility, where the perpetrator of incivility is the senior leader in this study. Workplace incivility is considered a form of destructive behaviour that has become increasingly more common due to increased pressures in the workplace from time pressures to finance pressures, to market pressures (Estes & Wang, 2008; Hoffman & Chunta, 2015; Sears & Humiston, 2015; Sharma, 2018). Andersson and Pearson (1999) defined workplace incivility as “low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms of mutual respect” (p. 457).

Behaviours related to workplace incivility have been found to include impolite, discourteous, derogatory behaviours, belittling and undermining, colluding and insulting, negative gestures and aggressiveness, as well as the exclusion of members (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Estes and Wang (2008) described uncivil behaviours as patronizing, disrespecting, undermining and/or disrupting others, overruling decisions without an explanation, ignoring people, insulting and shouting, gossiping, name calling and/or publicly criticising others.

### **2.3.1 CONSEQUENCES OF WORKPLACE INCIVILITY**

On an individual level, workplace incivility has been found to result in psychological distress, reduced job satisfaction and increased job stress (Cortina et al., 2001), increased negative emotions, (Sakurai & Jex, 2012) and emotional exhaustion (Huang & Lin, 2019).

The resultant impact, at an organisational level was found to be increased turnover intentions (Huang & Lin, 2019), reduced work effort (Sakurai & Jex, 2012), counterproductive work behaviours (Sakurai & Jex, 2012; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Wu et al., 2014) e.g. organisational withdrawal (Cortina et al., 2001), reduced affective trust (Cameron & Webster, 2011), and reduced job productivity (Anjum et al., 2018).

In contrast, workplace civility has been associated with perceptions of warmth and competence that has been found to encourage the exchange of information and advice, increased perceptions of leadership enhancing influence, and improved all round performance (C. L. Porath et al., 2015).

### **2.3.2 INCIVILITY INTENTION**

According to Andersson and Pearson's (1999) definition of workplace incivility, workplace incivility is characterised by ambiguous intention to harm the target. In this study we are interested in the factors that enable positive organisational outcomes, despite the senior leader demonstrating uncivil behaviours, and therefore whilst the motives behind why leaders engage in uncivil behaviours falls outside the scope of this study, follower perceptions of the leader's intent related to the leader's incivility is of interest since it is likely to influence how followers experience SLI and therefore impact outcomes. Marchiondo, Cortina and Kabatfarr (2018) found when the leader's intention to harm the follower was not in question, people evaluated the leader's uncivil behaviour less harshly. They associated positive meaning to the incident, justifying the incident which elicited cooperative behaviour. The researchers found that when the leader's intention was not malicious, followers appraised the leader's incivility as a challenge. Grounded in conservation of resources theory, when followers viewed incivility as a challenge and they did not perceive a threat to their resources, they were instead driven to improve their performance to accumulate resources. They extracted the lessons and used it to guide future behaviour, thereby improving their performance, job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behaviours.

## **2.4 EXPRESSION OF INCIVILITY**

Leadership outcomes as a result of destructive leader behaviours is dependent on the intensity of destructive behaviours (Ghosh, Jacobs, & Reio, 2011; Lipman-Blumen, 2005), frequency and duration of destructive behaviours (Einarsen et al., 2007; Erickson et al., 2015; Ghosh et al., 2011; Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao, & Chang, 2012; Wang, Ford, Wang, & Jin, 2019), and interpersonal injustice differentiation amongst group members (Lilly, 2017; Wang et al., 2019).

### **2.4.1 FREQUENCY OF INCIVILITY**

It is interesting to note that Andersson and Pearson (1999) did not make reference to the frequency of uncivil behaviours within their definition of workplace incivility. This is in contrast with Einarsen, Aasland and Skogstad (2007) and Erickson, Shaw, Murray and Branch (2015) who both argued frequency of destructive leader behaviours played a key role in outcomes and therefore should be considered when identifying and classifying leaders/leadership as destructive (Einarsen et al., 2007; Erickson et al., 2015).

According to the effort-recovery model, frequency matters because followers need time to recover from the stressor, which would be the uncivil event in the context of this study. Without adequate recovery time to rebuild resources, negative reactions can be expected (Sguera, Bagozzi, Huy, Boss, & Boss, 2016).

Whilst literature exploring the influence of frequency of uncivil behaviours on incivility outcomes was found to be lacking, the frequency of destructive leader behaviours was explored by Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao and Chang (2012). The researchers argued that followers accredited infrequent, occasional abusive behaviours to stress related to situational factors, which resulted in higher levels of perceived leader effectiveness compared to frequent, regular abusive behaviours which were attributed to personal leader factors and resulted in lower levels of perceived leader effectiveness.

## **2.4.2 INCIVILITY DIFFERENTIATION WITHIN GROUPS**

A study performed by Mao, Chang, Johnson and Sun (2019), found incivility differentiation i.e. variability in incivility experiences amongst group members moderated the relationship between incivility and outcomes, specifically task performance, organisational citizenship behaviours and counter-productive work behaviours. The authors argued people appraised their experiences relative to the treatment of others in order to make sense of their own experiences. Variation in the treatment of group members influenced the way employees perceived and responded to uncivil behaviours, where being singled out resulted in perceptions of a personal attack and threat.

Similarly, P. Schilpzand, Leavitt and Lim (2016) argued that when a negative event occurs people tend to reflect on their own behaviours and experience guilt and when a single individual is the target of incivility, followers are likely to attribute the cause of the incident to one's self and engage in self-blame. This is opposed to when incivility is shared i.e. where multiple people (e.g. in a group) get the same treatment at the same time. In this case the blame is shared and people are less likely to personalise the incident, reducing self-blame. The study found self-blame moderated the relationship between incivility and employee stress levels and employee withdrawal behaviours.

The perception of fairness within a group is an important factor that influences leadership outcomes. Fairness enhances feelings of being respected and being valued resulting in an increased sense of belonging and confidence. Perceptions of unfairness give rise to feelings of threat, which results in negative reactions that manifest in the form of deviant workplace behaviours (Lilly, 2017). He, Fehr, Yam, Long and Hao (2017) argued fairness is an integral component of effective leadership where perceptions of fairness were found to influence employee attitudes, behaviours and relationships. In a study exploring interactional injustice, where interactional justice refers to the extent to which followers are treated with respect and dignity, Wang, Ford, Wang and Jin (2019) argued interactional justice differentiation i.e. a difference in interactional justice behaviours of the leader towards followers within a group created a sense of unfairness, uncertainty and

distrust which resulted in negative follower emotions that prompted retaliatory behaviours.

Whilst, the literature affirms there are several factors related to the expression of destructive behaviours which play a role in influencing how destructive behaviours are perceived by the target and thus on outcomes, incivility scholars have only just begun to explore these behavioural factors, with literature found to be limited, focussing mainly on incivility differentiation as a behavioural factor that influences incivility outcomes.

## **2.5 SENIOR LEADER INCIVILITY (SLI)**

Andersson and Pearson (1999) defined workplace incivility as “low intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms of mutual respect” (p. 457). Glendinning (2001) referred to incivility as bullying, Davenport, Schwartz and Elliott (2002) referred to incivility as emotional abuse and mobbing behaviours in the workplace and Zauderer (2002) referred to incivility as impolite behaviour that consisted of bad manners. Behaviours related to workplace incivility include impolite, discourteous, derogatory behaviours, belittling, colluding, negative gestures and aggressiveness, as well as exclusion of members (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), patronizing, disrespecting, undermining and/or disrupting others, overruling decisions without an explanation, ignoring people, insulting and shouting, gossiping, name calling and/or publicly humiliating others (Estes & Wang, 2008).

In this study a definition for SLI is proposed based on previous scholars' definitions of workplace incivility and the behaviours related to workplace incivility. Senior leader incivility (SLI) is defined as:

*Emotional abuse inflicted by direct and demanding leaders who express themselves forcefully, and comprises of a blend of aggressive, intimidating and abusive behaviours (where the leaders' intentionality to cause harm to subordinates is irrelevant).*

The next three subsections of this chapter explore the literature related to the factors that influence incivility outcomes. With workplace incivility described as an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999) , the presentation of the literature reviewed related to the factors that influence the relationship between incivility and outcomes is structured accordingly, and is presented under the subsections titled The Leader as the Perpetrator, The Target and The Context (the observer falls outside the scope of this study).

## **2.6 THE LEADER AS THE PERPETRATOR**

This section discusses the factors related to the perpetrator that influences the relationship between incivility and organisational outcomes. Whilst researchers have explored the traits and motives of perpetrators as antecedents to uncivil behaviours (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016), the antecedents related to the perpetrator falls out of the scope of this study. Instead we are interested in what are the factors related to the leader (as the perpetrator) that enables positive organisational outcomes, despite the leader demonstrating uncivil behaviours. Research exploring the factors related to the perpetrator that influences the relationship between incivility and outcomes was found to be severely lacking. With the perpetrator being the senior leader in the context of this study, the researcher therefore extended the literature review to explore on a more general level, the factors related to the leader that influences leadership outcomes.

Zaccaro, Green, Dubrow and Kolze (2018) conducted a ten year review of the literature related to leader individual differences and leader outcomes, and proposed a conceptual framework that integrated previous studies. The researchers argued that it was the leader's foundational traits and the leader's capacities which shaped the leader's behaviours, that influenced leadership outcomes (with the relationship moderated by the situational factors). This is supported by Tuncdogan, Acar, and Stam (2017). In line with Zaccaro, Green, Dubrow and Kolze's (2018) model, the factors related to the leader (as the perpetrator of incivility) that were explored further were leader foundational traits and leader capacities, referred to collectively as leader characteristics.

## **2.6.1 LEADER CHARACTERISTICS**

Leader characteristics were found to influence leader behaviour and leadership outcomes. Leader characteristics refer to the leader's foundational traits i.e. stable attributes and leader capacities i.e. mutable attributes. Leader capacities refer to the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) of the leader, and the leader's behavioural style which sways the leader towards certain behaviours in leadership situations, with the researchers arguing that leadership outcomes are not simply a function of the leaders expressed behaviours at a particular point in time, but is also influenced by the leader's dominant behavioural tendencies (Zaccaro et al., 2018).

### **2.6.1.1 FOUNDATIONAL TRAITS**

Zaccaro, Green, Dubrow and Kolze (2018) argued leader foundational traits was a leader characteristic that influenced leadership outcomes, where leader foundational traits refer to relatively stable attributes related to the leader that results from genetics and early life experiences and include personality (e.g. honesty, humility, conscientiousness, neuroticism), motives/values, general cognitive ability, demographics and physical characteristics. Foundation traits form the basis on which leadership capacities are built (Zaccaro et al., 2018).

#### **2.6.1.1.1 Leader Remorse**

The importance of leader remorse as a leader trait that influences outcomes has been confirmed within the leadership literature where it has been argued that the ability for a leader to demonstrate humility in the form of repentance when trust has been violated due to his or her actions, is a leadership trait that has a positive influence on leadership outcomes. Researchers have found when trust is violated and not restored followers withdraw from the relationship and withdraw their effort (Fehr & Gelfand, 2010; Grover, Hasel, Manville, & Serrano-Archimi, 2014).

Whilst literature exploring the influence of perpetrator remorse on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was found to be lacking, Haggard and Park (2018) explored the effect of leader remorse on the outcomes of abusive supervision, a construct closely related to workplace incivility. Tepper (2000) defined abusive supervision as "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors



engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact” (p. 178). Haggard and Park (2018) argued that high perceptions of supervisor remorse resulted in followers attributing abusive supervisor behaviours to supervisor impulse as opposed to harmful intent and found that perceived supervisor remorse i.e. perceptions of the supervisor taking responsibility for wrongful actions and demonstrating regret for the harm caused, diminished the harmful effects of abusive supervision with respect to turn-over intentions and self-esteem, through leader-member exchange (LMX) and interactional justice. Whilst the researchers claimed apologies were not a prerequisite for perceived supervisor remorse, it was argued that apologies did assist in restoring justice after a trust violation, with apologies found to be most effective when they were least expected (which is usually the case when someone of a higher rank apologises to people of a lower rank). The researchers further argued that occasional hurtful behaviours were often unintentional, and perceptions of remorse indicated perpetrator concern for the target’s emotional well-being and the desire to repair the relationship, which elicited feelings of empathy towards the perpetrator.

#### **2.6.1.2 LEADER CAPACITIES**

Zaccaro, Green, Dubrow and Kolze (2018) argued leader capacities were a leader characteristic that influenced leadership outcomes, where leader capacities refer to the KSA’s of the leader and include the leader’s behavioural style which sways the leader towards certain behaviours in leadership situations (Zaccaro et al., 2018).

##### **2.6.1.2.1 Leader Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA’s)**

Zaccaro, Green, Dubrow and Kolze (2018) argued that leader KSA’s were leader characteristics that influenced leadership outcomes. Leader KSA’s refer to the leader’s motivational orientation (e.g. motivated to engage in leadership, self-efficacy); social capacities (including communication skills, persuasion and social acuteness); cognitive capacity (i.e. problem solving and decision making skills, strategic and innovative thinking) and knowledge and expertise (i.e. functional and tacit knowledge) (Zaccaro et al., 2018).

#### *2.6.1.2.1.1 Leader Knowledge and Expertise*

Whilst literature exploring the influence of perpetrator knowledge on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was found to be lacking, in a paper that explored destructive leadership and follower compliance, Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) found destructive leaders that possessed expert knowledge i.e. relevant knowledge and/or expertise were able to achieve follower (acolytes) compliance, where compliance was driven by shared goals, trust and a belief that the leader knows best. This is consistent with an earlier study conducted by Barbuto (2000) who argued expert power i.e. the ability to influence through accumulated expertise and experience, was an intervening variable that influenced the relationship between influence triggers and target compliance.

The influence of leader competence on leadership outcomes was supported by Goodall & Pogrebna (2015) who referred to functional and tacit knowledge as expert knowledge, a combination of both industry experience, core business knowledge and expertise. Leader expert knowledge was found to influence leadership outcomes both directly i.e. the leader applies his or her knowledge to make better decisions (Goodall & Pogrebna, 2015) and indirectly i.e. expert knowledge created a perception of leader credibility and trustworthiness thereby increasing the leaders influence over followers (Goodall & Pogrebna, 2015; Swanson & Kent, 2014).

#### **2.6.1.2.2 Leader behavioural style**

Zaccaro, Green, Dubrow and Kolze (2018) argued leader behavioural style was a leader characteristic that influenced leadership outcomes where leader behavioural style is the leader's general and dominant tendency (capacity) in engaging in certain behaviours. Leader behavioural style was positioned as a leadership capacity and should not be confounded with expressed leader behaviours. This is based on the argument that leader outcomes are not simply a function of the leader's expressed (uncivil) behaviours at a particular point in time, but is influenced by the leader's general behavioural style. (Zaccaro et al., 2018). It is therefore possible for a single leader to demonstrate both constructive and destructive behaviours (Einarsen et al., 2007). In fact, Zhang, Ou, Tsui and Wang

(2017) performed a study that found destructive and constructive leader behaviours interacted and worked together to influence outcomes. The study found leader humility and narcissism interacted in a complementary way to improve innovation culture within organisations and innovative performance.

#### *2.6.1.2.2.1 Visionary leadership*

Whilst literature exploring the influence of visionary leadership on the relationship between leader incivility and outcomes was found to be lacking, in a paper that explored destructive leadership and follower compliance, Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) found destructive leaders who are also visionary leaders, who communicate and align the organisations vision and values to his or her followers personal values, achieve follower (acolytes) compliance, where compliance is driven by internal follower motivation towards the achievement of an intrinsically valued goal. This is supported by the literature exploring the dark side of charisma which found charismatic leaders effectively persuade and gain follower loyalty by articulating a vision and organisational values which followers internalise, encouraging compliance (Samnani & Singh, 2013; Sankowsky, 1995). Effective visionary leadership i.e. supporting the interests of the organisation by setting goals and focussing effort on the achievement of those goals, was found to generate enthusiasm and optimism amongst followers. Further to this, Harms, Credé, Tynan, Leon and Jeung (2017) argued that a compelling vision provided a buffer against employee stress and burn-out commonly associated with abusive supervision, by providing encouragement in times of diminishing resource levels.

Researchers have confirmed the positive relationship between vision communication and goal setting, to positive organisational outcomes (Berson, Halevy, Shamir, & Erez, 2015; Epitropaki, Kark, Mainemelis, & Lord, 2017; Jantz, 2017). Vision communication is considered a crucial aspect of being a visionary leader and when effectively executed, has been found to inspire and create enthusiasm for the attainment of group goals thereby increasing commitment and motivation to perform (Jantz, 2017). A collective vision elicits a sense of belonging through shared involvement in group tasks, enhancing the followers' social identification thereby increasing motivation to contribute to the collective goal (Epitropaki et al., 2017). Visionary leadership has been found to increase follower

motivation, job satisfaction, follower and organisational performance (Berson et al., 2015). Vondey (2008), argued that leader behaviours which include communicating a compelling vision that provides purpose and guides decisions, providing clear instructions on how to achieve that vision, and empowering followers to fully participate and achieve the vision, was positively related to increased employee organisational citizenship behaviours.

#### *2.6.1.2.2 Supportive Leadership*

Supportive leadership was found to increase follower well-being and job satisfaction, and reduce follower stress levels and anxiety (Sharma & Pearsall, 2016). The lack of leadership supportive has been found to result in employee stress, anxiety, depression, burnout and employee turnover (Sharma & Pearsall, 2016; Sparks, Faragher, & Cooper, 2001; B.J. Tepper, 2007). Monje Amor, Abeal Vázquez and Faíña (2019) described supportive leader behaviours to comprise of showing concern for followers, considering the needs of followers and providing personalised support and advice through mentorship and coaching, and found that supportive leader behaviours created structural empowerment i.e. learning opportunities, career advancement opportunities, guidance, and access to information and resources. Incivility scholars have explored the impact of support on incivility outcomes primarily when the perpetrator is either a co-worker or customer. A review of a selection of these studies follows.

The influence of support in buffering against the negative effects of work stressors, specifically co-worker incivility was established by Miner, Settles, Pratt-Hyatt and Brady (2012), who argued social support i.e. emotional support from others (care, empathy, encouragement, etc) and organisational support (perceptions that the organisation cares about their employees), generated feeling of belongingness, feeling valued and cared for and respected, which countered the negative effects of workplace incivility. The study found in spite of incivility, people that perceived higher levels of support experienced lower job stress and illness, and higher job satisfaction.

Sakurai & Jex (2012) explored the relationship between co-worker incivility and work effort, and co-worker incivility and counter productive work behaviours, and

found that leader support i.e. providing emotional support (care and compassion) and instrumental support (in solving problems and on job coaching/ advising), moderated the relationship between incivility and work effort, and incivility and counter productive work behaviours. In line with social exchange theory, employees are motivated to reciprocate to leader social support which is usually through work effort and citizenship behaviours. Sakurai and Jex argued that followers were therefore less inclined to engage in deviant work behaviours in response to co-worker incivility. This is because supportive leader behaviours serves as a resource which followers draw on (G. H. Han, Harms, & Bai, 2017).

S. J. Han, Bonn and Cho (2016) conducted a study within the restaurant industry and found organisational and supervisor support moderated the relationship between customer incivility and employee burnout. The researchers argued that incivility is a workplace stressor and in line with conservation of resources theory where people are inherently driven to acquire, maintain and protect resources, incivility depletes employee emotional and psychological resources, which results in emotional exhaustion and job burn-out. However, the researchers found the perception of organisational and supervisor support decreased the stress experienced by employees and enhanced employee belief in his or her ability to cope with customer incivility, thereby reducing the negative effects of incivility.

Similarly, Boukis, Christos, Daunt and Papastathopoulos (2020), confirmed the buffering effects of supervisor support on customer incivility outcomes particularly employee job stress, retaliatory and withdrawal behaviours, in a study conducted within the hospitality and tourism industry. Supervisor support specifically an empowering supervisor that guides employees, was argued to be a resource that aids in reducing negative perceptions of the uncivil incident and enhances perceptions of psychological safety.

From the literature reviewed it is apparent that whilst incivility scholars have explored the moderating effect of leader support on the relationship between co-worker/ customer incivility and outcomes, literature exploring the influence of leader support on incivility outcomes when the leader himself/herself is the perpetrator of uncivil behaviours was found to be lacking.

Although literature exploring the influence of leader support on leader incivility outcomes was found to be lacking, Haggard and Park (2018) argued that occasional hurtful leader behaviours are often unintentional and supportive leader behaviours serve to mitigate against the harmful effects of abusive leader behaviours by shifting the perception of the leaders' occasional abusive behaviours. When the dominant tendency of a leader is to demonstrate supportive leader behaviours, high quality LMX and trust is built which has been found to play an important role in influencing incivility outcomes (Cameron & Webster, 2011; Jawahar & Schreurs, 2018; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Sears & Humiston, 2015; Thompson et al., 2018).

Whilst it is evident from the literature that leader characteristics i.e. the leader's foundational traits and the leader's capacities are factors related to the leader that influences leadership outcomes, literature exploring the leader characteristics that influence the relationship between leader incivility and outcomes was found to be severely lacking.

## **2.7 THE TARGET**

With workplace incivility described as an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), this section discusses the factors related to the target that influences how targets perceive and respond to leader incivility. Where research related to (the target of) leader incivility was found to be scarce, the researcher extended the literature reviewed to incorporate co-worker/ customer incivility. Where research related to incivility was found to be scarce, the researcher extended the literature reviewed to incorporate related constructs.

### **2.7.1 TRAITS**

Incivility scholars have found the target's traits to be a factor that influences how a target's perceive incivility and thus influences incivility outcomes. A review of a selection of these studies follows.

Kabat-Farr, Walsh and McGonagle (2019) explored the effect of the trait grit i.e. level of perseverance on leader incivility outcomes. The researchers found that when a follower's possessed high levels of grit, leader incivility had no effect on follower's perceived work ability, where perceived work ability referred to the follower's evaluation of his or her ability to carry on working in a job. The researchers argued that follower grit enabled followers to persevere despite the leaders' uncivil behaviours. However when follower grit was low, incivility had a significant negative effect on follower appraisal of their work ability.

Beattie and Griffin (2014) explored the influence of the employee trait, neuroticism on workplace incivility outcomes. Neuroticism is one of the big five higher order personality traits and is associated with distressed emotions, and the tendency to experience events negatively. Beattie and Griffin argued people high in neuroticism perceived the uncivil incident as more severe and negative than the average person. As a result they experienced higher levels of guilt and/or anger, which caused them to behave negatively i.e. by seeking revenge, ignoring or avoiding the perpetrator.

In a similar study Walker, van Jaarsveld and Skarlicki (2014) explored the influence of the employee trait, negative affectivity on perceptions of customer incivility. In line with affective events theory i.e. employee behaviours are influenced by their affective reactions to events at work. Negative affectivity was described as one's tendency towards a negative disposition and attitude, where people high in negative affectivity experience more regular negative emotions and tend to expect the worse and react negatively. The researchers found that customer incivility triggered employee incivility, in employees high in negative affectivity. Walker, van Jaarsveld and Skarlicki argued this was because employees high in negative affectivity attributed the customer incivility experienced to negative intentions.

Bavik and Bavik (2015) explored the influence of the trait moral identity on the relationship between employee incivility and customer reactions and found that customer moral identity moderated the relationship. Bavik and Bavik found that when customers high in moral identity were targets of employee incivility, they sought revenge by complaining. Based on psychological contract theory where relationships are associated with unwritten mutual expectations and obligations,

Bavik and Bavik argued that employee incivility directed towards customers was perceived as a breach of psychological contract where customers high in moral identity experienced strong reactions to employee incivility which opposed their moral values (where high moral identity referred to people with certain moral traits central to their self-concept and their behaviours consistently reflected those moral traits). This prompted customer complaints i.e. behaviour aimed at restoring social order and reducing the injustice.

The literature is consistent in its findings i.e. the target's personal traits is a factor that influences how incivility is perceived by the target and subsequent outcomes. Whilst researchers have provided empirical evidence to support the moderating effect of individual target traits on the relationship between incivility and outcomes, scholars have focussed on conducting mainly quantitative studies, pre-selecting the factors they have chosen to explore.

### **2.7.2 CAPABILITIES**

Scholars are in agreement that the target's level of emotional intelligence (EQ) is a factor that influences the relationship between destructive behaviours and outcomes, where EQ is a follower capability i.e. a learnt social skill. Social skills refer to social intelligence that guides people on how and when to exhibit certain behaviours (Hochwarter, Witt, Treadway, & Ferris, 2006). EQ is described to be an attribute that makes for an effective follower (Antelo, Prilipko, & Henderson, 2011).

Itzkovich and Dolev (2017) explored the influence of student EQ on perceived faculty incivility. The researchers found high levels of EQ were negatively related to perceived incivility. EQ is the ability to perceive, identify, evaluate, understand and regulate one's own emotions and that of others effectively (Itzkovich & Dolev, 2017). Wong and Law (2002) found a positive relationship between follower EQ and follower performance and job satisfaction, where people high in EQ were found to experience better interpersonal work relationships. Itzkovich and Dolev (2017) argued that EQ reduced the negative emotions and stress usually triggered by aggressive behaviours, where students with high EQ were able to recognise and understand the emotions of the perpetrator and thereby control their reactions. Whilst it could be argued that the nature of relationship between student and



faculty member is very different from leader and follower i.e. it consists of less interdependency and is temporary, the study has been valuable in advancing the theory related to workplace incivility as it was one of the first's studies that explored personal capabilities, as a moderator of the relationship between incivility and the target's perception of incivility.

The role of the EQ in influencing outcomes related to destructive behaviours was also explored in a study conducted by Keskin, Akgün, Ayar and Kayman (2016) related to cyberbullying. The researchers argued people that possessed high EQ were more successful at handling cyberbullying because they were better equipped to overcome stressful situations. They had the ability to maintain a positive affective state, they enjoyed better interpersonal work relationships and they were more effective because they spent fewer resources on emotional upsets, which they directed to address work problems.

Similarly, Kashif, Braganca, Awang and Run (2017) explored the role of EQ in influencing outcomes related to destructive behaviours in a study within the banking sector. The researchers found that employee EQ was negatively related to employee emotional exhaustion, particularly when employees were subjected to aggressive and abusive customer behaviours, where employee emotional exhaustion was a predictor of employee job satisfaction and turnover intention.

Whilst scholars have established that EQ is a target capability that moderates the relationship between destructive behaviours and how targets experience those behaviours, scholars have not explored the influence of the target's capabilities on incivility outcomes particularly when the leader is the perpetrator.

### **2.7.3 MOTIVATION/ VALUES**

Whilst literature exploring the target's motivation/values as a factor that influences the relationship between incivility and outcomes was found to be lacking, scholars have explored the influence of target motivation on destructive leader outcomes.

Shao, Li and Mawritz (2017) explored employee motivation as a moderator of reactions to abusive supervision from a third party perspective and found employees strong in prevention focus (i.e. their dominant motivation orientation),

whom witnessed co-worker abuse, increased their own performance efforts i.e. they were motivated to enhance their own performance driven by a desire to avoid similar mistreatment and/or punishment to themselves (driven by self-protection). The authors argued that followers react to leaders based on their motivation orientation, where people act to promote the achievement of what they value (promotion focus) or to protect what they value (prevention focus). In summary this study found third party employee motivation i.e. specifically self-protection moderated the relationship between abusive supervision and third-party follower performance. Whilst follower performance driven by fear is expected to bring short term benefits, the long-term effect is questionable. It must be noted that a follower with a prevention focussed motivation orientation is just as likely to indulge in destructive behaviours as he/she is to enhance performance, in order to avoid negative consequences. In fact a study conducted by Schwarzmüller, Brosi and Welppe (2018) found leaders displaying intense anger, motivated both follower effort due to follower anxiety and increased leader directed deviant behaviours due to follower anger. Whilst increased effort suggests improved performance in the short term the aggregate effect of deviant work behaviours and effort driven by anxiety could prove to be detrimental for both the organisation and employee in the long term.

Starratt and Grandy (2010) found the target's motivation moderated the relationship between abusive leader behaviours and organisational outcomes i.e. employee turnover and performance. Motivators included social atmosphere where positive social interactions and close bonds were found to motivate followers to remain in the organisation; financial rewards, where followers were driven to perform due to a desire for the financial rewards they received in exchange for performing in their jobs; and fear, where followers performed to avoid losing their jobs and their income, which were the consequences of not performing.

Follower (traits) motivation/ values was recognised by Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) to be a moderating factor that influences follower compliance in response to destructive leaders. The study found that followers differed by personality and motives, and were categorised into 5 groups i.e. lost souls, authoritarians, bystanders, acolytes and opportunists. Lost souls were found to be people with low self-esteem, need for direction and belonging, weak self-

concept, unmet needs and driven by a strong desire for approval. Authoritarians were found to possess a hierarchical attitude with strong beliefs related to rank. These were people influenced by legitimate power, trusting of leadership, strong need for certainty and strict adherence to rules and norms, driven by a strong duty to perform based on norms, position and role. Bystanders were typically risk averse introverts who lacked courage, possessed low self-esteem and an external locus of control, motivated primarily by fear. Acolytes were described as individuals with a strong self-concept found to comply through the alignment of personal values and goals of the leader. Opportunists were described as people with high personal ambition found to be driven by personal gain in the form of rewards.

Follower motivation/values as a factor that influences follower compliance was strongly supported by Barbuto (2000). Barbuto (2000) developed a framework to explain follower compliance which indicated that follower's compliance in response to a trigger (i.e. the followers' instantaneous perception of the influence attempt) was dependent on intervening variables i.e. the follower's motivation, the leader's power and the follower's willingness to perform the task.

Barbuto (2000) described follower motives to comprise of:

- **External Rewards**

Instrumental motivation i.e. follower behaviour driven by an external reward or consequence i.e. tangible or psychological rewards/ consequences that arise outside of the follower. Rewards include monetary rewards, praise, flexible work arrangements and access to learning and career development opportunities (Abdur, Malik, Butt, & Choi, 2015; Haider, Aamir, Hamid, & Hashim, 2015; Schlechter, Thompson, & Bussin, 2015). According to expectancy theory, people are motivated to act due to what they expect the results of their actions will bring.

Self-concept external motivation i.e. followers driven to behave in ways that achieve the approval and acceptance of others. In line with social exchange theory Clarke and Mahadi (2017) found that when leaders acknowledge follower efforts through recognition, followers feel valued and accepted within the group. This enhances the follower's self-worth and followers reciprocate by enhancing their job performance. This is supported by Schlechter, Thompson and Bussin (2015).

- **Internal Rewards**

Intrinsic process motivation i.e. followers driven by the pleasure of engaging in an activity. Intrinsically motivated followers obtain a sense of pleasure and satisfaction from the work they engage in. This drives their effort, commitment and persistence.

Self-concept internal source of motivation i.e. followers driven to behave in line with internal standards. Followers that value achievement (where achievement is a means to satisfying an internal standard) are motivated by doing better and by excellence, and therefore typically seek to challenge themselves with an interest to learn and grow. This drives their willingness to increase effort, their levels of commitment and persistence, all of which results in greater achievement and performance (Y. Han, Kim, & Hur, 2019; Thielgen, Krumm, & Hertel, 2015). Achievement includes personal achievement and professional growth that brings an internal sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Work ethic is an internal standard. People with a high work ethic have a high personal standard related to their work behaviour. High follower work ethic stems from a belief that hard work is virtuous. A study exploring work ethic and task performance found high work ethic to be positively related to task motivation, task intensity i.e. effort in engaging in a task, and task performance (Meriac, Thomas, & Milunski, 2015). The researchers argued work ethic comprised of self-reliance, morality, leisure i.e. a value placed on down time, hard work, centrality of work i.e. recognising the significance of work, productivity i.e. the effective use of time and the delay of immediate gratifications.

Goal internalised i.e. followers naturally behave in ways that align to their personal values, where values refers to the enduring beliefs a follower holds. When the organisation's vision and values align with the values held by the follower, followers make decisions that benefit the organisations and followers identify more strongly with the organisation, enhancing their sense of purpose. Alignment between follower and organisational values has been found to increase motivation, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Paarlberg & Perry, 2007; Walsh, Lee, Jensen, McGonagle, & Samnani, 2018).

The review of the literature found that a target's perception and response to destructive leader behaviours is influenced by the target's traits, capabilities and motive/values. In the context of this study the target is the follower. Followers'

traits, capabilities and motives/values are collectively referred to in the literature as follower characteristics (Antelo et al., 2011; Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe and Carten (2014) argued that it is the follower's characteristics that influences follower behaviours and follower outcomes.

Whilst incivility scholars have studied the moderating influence of specific target's traits and EQ (as a capability) on the relationship between incivility and outcomes, the literature is fragmented and limited. In addition, literature exploring the influence of the target's motivation/values on the relationship between incivility and outcomes remains scarce.

## **2.8 THE CONTEXT**

With workplace incivility described as an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), this section discusses the factors related to the context i.e. the situational factors that occur from the environment, that influences how targets perceive and respond to leader incivility. Where research related to the context and incivility was found to be scarce, the researcher extended the literature reviewed to incorporate related constructs.

### **2.8.1 JOB FACTORS**

Incivility scholars found job related factors moderated the relationship between leader incivility and outcomes. Sguera, Bagozzi, Huy, Boss and Boss (2016) explored the influence of job related factors, specifically working only night shifts and role ambiguity on leader incivility and employee intentions to leave. In line with conservation of resources theory i.e. people possess limited resources and are driven to protect and accrue resources. Sguera, Bagozzi, Huy, Boss and Boss (2016) argued that leader incivility was a workplace stressor that depleted employee resources, with role ambiguity moderating the relationship between incivility and outcomes causing further depletion of employee energy resources through the uncertainty and tension it created. The moderating effect of night shift workers was attributed to the fact that people who work exclusively at night were found to experience high levels of psychological, physiological and relational stress

that reduced energy resources. With severely reduced energy reserves, employees struggle to cope with incivility, and in turn leave the organisation.

## **2.8.2 CULTURAL NORMS**

Organisational cultural norm has been the most frequently studied contextual factor found within the incivility literature. Based on social information processing and social cognitive theory, employee perceptions of acceptable behaviours are formed by what they observe. Norms for respect refers to the follower's perception of the importance placed on respect and dignity in an organisation, and was found to be influenced by the leader's behaviour and through workplace practices that signal desired and undesired behaviours (Walsh et al., 2018).

Whilst scholars have recognised the role of cultural norms as a factor that influences incivility outcomes, researchers have focussed on cultural norms as an antecedent to workplace incivility. Estes and Wang (2008) argued workplace cultural norms, particularly the sanctioning of worker mistreatment increased workplace incivility. Increased employee perceptions of norms for respect were found to result in lower levels of workplace incivility (Walsh et al., 2018).

Other researchers have focussed on the consequences of incivility as a cultural norm. Tolerance to workplace incivility i.e. a work climate that accepts and permits incivility as a cultural norm, has been found to be related to negative emotions and as a result deviant work behaviours (Abubakar, Yazdian, & Behraves, 2018), and intentions to leave (Aljawarneh & Atan, 2018). Yang (2016) found a team climate i.e. the shared perception of incivility, resulted in ineffective teamwork behaviours.

However, in this research study we are concerned with contextual factors that moderate the relationship between incivility and outcomes. Walker, van Jaarsveld and Skarlicki (2014) found organisational cultural norms moderated the relationship between customer incivility and employee incivility (specifically in employees low in negative affectivity). The researchers argued that when incivility is not a norm, an uncivil incident triggers a psychological reaction due to the unexpectedness of the event, where people respond more strongly than they would if it were a common occurrence. This study found evidence to support that an organisational norm of

civility would strengthen the relationship between expressed incivility and negative outcomes.

Sharma (2018) found organisational culture, personal cultural values and the state of the organisation to be organisational contextual factors that moderated employee responses to aggressive leader behaviours (with incivility classified in the study as a construct that falls within aggressive leader behaviours).

Organisational culture refers to shared assumptions and beliefs based on organisational behavioural norms that reflect the organisation's values. Culture determines the way in which day to day business activities and practices are conducted (Sharma, 2018). Sharma (2018) found cultural norms moderated the relationship between abusive supervision and employee reactions to abusive supervision.

In addition, Sharma (2018) found cultural values influenced follower perception of aggressive leader behaviours e.g. in cultures of high power distance, leaders are admired and leader incivility is more tolerated. Therefore, whilst incivility scholars have focussed their efforts on exploring cultural norms at an organisational level, cultural values (i.e. cultural norms at a macro level e.g. industry and/or country level) are just as likely to influence how incivility is perceived. It may therefore be necessary to consider the influence of cultural norms on an organisational level and on a macro level (Johns, 2006; Moon, Weick, & Uskul, 2018; Oc, 2018; Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016; Sharma, 2018).

### **2.8.3 STATE/ CONDITION OF THE ORGANISATION**

The third organisational contextual factor that Sharma (2018) found influenced employee responses to aggressive leader behaviours, was organisational crisis e.g. poor financial health, reputation and/or availability of resources. The study found in conditions of crisis where employee stress and anxiety levels were high, the threshold for aggressive leader behaviours lowered. Hannah, Uhl-bien, Avolio and Cavarretta (2009) argued in times of crisis where the magnitude of consequences are death, destruction or devastation both leaders and followers face unusual demands, needing to make decisions and act quickly under high

levels of stress which usually triggers a cognitive shift, redirecting attention which influences follower behaviour.

Whilst the review of the literature found job factors, cultural norms (at an organisational and macro level) and state of the organisation to be contextual factors that influence the relationship between incivility and outcomes, the literature related to the contextual factors that moderate the relationship between leader incivility and outcomes remains scarce.

## **2.9 RESEARCH LENS**

Workplace incivility is described to be an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). In response to the calls for adopting a more holistic approach over existing work to the study of workplace incivility (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016), to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, this research study aims to explore the factors that enable positive organisational outcomes to be achieved despite SLI, from all three dimensions i.e. the leader as the perpetrator, the follower as the target and the context. This is supported by leadership scholars who have called for a more holistic approach to the study of leadership, which looks at the leadership process as a function of the leader, the follower and the context (Antonakis, Day, & Schyns, 2012; Marathe, Balasubramanian, & Singhal, 2017; Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016; Thoroughgood et al., 2018; Tuncdogan et al., 2017). The relationship between leader and follower (LMX) falls outside the scope of this study and is therefore not explicitly explored.

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

The literature review sought to understand the most recent research and debate regarding the factors that influence the relationship between leader incivility and outcomes.



### **2.10.1 THE LEADER AS THE PERPETRATOR**

Leadership outcomes are a function of both leader behaviours (Einarsen et al., 2007; Erickson et al., 2015; Ghosh et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Lilly, 2017; Lipman-Blumen, 2005; Wang et al., 2019) and leader characteristics (Antonakis et al., 2012; Tuncdogan et al., 2017; Zaccaro et al., 2018). Whilst researchers have found incivility differentiation to influence incivility outcomes, scholars have not explored behavioural factors related to the expression of incivility beyond incivility differentiation. In reviewing the literature related to workplace incivility it has been found that little is known about the factors related to the perpetrator that influences the relationship between incivility and outcomes. The literature is therefore severely lacking in this respect. Literature does however affirm that it is the leader's characteristics i.e. traits and capacities that influence leadership outcomes. This study seeks to uncover the exact behavioural factors related to the leader's expression of incivility and the leader characteristics which enable uncivil senior leaders to still achieve positive organisational outcomes. This is the reason for Research Question 1

**Research Question 1: What are the factors related to the uncivil senior leader that enables them to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

### **2.10.2 THE TARGET**

The literature reviewed revealed that it is a follower's traits, capabilities and motivation/values, referred to as follower characteristics (Antelo et al., 2011; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) that influence the relationship between destructive leader behaviours and outcomes. The literature review revealed that much is known regarding the target's personal traits and its influence on incivility outcomes. However literature remains scarce regarding the target's capabilities (other than EQ) and the target's motivation/values, as factors that influence the relationship between incivility and outcomes, particularly leader incivility. An inductive study is necessary to obtain new insights regarding the follower characteristics which diminish negative perceptions and outcomes, commonly associated with leader incivility. This study seeks to uncover the exact follower characteristics that influence follower perceptions and follower outcomes, such that uncivil senior

leaders still achieve positive organisational outcomes. This is the reason for Research Question 2.

**Research Question 2: What are the factors related to the follower that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

### **2.10.3 THE CONTEXT**

Literature remains scarce regarding the contextual factors that moderate the relationship between incivility and outcomes. What is known is that contextual factors comprise of both macro level and organisational level factors (Johns, 2006; Oc, 2018). This study seeks to uncover the exact macro and organisational level contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. This is the reason for Research Question 3.

**Research Question 3: What are the contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

### **3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This research study seeks to understand how uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes by answering three specific research questions. The research questions were formulated based on the reviewed literature.

#### **Research Question 1: What are the factors related to the uncivil senior leader that enables them to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

Research Question 1 aims to identify the behavioural factors related specifically to the leader's expression of incivility and the senior leader's characteristics i.e. traits and capacities (i.e. KSA's and leader behavioural style) that are influential in SLI achieving positive organisational outcomes. This will provide deeper insights regarding the behavioural aspects related to the expression of incivility that influences outcomes and will provide an improved understanding of the leader (as the perpetrator) characteristics that moderates the relationship between incivility and outcomes.

#### **Research Question 2: What are the factors related to the follower that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

Research Question 2 aims to identify the key follower characteristics i.e. traits, capabilities and/or motives that allow for uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational performance. This will support the development of an improved understanding of the target's characteristics that moderate the relationship between incivility and outcomes.

#### **Research Question 3: What are the contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

Research Question 3 aims to identify the situational variables i.e. at an organisational level and at a macro level, that allows for uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. This will support the development of an improved understanding of the contextual factors that moderates the relationship between incivility and outcomes.

The research questions are supported by Pauline Schilpzand, Pater and Erez (2016) who called for more research investigating the moderators of workplace incivility and outcomes

## **4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study. The study adopted a qualitative, exploratory approach to the research design, to data sampling, data gathering and data analysis. Data was collected through face to face, one on one semi structured interviews with uncivil senior leaders and followers of uncivil senior leaders who achieved positive organisational outcomes. Quality controls and limitations of the study are presented at the end of this chapter.

### **4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

The research was conducted using an interpretivist approach since the study sought to draw meaning regarding the phenomenon of SLI and positive organisational outcomes, from the leaders and the follower's viewpoints, given that people's understanding of their social realities is subjective. This is in line with Saunders and Lewis (2018) who described interpretivism as "the study of social phenomena in their natural environment" (p. 109), where conclusions are drawn based on the participants' perspectives and interpretations.

The objective of the study was to gain a holistic understanding of how uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes by exploring the leader (perpetrator), the follower (target) and the contextual factors that influence the process. With research related to leader incivility being fragmented and limited (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016), an inductive approach was adopted where themes emerged from the data collected. This is in line with Woo, O'Boyle and Spector (2017) who argued that an inductive approach is the most suitable method of research when little is known regarding the topic/ phenomenon being studied. This was achieved by analysing the data obtained through the interviews across multiple cases identifying patterns and common themes that provided answers to each of the research questions (Creswell, Hanson, & Clark, 2007; Saunders & Lewis, 2018) that collectively explained the phenomenon of SLI and positive organisational outcomes.

Scholars have taken a narrow approach to studying the moderators of incivility and outcomes, focussing largely on the target's traits. This research study aimed to understand the moderators of the relationship between SLI and positive organisational outcomes considering a wider perspective i.e. factors related to the leader, factors related to the follower and factors related to the context that enables this phenomenon. An exploratory and qualitative approach was found to be most suitable as the study sought to uncover new insights (Saunders & Lewis, 2018) concerning the factors that influence the relationship between incivility and outcomes, regarding a previously unexplained relationship i.e. SLI and positive organisational outcomes, and from a new perspective i.e. exploring all three dimensions (leader, follower and context). A qualitative method was selected since it allowed the researcher to delve deeply uncovering rich, meaningful insights from the leaders' and followers' perspective regarding their interpretation of their experiences related to each research question (Bluhm, Harman, Lee, & Mitchell, 2011; Horsburgh, 2003). The objective of the research was to provide a theoretical understanding of SLI and positive organisational outcomes.

This study was a cross sectional study i.e. data was collected from multiple sources at a single point in time (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The cross-sectional method was selected due to practical considerations related to the purpose of the research study.

A semi-structured, face to face, in-depth interview strategy was used to collect data as it allowed for personal interaction and a rapport to be developed between researcher and interview participant which was necessary given the sensitive nature of the research topic. Furthermore, face to face interviews were selected in order to minimize the risk of miscommunication. The semi-structured, in depth interviews provided a unique depth of understanding regarding the phenomenon and allowed for adjustments to be made to interview questions based on the insights uncovered (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The interview questions used to guide the interview was grounded in the existing literature.

### **4.3 POPULATION**

The population identified to be relevant for the study was senior and executive managers whom demonstrated uncivil behaviours and had experience with achieving positive organisational outcomes, and followers who had experience being the target of uncivil senior leaders that achieved positive organisational outcomes, due to the insights they could share from their personal experiences. Suitability of candidates to sample criteria was established during the interviews through interview question 4 which prompted participants for examples of positive organisational outcomes and interview question 5 which provided participants with an opportunity to share their experiences of when they demonstrated (or their leaders demonstrated) behaviours characteristic of incivility.

### **4.4 UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

Whilst most research related to incivility focusses on the consequences of incivility (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016) exploring the perspective of the target, this study aimed to obtain an all-inclusive understanding of the phenomenon by making both the leader and the follower the unit of analysis. The leader and follower were both in a position to provide valuable and unique insights based on their individual perspectives and interpretation of their experiences, and they both have a crucial role to play in leadership outcomes. This multi-dimensional approach strengthened the validity of this study's findings.

### **4.5 SAMPLING METHOD AND SIZE**

The sample was selected based on relevance i.e. leaders who demonstrated uncivil behaviours and had experience with achieving positive organisational outcomes, and followers who had experience being the target of uncivil senior leaders that achieved positive organisational outcomes (sample criteria). These participants were selected because they could provide pertinent insights based on first hand personal experience, thereby providing relevant data for analysis (Horsburgh, 2003). Since the entirety of the population of senior leaders who demonstrated uncivil behaviours and achieved positive organisational outcomes; and followers who have had experience working with such leaders were unknown,

the sampling technique employed was non-probability sampling. This is in line with Saunders and Lewis (2018) who advocated non-probability sampling as the most suitable sampling method in the absence of a sampling frame. The research initially made use of purposive non-probability sampling, a sampling technique that involved the researcher's judgment in selecting interviewees best suited to participate in the study to provide insights that provided answers to the research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The sample was obtained from the researcher's and the researcher's supervisor's networks and their referrals based on the sample criteria. Snowball sampling was employed to identify further potential interview participants. Snowball sampling was selected due to the difficulty found in identifying suitable interview participants and to gain access to certain participants. The choice of a homogenous sample was the logical choice given the purpose of the study and allowed for the phenomenon to be explored in great depth (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The sample consisted of ten senior leaders that exhibited uncivil behaviours and eight followers (targets) of uncivil senior leaders.

As judgement and snowball sampling was adopted, industries and gender were not equally represented in the sample. Whilst sampling across industries ensures variation of data drawn from various experiences and context, (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002) randomness and representativeness of the sample was not of primary concern in this study. Qualitative research instead places greater emphasis on relevance i.e. the ability for the interview participant to provide the relevant insights related to the research topic (Horsburgh, 2003).

#### **4.6 DATA COLLECTION TOOL**

Whilst the researcher is regarded as the measurement instrument in qualitative research with the researcher's ability and effort having a direct influence on the credibility of the study (Golafshani, 2003), the interview guide presented in Appendix 4 was used as a practical measurement tool. The research questions outlined in chapter 3, were derived from the literature in response to the research problem identified in Chapter 1. The interview questions were mapped against each research question to ensure alignment between the literature reviewed, the research questions and the questions asked during the interviews and is presented



in Appendix 1. This served to ensure quality of data collected. The interview questions set out in the interview guide presented in Appendix 4, were used to guide the interviews with both uncivil senior leaders and followers of uncivil senior leaders. Being an exploratory study, the design of the questions allowed participants to examine the questions thoroughly and in depth, uncovering new insights. Where participants required clarification, this was provided. The open-ended interview questions included questions to determine sample suitability i.e. to confirm positive organisational outcomes and to confirm uncivil senior leader behaviours. The interview guide served to guide the interview and created a degree of consistency related to data gathered across interviews. The complicated nature of the questions lent itself to a semi-structured approach. The interview questions were designed to validate the literature, but were kept at a high enough level to prevent leading the participant in an effort to reduce bias (Roulston, 2010), and to allow additional participant insights to emerge.

Three pilot interviews were conducted by the researcher with senior leaders to test interviewer technique and the relevance and understanding of the questions in the interview guide to ensure the research objectives would be met from the data gathered. This provided the researcher an opportunity to make adjustments early on in the process to ensure improved effectiveness going forward (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Whilst the effectiveness and credibility of the interview guide was confirmed through the pilot interviews with questions adequately understood, the pilot interviews revealed the research brief was too broad which resulted in unsuitable interview participants being interviewed i.e. leaders who were exceptionally demanding but did not fit the definition of SLI in every other respect. The research brief was subsequently amended by the researcher to reduce ambiguity regarding the leadership behaviours of interest, whilst still being conscious of the sensitive nature of the topic. With quality of data influenced by the researchers interviewing skills (Roulston, 2010), the pilot interviews were useful in that it provided an opportunity for the researcher to improve her level of interviewing skills.

## **4.7 DATA GATHERING PROCESS**

The method selected for collecting data was semi structured interviews since the objective of the study was to explore a complex phenomenon not previously explained in the literature i.e. SLI and positive organisational outcomes. This is described by Saunders and Lewis (2018) as a useful method to collect data to gain new insights to describe what is observed in reality. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to direct the conversation through the use of the interview guide (Saunders & Lewis, 2018), allowing flexibility to probe for further insights, given the complex nature of the research questions.

Eighteen face to face interviews were conducted with senior leaders who demonstrated uncivil behaviours and followers of uncivil senior leaders who were the targets of these behaviours, across organisations. Both senior leaders and followers were asked the same questions from the same interview guide, presented in Appendix 4. The objective behind interviewing and asking the same questions to both leaders and followers, was to gain multiple perspectives and insights to obtain an all-inclusive understanding of the phenomenon and to improve the quality of findings (Roulston, 2010). Face to face interviews were used to collect data since this approach allowed for a rapport to be developed which was expected to create a level of comfort that would facilitate honest and open dialogue based on experiences, perceptions and opinions. This was of particular importance in this study given the sensitive nature of the topic. Two of the interviews were conducted using video conferencing due to the physical location of the participants and the impracticality of in-person interviews. The remaining interviews were in person, conducted at the participant's place of work or home. Identified participants were initially contacted via phone or email where the purpose of the research was explained (the research brief), willingness to participate in the study was assessed, and a suitable time and venue was agreed upon. This was followed by a meeting request. On average, the interviews lasted 45 minutes.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research topic, the researcher had to practice caution so as not to offend and discourage participation in the study, as well as to ensure relationships were not compromised where people provided introduction and access to participants. The brief sent out to participants therefore did not make

mention of the academic term, incivility. Instead a more indirect approach was adopted. In order to reduce the risk of participant bias (from fear of judgement), the researcher had to create a level of trust so that participants felt safe to open up and share their thoughts and experiences honestly. This was achieved by the researcher maintaining a relaxed conversational approach, making small talk, providing background related to herself, conducting the interviews at the participants' preferred location and drawing on examples of well-known leaders who demonstrated similar behaviours whilst building successful companies. Participants were encouraged to share freely without fear of judgement. The interviews were conducted in a respectful, non-judgemental manner. The researcher commenced the interview by providing background related to the study and an explanation of the research objectives. The sensitive nature of the research topic was acknowledged and the participant was assured that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained. The researcher thereafter provided a description of the typical leader behaviours of interest to ensure a common understanding of the subject. The consent form presented in Appendix 3 was read out to the participant after which the participant was requested to sign the consent form. All interviews were audio recorded once permission from the participant was granted. This was followed by the open-ended interview questions where participants were asked to respond based on their personal experiences. All interviews ended with the researcher asking the participants if they had anything to add over and above what was already covered in the interview and related to the topic. This was done to allow for additional insights to be captured. Field notes were made during the interview process to capture key insights (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). In order to improve the quality of data collected, the researcher verified interpretation of responses and sought clarification of responses where responses were found to be unclear or ambiguous (Roulston, 2010).

The collection of data ceased after the eighteenth interview with only one new code created from the data collected during the last two interviews, which fell into the bucket of one of the existing themes. This is in line with Fusch and Ness (2015) who argued that data should only be collected up until a point where no new themes emerge. This signals data saturation and any further data collection is of little value.

## **4.8 DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH**

Audio recordings and field notes obtained during the interviews were stored electronically with multiple back-ups made to ensure the data was not lost. All electronic files were password protected to ensure confidentiality of the data collected. Audio recordings were transcribed into text using the services of two professional transcribers who signed non-disclosure agreements before the audio files were handed over, to maintain confidentiality of data collected.

Interview transcriptions and field notes were used in the analysis process. A thematic content analysis approach was adopted which allowed themes to emerge from the participants' unique insights (Shannon & Hsieh, 2005; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Analysis of data commenced midway through the interview process and was performed according to the research questions. The objective of the analysis was to identify themes that provided answers to each of the research questions. Atlas TI was used during the analysis process. The process entailed reading each transcript and associated field note, using the data to derive codes and assigning code names that best captured the participants' responses. The codes were organised into categories based on common meaning and how they related to each other (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The categories were organised into themes and the themes were assigned a definition. The transcript data and field notes for each participant interviewed was analysed this way. The categories and themes that emerged from each interview were linked.

The analysis process was an iterative one that entailed reading the transcripts, listening to the audio recordings, coding and grouping to ensure alignment between data, codes, categories and themes. The results of each iteration are presented in Appendix 5 and 6. Through this iterative process and with increased familiarity with the data, the researcher obtained an improved understanding regarding the meaning of the data. The insights were analysed in the context of the research questions.

A frequency analysis i.e. a count of the number of participants who provided responses related to each theme was performed and is presented in Appendix, 5. Whilst the number of responses is insufficient to draw conclusions from in

qualitative research (Shannon & Hsieh, 2005; Vaismoradi et al., 2013), the frequency analysis served to prove the trustworthiness of findings, showing multiple participants confirmed the research findings.

#### **4.9 QUALITY CONTROLS**

The nature of qualitative studies is that the researcher is intimately involved in every step of the research process (Golafshani, 2003). Researcher bias was therefore expected (Roulston, 2010). In order to limit researcher bias and improve the quality of the data collected, pilot interviews were conducted to assess researcher influence on responses and to create awareness of potential leading. In addition, the researcher's interpretations of responses were regularly clarified during the interviews. The researcher frequently reflected during the data collection and analysis process, creating awareness of researcher bias and its influence on the study (Roulston, 2010; Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

In order to further improve data quality:

- An interview guide was used which served to provide consistency related to data gathered across interviews.
- Interview participants' understanding of interview questions was regularly evaluated during the interview.
- Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim.
- Reliability of findings were assured by the researcher continuing to interview until data saturation had been approached i.e. no new themes emerged (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Morse et al., 2002).
- The suitability of interview participants was established during the interviews.
- Data triangulation was used to minimise bias and to improve the quality of findings by verifying insights from different perspectives. This was achieved by interviewing both leaders who demonstrated uncivil behaviours and followers of leaders who have been the target of uncivil behaviours, asking the same interview questions. The use of two different sample groups to collect responses to the same questions assured validity and improved trustworthiness of findings.

(Golafshani, 2003; Roulston, 2010; Saunders & Lewis, 2018; Shannon & Hsieh, 2005).

#### **4.10 RESEARCH ETHICS**

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) Ethics Committee, prior to commencing data collection (Appendix 2). The consent form presented in Appendix 3 was read out to all participants where their right to withdraw was emphasised, assuring them that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained. All participants were requested to sign the consent form.

#### **4.11 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

In addition to the researcher bias inherent in qualitative research (Saunders & Lewis, 2018), further limitations of the study include:

- The researcher experienced difficulty in identifying participants as incivility is a matter of perspective with the study heavily reliant on the judgement of the researcher and the researcher's supervisor and their networks to identify possible interview participants. This introduced sampling bias when it came to identifying possible participants. In order to counter this, sample suitability to sample criteria was verified during the interviews.
- The number of leaders willing to participate in the study and openly admit to uncivil behaviours was low due to the negative connotation related to the research topic. The number of followers willing to participate in the study was also low. This could have been for fear of the negative consequences that could result from expressing negative sentiments regarding one's leader.
- The sample of uncivil senior leaders was largely homogenous in demographic. Furthermore, industries were not equally represented and instead the study lent heavily towards the power industry. This was a result of the sampling method which was based on judgement sampling and snowball sampling. The limitation of a non-random, non-representative sample is the risk of uniform data, yielding findings which may not be generalisable (Morse et al., 2002). This was an acceptable limitation given this was a qualitative study that aimed to provide transferable findings as opposed to generalisable findings.

- A significant limitation of the study was the indirect approach the researcher adopted in presenting the research topic. The research brief sent out to participants in assessing interest in being interviewed, the consent letter, and interview questions did not make mention of the term incivility. Whilst it was necessary to approach the topic with caution due to the sensitive nature of the topic, it prevented the researcher from explicitly clarifying understanding of the research topic. In order to ensure a common understanding of the leader behaviours in question, the researcher provided a detailed description of typical leader behaviours associated with the type of leadership of interest.
- In order for people to feel safe to openly express themselves there needs to a level of trust (Newman, Donohue, & Eva, 2017). This was particularly true for this study due to the nature of the topic. The researcher met all interview participants for the first time at the interview and due to the time horizon of the study i.e. being a cross sectional study there was little opportunity for the researcher to build trust with the participant. The absence of trust could have prevented participants from expressing themselves honestly. In order to build a reasonable level of trust that facilitated honest and open responses to some degree, the researcher adopted certain tactics i.e. maintaining a relaxed conversational approach, making small talk, providing background related to herself and conducted the interviews at the participants preferred location. To further encourage openness and honesty particularly from the leader participants, the researcher specifically drew on examples of well-known leaders who demonstrated similar behaviours whilst building successful companies, which hinted at admiration and praise.
- The inexperience of the interviewer (researcher) could have compromised the quality of the data collected (Roulston, 2010). In order to reduce the negative impact of interviewer experience, three pilot interviews were conducted that gave the researcher an opportunity to practice her skills.

## **5 RESULTS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 5 presents the key findings after the analysis of the data collected through the interviews. This chapter begins with a description of the sample to provide context to the results presented and presents sample suitability to validate the fit of sample to sample criteria. This is followed by the key themes that emerged through the qualitative analysis process, related to each of the research questions formulated in Chapter 3.

### **5.2 SAMPLE DESCRIPTION**

Table 1 presents the data related to the eighteen interview participants presented in the study. The identities of participants have been protected by assigning each participant a unique participant code. Pseudonyms were used to replace people and company/business unit names where they were referred to by participants in their responses. In the study, the researcher undertook to explore the views of both leaders and followers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, and to assure the trustworthiness of findings. Judgement sampling and snowball sampling were used to identify the interview participants based on the sample criteria i.e. senior leaders or followers of senior leaders who demonstrated uncivil behaviours and achieved positive organisational outcomes. The entire sample consisted of ten senior leaders and eight followers i.e. targets of uncivil senior leaders. It is important to note that participant F01 (the very first interview) provided rich insights as this participant identified himself as both an uncivil senior leader and as a follower of uncivil senior leaders. In this study however, F01 was classified as a follower since this was the perspective that dominated his responses. Sixteen of the eighteen interviews were conducted face to face and in person, and the remaining two (L002 and L005) were conducted using videoconferencing.

Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, in conducting the leader interviews, the researcher had to be particularly attentive to participant responses and body language, detecting and making adjustments, accordingly, being careful not to



offend the participant and to not jeopardise the relationship between informants and interview participants.

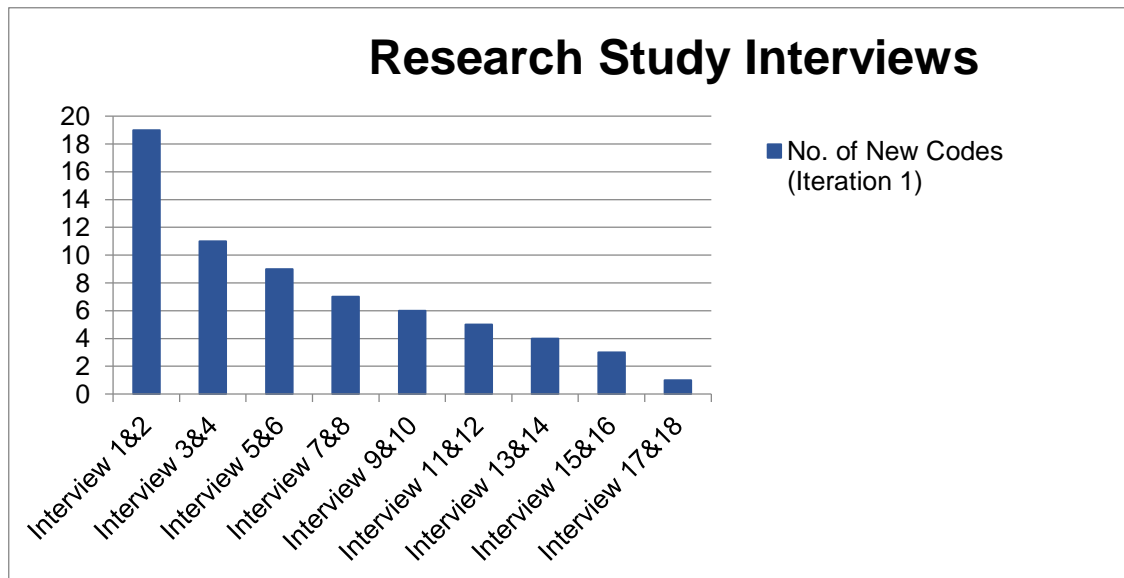
**Table 1: Research Study Participants**

	Participant Code	Industry	Position	Age	Gender
<b>Senior Leaders</b>	L001	Hotel	Chief Operations Officer	41	Male
	L002	Media	Sales Director	42	Male
	L003	Finance	Owner	53	Male
		Property Development			
		Retail			
	L004	Healthcare	Enterprise Manager	33	Male
	L005	Power	Maintenance Manager	50	Female
	L006	Logistics	Managing Director	48	Male
	L007	Mining	General Manager	50	Male
	L008	Power	Power Station Manager	50	Male
	L009	Power	Senior Manager	49	Female
L010	Logistics	Director	48	Male	
<b>Followers of Senior Leader</b>	F01	Power	General Manager	50	Male
	F02	State	Director of Records and Information Management	51	Male
	F03	Power	Senior Sales Manager	42	Male
	F04	Hotel	Group Sales Manager	38	Female
	F05	Power	Engineering Manager	40	Female
	F06	Logistics	Key Accounts Manager	33	Female
	F07	Power	Commercial and Assurance Manager	58	Male
	F08	Logistics	Operations Manager	50	Male

Whilst the researcher made every effort to accomplish heterogeneity in the sample to obtain the variation of data, greater emphasis was placed on relevance i.e. the ability for the interview participant to provide the relevant insights related to the

research topic, which Horsburgh (2003) argued to be the most appropriate approach for qualitative research.

### 5.3 DATA SATURATION



**Figure 1: Data Saturation – Leader and Follower**

According to Fusch and Ness (2015), as a general guideline data should be collected until no new themes emerge. This signals data saturation and any further data collection is of little value. In line with this, collection of data ceased after the eighteenth interview. This was because the data approached saturation, as shown in Figure 1 above, with only one new code obtained during the last two interviews which fell into the bucket of one of the existing themes.

### 5.4 SUITABILITY OF SAMPLE

#### 5.4.1 SUITABILITY OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS - UNCIVIL BEHAVIOURS

In order to verify interview participants met the sample criteria i.e. senior leaders or followers of senior leaders whom demonstrated uncivil behaviours and achieved positive organisational outcomes, interview question 5 prompted participants for examples of impolite senior leader behaviours by provided participants with an

opportunity to share their experiences of when they believed they (or their leaders) demonstrated forceful, bad mannered behaviours. Senior leader responses are presented next validating leader participants demonstrate uncivil behaviours. This is followed by follower responses validating follower participants refer to leaders that demonstrate uncivil behaviours.

#### 5.4.1.1 LEADER RESPONSES CONFIRMING DEMONSTRATIONS OF UNCIVIL BEHAVIOURS

L001

*"...but there are times when you do shout and scream on a regular basis, because you want to make sure that there's, you know if one's behind slightly or this is behind slightly, it's unacceptable. "*

*"I will name and shame you, if I've asked you to please ensure this is the way it's done, and then I come in here again next week and I realise that it's not done again - by the third time you must expect to be name and shamed."*

L002

Interviewer: *"...would you say that you express yourself quite forcefully when targets are not met, when people fail to deliver?"*

Participant: *"Yes."*

Interviewer: *"Would you say that – and sometimes people take offence to that? To the way you express yourself?"*

L004

*"I went really hard, where I made people cry"*

*"some people you can be tough on, you can tell them, you really didn't do your work, I think you are incompetent and it's actually close to stupidity"*

L003

*"I have a business plan in my mind, I have my strategy, I have everything, I have a recipe of success, why should I change it to accommodate you? I'm not giving you options, I'm giving you instructions, which was a very key part of my success"*

**L005**

*"I'm a typical British woman and I shout, and I swore, and I banged my fist on the table"*

**L006**

*"So some people you can say; F\*ck that, get that done. And other people you say that and they run to HR. "*

Interviewer: *"Could you be interpreted as being impolite and rude?"*

Participant: *"Or arrogant, yes. "*

Interviewer: *"And possibly offensive?"*

Participant: *"Absolutely."*

**L008**

*"Then I say to them; listen, today it's Friday, you're supposed to knock off at 12. The time is 8 o'clock. Nobody goes home until a strategy is done. Let's go back to your office. Nobody goes home."*

**L007**

*"I was probably an absolute terror. Nobody wanted to come close to me, they were shit-scared when I came to site and started doing something...I ran it like an autocrat. There was there was no gap for anything "*

*"...there's a swear jar and I'm always contributing to this thing."*

**L009**

*"Then I realised that my team actually saw me as somewhat of a Maggie Thatcher"*

**L010**

*"So that was it, he was sitting across the desk from me and the freaking phone went flying across the desk."*

### 5.4.1.2 FOLLOWER RESPONSES CONFIRMING LEADER DEMONSTRATIONS OF UNCIVIL BEHAVIOURS

**F01**

*"Threatening, very threatening.  
You know I worked for  
Dodgson. He threatened me  
every day that he will send me  
home. "*

**F02**

*"she chased people out of the room"  
"...definitely a need for control. "  
"So you are sitting here and all you are hearing is  
this person screaming at you..."*

**F04**

*"I see him screaming and  
shouting and banging his  
fist..."*

**F03**

*"Then he proceeded to ride him every single  
day, two or three times a day, until he  
decided to leave the company, because he  
didn't want him there, because he felt that he  
wasn't competent enough."  
"...they're borderline arrogant right"*

**F05**

*"He was very arrogant,  
you know, derogatory,  
you name it."*

**F06**

*"Yes, he's a vicious man.  
He's harsh"*

**F07**

*"He instilled an atmosphere and culture  
of fear and a reluctance of being found  
wanting because of what might happen  
to you."*

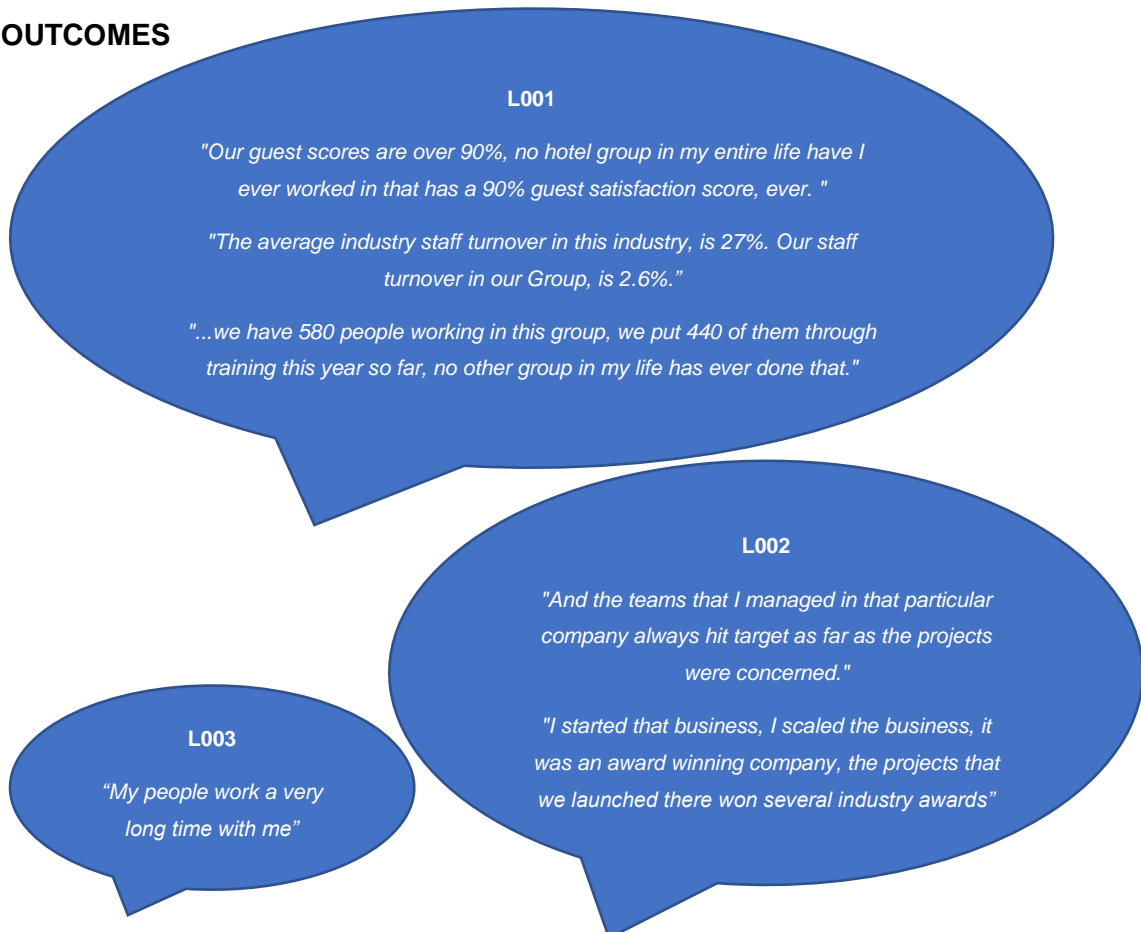
**F08**

*"Sometimes he calls  
people names."*

## 5.4.2 SUITABILITY OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS – POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES

In order to verify interview participants met the sample criteria i.e. senior leaders or followers of senior leaders whom demonstrated uncivil behaviours and achieved positive organisational outcomes, interview question 4 prompted participants for examples of positive organisational outcomes, where positive organisational outcomes refer to the achievement of financial and/or non-financial organisational goals (e.g. innovation, efficiency, knowledge elements in an organisation, employee attitudes and commitment, customer satisfaction and loyalty, reputation and dynamic capabilities (Mutalib et al., 2018)). Leader responses are presented next validating these (uncivil) senior leader participants achieve positive organisational outcomes. This is followed by follower responses validating follower participants refer to (uncivil) senior leaders that achieve positive organisational outcomes. In general participants avoided disclosing details related to financial success and instead focussed on non-financial successes.

### 5.4.2.1 LEADER RESPONSES CONFIRMING POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES



**L004**

*"I averaged 110% of my target, and the one year ...I scored a 95 and 90% of target for the two business lines."*

**L005**

*"...turnover within maintenance I can comment on, it's actually very low."  
"With regards to governance and setting up documentation and proceduralising things, we're getting there"*

**L006**

*"I've coached at least 4 or 5 people that are in fairly senior positions within the group."  
"I've built the rail business. I've built the intermodal business. I've built the transport business and I've built ocean breaking business. And I've had all those business units and I've built them up over the years and I've grown them with revenue targets."*

**L007**

*"Within the group, we are one of the best performing parts of the organisation."  
"...safety and performance have improved year on year for the last 15 years"*

**L008**

*"..for the first time I've been in EnergyCorpX, 3 weeks ago we ran all 6 units. That's for the first time."  
"And then the other thing that I believe I've managed to do very well is to conscientise people about safety. "*

**L009**

*"...in short it was when we actually turned the business around"*

**L010**

*" we don't have a high staff turnover, you know? We've got a lot of people that have been here for 20 years....when they saw I was back in the industry, they all moved over here. So they've had been with me for, forever and a day."*

#### 5.4.2.2 FOLLOWER RESPONSES CONFIRMING POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES

**F01**

*"You know he also got things done. I mean he could take things and then he makes sure it's a success."*

*"Then the big one was when Dodgson came, we are loadshedding this country, he turned it around. No loadshedding".*

**F02**

*"she strengthened a lot of the processes that we have. She has made sure that we meet targets"*

**F03**

*"in 2016/17 he made the biggest order and take for the Sub-Saharan business portfolio ever."*

**F04**

*"so obviously, he does have quite a big influence on the staff and our staff turnover is very good... people don't generally leave us."*

**F05**

*"he turned around the perception of what EnergyCorpX was, because in the organisation EnergyCorpX is basically the black sheep of the family ... but we managed to turn around how people perceived us. You know, you would go to forums and suddenly people would look to you to say, but how? How did you guys get it right?"*

**F08**

*"Once people are here they don't leave. It's not a company that's got people in and out"*

**F06**

*"So in 2009 I believed we were very close to closing our doors...on the brink of being bankrupted. And then the other partner phoned him and said; listen, we are gonna need your help here...We actually went from a total loss to a profit."*

**F07**

*"new systems were implemented successfully, the structures were changed and new departments were created that allowed us to operate more efficiently."*



Due to the sensitive nature of the research topic, the researcher had to practice caution so as not to cause offence and discourage participation in the study. The research brief sent out to participants therefore did not make mention of the academic term, incivility. Instead a more indirect approach was adopted. This resulted in three unsuitable participants being interviewed (the pilot interviews) i.e. leaders who were demanding but who did not fit the definition of SLI, as per this study. Additionally, two interviews were conducted with leaders reported by their followers to demonstrate uncivil behaviours. However these participants were reluctant to disclose details related to their behaviours thus sample suitability could not be confirmed. The insights obtained from these interviews have therefore been excluded from the study.

## **5.5 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

Workplace incivility is considered to be destructive to organisations (Anjum et al., 2018; Estes & Wang, 2008; Huang & Lin, 2019; Wu et al., 2014), however in practice it has been observed that this is not always the case. The research questions sought to understand the factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. With workplace incivility described as an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), where the senior leader is the perpetrator and the follower is the target in this study, the dimensions of the leader, the follower and the context were explored to gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon (The influence of the observer on incivility outcomes falls outside the scope of this study and was therefore not explored). The results are clustered around the research questions and the themes that emerged are presented in the sequence that reflects their frequency ranking i.e. the number of participants that provided data related to the theme, from highest to lowest.

### **5.5.1 TRIANGULATION OF DATA**

The researcher undertook to explore the views of both leaders (the perpetrator) and followers (the target) to obtain comprehensive insights regarding the phenomenon of SLI and positive organisational outcomes, and to assure the validity of findings. Every theme that emerged was verified by both leader and

follower participants thereby adding credibility to the research findings. The themes that emerged per research question and a summary of the frequency of responses are presented in Table 2. The detailed frequency analysis containing categories and identifying participants that commented per theme can be found in Appendix 5.

**Table 2: Triangulation Matrix**

No. of Leaders Respondents (out of a total of 10)	Theme	No. of Follower Respondents (out of a total of 8)	Total Respondents (out of a total of 18)
<b>Research Question 1</b>			
<b>Leader's Expression of Incivility</b>			
5	Infrequently uncivil	5	10
3	Impartially uncivil	4	7
<b>Leader Characteristics</b>			
10	Visionary leader	7	17
9	Highly Knowledgeable	7	16
9	Exceptionally Supportive	6	15
5	Remorseful	2	7
<b>Research Question 2</b>			
<b>Follower Characteristics</b>			
10	Risk and Rewards	7	17
8	High Social Skills	8	16
6	Achievement driven	8	14
5	Personal values	4	9
<b>Research Question 3</b>			
<b>Contextual Factors</b>			
6	Cultural Norm of SLI	4	10
4	High Stakes	3	7

### 5.5.2 RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1

**Research Question 1: What are the factors related to the uncivil senior leader that enables them to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

The aim of Research Question 1 was to identify the factors related to the leader that enabled positive organisational outcomes, despite the leader demonstrating uncivil behaviours. Interview question 5, prompted participants to shed insights regarding their expressed (uncivil) behaviours. Interview question 1 was designed to understand the leader characteristics which were influential in achieving positive organisational outcomes in spite of SLI. Participants were prompted to draw on

personal experience, to identify the key leader traits, KSA's and leader behavioural style which they believed influenced outcomes positively, in spite of SLI.

Table 3 below presents an overview of the results related to Research Question 1, presenting the categories that emerged related to each theme.

**Table 3: Overview of Results to Research Question 1**

Theme	Category
<b>Leader Uncivil Behaviour</b>	
Infrequently uncivil	Incivility is irregular
Impartially uncivil	Impartial
<b>Leader Characteristics</b>	
Visionary Leader	Provides a clear vision
	Provides clear direction
Highly Knowledgeable	History of success
	Knowledge
Exceptionally Supportive	Genuinely cares
	Enables followers
	Guides and Coaches
Remorseful	Remorse

A key finding related to the leader's behaviour, specifically regarding the leaders' expression of incivility was that senior leaders were able to achieve positive organisational outcomes when they demonstrated uncivil behaviours only occasionally (and not all of the time), and when they did, they did so without discriminating between team members. The results that emerged revealed uncivil senior leaders were able to achieve positive organisational outcomes when in addition to their occasionally and fair uncivil behaviours, they demonstrated visionary leadership behaviours (providing a clear vision of where they wanted to take the organisation and provided clear direction to followers), they demonstrated exceptionally supportive leadership behaviours towards followers, and they were highly knowledgeable (i.e. knowledge acquired through expertise and experience in the organisation and/or industry). In addition, followers were found to perform despite SLI when the uncivil senior leader expressed regret over his or her uncivil behaviours causing offense and sought to restore good relations with the follower i.e. showed remorse.

### 5.5.2.1 LEADER'S EXPRESSION OF INCIVILITY

Research Question 1 sought to identify the factors related to the leader that enabled positive organisational outcomes despite the leader demonstrating uncivil behaviours. With the leader being the perpetrator that expresses the uncivil behaviours, 'leader's expression of incivility' refers to the behavioural factors related specifically to the way in which the leader expresses uncivil behaviours.

#### 5.5.2.1.1 Infrequently Uncivil

With 10 of the 18 participants in agreement demonstrating uncivil behaviours only occasionally is a leader factor (related to the leaders' uncivil behaviour) that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Infrequently uncivil refers to occasional and sporadic demonstrations of uncivil behaviours, as opposed to incivility being a regular, everyday occurrence. Participants agreed that uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes because they are never constantly uncivil. Instead the leader is triggered by certain events that results in the leader demonstrating uncivil behaviours, however once the issue is dealt with, they put the issue behind them and do not hold a grudge.

L001: *"we don't scream and shout at our people every day, that's by no means what happens here."*

L002: *"if there's an issue it's dealt with there and then and sorted and it's left behind and we moved forward."*

L007: *"You don't hammer something forever, you say this is wrong, fix it; made a mistake, learn from mistakes, get it fixed... if it's a learning experience and must happen, do it, get past it and move on to the next thing."*

L010: *"It definitely fluctuates. I'm certainly not like that all the time. You know, it's not like every day is terrible at work. But when I do lose my cool, I lose it big time."*

F04: *"So I think that, but you know, then when he is hard, it generally is for a reason, it's not for, just walk around screaming at everybody."*

### 5.5.2.1.2 Impartially Uncivil

With 7 of the 18 participant's in agreement demonstrating uncivil behaviours impartially is a leader factor that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Impartially uncivil refers to leaders that are fair in the expression of their uncivil behaviours i.e. they do not discriminate amongst followers and all followers are at equal risk of being a target of their uncivil treatment. Participants agreed that uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes because they are fair i.e. all followers are under threat of being on the receiving end of the leader's incivility. It is this sense of fairness that drives positive follower outcomes.

L006: *"That's the experience they would take out of a scenario and they know that their fellow colleague sitting right next to them will get exactly the same treatment. So also a lot of it is about equal treatment. So nobody gets away."*

L007: *"I think it's, I'm pretty constant the way I operate, I don't treat people differently; when there's a sharp pitch to be given everybody gets it."*

F02: *"she is like this with everybody. It doesn't matter what colour you are or whatever, it's just the way she is."*

F05: *"For me, it's actually fairness. Ja, be fair. You be harsh all you want. But be fair ...if you and me do the same thing, but then the treatment towards me is different than it is towards you then that somehow will, you'll be like, why should I bother?"*

### 5.5.2.2 LEADER CHARACTERISTICS

Leader characteristics refer to attributes belonging specifically to the leader and comprise of leader foundational traits and capacities. Foundational traits refer to stable characteristics related to the leader that results from genetics and early life experiences and capacities refer to leader knowledge, skills and attributes (KSA's) and leader behavioural style i.e. the leader's general and dominant tendency in engaging in certain behaviours.

### 5.5.2.2.1 Visionary Leader

With 17 of the 18 participants in agreement, being a visionary leader emerged from the data as the main leader factor that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Based on participant responses, a visionary leader refers to a leader that has a clear vision for what the organisation aspires to become and articulates that vision to his or her followers in such a way that he/she inspires a following and garners follower support for the vision; and provides explicit directions to followers on how to achieve that vision. Visionary leadership is a leader characteristic that falls within the category of leader capacities under leader behavioural style.

Participants agreed that uncivil senior leaders who achieve positive organisational outcomes, are leaders that have a clear vision i.e. a picture of the desired future for the organisation and who are able to communicate that vision to their followers. The results found followers collectively committed to a single vision are not deterred by uncivil senior leader behaviours.

*F01: "They knew what they wanted to achieve...They had vision. You know where we must go in the future. Which areas of research we're gonna do? What you need to focus on. They had a vision to grow sales... if you ask them where they wanted to go they knew. I want EAF to be this figure. I don't want to burn diesel. You know, I don't want to loadshed or whatever. They knew it...they would look into the future and say; you know, we need to play in the renewables. We need to do this research. We need to advance here."*

*F03: "I think what it is about the leader is, irrespective of how harsh or whatever they are, do they give me what vision they're going for...if you don't know what you're selling, I can't buy it...irrespective of what the boss says, if all of you are following the same vision, then there's a sense of belonging in the environment that you work on. And then whatever this person does, it's easier for everybody to work with. But if you are just showing us no vision, you're just throwing tantrums, we don't know where you going, that affects the environment, then you start to have little negative cliques that you get sucked into that negative environment. And while*

*the environment becomes negative, you will certainly see the performance just deteriorate.”*

Participants explained uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes when they provide clear direction i.e. unambiguous, understandable instructions and expectations to followers. Participants explained that regardless of leader behaviours, when followers are provided with clear direction and expectations are clearly defined, followers are likely to succeed and accomplish the desired outcomes.

*F03: “I think most people work good under clear direction, under clear instructions. Because you’re not going to consume your time on something when that manager will say, no, that’s not what I wanted, no, that’s not what I wanted. They’re very clear from the beginning so it’s easier to get to an end result as a follower because you say, I know exactly what he wants, I deliver this, we move onto something else.”*

*F05: “I think if the leader is, as I said before, if they're precise in it, what it is that the vision is, if you tell the people that work for you, what you're trying to achieve, and you are clear and you give them direct steps of what it is that you want. That is, you've won the war basically, because you are then giving the people that work for you a sense of belonging, a sense of passion and drive.”*

#### **5.5.2.2.2 Highly Knowledgeable**

With 16 out of the 18 participants in agreement, being a highly knowledgeable leader emerged from the data as a key leader factor that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Based on participant responses, this research study found leader knowledge to comprise of the leader’s experience, expertise, business acumen, understanding of the business and industry. Leader knowledge is a leader characteristic that falls within the category of leader capacities under knowledge, skills and attributes (KSA). Participants agreed that an uncivil senior leader’s accomplishments, knowledge and understanding of the business play a key role in bringing about positive organisational outcomes. An uncivil senior leader who is accomplished and is

knowledgeable is respected and credible; and whilst they may fail in their delivery of the message, the message itself is sound because it is based on extensive experience and past success.

Participants believed that uncivil senior leaders with a track record of past achievements were successful at influencing followers because of their credibility which inspired belief amongst followers in the leader's capabilities.

*F01: "You know he got things done. I mean he could take things and then he makes sure it's a success."*

Participants agreed that uncivil senior leaders who are highly knowledgeable as a result of personal experience and expertise were successful at influencing followers because of the credibility they possessed as a result of their competence.

*F01: "the reason being is that [pause] I believe is that one, they knew what they were talking about. So you know the advantage is that if they had to challenge you it wasn't somebody that did not know what they were talking about. They knew the business.... You know Mark grew up in this organisation. Dodgson grew up, he spent 30 odd years in this organisation. So they had the "know how". And that's it."*

*F03: "But if you're a great leader your arrogance is backed up by your capabilities, your confidence is backed up by your capabilities. I think that's how they get away with it because they can back it up. They have a more holistic – you know like what you tend to find with these people is they haven't just worked in one area of the business. They haven't just worked in engineering all their life, or they haven't worked as a procurement manager all their life. They've moved between finance, between execution, between sales, they understand how to operate a business as opposed to a department. They understand what the business needs to make an outcome, not his department."*

#### **5.5.2.2.3 Exceptionally Supportive**

With 15 of the 18 participants in agreement, being an exceptionally supportive leader emerged from the data as a key leader factor that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Based on the insights



obtained through the data, exceptionally supportive leader behaviours comprise of demonstrating empathy and assisting followers overcome both work related and personal challenges; enabling followers by backing them, fighting on their behalf, removing the obstacles that stand in their way of succeeding, as well as empowering followers by providing them with what they need to succeed; helping develop and build followers through coaching and mentoring, and providing guidance and advice to followers helping them overcome the challenges they face. Supportive leadership is a leader characteristic that falls within the category of leader capacities under leader behavioural style. The data revealed when uncivil senior leaders are willing to go the extra mile to assist their followers and actively work at developing and helping their followers succeed, they build follower loyalty.

Participants revealed when leaders demonstrate genuine care, compassion and concern for followers which extends beyond their working relationship, leaders gain follower loyalty. This loyalty results in followers performing despite SLI.

*F04: "everybody is aware, even though he can be an ass, they're very aware that he's got their back, and I think that's how they stay loyal. Because they know that if I can phone him at midnight. And if somebody's trying to steal my car and left me on the highway, I can phone him at midnight. And I'm pretty sure 90% of the people would feel the same way. I would phone him and he would come and fetch me or sort it out at least. So I think that's how he gets the loyalty."*

*F06: "And people feel like they can go speak to him if they need money in the last week of the month. Or I mean there was a lady that worked with us as well, she was also going through some things with her family and he says; listen I've got this whole house, just take some time off. Go stay there. No charge. Please go."*

Participants indicated that uncivil senior leaders who achieve great outcomes support their followers by enabling them i.e. providing them with what they need to ensure followers succeed. These leaders are willing to stand up and challenge others/ existing rules, removing the obstacles that stand in the way of their follower's success.

F01: *“He would support. And sometimes you know he would bring people in to help you. What I’ve learnt from these guys is they would, as long as it made sense, they will fight and give you what you wanted. And we delivered...So let me give you some examples. You don’t have enough staff to do certain things. I don’t know how they would, but they will place a contract to get you assistance or whatever...They would get it done. And that is how they were and that’s how you achieved stuff.”*

There was strong agreement amongst participants that uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes when they usually support their followers by guiding and helping them overcome work challenges through on job coaching and when the leader invests in the long-term development of his or her followers through mentorship.

L002: *“help them be the best they can be. If that requires you to tell them that they’re being lazy and they’re sitting around waiting for a hand-out and that’s not going to happen in this team, then so be it, but let them know that and then help them... I coach them, I help them along, I’m there for them.”*

L006: *“But also if you screw up you will get bollocked, you’ll be given guidance and you will know how to fix it. And you’ll learn from it.”*

F01: *“The other thing that I enjoyed with Dodgson is that I could approach him after hours at any time. Look there are times where he would really [pause] I think I got something right and he will shoot it down from a dizzy height and make me feel that I was useless but that is fine. That’s the learning you get but he’s approachable...He drove you very hard to deliver but would never leave you to sink. When I say never leave you to sink, he might swear. I think I swear a lot. So when you say sometimes I can swear, I can lose my temper but I’ve also got the style where I would lose my temper, I would get people but I would never leave them on their own. I would then say; but listen, you need to do this this this. And we get it done. And that was also with him.”*

#### **5.5.2.2.4 Remorseful**

With 7 of the 18 participants in agreement, demonstrating remorse emerged from the data to be a leader factor that enables positive organisational outcomes.

Remorseful refers to the act of the leader admitting to having violated the follower by owning up to his or her mistakes and expressing regret for causing harm to an aggrieved follower. Leader remorse is a leader characteristic that falls within the category of foundational traits.

L005: *“I can go back and I have the ability to also say, I can understand that I could have offended, and I try my best to put it right there and then. So I don't have a problem with saying I'm sorry.”*

L006: *“So you might be direct. You might be hard. You might be rude. You also might be mistaken. But what I find is that if I'm really really hard on someone and I'm wrong, I will go out there straight away and go; you are right.”*

L007: *“If I lose it a bit one day I'm a bit harsh to the guys and I come back the next day and I say ah sorry, I made a bit of a mistake or something they, they're very accepting of that.”*

### **5.5.3 RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

**Research Question 2: What are the factors related to the follower that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

The aim of Research Question 2 was to identify the factors related to the follower that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Interview question 2 was designed to understand the follower characteristics which were influential in achieving positive organisational outcomes in spite of SLI. Participants were prompted to draw on personal experience, to identify the key follower traits, capabilities and motives/values which they believed influenced outcomes positively, in spite of SLI.

Table 4 presents an overview of the results related to Research Question 2, presenting the categories that emerged related to each theme.

**Table 4: Overview of Results to Research Question 2**

Theme	Category
<b>Follower Characteristics</b>	
Risk and Rewards	Financial rewards
	Avoid undesirable outcomes
	Recognition
	Opportunity
High Social Skills	Tolerance
	High Emotional intelligence
Achievement Driven	Driven by achievement
Personal Values	Personal values align to vision
	High work Ethic

The results that emerged from the data was that positive organisational outcomes are achieved, despite SLI when followers possess high levels of social skills (a capability which enables the follower to regulate his or her emotions and behaviours), are motivated by a strong desire to avoid the negative consequences that are associated with not performing and/or they value the rewards that are associated with performing (risk and rewards) and when followers are motivated by an internal desire for achievement. In addition, the data revealed that when follower’s personal values align with the interests of the organisation, positive organisational outcomes are achieved regardless of SLI because followers naturally behave according to their personal values.

### **5.5.3.1 FOLLOWER CHARACTERISTICS**

Research Question 2 sought to identify the factors related to the follower that enabled positive organisational outcomes despite the leader demonstrating uncivil behaviours. Follower characteristics refer to attributes belonging specifically to the follower and comprise of follower traits, capabilities and motives/values.

#### **5.5.3.1.1 Risk and Rewards**

With 17 of the 18 participants in agreement, follower motivation to avoid risks and to achieve rewards emerged from the data as a key follower factor that enabled uncivil senior leader behaviours to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Risk

and rewards refer to follower motives that drive follower behaviours. Followers are driven to behave in ways to avoid exposure to loss (risks), and/or are driven to behave in ways that promote the achievement of valued rewards. Risk and rewards fall within the follower characteristic, motives/values. Participants agreed that positive organisational outcomes are achievable despite SLI when followers possess a strong reason to perform that overshadows the leader's incivility. The results revealed followers perform despite SLI to avoid an unwanted outcome, or because they are driven by financial rewards, being recognised and having their efforts acknowledged, and/or by the belief that there is an opportunity from which they stand to gain from. The study found these motivators were extremely influential in driving follower performance.

- **Risks**

Participants agreed that followers often perform, despite being the target of a leader's uncivil behaviours, because they fear the negative consequence they would have to face if they did not perform e.g. loss of job and the ability to earn an income.

*F01: "Tough people to work for. Threatening, very threatening. You know I worked for Dodgson. He threatened me everyday that he will send me home...Look Mark was like I said, threatening. He would give you [pause] he would say you'll get fired. The firing thing always comes. You know, get fired. Dodgson at many times sent people home without following proper policies or procedures. Go home. Sit for 14 days. Don't get paid."*

One senior leader revealed his followers often complied because they feared further unpleasant confrontation with him.

*L004: "So that's the other thing, I think me being frank, they didn't want to pick a fight, not a physical fight, but they knew that I would go full blown. I'm either on or off, there's not a grey, we're going to discuss, it's either 0 or 100 percent...And secondly, being a male weighing 100 kilos and 1.87, I think - I'm not saying I was a bully, but I do think that it intimidates people. Not everyone, but it intimidates people, and I think I have used that."*

- **Rewards**

Participants agreed that followers often perform, despite being the target of a leader's uncivil behaviours, because they value the rewards i.e. financial, recognition and opportunities, that are associated with them performing.

In the work environment people are expected to perform in exchange for financial rewards. The data indicated financial rewards play a key role in influencing follower behaviours, for followers who place high value on financial rewards. These followers were found to be willing to put up with uncivil senior leader behaviours and continue to perform, driven by the desire to maintain their earning potential.

*L006: "So my reports are generally motivated on one thing only. And that's the ability to earn money. So if you can make them feel that they're remunerated well for what they do, that is one thing."*

*F07: "You have to earn. We are willing to push through because of certain commitments, family commitments, financial commitments and so on."*

Oftentimes good performance is rewarded with more financial rewards i.e. incentives and bonuses. In such scenarios a follower that values financial rewards is driven to perform by the desire to earn more, and an uncivil senior leader is not enough to detract the follower from achieving that.

*F01: "So you can see he also rewarded. You see that's the difference. He might be hard but he also rewarded good performance. You know he came in and he said people will get a winter bonus at one stage. He would do other things. So all I'm saying is that they had that big big stick out but there was also a carrot, somewhere that carrot was there."*

One senior leader explained followers perform despite SLI when they feel valued and know their worth in the organisation.

*L006: "Do they know that they are a valuable member of the team? Those are things that motivate people. You know if you're the idiot that's getting shouted at all day and everybody says; she's not part of the team. You're not going to work*

*properly. But if you feel that you had one or two things wrong, the boss helps out to guide you right and you're still part of the team and he still keeps you as an equal, then I think people then feel a lot more relieved and it synergises at that level."*

Other participants agreed that followers perform despite SLI because they are driven by the desire to get recognised, where recognition is a sign of appreciation and an indication of worth and performing is a means to achieving that recognition.

*L010: "he's going jeez, you know that ops-guy at [indistinct] you know he's really freaking excellent. he always keeps me up to date, he's never missed a collection, etc, etc, etc. That's the way you want the world to see you, you know what I'm saying to you?... So for that reason, number one for recognition."*

*F06: "Well, first of all acknowledgement. I want the group to one day to say, she played a big role in where your guys are now. Everyone wants personal acknowledgement, you know recognition."*

Two participants indicated that followers comply when they seek recognition and validation specifically from the leader demonstrating the uncivil behaviours. Recognition from the leader then goes on to drive followers to perform even further.

*L007: "Everybody wants to do well, I think, I don't think that that changes. And I think everybody wants recognition in one form or another. And the one thing and I'm sort of self-critical myself, I don't dish out praise very easily. Now if it's not right you're going to get criticism, if it's okay it's going to be 'Oh thanks, okay'. And if it's something really exceptional, you'll get praise. And I think sometimes the guys are, they don't want to get the criticism, nobody does. Everybody wants to do their job okay, but the guys are also searching for bit of praise or recognition or something that they know, I think in the environment where the boss is tough or the situation is tough, when you get recognition you know it's well deserved. It's not just dished out for free."*

Participants agreed that followers continue to perform and are not discouraged by uncivil senior leader behaviours when followers believe there is an opportunity which they stand to benefit from e.g. when there is something they want to learn

from the leader. Followers continue to perform, withstanding the leader's uncivil behaviours in order to gain the benefit of learning from the leader.

*L002: "my followers follow me and want to learn from me because of reality – I pass on my knowledge. So that's one thing, I'm prepared to pass on and share my knowledge"*

*F04: "I would say it depends. If I feel there's something that I can learn from you, whether you're that kind of person or you're not, that's your business. I am who I am, and if I need to learn something from you, I will come to you."*

Six participants agreed that followers continue to perform and are not discouraged by uncivil senior leaders' behaviours when they believe there is an opportunity for them to grow in their careers within the organisation and performing is the means of achieving that.

*L006: "So for them I think the big motivators are always money, always ability for growth...So do they know they're part of the greater succession plan."*

*F03: "people have got to believe in you and they've got to believe that your hard work and their hard work is also going to do something for you, it's going to improve your position, your status in the company and your career. You don't do it for their career just do you? You do it for the whole picture."*

#### **5.5.3.1.2 High Social Skills**

With 16 of the 18 participants in agreement, high social skills emerged from the data as a key follower factor that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Social skills are competencies that facilitate positive social interactions and refer specifically to tolerance and EQ within this study. Social skills is a follower characteristic that falls within the category of capabilities.

Participants identified tolerance i.e. the ability to accept the leaders' behaviours without necessarily agreeing with them, as a social skill necessary for followers to endure the brutality dished out by an uncivil senior leader. Participants revealed that when followers have had experience working with the uncivil senior leader,



they grow to understand the leader and get to know what to expect from the leader. This makes them more tolerant of the leader's uncivil behaviours. Tolerance therefore enables followers to be subjected to the leader's uncivil behaviours, without having it adversely impact their performance.

*L007: "if you can choose or develop the people that work for you, in this environment, they get used to it. It's not something that, sometimes when people come in and they've not been exposed, it's a big shock to them...I find especially in the work environment now, the people that I work with are, they're used to me...I think they're very accepting of themselves and of me...In meetings, luckily, my colleagues are used to me, I will actually be very blunt."*

*F06: "But luckily the environment and the people we work for [pause] they've been here for years. So they don't take offence. They know him."*

High emotional intelligence (EQ) was identified by participants as an essential social skill required by followers for uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive outcomes. In this study follower EQ refers to the followers' ability to manage themselves in a situation and involves behaving rationally and being able to control one's emotions and incorporates having empathy for the leader. It was found that followers who are emotionally mature are able to manage their emotions. They were described as people not easily offended or upset by what the leader says in a moment of anger. They tend to focus on the message as opposed to the delivery and are not negatively affected by uncivil senior leader behaviours.

*L006: "If you want to be a person that gets upset very quickly and you don't take criticism or pressure you're going to crumble."*

*L007: "I think that in general, and I think it's an advantage of the mining environment which suits me, the people are a bit tougher...They're tough and they're not sensitive about when I'm a bit harsh with the guys or about things."*

*F04: "And I'm relatively strong person when it comes to business. So I can take quite a lot. I don't cry about everything."*

F05: *“Then what I would say I would personally do is from whatever derogatory thing that you say, I syphon what is truth and what isn't? So your opinion is your opinion. But at the core of what you said, what was the truth?”*

One follower explained that through experience he understands the pressure the leader faces which has made him more accepting of the senior leader's uncivil behaviours, which leads him to comply.

F02: *“I had to act for two years in the CI position and doing that I was pulled into a different layer of the department...The tendency that a lot of us have if you are sitting outside of the political layers, if I can put it like that, you are sitting outside of those pressures because there is somebody above you that is actually dealing with it. So you are sitting here and all you are hearing is this person screaming at you, so you don't understand where it comes from or whatever. But now I've got a different understanding of the department and where it comes from. So it also makes it easier to understand.”*

#### **5.5.3.1.3 Achievement Driven**

With 14 of the 18 participants in agreement, followers driven by the need for achievement emerged as a key follower factor that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Achievement driven refers to follower motives, where followers possess an inherent need to achieve to surpass current standards. Achievement provides followers with a sense of satisfaction which drives their efforts. Achievement driven, is a follower characteristic that falls within the category of motives/values. Participants agreed followers that possess a strong need for achievement and accomplishment are driven to perform regardless of SLI. Their internal motivation directs their actions and they are not swayed by uncivil senior leader behaviours.

F01: *“You want to achieve things and get it done.”*

F03: *“You also have to have the same kind of desires to win and succeed and do it at any cost, well not any cost but you know.”*

*F04: "I'm quite a competitive person, always have been so like from a child. So even like competing with my brother, I guess, from as early as that. So I'm quite competitive, I don't want, I don't want to lose."*

Participants expressed that followers driven by an internal desire for achievement who attributed their past successes and/or growth to a particular leader are likely to comply and continue performing for that leader regardless of whether or not that leader demonstrates incivility.

*L008: "But the biggest one is now I've made people to realise their potential that things can be done."*

*L010: "I think just about every staff member here started off somewhere and is now in a better place, you know."*

*F01: "I would have never grown and I've grown in the organisation because of the challenges he gave me."*

F01 in particular expressed as a follower he is driven by an internal desire to positively contribute to the success of the organisation i.e. to play a role in helping the company succeed, where the success or failure of the organisation has national impact.

*F01: "So for me I think it's just the ability to make a difference. To make sure that we all benefit...is to strive to do positive stuff and just do it to the best you can."*

#### **5.5.3.1.4 Personal Values**

Personal values refer to that which is important and holds personal worth to a follower. Personal values is a follower characteristic that falls within the category of follower motivates/values.

With 9 out of the 18 in agreement, personal values emerged from the data as a key follower factor that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. When there is alignment between the follower's personal values and the goals of the organisation; and when followers possess a high work ethic, positive

organisational outcomes are achievable regardless of SLI because followers are naturally driven to act in line with their personal beliefs and values. Participants revealed that when followers' personal values align with the organisations values and when followers believe in what the company is striving to achieve, they are driven to contribute to and focus their efforts on something that is important and of significance to them.

*L008: "You need to get to their level in terms of understanding what are the implications of them not doing what they're supposed to for the company's bottom line in terms of the revenue, in terms of production, also in terms of the future of this country. And the implication they have on each and every individual in the country... So it's important that they realise and understand their potential, they realise and understand that they can do better, realise and understand that if they delay what are the implications. Realise and understand without them the company cannot survive and it's gonna affect his grandmother because his grandmother is not gonna get pension money... It's gonna affect him in his pocket because the bread is gonna get expensive for him as well."*

*F03: "You've got to believe in the journey that he wants to go on."*

The data revealed that followers who have a strong work ethic i.e. a strong internal principle of hard work and diligence, are inherently driven to perform even when they are the target of SLI.

*L007: "I think the work ethic, the drive to actually do something and do it to a decent standard about having pride in your work...the work ethic has got to be there."*

*L008: "You have that level of morals, that level of work ethic, that type of conviction that says; yes I've done it and I deserve it."*

#### **5.5.4 RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

**Research Question 3: What are the contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

The aim of Research Question 3 was to identify the situational factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive results. Interview question 3 prompted participants to draw on their personal experience to identify the factors related to the environment on a macro and organisational level that drive follower performance in the face of SLI.

Table 5 below presents an overview of the results related to Research Question 3, presenting the categories that emerged related to each theme.

**Table 5: Overview of Results to Research Question 3**

Theme	Category
Cultural Norm of SLI	Organisational cultural norm
	Industry wide cultural norm
High Stakes	High Stakes

The data revealed that when SLI is a norm in organisations and/or an industry, followers do not take the leaders' uncivil behaviours personally and are thus not negatively impacted by the leader's uncivil behaviours. The data also revealed that followers perform regardless of SLI when there are disastrous consequences associated with not performing.

#### **5.5.4.1 CULTURAL NORM OF SLI**

With 10 out of 18 participants in agreement, a cultural norm of SLI emerged from the data as a key contextual factor at an organisational and industry level that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. Cultural norms refer to the shared beliefs and expectations of acceptable workplace behaviour based on what is observed. Participants revealed that in organisations and/or industries where uncivil senior leader behaviours are a common occurrence, followers do not take SLI directed towards them personally and thus the leader's incivility has low negative impact on follower outcomes.

- **Organisational level**

L004: *“I was lucky to work in a very direct organisation. So being a Dutch company, and the Dutch are very - they will quickly tell you that the Dutch are frank, so I think I used that to my advantage. For some or other reason with the Dutch you can tell them straight in their face, ‘I don’t think you’re doing your job’, or ‘You’re a liar’, and they don’t get angry, they just want to understand why, but they’re a very frank organisation.”*

L006: *“So we have a very hard direct, no errors and graces approach. And that’s how it is. And if you don’t like it you won’t fit in. So we do find that people are quite [pause] people either cut it or they don’t.”*

- **Industry level**

L001: *“I think in this industry, hospitality leaders have always been assholes.”*

L010: *“So it’s a high pressure environment and I think emotional outbursts are probably pretty common.”*

#### **5.5.4.1.1 High Stakes**

With 7 of the 18 participants in agreement, high stakes emerged from the data as a key contextual factor that enabled uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. High stakes refer to crisis conditions where the consequences associated with not performing could be disastrous. High stakes refers specifically to consequences that have national impact or could cause loss of life.

L004: *“First of all it was in a hospital environment, so if we wanted - let me take an example. A hospital needed a ventilator now, so it’s not that I can go and deliver it six weeks from now, it’s now.”*

L008: *“Because you can agree with me, we cannot afford to have a unit for example in a power station being off for more than 3 days, if we can do it in half the duration. Because the implications are that we will loadshed the country.”*

*F02: “from a support function if you don’t deliver then they will not be able to deliver to the country and I think that’s why the environment allows for it.”*

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

The findings to the three research questions posed in Chapter 3 were presented in this chapter.

The results of the study revealed that the factors related to the uncivil leader which enabled positive organisational outcomes comprised of both behavioural factors (related to the leaders' expression of incivility) and the leader's characteristics. The study found that when SLI is infrequent and the leader is impartial with respect to the delivery of his or her uncivil behaviours, positive organisational outcomes are achievable. Whilst it was expected based on the literature related to incivility that impartiality would emerge as a factor that influenced incivility outcomes (Mao et al., 2019; P. Schilpzand et al., 2016), frequency of uncivil behaviours was not expected. The frequency of uncivil behaviours was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars. The results revealed positive organisational outcomes are achieved in the face of SLI when the leader possesses certain key foundational traits and capacities i.e. the leader possesses a dominant tendency to engage in visionary and supportive leadership behaviours (leader behavioural style), when the leader is highly knowledgeable (KSA), and when the leader is remorseful (trait). This was not expected. Perpetrator factors as moderators of incivility and incivility outcomes were not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

With incivility being a function of more than just the perpetrator, positive organisational outcomes in the face of SLI was also found to be dependent on follower (target) characteristics i.e. follower motives/values and capabilities. Follower traits was also expected to emerge as a factor that influenced how followers experienced SLI, since target traits featured prominently in the literature, however follower traits did not emerge within this study as a factor that influenced the relationship between SLI and outcomes. Social skills however did emerge as a follower factor that enabled positive outcomes despite SLI. This was expected based on the incivility literature reviewed (Iitzkovich & Dolev, 2017). In addition, the

study found positive organisational outcomes are achieved despite SLI when followers are motivated to perform in order to avoid the negative consequences associated with not performing (risks), in exchange for external rewards, when followers are driven by a strong internal desire for achievement, and when follower's personal values aligned to the interests of the organisation. This was not expected. Follower motives/values as a moderator of incivility and incivility outcomes were not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

With respect to the context, the results revealed that uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes when SLI is a cultural norm in the industry and/or organisation and when the stakes are exceptionally high i.e. consequence of not performing has national impact or could result in loss of life. A cultural norm of incivility was expected to emerge as a contextual factor that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive outcomes, based on the incivility literature reviewed (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2014). High stakes as a contextual factor was not expected and was not found to have been previously explored as a moderator of incivility and incivility outcomes.

The next chapter discusses the findings from this chapter in detail relating it back to the literature.



## **6 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The results presented in Chapter 5 were gathered through the process documented in Chapter 4 and are discussed in detail in this chapter. The insights presented in this chapter are compared and contrasted to the existing literature presented in chapter 2, in order to arrive at conclusive findings to the research questions identified in Chapter 3. The insights contribute to an improved understanding of the construct workplace incivility and in particular leader incivility. The study identified the specific leader (the perpetrator) factors, follower (the target) factors and contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes, offering new insights that have not been previously explored, in the reviewed literature. The discussion is presented in line with the research questions and collectively provides insights into the research problem identified in Chapter 1.

The sample criteria was senior leaders who demonstrated incivility and followers of senior leaders who demonstrated incivility, and still achieved positive organisational outcomes, where positive organisational outcomes refer to the achievement of financial and/or non-financial organisational goals. Interview questions 4 prompted participants for examples of positive organisational outcomes and interview question 5 prompted participants for examples of senior leader behaviours that were characteristic of incivility. The participant responses confirmed the senior leaders (and those referred to) demonstrated uncivil behaviours (as per the definition of SLI presented in chapter 2) and achieved positive organisational success. The participant responses validate interview participants met the sample criteria, which provides credibility to the findings of this study.

### **6.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

**Research Question 1: What are the factors related to the uncivil senior leader that enables them to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

Research Question 1 sought to identify the behavioural factors related specifically to the leader's expression of incivility, which influenced organisational outcomes positively. Interview question 5, prompted participants to shed insights regarding their expressed (uncivil) behaviours. Research Question 1 further sought to identify the characteristics related to the leader that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. With leader characteristics found to comprise of leader traits and capacities (i.e. KSA's and leader behavioural style) (Zaccaro et al., 2018), the study sought to identify the exact leader traits, KSA's and leader behavioural styles required for uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. This section proceeds with a discussion of each theme that emerged regarding the behavioural factors related to the leader's expression of incivility, followed by a discussion of the themes that emerged related to the leader's characteristics, which enables positive outcomes, despite SLI.

## **6.2.1 LEADER'S EXPRESSION OF INCIVILITY**

The study found that senior leaders were able to achieve positive organisational outcomes when they demonstrated uncivil behaviours only occasionally and not all of the time (infrequently uncivil), and when they did, they did so without discriminating between team members (impartially uncivil).

### **6.2.1.1 INFREQUENTLY UNCIVIL**

The study revealed that positive organisational outcomes are achieved when SLI is not a regular, everyday occurrence but is instead triggered by an event and occurs only occasionally. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the impact of frequency of uncivil behaviours on outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

Whilst this finding is unexpected, it is supported by Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao and Chang (2012) who found infrequent, occasional destructive leader behaviours had a positive influence on follower performance through high perceptions of leader effectiveness compared to frequent, regular demonstrations of destructive leader behaviours, which resulted in low perceptions of leader effectiveness. The researchers argued that followers attributed frequent, regular abusive leader

behaviours to personal factors, compared to infrequent occasional abusive behaviours which were attributed to situational factors. This is in line with Einarsen, Aasland and Skogstad (2007) who argued that leaders occasionally make poor decisions and that it is only when the leader demonstrates destructive behaviours regularly that the leader can be categorised as a destructive leader, and destructive outcomes be expected. This is supported by Erickson, Shaw, Murray and Branch (2015) who argued that random acts of destructive behaviours do not qualify as destructive leadership.

This research study found that whilst these leaders demonstrate occasional incivility they otherwise demonstrate exceptionally supportive behaviours towards their followers. It seems that when incivility is not a regular occurrence and the leader has proven their good intentions towards followers and when a trusting relationship has been developed through otherwise supportive leader behaviours, followers do not do not take the leaders' occasional uncivil behaviours personally. This is supported by Haggard and Park (2018) who argued that occasional hurtful leader behaviours are often unintentional and supportive leader behaviours serve to mitigate against the harmful effects of abusive leader behaviours by altering perceptions of the leaders' occasional abusive behaviours. Supportive leader behaviours mitigate against occasional demonstrations of destructive leader behaviours because leader support provides confirmation of positive leader intentions (Miner et al., 2012). Marchiondo, Cortina and Kabat-farr (2018) found that when the perpetrator's intention to harm is not in question, targets do not perceive incivility as a threat. Furthermore, supportive leader behaviours mitigate against infrequent demonstrations of destructive leader behaviours because perceptions of leader support strengthen the relationship between leader and follower, where high quality LMX is characterised by high levels of trust (Sears & Humiston, 2015). It is through a trusting relationship developed through supportive leader behaviours that the occasional hurtful behaviours diminish the negative effects commonly associated with abusive leader behaviours.

#### **6.2.1.2 IMPARTIALLY UNCIVIL**

This research study found positive organisational outcomes are achieved when uncivil senior leaders do not differentiate amongst followers and all followers are at

risk of receiving uncivil treatment. It may be due to this impartiality that followers don't feel discriminated against and are therefore less likely to take the incident personally or let it negatively influence their outputs. They seem to instead attribute the leader's behaviour to the situation, filter out the useful feedback and make the necessary corrections, thereby improving their performance.

This finding was expected and is consistent with the literature. Mao, Chang, Johnson and Sun (2019) found perceptions of variability in incivility experiences amongst group members influenced follower outputs negatively. P. Schilpzand, Leavitt and Lim (2016) argued being singled out amongst group members as the target of incivility resulted in increased perceptions of a threat and increased self-blame. He, Fehr, Yam, Long and Hao (2017) argued that follower perception of fairness is dependent on both interactional justice i.e. the follower's perception of the treatment he/she receives by the leader and interactional justice differentiation i.e. the difference in interactional justice behaviours of the leader towards followers within a group, which has a direct influence on follower attitudes, behaviour, performance, relationships and organisational outcomes. Lily (2017) argued that perceptions of fairness were associated with positive emotions that arise from feelings of being respected and valued, and through social identity. This is in line with the findings from this study. This study found that when the leader is impartial, follower treatment is considered fair and thus minimizes the negative impact incivility has on the follower and his or her outputs.

## **6.2.2 LEADER CHARACTERISTICS**

This section discusses the themes that emerged related to the senior leader's characteristics (i.e. leader traits, KSA's, leadership style), which were found to influence the relationship between incivility and outcomes, positively. The themes that emerged were visionary leadership, a highly knowledgeable leader, exceptionally supportive leadership behaviours and the ability to express remorse for causing offense.

### **6.2.2.1 VISIONARY LEADER**

The study found positive organisational outcomes are achieved when the uncivil leader demonstrates visionary leadership behaviours. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of visionary leadership on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

Based on the insights obtained, a visionary leader refers to a leader that has a clear vision for what the organisation aspires to become and articulates that vision to his or her followers in such a way that he/she inspires a following and garners follower support for the vision; and provides explicit directions to followers on how to achieve that vision. This is supported by Jantz (2017) who described the visioning process to encompass the leader visualizing a desired future, effectively communicating that vision to his or her followers and empowering followers so that they succeed.

A study conducted by Berson, Halevy, Shamir and Erez (2015) explained that when followers ascribe a high intrinsic value to their work, they are extremely motivated to perform. The findings of this research study confirmed this. This study found that when followers are inspired by a leader's shared vision, they are motivated to perform. This could be because they are excited about the future and they believe their work has purpose, so much so that the senior leader's uncivil behaviours has little impact on the follower. This is consistent with the studies performed by Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012), Samnani and Singh (2013) and Harms, Credé, Tynan, Leon and Jeung (2017) who found when destructive leaders provide a compelling vision which followers internalise, followers are intrinsically driven to comply.

The results from this research study suggest that these leaders are effective despite their incivility because they have a plan for the future of the organisation, and work at moving the organisation in that direction by focussing organisational efforts towards the achievement of the collective vision. This is supported by Berson, Halevy, Shamir and Erez (2015) and Jantz (2017) who argued that goals direct effort and the alignment between goals, decisions and actions are essential

for the process to yield desired outcomes. In focussing organisational efforts, this research study found effective leaders are clear about what they want to achieve. They were found to provide clear direction and set out clear expectations to followers. Participants agreed that when followers are provided with clear direction and expectations are clear, followers are very likely to succeed in fulfilling their responsibilities. Berson, Halevy, Shamir and Erez (2015) supported this, arguing clear objectives and clear direction on how to achieve those objectives are critical for follower performance, where clear expectations help reduce ambiguity and improves follower effectiveness by directing followers' efforts and attention.

When everyone is working towards a common objective and decisions taken are aligned to that objective, it can be expected that the organisation becomes more affective at succeeding in achieving that vision through collective effort. This is supported by the literature where organisational goals have been found to direct attention and coordinate efforts towards the accomplishment of those goals, thereby improving performance (Berson et al., 2015).

The results revealed that a shared vision motivates followers by creating a sense of belonging in the organisation. Despite SLI, followers seem to give their best effort, striving towards the achievement of the collective vision driven by a desire for achievement and to help towards making a positive difference. Epitropaki, Kark, Mainemelis and Lord (2017) found a collective vision creates a shared identity amongst followers, where followers are motivated to perform due to follower social identification i.e. where the follower adopts the identity of the group, motivating followers to contribute to group goals.

Berson, Halevy, Shamir and Erez (2015) and Epitropaki, Kark, Mainemelis and Lord (2017) referred to visionary leader behaviours as transformational behaviours, a construct that falls into the category of constructive leadership (Fors Brandebo et al., 2016; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). This is important to note, since whilst the senior leader demonstrates uncivil behaviours, otherwise known as a destructive behaviours some of the time, he/she also demonstrates constructive leader behaviours. The outcome of the leadership process therefore cannot be attributed to a particular leader behaviour or characteristic but is the result of a confluence of leader behaviours and characteristics; as well as follower and contextual factors.

#### **6.2.2.2 HIGHLY KNOWLEDGEABLE**

This research study found the knowledge of the leader plays a key role in enabling uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of perpetrator knowledge on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

Whilst this finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility, this finding is consistent with the study conducted by Zaccaro, Green, Dubrow and Kolze (2018) who found a leader's knowledge of the situation, knowledge of the business, experience, tenure in the business and education level (referred to as leader knowledge, skills and abilities - KSA) to be a key leadership capacity that influenced leader outcomes. Based on participant responses, this research study found leader knowledge to comprise of the leader's experience, expertise, business acumen, understanding of the business and industry. This is in partial alignment with literature with one exception i.e. the leader's education level. In this study the leader's education level did not come up once and is therefore excluded from the description of leader knowledge.

Knowledgeable senior leaders with a history of past achievements are believable and convincing, and therefore credible. Perceived leader credibility seems to inspire confidence and trust amongst followers in the leader's abilities. Credibility appears to increase the leaders' influence over his or her followers, particularly if followers find value in the leaders' achievements. The study found that when leaders speak from a position of expertise and experience they are respected by their followers. These leaders seem to possess an authority and influence over their followers that extends beyond their position because what they say can be trusted, and probably affords them more leeway with respect to their uncivil behaviours than others. Credibility was described by Swanson & Kent (2014) as the perceived trustworthiness of the speaker and is a function of audience's perception of the speaker's knowledge, experience, training, expertise and intelligence, and the audience's beliefs regarding the speaker's sincerity and intention towards the receiver. Leader credibility has been found to influence leadership outcomes because of the trust and confidence it creates, with leader

credibility determining the influence leaders have over followers (Swanson & Kent, 2014). Credibility is a means of persuasion, related to ethos within Aristotle's model of the three modes of persuasion (Swanson & Kent, 2014). It is very likely that it is this power of influence that keeps followers performing despite the leaders' uncivil behaviours and which enables positive organisational outcomes. This is supported by Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) who argued that certain followers comply with destructive leaders due to the trust and belief they have in the leader which can be attributed to the leaders' expert knowledge.

Leaders that are highly knowledgeable seem to be more effectively at executing leadership related tasks successfully e.g. visioning, decisions making, problem solving, etc., because they are well informed and their decisions stem from a solid understanding of the business. This is supported by Goodall & Pogrebná (2015) who found that positive team outcomes were linked to the leaders' expert knowledge i.e. knowledge of the organisations core business together with industry experience i.e. the theory of expert leadership. The leader's expert knowledge was found to facilitate effective decision making (both strategic and operational) and improved follower performance as a result of their expert power i.e. the influence the leader had over followers due to their credibility.

### **6.2.2.3 EXCEPTIONALLY SUPPORTIVE**

The results of this study found uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes when leaders are normally exceptionally supportive towards their followers. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of supportive leadership on the relationship between leader incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars. Based on the insights obtained through the data, exceptionally supportive leader behaviours comprises of:

- demonstrating empathy and assisting followers overcome both work related and personal challenges,
- enabling followers by backing them, fighting on their behalf, removing the obstacles that stand in their way of succeeding, as well as empowering followers by providing them with what they need to succeed e.g. resources, assistance and skills,



- helps develop and build followers through coaching and mentoring and provides guidance and advice to followers helping them overcome the challenges they face.

This is consistent with the literature where supportive leader behaviours have been found to include leaders demonstrating concern for followers, considering the personal and developmental needs of followers, providing assistance to followers and mentoring followers (Monje Amor et al., 2019).

It appears that is through the leader's demonstrations of care, encouragement and willingness to assist, aimed at helping the follower be and do better, that a trusting relationship is developed and loyalty is built. It seems that it is because the leader's intention to harm the follower is not in question, because of follower loyalty and because the follower feels obliged to give back to the leader in response to the leader's supportive behaviours, that followers continue to perform even when the leader demonstrates uncivil behaviours.

This is supported by the literature. Exceptionally supportive leader behaviours is confirmation of positive leader intentions (Miner et al., 2012). Marchiondo, Cortina and Kabat-farr (2018) found when the leaders intention to harm is not in question, followers do not perceive SLI as a threat and instead rationalise the uncivil event. This enables them to extract the lessons from the message and make improvements. According to the literature supportive leader behaviours strengthens the relationship between leader and follower (Cameron & Webster, 2011; Sears & Humiston, 2015; Thompson et al., 2018) by generating positive follower emotions of belongingness, feeling valued, cared for and respected by the leader (Miner et al., 2012). High quality leader-member exchange relationships are associated with high levels of trust and long term reciprocity (He et al., 2017; Sakurai & Jex, 2012). In line with social exchange theory, relationships are associated with reciprocal obligations. When leaders demonstrate supportive behaviours towards followers and empower their followers, followers reciprocate through improved work engagement and improved job commitment (Monje Amor et al., 2019). This is further supported by Thompson, Buch and Glasø (2018) who argued that follower outcomes are largely influenced by the relationship between the leader and follower.

Whilst Schyns & Schilling (2013) found destructive leader behaviours diminished trust and increased follower resistance towards the leader, this research study found SLI did not have any major negative effect on trust, or on outcomes as a result of diminished trust. The contradiction in the findings could be attributed to the fact that follower trust is a function of more than just a single destructive act in isolation but is reinforced and built over time through multiple exchanges. This is supported by Haggard and Park (2018) who argued that supportive leader behaviours serves to mitigate against the harmful effects of occasional abusive leader behaviours by shifting the perception of the leader's behaviours.

The very act of leaders supporting followers i.e. enabling them, removing obstacles, coaching, advising, developing them, helps followers succeed and therefore positive organisational outcomes are expected. This is supported by Monje Amor, Abeal Vázquez and Faíña (2019) who argued that supportive leader behaviours increases structural empowerment where followers have access to information and resources, learning and development opportunities, and guidance, all of which enables followers to succeed, promoting organisational goals.

Monje Amor, Abeal Vázquez and Faíña (2019) describe supportive leadership to be a characteristic of transformational leadership, a construct that falls into the category of constructive leadership (Fors Brandebo et al., 2016; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). It is important to note that whilst the senior leader demonstrates uncivil behaviours considered destructive behaviours, the leader also demonstrates constructive supportive leader behaviours. Based on the findings, leaders exhibit a range of behaviours, the outcome of which is a function of the aggregate effect of the leader's behaviours over time, and not based on the leader's behaviour at a single point in time.

#### **6.2.2.4 REMORSEFUL**

The study found that when a follower feels aggrieved by SLI, positive organisational outcomes are still achievable if the uncivil senior leader owns up and demonstrates regret for his or her uncivil behaviours. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence

of perpetrator remorse on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

Destructive leader behaviours have been found to cause emotional upset to followers resulting in negative follower and organisational consequences (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). It seems the act of the leader admitting to having violated the follower by owning up to his or her mistakes and expressing regret for causing harm to an aggrieved follower helps restore positive follower's emotions and repairs the relationship between leader and follower, resulting in follower performance levels being restored. Whilst this finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility, this finding is supported by literature. Haggard and Park (2018) found high follower perceptions of leader remorse diminished the harmful effects usually associated with abusive leader behaviours, where signs of remorse indicated concern for the target and a desire to repair the relationship. This was argued to elicit feelings of empathy towards the leader, with the follower attributing the leader's destructive behaviours to impulse as opposed to harmful intent.

In a study exploring restoring leader trust violations, Grover, Hasel, Manville and Serrano-Archimi (2014) argued leader apologies positively influence follower mental and emotional well-being, follower perception of the leader and trust in the leader (in situations where the violation of trust is not severe) with trust found to be associated with higher levels of follower performance. Fehr and Gelfand (2010) explored the components that make for an effective apology and found that expressions of empathy within an apology i.e. demonstrating recognition and concern for the emotions of the target, showing understanding from the target's viewpoint and for the target's suffering, elicits forgiveness. Forgiveness as a result of leaders' apology has been found to be related to (from the target's perspective) reduced negative emotions, increased self-esteem, improved quality of relationship as a result of improved trust, increased co-operation and improved job performance (Fehr & Gelfand, 2010). Sguera, Bagozzi, Huy, Boss and Boss (2016) further supported this arguing that incivility followed by an apology reduces the likelihood of negative outcomes.

### **6.2.3 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

The research study concluded that uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes when uncivil behaviours are an exception and not an everyday norm; and when the leader does not discriminate amongst group members with respect to his or her expression of incivility. When there is a deep level of trust and a perception of fairness, followers are not threatened by occasional SLI. They instead appreciate the seriousness of the issue and perform. The results of this research study found that whilst these leaders demonstrate occasional incivility, they are also predominantly visionary leaders who achieve positive organisational outcomes by creating a shared purpose, aligning efforts, and through collective action and clear direction, moves the organisation closer to its shared goals. Similarly, whilst these leaders demonstrate occasional incivility, they are usually exceptionally supportive of their followers. Follower loyalty is built as a result of the leader's supportive behaviours which results in followers performing despite SLI, where followers feel obliged to reciprocate to the leader's supportive behaviours which is usually through performance. Furthermore, the very act of supporting and helping the follower succeed helps the organisation succeed. The study found that uncivil senior leaders that are highly knowledgeable achieve positive organisational outcomes because of their credibility and the influential power they have over their followers as a result of their credibility. Their success can further be attributed to the effectiveness of their decisions due to their capabilities. And lastly, the study found when uncivil senior leaders recognise and face up to the offence they cause as a result of their uncivil behaviours, they restore positive follower emotion and trust which drives follower performance.

### **6.3 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

**Research Question 2: What are the factors related to the follower that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

Research Question 2 sought to identify the characteristics of the follower that enables followers to perform in spite of SLI. With follower characteristics found to comprise of follower traits, motives/values and capabilities belonging to the follower (Antelo et al., 2011; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), the study sought to identify the exact

follower traits, motives/values and capabilities that drives followers to perform despite being subjected to SLI. This section proceeds with a discussion of each theme that emerged related to the follower's characteristics, which were found to drive follower performance, despite SLI.

### **6.3.1 FOLLOWER CHARACTERISTICS**

The themes that emerged related to the follower's characteristics found to drive follower's performance, in the face of SLI, were motivation for risk and rewards, high social skills, motivation for achievement (achievement driven) and the follower's personal values.

#### **6.3.1.1 RISK AND REWARDS**

The study found that positive organisational outcomes are achieved in spite of SLI when followers are strongly motivated to perform. The research study found risks and rewards to be key motivators that drive followers to perform in spite of SLI. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of the target's motivation on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

- **Risk**

The study found that followers are driven to perform in spite of SLI to avoid the negative consequences associated with not performing (i.e. to minimise the cost). Followers were found to perform to avoid losing what they valued i.e. their jobs and thus their earning potential, and to avoid further unpleasantness i.e. further confrontation with the leader. Whilst researchers have not previously explored the influence of the target's motivation on the relationship between incivility and outcomes, this finding is supported by Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) who found that followers, termed bystanders, often submit to destructive leaders to avoid the consequences of not conforming and complying, and referred to this as fear based motivations. Starratt and Grandy (2010) found followers that were highly motivated by money, continue to perform despite being subjected to abusive leader behaviours for fear of losing their jobs and thus their income. Shao,

Similarly, Li and Mawritz (2017) found employees with a dominant motivation orientation of prevention focus i.e. driven to protect what they value, improved their performance after witnessing co-worker abuse (as a result of abusive supervision), driven by a desire to avoid similar mistreatment.

- **Rewards**

Whilst rewards comprise of a multitude of factors e.g. monetary rewards,, recognition, flexible working arrangements, career development, learning opportunities etc. (Abdur et al., 2015; Haider et al., 2015; Schlechter et al., 2015) in the context of this study based on the data, rewards refers to financial rewards, recognition and opportunities. Followers seem to be motivated to perform when they value the rewards that are associated with performing and are willing to withstand uncivil senior leader behaviours in order to maintain/obtain those rewards.

Followers that placed high value on financial rewards, were found to be motivated to perform despite SLI due to their financial rewards being directly linked to their performance. It seems when follower motivation to maintain/obtain financial rewards is high, it outweighs the negative effects of SLI. Whilst researchers have not previously explored the influence of the target's motivation on the relationship between incivility and outcomes, this finding is supported. Starratt and Grandy (2010) found the motivation for financial rewards moderated the relationship between abusive leader behaviours and follower outcomes, where followers that were highly motivated by financial rewards were willing to tolerate abusive leader behaviours. In line with expectancy theory when financial rewards are linked to performance, and employees value financial rewards, employees apply great effort to improve/maintain their performance to achieve financial rewards (Abdur et al., 2015; Barbuto, 2000; Schlechter et al., 2015).

Followers that place high value on being acknowledged for their abilities and actions were found to be motivated to perform despite SLI to obtain recognition, where recognition indicates the follower's value in the organisation. It seems that recognition enhances the follower's sense of self-worth. This is supported by Clarke and Mahadi (2017) who argued recognition reinforces feelings of being valued. Whilst literature related to leader incivility is silent on follower recognition

and its influence on incivility outcomes, literature does confirm that when leaders recognise employees, employees reciprocate with actions that benefit the leader typically through their outputs (Clarke & Mahadi, 2017; Schlechter et al., 2015). This is further supported by Barbuto (2000). Barbuto argued that followers who care deeply about how others view them are driven by the need for acceptance and behave in ways to achieve acceptance, which is often through their performance in the workplace, which explains why followers comply, despite being targets of SLI.

The research study also found that followers withstand SLI and continue to perform when they believe there are opportunities that they could benefit from if they continued to maintain their performance. Based on the data collected, opportunities in the context of this study refer to opportunities to learn from the leader and opportunities for career advancement. It seems when there is something that followers want to learn from the uncivil senior leader they are willing to satisfy the leader and protect the relationship, despite the leaders' uncivil behaviours to gain the benefit of learning from the leader, where non-performance/poor performance may jeopardise that learning opportunity. In addition, the opportunity for career growth seems to provide followers with a motive to perform in spite of the leaders' uncivil behaviours, based on a belief that good performance and compliance will move the follower closer to their career goals. This is supported by Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) who found followers comply with destructive leaders when they sense an opportunity for an exchange for that which they value, with career advancement and training opportunities considered valuable rewards (Schlechter et al., 2015) and the exchange is contingent on them complying.

#### **6.3.1.1.1 High Social Skills**

The research study found positive organisational outcomes are possible in spite of SLI when followers possess high levels of social skills. Social skills refer to a variety of interpersonal skills that enables people to effectively engage, however within this study based on the insights obtained through the data, social skills refer specifically to tolerance and EQ. This is supported by the literature that has found both tolerance and EQ to be attributes that make for an effective follower (Antelo et al., 2011). Social skills were identified in the study, to be essential in enabling

followers to regulate their emotions to be able to withstand the leader's incivility and respond constructively to uncivil behaviours. This is supported by Hochwarter, Witt, Treadway and Ferris (2006) who argued social skills are positively related to job performance (achieved through improved social interactions) and are particularly helpful in dealing with difficult people.

The study found that positive organisational outcomes are achieved despite SLI when followers are tolerant. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of the target's tolerance levels on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars. The study found that when followers have experience working with an uncivil senior leader they grow tolerant of the leader's uncivil behaviours. It seems that over time followers get to know their leaders and they grow to understand how the leader behaves under different situations. They seem to know what to expect, and through experience they know not to take the leader's behaviours personally and let it negatively impact their outputs. Whilst researchers have not previously explored the influence of the target's tolerance levels on the relationship between incivility and outcomes, this finding is supported by Antelo, Prilipko and Henderson (2011) who found tolerance to be a follower characteristics that enabled followers to be more effective, where tolerance was described as the ability of the follower to accept decisions, actions and/or practices without necessarily agreeing with them. This is consistent with Hochwarter, Witt, Treadway and Ferris (2006) who argued tolerance is a social skill that helps people deal with difficult individuals.

The study also found that positive organisational outcomes are achieved in spite of SLI when followers possess high levels of EQ. According to the data collected, EQ refers to the follower's ability to manage themselves in a situation and involves behaving rationally and being able to control one's emotions and incorporates empathy for the leader. This is in line with the literature where EQ refers to the ability one possesses to effectively deal with emotions and includes being mindful, managing one's emotions, having empathy and effectively managing relationships (Wong & Law, 2002). Incivility has been found to be damaging because it negatively impacts followers on an emotional level (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016). However, when followers possess high levels of EQ, it seems they are less



likely to interpret the leader's incivility as a personal attack. And whilst some with high EQ may still feel aggrieved, they are able to manage their emotions in the situation such that SLI does not negatively impact them or their performance. Furthermore, it appears that when followers have an appreciation of the pressures that the leader faces, they are empathetic towards the leader. They are therefore less likely to take the incident personally but are more likely to be solutions focussed. This finding was expected and is supported by the literature. Itzkovich and Dolev (2017) explored the influence of the target's EQ on incivility outcomes, and argued that it is the perception of a violation that triggers negative emotions and reactions where people high in EQ do not perceive a violation and are thus not negatively affected by incivility. This is supported by a study that investigated the effect of customer abuse on employees, where it was found employees that possessed high levels of EQ experienced less negative reactions to aggressive and abusive behaviours (Kashif et al., 2017). Similarly, in a study investigating workplace cyberbullying Keskin, Akgün, Ayar and Kayman (2016), found high EQ helped followers manage workplace stressors better. The authors further argued that high EQ enabled employees to rather direct their resources on solving problems. Itzkovich and Dolev (2017) asserted that empathy was a key component of EQ explaining that when followers are able to put themselves in the leader's position and consider the pressures that the leader faces, they are more understanding of the leader's uncivil behaviours which reduces the negative emotions and stress usually triggered by uncivil behaviours.

#### **6.3.1.2 ACHIEVEMENT DRIVEN**

The research study found positive organisational outcomes are possible in spite of SLI when followers possess an inherent need for achievement which drives their efforts. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of the target's motivation on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars. It seems these followers are undeterred by uncivil senior leader behaviours and are instead driven by a strong inner desire to succeed and to achieve a particular result, which provides them with a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment. This is referred to in the literature as achievement motives where people are driven to behave so as to surpass current standards and is associated with

greater accomplishments and job performance. (Thielgen et al., 2015). Whilst researchers have not previously explored the influence of the target's motivation on the relationship between incivility and outcomes, this finding is supported. Individuals with a high need for achievement seem to be willing to put in the effort and are driven to do whatever is necessary to succeed. Barbuto (2000) referred to this as self-concept internal source of motivation arguing that followers who value achievement are motivated by excellence which drives their efforts.

The study found that when achievement driven followers attributed past successes and their development/growth to a particular leader, those followers were likely to continue performing for that leader regardless of that leader's uncivil behaviours. It is likely that through these past experiences, followers develop trust and confidence in the leader abilities to steer him/her in the right direction to achieve further success, regardless of the leader's abusive behaviours. This is supported by the literature. Research has found when leaders are deeply respected and trusted by their followers and when followers (mentally) construct a parent-child relationship with the leader, seeking the approval of the leader and considers the leader as someone who cares about them and guides them and is deeply invested in their success, then leaders take on a symbolic status. They are intensely trusted and even considered heroic. They hold symbolic power which goes way beyond normal leader power, which makes followers exceptionally susceptible to the leader's influence (Sankowsky, 1995).

#### **6.3.1.3 PERSONAL VALUES**

The research study found positive organisational outcomes are possible in spite of SLI when the follower's personal values align with the interests of the organisation. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of the target's personal values on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars. Based on the data, the theme personal values refers specifically to the follower's belief in the company's vision and values, and high follower work ethic.

The study found that when followers truly believe in the company's vision and what the company strives to achieve, and subscribes to the organisation's values, they naturally do what's in the best interest of the organisation. This is because followers are inherently driven to act based on their beliefs and what's important to them. It seems when followers truly believe in company's vision and values, they have a clear rationale for their choices and are driven by a strong sense of purpose, regardless of the leader's incivility. Whilst literature exploring the influence of the target's values on the relationship between incivility and incivility outcomes was found to be lacking, literature does confirm the positive consequences of aligning organisation vision and employee values. When the vision and values of the company align with followers' values, followers act in ways that benefit both the follower and the organisation (Paarlberg & Perry, 2007; Walsh et al., 2018). Barbuto (2000) referred to this as goal internalised motivation arguing that followers naturally make decisions and behave in line with their personal values. In a study exploring followers that comply with destructive leaders, Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) argued that when a destructive leader's vision aligns with the follower's (acolytes) values, followers comply.

The study found that when followers have a high work ethic, they give their best effort regardless of the leader's incivility. Work ethic guides one's work behaviour. Followers that possess a high work ethic seem to be driven by a strong inner principle that is not derailed by the leader's incivility. Whilst literature exploring the influence of the target's work ethic on the relationship between incivility and incivility outcomes was found to be lacking, researchers have confirmed the positive relationship between work ethic, follower effort, and follower performance. Meriac, Thomas and Milunski (2015) found in a setting where employees were unsupervised, employees with a high work ethic worked with greater intensity than followers with a low work ethic, which improved performance. Barbuto (2000) referred to this as a self-concept internal source of motivation arguing that followers are driven to behave in line with internal standards.

### **6.3.2 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

The research findings concluded that when followers possess high social skills, in particular tolerance and EQ, they are able to effectively manage their emotions,

such that the SLI does not trigger negative responses. The study found follower motivates/values to be a key factor that enables positive organisational outcomes to be achieved despite SLI. Followers motivated to avoid risks i.e. the negative consequences associated with not performing and/or highly motivated by rewards where the attainment of those rewards hinged on their performance, were found to perform regardless of SLI. Similarly, followers with a strong need for achievement i.e. intrinsically motivated to succeed, remain committed to their goals, despite SLI. The study further found that when a follower's personal values align with the interests of the organisation, success can be expected regardless of SLI, since followers are naturally inclined to behave in line with their beliefs and internal standards.

## **6.4 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

**Research Question 3: What are the contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes?**

Research Question 3 sought to identify the contextual factors that enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. With context found to comprise of macro factors and organisational factors, interview question 3 sought to identify the exact macro and/or organisational level factors that drive followers to perform despite being subjected to the leader's uncivil behaviours. Whilst there is wide recognition that context influences leadership outcomes, literature in terms of the contextual factors that influence the relationship between incivility and incivility outcomes was found to be limited.

The themes that emerged related to the context found to drive follower's performance, in the face of SLI were cultural norms of SLI (at an organisational and industry level) and the potential of disastrous consequences (high stakes) associated with not performing. This section proceeds with a discussion of each of these themes.

#### **6.4.1 CULTURAL NORM OF SLI**

The research study found positive organisational outcomes are achieved in spite of SLI when SLI is accepted and expected in the organisation and/or in the industry. Based on the data cultural norms refers to collective beliefs and expectations of workplace behaviour based on what is observed. This is consistent with the literature. Sharma (2018) described culture as the shared assumptions and beliefs of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours based on organisational norms of behaviours and values.

It seems that when SLI is a cultural norm, followers are more accepting of this behaviour. They seem to grow accustomed to the experience of workplace incivility and through this experience learn that it is not personal, and instead SLI is expected. They do not perceive the leader's incivility as a violation and therefore their reactions are not negative, and their outputs are not adversely impacted. They seem to be accepting of incivility as a workplace norm and rationalise this by attributing it to the pressures within the environment. This finding is consistent with the literature reviewed. Walker, van Jaarsveld and Skarlicki (2014) found that cultural norms moderated the relationship between incivility and employees (with low negative affectivity) reactions to incivility, where when incivility was not a norm, the unexpectedness of the leaders' incivility triggered negative reactions. Similarly, Sharma (2018) argued cultural norms moderated the relationship between abusive supervision and employee reactions to abusive supervision. Walsh, Lee, Jensen, McGonagle and Samnani (2018) found leader behaviours influenced employee perceptions of norms of respect, thereby shaping employee perceptions of behaviours that are acceptable and those that are not. Therefore when leaders are uncivil, employees perceive incivility to be normal business practice. They do not take personal offense, nor are their outputs negatively impacted.

Contradictory to this research study's finding, Aljawarneh & Atan (2018), Abubakar, Yazdian, & Behraves (2018), and Yang (2016) found incivility as a workplace norm resulted in negative emotions, deviant work behaviour and ineffective team behaviours. This could be explained by the fact that in focussing on the consequences of incivility, these studies have neglected to consider the influence

cultural norms has on shaping follower perceptions and behaviours, which alters follower responses to incivility.

#### **6.4.2 HIGH STAKES**

The research study found positive organisational outcomes are achieved in spite of SLI when the risks of not performing could be disastrous i.e. having national impact (e.g. load shedding) or loss of life, followers performed regardless of SLI. This finding was not expected based on the literature reviewed related to workplace incivility where the influence of the criticality of the situation on the relationship between incivility and outcomes was not found to have been previously explored by incivility scholars.

In these situations, followers seem to be driven by a responsibility to act. They appear to put aside their personal interests and feelings, because there is much more at stake and does what needs to be done to avoid the disastrous consequences. Whilst literature exploring the influence of the criticality of the situation on the relationship between incivility and incivility outcomes was found to be lacking, researchers have found that when in times of crisis and when the magnitude of consequences are high e.g. death, destruction or devastation, followers are more tolerant of abusive behaviours. They are concerned with more pressing issues i.e. a moral obligation that redirects their attention and efforts which drives their performance (Hannah et al., 2009; Sharma, 2018).

#### **6.4.3 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

The research study concluded that the contextual factors which enable uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes are SLI being a cultural norm in the organisation and/or industry, and when the stakes associated with not performing are exceptionally high. When SLI is a cultural norm in the organisation and/or the industry, followers expect and are generally more accepting of uncivil senior leader behaviours. This reduces the negative perceptions usually associated with incivility. SLI therefore does not negatively impact follower performance. In addition, the study found when the risks of not performing could be disastrous i.e.

has a national impact or could cause the loss of life, followers perform despite SLI, driven by a sense of duty.

## **6.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented a discussion of the results obtained through the data analysis process. The study found the factors that enable positive organisational outcomes, despite SLI comprise of:

- Leader behavioural factors: infrequent and impartial expression of incivility
- Leader characteristics: visionary and supportive leader behaviours (leader behavioural style), a highly knowledgeable leader (KSA) and leader remorse (trait)
- Follower characteristics: high social skills (capabilities), followers motivated by risk and rewards, and achievement (motives/values), and when follower personal values align to the interest of the organisation (motives/values)
- Contextual factors: cultural norms of SLI (organisational and industry level) and high stakes, where the risks associated with not performing is exceptionally high.

The results were integrated to develop a practical framework that explains the phenomenon of SLI and positive organisational outcomes, which could be of benefit to uncivil senior leaders and is presented in the concluding chapter of this study that follows

## 7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

With leader behaviours commonly categorised in the literature as constructive and destructive based on organisational and employee outcomes (Collins & Jackson, 2015; Fors Brandebo et al., 2016, 2018; Schyns & Schilling, 2013), this study sought to understand how uncivil senior leaders, a behaviour regarded by scholars to be destructive (Anjum et al., 2018; Estes & Wang, 2008; Huang & Lin, 2019; Wu et al., 2014), achieve positive organisational outcomes. Workplace incivility is described as an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Given within this study the senior leader was the perpetrator and the follower was the target, the researcher explored the relationship between SLI and positive organisational outcomes from the dimensions of the leader, the follower and the context, with the objective of identifying the leader factors, the follower factors and the contextual factors that influenced this relationship. The influence of the observer on incivility outcomes fell outside the scope of this study and was therefore not explored.

The topic of workplace incivility is of relevance with workplace incivility found to be on the rise and expected to increase even further going forward due to the increasing pressures senior leaders face (Estes & Wang, 2008; Hoffman & Chunta, 2015; Sears & Humiston, 2015; Sharma, 2018). The relationship between senior leader incivility and positive organisational outcomes is of particular interest since we observe more and more leaders in business demonstrating uncivil behaviours and achieving positive organisational outcomes, despite scholars advocating these behaviours result in destructive outcomes (Anjum et al., 2018; Cameron & Webster, 2011; Cortina et al., 2001; Huang & Lin, 2019; Sakurai & Jex, 2012; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Wu et al., 2014).

In Chapter 2 of this study a definition for SLI was proposed based on the literature reviewed, related to workplace incivility. SLI was defined as:

*Emotional abuse inflicted by direct and demanding leaders whom express themselves forcefully, and comprises of a blend of aggressive, intimidating and*



*abusive behaviours (where the leaders' intentionality to cause harm to subordinates is irrelevant).*

Through the insights obtained during the research process, it is evident the originally proposed definition of SLI requires refinement. The new definition of SLI is therefore:

*Emotional abuse inflicted by direct and demanding leaders whom express themselves forcefully, and comprises of a blend of aggressive, intimidating and abusive behaviours that occurs recurrently but not frequently, where the leader has no intention to cause harm to the follower.*

This section presents the findings of the study and integrates the findings into a framework that explains the phenomenon of SLI and positive organisational outcomes. This is followed by a discussion of the contribution of this study to academia and provides recommendations for uncivil senior leaders. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

This research study found uncivil senior leaders achieve positive organisational outcomes when specific leader factors, follower factors and contextual factors are present.

## **7.2 FACTORS RELATED TO THE LEADER THAT ENABLE POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES, DESPITE SLI**

The study found senior leader incivility outcomes where a function of behavioural factors related to the leaders' expression of incivility, as well as the leader's characteristics i.e. leader behavioural style, KSA's and traits.

The research study found when incivility is infrequent and impartial followers tend to rationalise the uncivil incident. Followers perceive the leader's behaviours as non-threatening. They therefore do not take the incident personally nor do they react negatively to SLI. They instead improve performance. This is especially true for when these leaders are otherwise extremely supportive of their followers, since

it is through the leader's supportive behaviours where trust is developed, and where the good intentions of the leader towards the follower is made apparent which results in followers feeling secure in the leader's intentions towards them and therefore do not take the incident as a personal attack. Furthermore supportive leader behaviours achieve positive outcomes because leader support elicits an obligation for followers to reciprocate, which is usually through performance. Whilst infrequent, impartial expressions of incivility and supportive leader behaviours aid in diminishing negative reactions to SLI, in cases where followers do experience the leader's incivility negatively, the study found demonstrations of leader remorse serve to reduce the emotional distress followers experience, thereby restoring trust and improves follower performance.

The study found when senior leaders are effective visionary leaders and are highly knowledgeable positive outcomes follow, despite SLI. When visionary leaders develop and articulate a shared vision, followers are motivated to perform driven by a strong sense of purpose and shared identity that dominates over the negative emotions that may arise as a result of the leader's uncivil behaviours. These leaders set out clear expectations providing tangible goals that enable followers to succeed. Leader knowledge i.e. leader experience, expertise, business acumen and understanding of the business and industry, was found to influence cognitive task outcomes and was found be a key factor that influenced SLI outcomes. Followers comply with highly knowledgeable, uncivil senior leaders because of the trust and belief they have in the leader.

### **7.3 FACTORS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWER THAT ENABLE POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES, DESPITE SLI**

The study found incivility outcomes where a function of follower characteristics i.e. follower motive/values and capabilities. From a capabilities perspective, the study found high social skills enables followers to interpret the uncivil event unemotionally, and aids others in regulating their emotions in response to SLI when they do experience negative emotions as a result of the leader's incivility. In addition, the research study found followers continue to perform, despite SLI when followers are strongly motivated to avoid the consequences of not performing, when followers place high value on the external rewards associated with

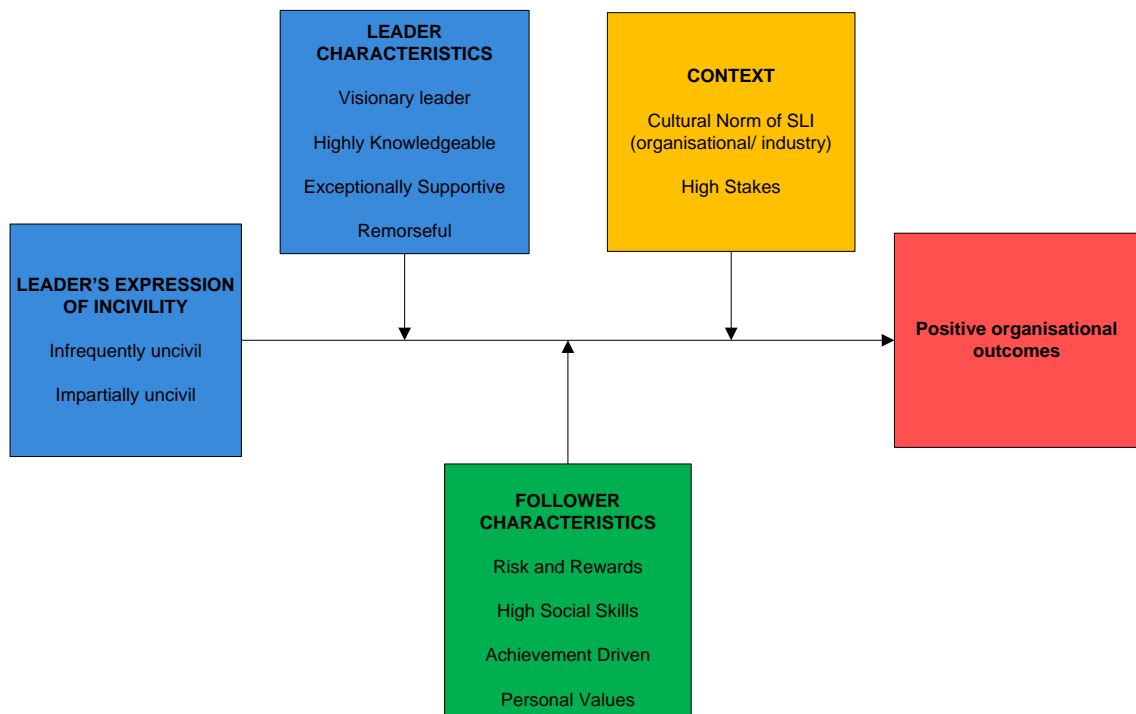
performing and when followers possess a strong internal desire for achievement placing high value on surpassing current standards, and where performance is the means to maintaining/achieving that which the follower values. When follower motivation is strong, followers do whatever it takes to maintain/obtain that which they deeply value, which includes withstanding the leader's uncivil behaviours and continuing to perform. Similarly, the study found when follower's personal beliefs and values align to the vision and values of the organisation and when followers possess an internal principle of high work ethic, followers act in the best interest of the organisation, regardless of the leader's behaviours, since people are naturally inclined to act in alignment with their personal beliefs and values.

#### **7.4 CONTEXTUAL FACTORS THAT ENABLE POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES, DESPITE SLI**

The study found incivility outcomes where a function of contextual factors, where contextual factors influenced the way in which follower's responded to SLI. The research study found when SLI is a cultural norm in an organisation and/or an industry, and when the risks of not performing could be disastrous, positive organisational outcomes are achievable.

When SLI is acceptable workplace behaviour, followers do not perceive the leader's incivility as a violation. They do not take personal offense because uncivil senior leader behaviours are expected, and their outputs are therefore not negatively impacted. In addition, the study found that when the risks associated with not performing could be disastrous i.e. having national impact or loss of life, followers perform regardless of SLI. Followers put aside their emotions and personal interests and are instead driven by a moral obligation.

Figure 2 presents an overview of the results to the research problem identified in chapter 1.



**Figure 2: Proposed Framework - Senior leader Incivility and Positive Organisational Outcomes**

The research study found the relationship between SLI and incivility outcomes is moderated by factors related to the leader (perpetrator), factors related to the follower (target) and contextual factors. This study found positive organisational outcomes are achievable in spite of SLI, when senior leader incivility is infrequent and impartial, when the leader is a visionary and exceptionally supportive leader, who is highly knowledgeable and has the ability to demonstrate remorse when he/she causes offense; when followers possess high social skills; are motivated to perform in order to avoid the negative consequences associated with not performing (risks), by external rewards; by a strong internal desire for achievement and when followers personal values align to the interests of the organisation, in an environment where SLI is a cultural norm and when the risks of not performing could be disastrous.

## **7.5 ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY**

Whilst earlier research related to workplace incivility did not differentiate between perpetrators, it is only until recently that scholars have recognised the significance

of the source in bringing about unique outcomes and have studied the construct accordingly. With research by source is still in its infancy, Pauline Schilpzand, Pater and Erez (2016), called for more studies exploring incivility by source. This study responds to this call, thereby contributing to an improved understanding of leader incivility.

Workplace incivility scholars have focussed much of their efforts investigating the consequences and antecedents to workplace incivility (Estes & Wang, 2008; Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016) . More recently, there has been an increase in the number of studies exploring the moderators of workplace incivility and outcomes, however research on the moderators on incivility and outcomes is still limited with scholars being found to take a narrow view focussing largely on follower traits (Bavik & Bavik, 2015; Beattie & Griffin, 2014; Kabat-Farr et al., 2019). This research study contributes to the literature by providing holistic insights (related to the leader, follower and context) regarding the moderating variables that influence the relationship between SLI and positive organisational outcomes, compared to previous studies. This research study adopted an inductive approach that allowed new insights related to the factors that influence the relationship between incivility and outcomes to emerge.

Few incivility scholars have previously sought to understand the perpetrator, and those that did, have explored the perpetrator to understand the antecedents to the perpetrators uncivil behaviours (Pauline Schilpzand et al., 2016). This research study contributes to the literature by providing insights from a previously unexplored perspective, i.e. the factors related to the perpetrator over and above his or her incivility that enables positive organisational outcomes to be achieved.

This study builds on the work of scholars. With existing literature having found the targets traits (Bavik & Bavik, 2015; Beattie & Griffin, 2014; Kabat-Farr et al., 2019) and capabilities (Iitzkovich & Dolev, 2017) to influence reactions to incivility, this study offers new insights identifying target motivation to be an additional (target) characteristic that influences the relationship between incivility and outcomes. Similarly, this study offers new insights identifying high stakes to be a contextual factor that influences the relationship between incivility and outcomes.

In addition, this study expands our understanding of leader behaviours. The study has found that leader behaviours exhibited at a single point in time are neither constructive nor destructive, but instead leadership outcomes are based on the cumulative effect of leader behaviours exhibited over a period of time.

## **7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNCIVIL SENIOR LEADERS**

Whilst this study does not aim to encourage SLI, it does endeavour to provide insights on how to counter the potential negative effects of uncivil senior leader behaviours by providing leaders with an understanding of the additional elements uncivil behaviours need to be coupled with, to achieve positive organisational outcomes.

When senior leaders possess a passion for excellence and/or they are personally invested, they tend to naturally express themselves forcefully when things don't go according to plan or when followers fail to do what is expected. These senior leaders are inclined to instinctively react to situations that threaten the success of the organisation, which manifests into uncivil behaviours. Therefore eliminating uncivil senior leader behaviours altogether may not be practically possible. Furthermore incivility is just one side of the coin. It could be argued that on the other side, it is the leader's passion for excellence that drives a high-performance culture and organisational success. Therefore whilst senior leaders battle to search for ways to reduce their uncivil behaviours, it may be beneficial for these leaders to understand the factors that influence the relationship between their incivility and outcomes, so that they can concurrently work at strengthening those factors to counter the negative effects of their incivility.

- Uncivil senior leaders should ensure they balance their incivility with supportive behaviours towards their followers. This will serve to strengthen the relationship and trust between leader and follower and diminish the negative effects of incivility.
- Uncivil senior leaders that cause offense should be aware that expressions of remorse aids in restoring positive emotions after an uncivil event and improves performance.

- Uncivil senior leaders should take the time to understand what it is that their followers' value. When follower motives and values are known, leaders can use this information to drive performance by linking these motivators to employee performance. This will mitigate against the negative effects of SLI on organisational outcomes.
- Uncivil senior leaders should drive EQ skills development initiatives. This will have all round positive effects, where higher levels of EQ will reduce SLI and follower reactions to SLI.

## 7.7 LIMITATIONS

In addition to the researcher bias inherent in qualitative research (Saunders & Lewis, 2018), further limitations of the study include:

- The researcher experienced difficulty in identifying participants as incivility is a matter of perspective with the study heavily reliant on the judgement of the researcher, the supervisor, the co-supervisor and their networks to identify possible interview participants. This introduced sampling bias when it came to identifying possible participants. In order to counter this, sample suitability was verified during the interviews.
- The number of leaders willing to participate in the study and openly admit to uncivil behaviours was low due to the negative connotation related to the research topic. The number of followers willing to participate in the study was also low. This could have been for fear of the adverse consequences associated with expressing negative sentiments regarding one's leader.
- The sample of uncivil senior leaders were largely homogenous in demographic. Furthermore, industries were not equally represented and instead the study lent heavily towards the power industry. This was as a result of the sampling method which was based on judgement sampling and snowball sampling. The limitation of a non-random, non-representative sample is the risk of uniform data, yielding findings which may not be generalisable (Morse et al., 2002). This

was an acceptable limitation given this was a qualitative study that aimed to provide transferable findings as opposed to generalisable findings.

- A significant limitation of the study was the indirect approach the researcher adopted in presenting the research topic. The research brief sent out to participants in assessing interest in being interviewed, the consent letter, and interview questions did not make mention of the words 'leader incivility'. Whilst it was necessary to approach the topic with caution due to the sensitive nature of the topic, it prevented the researcher from explicitly clarifying understanding of the research topic. In order to establish a common understanding of the leader behaviours in question, the research provided a description of typical leader behaviours associated with this type of leadership.
- In order for people to feel safe to openly express themselves there needs to a level of trust (Newman et al., 2017). This was particularly true for this study due to the nature of the topic. The researcher met all interview participants for the first time at the interview and due to the time horizon of the study i.e. being a cross sectional study there was little opportunity for the researcher to build trust with the participant. The absence of trust could have prevented participants from expressing themselves honestly. In order to build a reasonable level of trust that facilitated honest and open responses to some degree, the researcher adopted certain tactics i.e. maintaining a relaxed conversational approach, making small talk, providing background related to herself and conducted the interviews at the participants preferred location. To further encourage openness and honesty, the researcher specifically drew on examples of well-known leaders whom demonstrated similar behaviours whilst building successful companies, subtly implying admiration and praise.
- The inexperience of interviewer (researcher) could have compromised the quality of the data collected (Roulston, 2010). In order to reduce the negative impact of interviewer experience, three pilot interviews were conducted that gave the researcher an opportunity to practice her skills.



## **7.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

To better understand the implications of the findings contained within this study, practitioners should consider:

- Investigating the importance of identified factors relative to one another to assess which factors hold the greatest influence on leader incivility outcomes
- Establishing the effectiveness of factors working in isolation versus working together in achieving positive organisational outcomes.

The findings of this study could be quantitatively validated within organisations where senior leaders demonstrate uncivil behaviours and still achieve positive organisational outcomes.

With the relationship between the leader and follower coming up repeatedly in this study, future studies could explore the influence of LMX as a moderator between SLI and incivility outcomes.

With workplace incivility described as an interactive event that involves the perpetrator, the target, the context and the observer (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), future studies could explore the influence of the observer on SLI and incivility outcomes.

## **7.9 CONCLUSION**

The relationship between SLI and positive organisational outcomes is of interest since we observe more and more leaders in business demonstrating uncivil behaviours and achieving positive organisational outcomes, despite scholars advocating these behaviours result in destructive outcomes (Anjum et al., 2018; Cameron & Webster, 2011; Cortina et al., 2001; Huang & Lin, 2019; Sakurai & Jex, 2012; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Wu et al., 2014). Based on the literature reviewed, little is known regarding SLI and positive outcomes.. The research study set out to close this gap that exists in the literature. The findings that emerged from this study provides a clear understanding of the factors (related to the leader, follower and context) that enables uncivil senior leaders to achieve positive organisational outcomes. The results of this study advances the conversation related to workplace

incivility, offering new insights that have not previously been explored. This study could be useful in improving the effectiveness of uncivil leaders by providing these leaders with an understanding of the additional elements that their uncivil behaviours needs to be coupled with, in order for positive organisational outcomes to be achieved.

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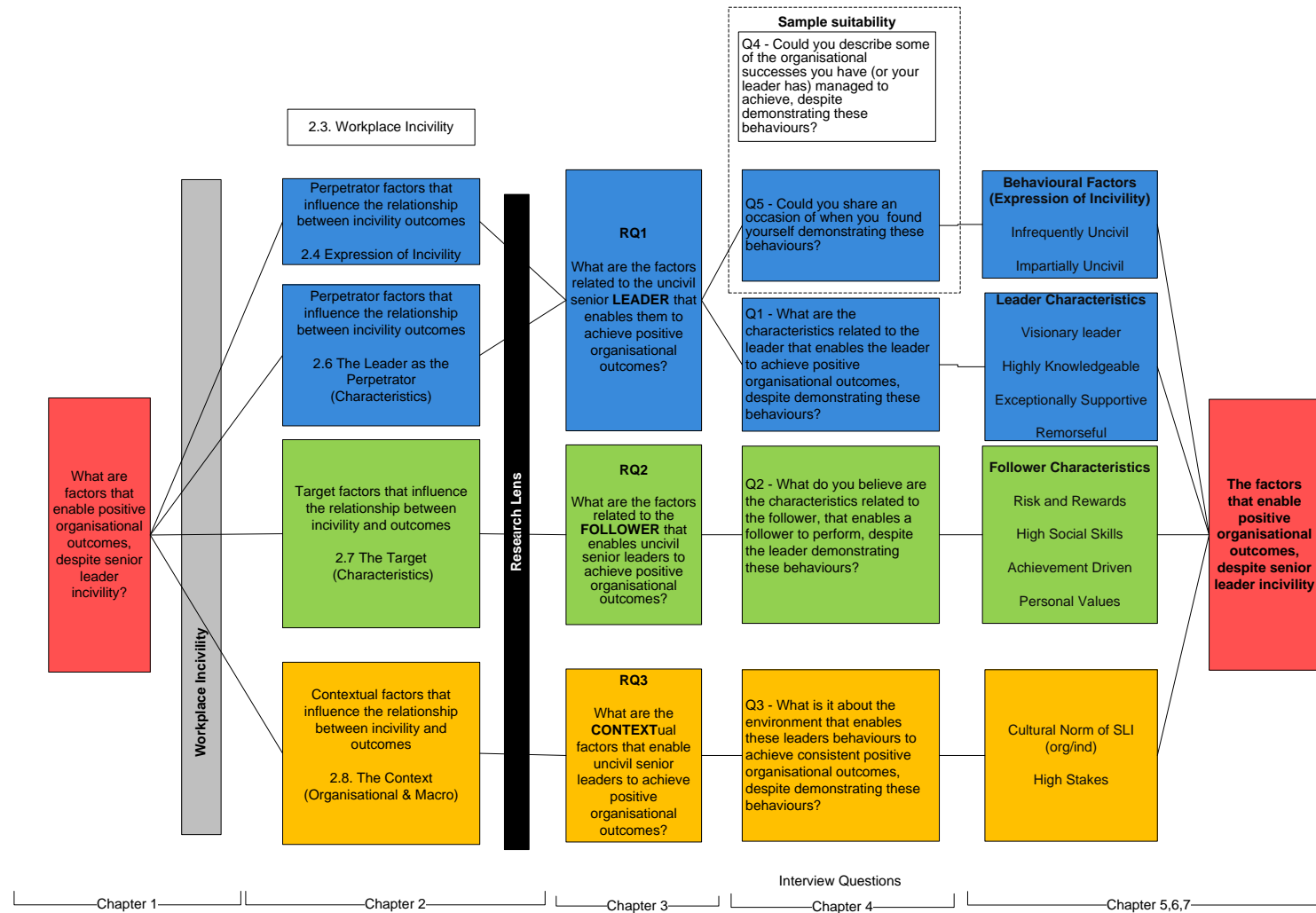
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# APPENDIX 1: THE GOLDEN THREAD



## APPENDIX 2: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

# Gordon Institute of Business Science

University  
of Pretoria

25 July 2019

Prenila Heera

Dear Prenila

*Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.*

*You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.*

*Please note that approval is granted based on the methodology and research instruments provided in the application. If there is any deviation change or addition to the research method or tools, a supplementary application for approval must be obtained*

*We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.*

*Kind Regards*

GIBS MBA Research Ethical Clearance Committee

## APPENDIX 3: CONSENT FORM

*I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA.*

*I am conducting research exploring the factors that enable leaders with strong personalities to achieve organisational performance. The purpose of the interview is to obtain insights from your personal experience related to the topic, with the interview expected to last about an hour, and will help us understand when a tough leadership approach works to result in positive organisational outcomes.*

*Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All data will be reported without identifiers, ensuring your confidentiality is maintained. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Details are provided below.*

Researchers Name	Prenila Iyer Heera	Supervisors Name	Dr Jeff Y-J Chen
Email	<a href="mailto:28504446@mygibs.co.za">28504446@mygibs.co.za</a>	Email	<a href="mailto:chenj@gibs.co.za">chenj@gibs.co.za</a>
Phone No.	083 4966 306	Phone No.	072 2227 119

Signature of Participant

Date:

Signature of Researcher

Date:

## APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name:

Start Time:

Organisation:

End Time:

Job Title:

Gender:

Age:

Race:

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Thank you for agreeing to this interview. Your time and input into this research is greatly appreciated.

In recent years, we have witnessed the emergence of a new leadership style i.e. leaders who are strong and at times, tough on their subordinates but still deliver outstanding results.

To date, academic research on the key factors that enable the success of this particular type of leader remains scarce. The purpose of this research is to explore these factors.

Well known examples of this type of leader is Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk i.e. tough leaders with strong personalities whom have established and led some of the most successful companies of our time.

This research is of a sensitive nature, however I encourage you to speak freely as you can be certain that the information you share will remain confidential and you will remain anonymous. You are also free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Before we start, I will take you through the interview consent form. I would also like to request your permission to record this interview, as well as take notes during the interview?

Clarifying the understanding of a tough leadership approach and strong personality (incivility)

The focus of this research is a tough leadership style. What is meant by this is a leader who is meticulous, very direct and demanding, someone who is authoritative, who is very critical and sometimes autocratic. These leaders are generally (but not in all cases) exceptionally passionate about excellence and in instances where people fail to deliver or meet expectations, they express themselves extremely forcefully e.g. by raising their voice, naming and shaming people, being verbally offensive and could be perceived as being impolite and rude.

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**RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

**Interview Question 1:**

What are the characteristics related to the leader that enables the leader to achieve positive organisational outcomes, despite demonstrating these behaviours?

Potential prompt: Foundational traits, KSA's, leader behavioural style

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**RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

**Interview Question 2:**

What do you believe are the characteristics related to the follower that enables a follower to perform, despite the leader demonstrating these behaviours?



Potential prompt: Personal traits, capabilities, motives/values

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### **RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

#### **Interview Question 3:**

What is it about the environment that enables you (these leaders) to achieve positive organisational outcomes, despite demonstrating these behaviours?

Potential Prompt: Macro level, Organisational level

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### **SUITABILITY OF PARTICIPANT**

#### **Interview Question 4:**

Could you describe some of the organisational successes you have (or your leader has) managed to achieve, despite demonstrating these behaviours?

Potential prompt: Financial, Non-financial

#### **Interview Question 5:**

Could you share an occasion of when you (or your leader) found yourself (your leader) demonstrating these behaviours?

Potential prompt: Frequency, duration, differentiation

## APPENDIX 5: FREQUENCY ANALYSIS

### Research Question 1 Final Codes (Iteration 4) and Frequency of Responses

Theme	Category	Code	Leaders (10)	Count (Leader x10)	Followers (8)	Count (Follower x8)	Total /18
Visionary Leader	Provides a clear vision	Leader: Provides a clear vision	L001, L003, L005, L008, L009, L010	10	F01, F03, F05, F06	7	17
	Provides clear direction	Leader: Provides clear direction	L001, L002, L003, L004, L006, L007, L008, L009, L010		F01, F02, F03, F05, F06, F08		
Highly Knowledgeable	History of success	Leader: Achievement of wealth and success	L003	9	F04, F06, F08	7	16
		Leader: Reputation for getting results	L007		F01		
	Knowledge	Leader: Leader experience and expertise	L001, L002, L003, L004, L005, L006, L008, L010		F01, F02, F03, F04, F05, F06, F08		
Exceptionally Supportive	Genuinely cares	Leader: Demonstrates care and compassion for followers	L002, L004, L006, L008, L010	9	F03, F04, F06, F08	6	15
	Enables followers	Leader: Backs you/ gives you what you need to succeed	L002, L007, L008, L009		F01, F05, F06, F08		
	Guides and Coaches	Leader: Teaches/coaches/ guides/ helps/ advises to help you succeed	L001, L002, L005, L006, L007, L008, L009, L010		F01, F03, F05, F06, F08		
Remorseful	Remorse	Leader: Apologises when he is out of line	L005, L006, L007, L009, L010	5	F04, F06	2	7
Infrequently uncivil	Incivility is irregular	Leader: Is NOT uncivil all of the time	L001, L002, L006, L007, L010	5	F02, F04, F05, F06, F08	5	10
Impartially uncivil	Impartial	Leader: Everybody gets the same treatment	L006, L007, L008	3	F02, F04, F05, F06, F08	4	7

## Research Question 2 Codes (Iteration 4) and Frequency of Responses

Theme	Category	Code	Leaders (10)	Count (Leader x10)	Followers (8)	Count (Follower x8)	Total /18
Risk and Rewards	Financial rewards	Follower: Follower values the financial rewards that come with performing (extrinsic)	L001, L002, L003, L004, L006, L009, L010	10	F01, F04, F06, F07	7	17
	Avoid undesirable outcomes	Follower: Fear of the consequences for not performing/behaving as expected	L001, L004, L005, L006, L007, L008, L009, L010		F01, F02, F05, F06, F07, F08		
	Recognition	Follower: Feels valued and appreciated in the organisation (intrinsic motivation as the result of leader's action) /team?	L001, L006, L007, L008, L010		F01, F04, F05, F06		
	Opportunity	Follower: Believes there is something that can be learnt from the leader	L001, L003, L006		F05, F06		
Follower: Potential to grow in the organisation		L006, L010	F03, F04, F06				
High Social Skills	Tolerance	Follower: Improved understanding of leader/style of leadership through experience	L002, L003, L007, L008, L010	8	F01, F02, F03, F04, F05, F06	8	16
	High Emotional intelligence	Follower: Empathy for the leader and the pressure the leader faces	L010		F02, F04, F06		
		Follower: Doesn't take it personally	L006, L007, L010		F05, F06, F07, F08		
		Follower: Emotional maturity			F03, F05, F07		
		Follower: Possesses Emotional Intelligence	L005		F02		
		Followers: Follower is not the sensitive type (doesn't take things personally)	L001, L006, L007		F04		
Achievement Driven	Driven by achievement	Follower: Internal Desire to make a positive contribution	L004	6	F01	8	14
		Follower: Internal drive for job accomplishment	L004, L005, L010		F02, F07		
		Follower: Internal drive to succeed (internally motivation)	L001, L003, L007, L010		F01, F03, F04, F05, F06, F08		
		Follower: Follower has had achievements (sometimes great achievements) under this leader	L008, L009, L010		F01, F06		
Personal Values	Personal values align to vision	Follower: Believes in the vision	L005, L008, L009	5	F01, F03, F05	4	9
	High work Ethic	Follower: Principle of hard work and diligence	L007, L008, L010		F01, F03, F07		

### Research Question 3 Codes (Iteration 4) and Frequency of Responses

Theme	Category	Code	Leaders (10)	Count(Leader x10)	Followers (8)	Count (Follower x8)	Total /18
Cultural Norm of SLI	Organisational cultural norm	Context: This style of leadership is norm in the organisation	L004, L005, L006, L007	6	F01, F03	4	10
	Industry wide cultural norm	Context: This leadership style is a norm for leaders in the industry	L001, L007, L010		F06, F08		
High Stakes		Context: Pressure due to whats at risk (national impact/loss of life)	L004, L005, L008, L009	4	F01, F02, F05	3	7

## APPENDIX 6: CODE BOOK (ITERATIONS 1-3)

### Iteration 1

#### Research Question 1 – Iteration 1 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Credible		Achievement of success	Leader: Achievement of wealth and success
Self-development		shows effort in trying to improve EQ skills	Leader: Actively developing and trying to improve on his/her people skills
EQ	-	-	Leader: Adjusts how he lands the message (incivility) depending on situation and people he is dealing with (people understand the seriousness and the urgency to act)
Leadership Style	Supportive	Approachable	Leader: Approachable (follower can be honest, ask for advice, help, come with problem)
Leadership trait	Authentic		Leader: Authentic in his leadership style (Naturally this way)
Leadership Style	Fair		Leader: Consistent about applying the consequences
Leadership trait	Consistent		Leader: Consistent in his/her tough leadership approach - (high expectations re: standards of behaviour and delivery). They know what to expect
Leadership trait	Confident		Leader: Demonstrates Confidence (i know what I'm doing)
Leadership Style	Supportive	Conditionally empathetic	Leader: Empathetic when the situations call for it
Leader Type	Visionary		Leader: Has a clear vision for the organisation (and communicates that)
-	-	shows vulnerability	Leader: Has the ability to own up to mistake/ say sorry
Accountability		accountability	Leader: Holds followers accountable
			Leader: Holds no grudges
Leadership Style		understanding	Leader: Involved. Stays close to realities of the business
Power	expert power	credible	Leader: Leader Credibility due to experience in the industry (believable/ can be trusted)
Power	expert power	credible	Leader: Leader Credibility due to expertise in the industry (believable/ can be trusted)
Communication			Leader: Leader is direct (people know where they stand, no uncertainty)
Leadership Style	Fair		Leader: Leader is Fair (objective, impartial, equal treatment)

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Motive	motive		Leader: Leaders intention: to ensure everyone needs to be doing what's best for the organisation
Leadership Style		leads by example	Leader: Leads from the front (To do the things or behave the way that one dictates)
Leadership style	Supportive		Leader: Never let you sink (always help you out)
			Leader: Not afraid of challenges/ unknown (courage)
Communication	Directing		Leader: Provides clear objectives/goals/direction/ rules of how things must be done
Work ethic			Leader: Puts in his best effort
Credibility	credible (convincing/ believable)	trust and confidence	Leader: Reputation for getting things done
Leadership style	Supportive		Leader: Empowers followers
Leadership style	Coaching		Leader: Teaches/coaches/ guides/ helps (invest time in followers)
			Leader: Understands what people are motivated by and provides those rewards
Power	Positional Power		Leader: Upfront and clear about whose the boss/ who holds the power
			Leader: Open to being challenged
Motive			Follower: Leader drives/ has driven follower to try harder, do more and better, to achieve -creates a new culture of working

## Research Question 2 - Iteration 1 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Motive	Negative motivation	Fear	Follower: (Fear of the) consequences for not performing/behaving as expected
Personality		Tolerance	Follower: Accepting
Emotion	Social Emotion	Admiration for leader	Follower: Admiration for leader
Motive		Motivation for goal accomplishment	Follower: Believes in the vision
Value		Opportunity to acquire knowledge/ skill from the leader	Follower: Believes there is something that can be learnt from the leader
Social Skills		Emotional Intelligence	Follower: Doesn't take it personally
Social Skills		Emotional Intelligence	Follower: Emotional maturity
Social Skills		Emotional Intelligence	Follower: Empathy for the leader and the pressure the leader faces

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Personality		Tolerance	Follower: Improved understanding of leader/style of leadership through experience
Motive		Sense of belonging	Follower: Feels valued in the organisation
Motive		Motivated by financial rewards	Follower: Follower values the financial rewards that come with performing
Motive		Achievement driven	Follower: Internal Desire to make a positive contribution
Motive		Achievement driven	Follower: Internal drive for job accomplishment
Motive		Achievement driven	Follower: Internal drive to succeed (internally motivation)
Motive	Negative motivation	Fear	Follower: Intimidated by leader
Motive	Negative motivation	Fear	Follower: Low Education level (cant easily find employment elsewhere)
Motive	Negative motivation	Fear	Follower: Low experience. (Need for direction. No allies. Lacks confidence)
Motive		Obligation to perform	Follower: Grateful to the company
Social Skills		Emotional Intelligence	Follower: Possesses Emotional Intelligence
Motive		Opportunity to grow his/her career in the organisation	Follower: Potential to grow in the organisation
Emotion	Social Emotion	Respect for leader	Follower: Respect for the leader due to his know how
Value		Seeks the approval of the leader	Follower: Seeks the approval of the leader
Emotion	Social Emotion	Trust in the leader	Follower: Confidence in the leaders abilities
Emotion	Social Emotion	Trust in the leader	Follower: Trust in the leaders motive
Motive	Negative motivation	Desire to avoid a the negative consequence	Follower: Understands the criticality of the organisation having to perform well - public knowledge
Motive		Motivated by being associated with the success of the organisation	Follower: Proud to be associated with success/es of the organisation
Value		High work Ethic	Principle of hard work and diligence
Motive		Achievement driven	Proud to be associated with the success of the company
Skill		Resilience	Resilient/ builds resilience
Motive		Achievement driven	Follower has had achieved (had great achievements) under this leader

### Research Question 3 – Iteration 1 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Code
Social	Team interactions	Context: Close interpersonal relationships in the organisation
Culture	outcome oriented	Context: High Performance organisational culture
Temporal Pressure	Pressure	Context: Organisation: Stakes are high (national impact, loss of life)
Culture	Norm	Context: This leadership style is a norm for leaders in the industry
Culture	Norm	Context: This style of leadership is norm in the organisation

### Iteration 2

#### Research Question 1 – Iteration 2 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code	
Personality	Authentic		Leader: Authentic in his leadership style (Naturally this way)	
		shows vulnerability	Leader: Has the ability to own up to mistake/ say sorry	
	Confident		Leader: Demonstrates Confidence (i know what I'm doing)	
	Self-efficacy		Leader: Not afraid of challenges/ unknown (courage)	
	Candid		Leader: Honest and direct	
Cognitive	Visionary		Leader: Provides and articulates a clear vision for the organisation	
Leadership style	Coaching		Leader: Teaches/coaches/ guides/ helps (invest time in followers)	
	Consistent		Leader: Consistent in his/her tough leadership approach - (high expectations re: standards of behaviour and delivery). They know what to expect	
	Fair		Leader: Consistent about applying the consequences	
			Leader: Leader is Fair (objective, impartial, equal treatment)	
	Supportive	Approachable		Leader: Approachable (follower can be honest, ask for advice, help, come with problem)
		Conditionally empathetic		Leader: Empathetic when the situations call for it
				Leader: Never let you sink (always help you out)
			Leader: Empowers followers	



Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Motive/ Values	Motive	Intention	Leader: Acts in the best interest of the organisation
			Leader: Leader intention to drive people to give their best effort
	Value	High work ethic	Leader: High expectations of himself
Skill	Personal Development	Self-improvement	Leader: Actively developing and trying to improve on his/her people skills
	Expertise	credible	Leader: Achievement of wealth and success
			Leader: Leader Credibility due to experience in the industry (believable/ can be trusted)
			Leader: Leader Credibility due to expertise in the industry (believable/ can be trusted)
	Receptive	Willing to consider differing opinions	Leader: Reputation for getting things done
	Communication		Leader: Opened to being challenged
			Leader: Clearly communicates expectations
			Leader is NOT incivil all of the time

## Research Question 2 - Iteration 2 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Emotion	Social Emotion	Admiration and respect for leader	Follower: Admiration for leader
			Follower: Respect for the leader due to his know how
		Trust in the leader	Follower: Confidence in the leaders abilities
			Follower: Trust in the leaders motive
Personality	Tolerance		Follower: Accepting of leader
	Resilience		Follower: Improved understanding of leader/style of leadership through experience
Skill	Social Skill	Social appraisal skill	Follower: Resilient/ builds resilience
		Emotional Intelligence	Follower: Empathy for the leader and the pressure the leader faces
			Follower: Doesn't take it personally
			Follower: Emotional maturity
		Follower: Possesses Emotional Intelligence	
		Follower: Followers: Follower is not the sensitive type (doesn't take things personally)	

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code	
Motive/ Values	Goal achievement	Motivation for goal accomplishment	Follower: Believes in the vision	
	Sense of belonging	Valued	Follower: Feels valued in the organisation	
	Financial rewards	Motivated by financial rewards	Follower: Follower values the financial rewards that come with performing	
	Achievement driven			Follower: Internal Desire to make a positive contribution
				Follower: Internal drive for job accomplishment
				Follower: Internal drive to succeed (internally motivation)
				Follower: Follower has had achievements (sometimes great achievements) under this leader
	Negative motivation		Fear	Follower: Physically Intimidated by leader
				Follower: Low Education level (cant easily find employment elsewhere)
				Follower: Low experience. (Need for direction. No allies. Lacks confidence)
				Follower: Fear of the consequences for not performing/behaving as expected
			Desire to avoid a the negative consequence	Follower: Understands the criticality of the organisation having to perform well
	Obligation		Obligation to perform	Follower: Grateful to the company
	Pride		Pride	Follower: Proud to be associated with success/es of the organisation
	Values		Opportunity to aquire knowledge/skill from the leader	Follower: Believes there is something that can be learnt from the leader
Opportunity			Follower: Potential to grow in the organisation	
Approval			Follower: Seeks the approval of the leader	
High work Ethic			Follower: Principle of hard work and diligence	

### Research Question 3 - Iteration 2 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Code
Culture	Norm	Context: This style of leadership is norm in the organisation
		Context: This leadership style is a norm for leaders in the industry
Temporal Pressure	Pressure	Context: Organisation: Stakes are high

### Iteration 3

#### Research Question 1 - Iteration 3 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Leader behavioural style	Approachable		Leader: Approachable (followers feel comfortable to talk to the leader)
	Supportive	Empathetic	Leader: Empathetic when the situations call for it
		Willing to help	Leader: Never let you sink (always willing to help you out)
		Empowering	Leader: Empowers followers
		Coaches	Leader: Teaches/coaches/ guides/ helps (invest time in followers)
	Consistent		Leader: Consistent in his/her tough leadership approach - (high expectations re: standards of behaviour and delivery). They know what to expect
	Fair		Leader: Consistent about applying the consequences
			Leader: Leader is Fair (objective, impartial, equal treatment)
	Authentic	Authentic	Leader: Authentic in his leadership style (Naturally this way)
		Shows vulnerability	Leader: Has the ability to own up to mistake/ say sorry
Communication style		Leader: Honest and direct	
knowledge/ Expertise	History of success		Leader: Achievement of wealth and success Leader: Reputation for getting things done
		Knowledge	Leader: Leader experience and expertise
Cognitive skill	Visionary thinking		Leader: Provides a clear vision for the organisation
Motivation orientation	High self-belief	confidence	Leader: Demonstrates Confidence (i know what I'm doing)
		self-efficacy	Leader: Not afraid of challenges/ unknown (courage)
Motivation orientation	Motive	Unselfish motives	Leader: Acts in the best interest of the organisation Leader: Leader intention to drive people to give their best effort
		Results driven	Leader: Clearly communicates expectations
Values	Values	High work ethic	Leader: High expectations of himself

## Research Question 2 - Iteration 3 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Sub Category	Code
Intrinsic Motivators	Achievement driven		Follower: Internal Desire to make a positive contribution
			Follower: Internal drive for job accomplishment
			Follower: Internal drive to succeed (internally motivation)
			Follower: Follower has had achievements (sometimes great achievements) under this leader
Extrinsic Motivators	Financial rewards	Motivated by financial rewards	Follower: Follower values the financial rewards that come with performing (extrinsic)
	Negative motivation	Desire to avoid a the negative consequence	Follower: Fear of the consequences for not performing/behaving as expected
			Follower: Understands the criticality of the organisation having to perform well
	Recognition	Recognition	Follower: Feels valued and appreciated in the organisation (intrinsic motivation as the result of leader's action) /team?
	Opportunity	Opportunity	Follower: Believes there is something that can be learnt from the leader
Follower: Potential to grow in the organisation			
Personal values	Personal values align to vision	Personal values align to vision	Follower: <b>Believes</b> in the vision
	High work Ethic	High work Ethic	Follower: Principle of hard work and diligence
Skill	Tolerance		Follower: Improved understanding of leader/style of leadership through experience
	Emotional intelligence	EI	Follower: Empathy for the leader and the pressure the leader faces
			Follower: Doesn't take it personally
			Follower: Emotional maturity
			Follower: Possesses Emotional Intelligence
Follower: Follower is not the sensitive type (doesn't take things personally)			

## Research Question 3 - Iteration 3 Codes, Categories and Themes

Theme	Category	Code
Culture	Norm	Context: This style of leadership is norm in the organisation
		Context: This leadership style is a norm in the industry
Temporal Pressure	Pressure	Context: Organisation: Stakes are high