

# National culture and its impact on workplace incivility

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**University of Zagreb**  
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**NATIONAL CULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON WORKPLACE  
INCIVILITY**

**Master thesis**

**Anthony Ante Grubišić**

**Zagreb, March 2021**

**University of Zagreb**  
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**NATIONAL CULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON WORKPLACE  
INCIVILITY**

**NACIONALNA KULTURA I NJEZIN UTJECAJ NA NEULJUDNO  
PONAŠANJE NA RADNOM MJESTU**

Master thesis

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**Zagreb, March 2021**

# STATEMENT ON THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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## **Summary and keywords**

The topic of this paper is national culture and its impact on workplace incivility. Geert Hofstede, an expert on cross-cultural dimension and management has defined culture as “The collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others”. With this being said, this paper will allow for greater understanding and insight as to how national culture impacts organizations, their employees, and most importantly workplace incivility. Workplace incivility is a low intensity deviant behavior that is counterproductive in its nature, in simple terms, incivility is described by everyday uncivil acts in the workplace. We will begin by diving into workplace incivility and its characteristics followed by national culture and the role that it plays into incivility in the workplace.

Furthermore, a survey on incivility was conducted between employees in Croatia and Canada and it was subsequently used along with data collected by Geert Hofstede on these two countries.

Through this, it can be said that national culture impacts the amount of experienced and perpetrated incivility at work. Additionally, the study aimed to explain the correlation between Hofstede’s model of national culture and demographics such as gender, age, amount of work experience, job position to the amount of incivility experienced/perpetrated at work. However, no strong correlation was found and as such it was concluded that Hofstede’s model of national culture is not applicable at an individual and organizational level.

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Object and purpose of thesis**

Workplace incivility, violence and discrimination is becoming an increasingly important topic in today's business world due to its impact on overall organization performance. Because of this there is a need for constant policy changes in order to decrease its presence inside organizations and increase employee satisfaction and performance. Additionally, the occurrence of workplace incivility and other forms of deviant behavior has been shown to lead to burnout, post-traumatic stress and lower well-being of employees. Many factors can influence occurrence of deviant behavior in organizational settings, both on individual and organizational level. Unfortunately, deviant behavior of lesser intensity such as workplace incivility has been largely undermined as a factor towards individual and organizational performance and satisfaction, and additional research on factors leading to its occurrence is necessary. Among others, research has indicated that national culture can be an important element in its occurrence, as national culture postulates norms and values that members find acceptable and that shape their behavior.

Thus, the main aim of this thesis is to analyze the impact and role of national culture on workplace incivility, as a deviant workplace behavior of low intensity. More specifically the paper will explore differences in the workplace incivility between employees in Canada and Croatia. Additionally the paper will evaluate which groups are more likely to display this type of behavior as well as which groups tend to be the most targeted by it, as well as potential solutions to prevent such behavior.

## **1.2 Data sources and collection method**

Secondary data for this thesis was attained through research of existing scientific and empirical papers, books and internet sources. Primary data was collected through empirical research on a sample of employees from Croatia and Canada.



### **1.3 The content and structure of thesis**

The paper is divided into three parts which include 1. Workplace incivility and its characteristics, 2. National culture and its influence in organizational settings, and 3. The empirical research done on the impact of national culture on workplace incivility. Firstly, this paper will begin by defining workplace incivility and its characteristics, continued by the process and implications on the spiraling effect of workplace incivility. Followed by that will be organizational policies and procedures involving deviant behavior and workplace incivility as well as a suggestion of a new people-centered policy that could contribute to reducing incivility in the workplace in the future.

Secondly, we will discuss national culture and its influence in organizational setting by focusing on the role of national culture on organizations and its employees. Following that, the Hofstede's model on national culture will be introduced and used to find any connection among national culture and deviant behavior.

Last but not least, the empirical data collected through a questionnaire will be presented and observations regarding the significance of that data will be made.

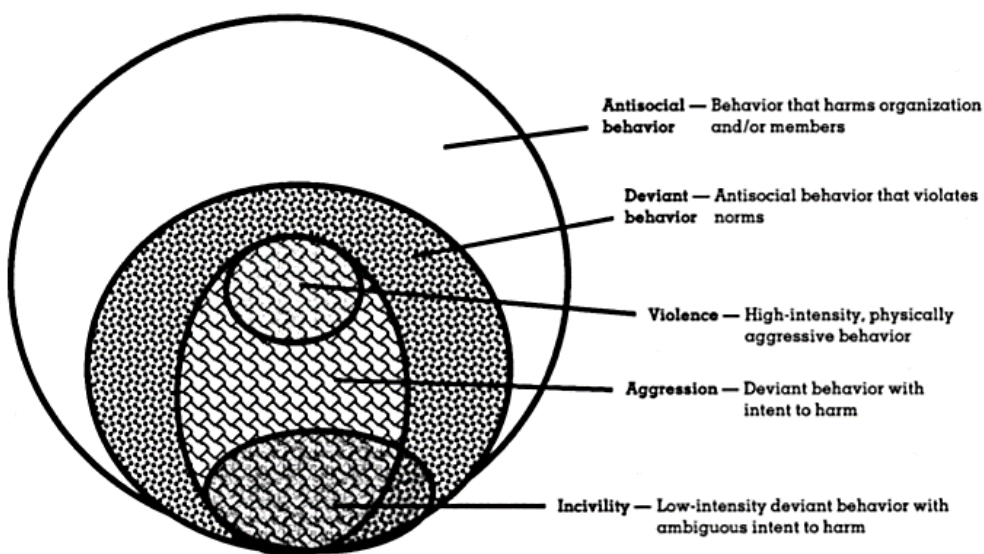
## **2. Workplace Incivility and its characteristics**

### **2.1 Definition and characteristics of Workplace Incivility**

Deviant behavior has been described as “voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and perceived it as threatening the well-being of the organization or its members”. (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007). Additionally, Wemer and De Simone (2008) made a typology of such behaviors and came up with 4 different categories: production deviance, property deviance, personal aggression, last but not least political deviance which is also the same category in which workplace incivility falls under.

Workplace Incivility has been defined as low-intensity deviant behavior with intent to harm the target (Schilpzand, De Pater, & Erez , 2016). Incivility in the workplace has largely been ignored as most of these behaviors go unnoticed to the point where even supervisors/leaders elicit this type of behavior without realizing that they are part of the problem. The following model was taken out of Andersson’s and Pearson’s study (1999) done on incivility to further understand the difference between incivility and other forms of mistreatment.

**Figure 1: Incivility and Other forms of mistreatment in Organizations**



Source: Andersson & Pearson, 1999

This model serves as a good illustration to understand what constitutes incivility. From the above, we can conclude that antisocial and deviant behaviors as well as aggression are forms of mistreatment that constitute incivility. Violence is not part of incivility as incivility are low-intensity deviant behaviors, however, according to Andersson and Pearson (1999), these behaviors can have a spiraling effect that escalate into violence.

Examples of such behaviors are as “insignificant” as answering an email during a meeting/presentation, having side conversations in meetings, giving dirty looks to coworkers, asking for input then ignoring it. Even reprimanding subordinates/coworkers in public or not giving credit where credit is due are behaviors that supervisors should know constitute incivility in the workplace.

Consequences of long-term incivility include higher turnover of employees and incivility in the workplace is estimated to cost twice an employee’s annual salary in the case of high-level employees (Cascio & Boudreau, 2015). Incivility causes that much discomfort in employees that they will do anything to avoid these behaviors in the workplace, therefore, they could choose to call in sick even though they are fully capable of working. Increased employee absenteeism from incivility has caused millions of dollars in damages each year (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Additionally, companies “waste” millions of dollars each year on reparations due to employee complaints as well as proactive policies to reduce these behaviors in the future (Porath & Pearson, 2013). According to a study done by Accountemps (2013), managers at Fortune 1000 spend 7 weeks a year (13% of their work time) repairing the damages done by incivility in the workplace.

Although, the focus of these behaviors points mostly towards problems within the organization, the lack of leadership and respect within the organization reflects these same negative behaviors towards customers.

In an experiment where a representative of a bank scolded another for incorrectly presenting credit card information, only 20% of customers that witnessed the incident said that they would use continue to use the services provided by the organization (Porath & Pearson, 2013). They concluded that regardless of the various scenarios that customers were put in, customers agreed that they didn’t like to see people being treated badly.

Workplace incivility is increasing in trend despite such progress in HR/ organizational policies and practices that attempt to proactively prevent these incidents as well as repair previous ones. It could be possible that the reasoning behind the increasing trend is that employees are becoming more aware of these negative behaviors and have only now started to report these incidents. Therefore, it does not necessarily mean that there is an increase in deviant behaviors, but as awareness of these deviant behavior increases, so do the reports/complaints of the same. Nevertheless, surveys in 1998 reported that a quarter of employees were treated rudely at least once a week, whilst, polls in 2011 showed a rise of these behaviors being experienced by up to a half of the workers (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Research has not concluded on a specific cause for this increase, however, they cited downsizing, employee diversity, budget cuts, increased pressures for productivity, autocratic work environments, part-time employees as different causes that increase uncivil workplace behaviors (Baron & Neuman, 1996).

## **2.2 Process and implications on the spiraling effect of workplace incivility**

In order to effectively understand workplace incivility, it is essential to understand the causes, outcomes and the process in between these two points. Also, it is necessary to bear in mind that there are three types of incivility: 1. Experienced, 2. Instigated, 3. Witnessed. Causes of Experienced incivility consist of dispositional, behavioral, and situational causes that predict experiencing uncivil workplace conduct (Cortina & Magley, 2001).

Firstly, studies have shown that dispositional causes of experienced incivility that are related to recurring encounters are: being a racial minority (Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskisen, Huerta, & Magley, 2011), being younger (Lee & Lim, 2011) , and being generation X as opposed to being part of the baby boomer generation (Leiter, Price, & Spence Laschinger, 2010). Secondly, the target behaviors that were shown to predict experienced incivility have been described as having a low or dominating integrating conflict management style (Trudel & Reio Jr., 2011) as well as the target's organizational and interpersonal counterproductive behavior (Meier & Spector, Reciprocal effects of work stressors and counterproductive work behavior: A five-wave longitudinal study, 2013). Last but not least, there is no consensus on clear predictors of situational causes up to date.

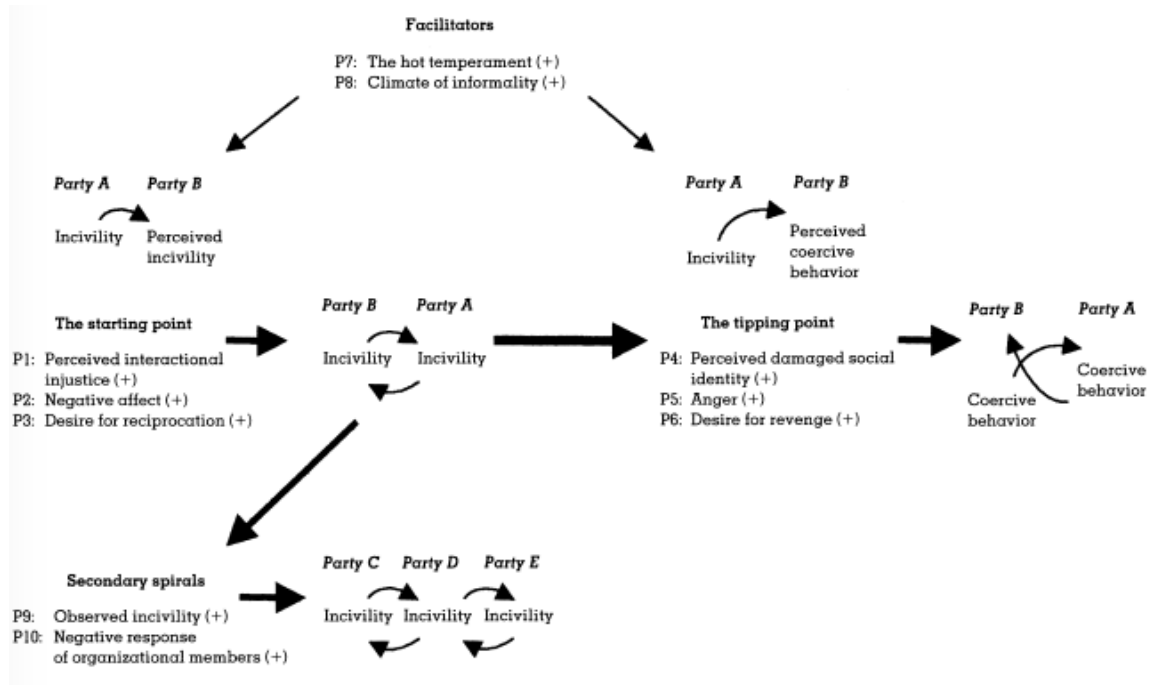
The consequences for targets of workplace incivility consist of affective, attitudinal, behavioral, and cognitive outcomes. Some of the affective outcomes of experienced incivility include emotional exhaustion (Kern & Grandey, 2009), depression (Lee & Lim, 2011), increased levels of stress (Adams & Webster, 2013). Attitudinal outcomes of experienced incivility include less commitment to the organization (Lim & Thompson, 2009), and have lower satisfaction with their colleagues and bosses (Bunk & Magley, 2013). Additionally, cognitive outcomes of experienced incivility have shown to lower the target's perceived fairness (Lee & Lim, 2011), whilst behavioral outcomes include retaliation (Shapiro & Kim, 2008) as well as lower task performance (Chen, et al., 2013).

Studies have shown that causes of instigated incivility are described as higher levels of power, trait anger (Meier & Semmer, 2013), as well as having a non-integrative or dominant conflict management style (Trudel & Reio Jr., 2011). The causes that predicted instigated incivility are lower job satisfaction as well as perceptions of distributive justice (Blau & Lynne, 2005).

Last but not least, the outcomes of witnessed incivility included emotional exhaustion, lower task performance, and work withdrawal just to name a few (Schilpzand, De Pater, & Erez, 2014).

An interesting outcome of incivility refers to so called “tit for tat” or spiraling effect of incivility. Namely, incivility towards a coworker reduces the target’s effectiveness at work. These “insignificant” social interactions may develop into intentional acts of aggression in the workplace (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Pearson and Andersson (1999) therefore introduced a framework that describes the spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace. This interpersonal event involves two parties but can involve other parties through secondary spirals. Additionally, as shown in the following figure 2 there are ten propositions that can increase the occurrence of an incivility spiral. Moreover, as the negative action of one party leads to the negative action of the second party, the increase of counterproductive behaviors is sure to follow.

**Figure 2: Conceptual framework for the spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace**



Source: Andersson & Pearson, 1999

The starting point of an incivility spiral is when there is a breach of mutual respect in the workplace that is defined through norms in that organization (Andersson & Pearson, 1999).

In order for this cycle of incivility between two or multiple parties to begin, one party will have to perceive interactional injustice due to the breach of mutual respect. As a consequence, this injustice can push the target to want to reciprocate or get revenge on the instigator. Unless one of the parties chooses an alternative to reciprocating uncivil behavior, this cycle of incivility will continue, and possibly escalate into coercive behavior.

In order to help prevent the incivility spiral from continuing into more serious consequences management should set zero-tolerance guidelines for incivility. In their words and in their deeds, leaders must be strong role models for civility. When incivility arises, leaders need to step in and correct it and not disregard it, even if their best performers demonstrate the behavior. This can best be achieved when leaders improve cooperative conduct and exemplify the ethical use of power by

employees. An example of doing so could be implementing specific practices whereby managers may publicly appreciate employee collaboration acts or have sponsored initiatives that encourage colleagues to reward each other for constructive and supportive behavior.

### **2.3 Organizational policies and procedures involving deviant behavior and workplace incivility**

Before a manager/supervisor undertakes any action concerning deviant behavior and workplace incivility, he/she must ensure that the organizational rules have been properly set as these rules will set into place as to what kind of behavior is expected from employees. Some ways of ensuring that such rules are established are: 1. Rules are disseminated throughout the entire organization, 2. The reasons behind a rule should always be explained, 3. Rules should always be written, and 4. Rules must be reasonable (Belcourt, Singh, Bohlander, & Snell, 2014). It is essential that employees understand the rules and regulations in the organization, as attempting to take corrective action against an employee that was not aware of certain rules can not only worsen the situation but can also in some cases be seen as a breach of contract.

An example of basic components that make an effective deviant behavior policy such as sexual harassment according to Dana S. Connell (1991) is as follows: 1. Establish a clear policy on sexual assault in the company and present it to both existing and new workers. Stress that sexual assault under no conditions would be tolerated. With the agenda being publicized and endorsed by top management, emphasis is better achieved. 2. Conduct training sessions with managers to clarify their position in ensuring an atmosphere free from sexual harassment and, when charges arise, institute effective investigative procedures. 3. Establish a standardized complaint process in which workers without fear of retaliation may address issues. How charges will be investigated and resolved should be clarified by the complaint process. 4. Act instinctively when workers complain of sexual assault. 5. Discipline the accused at once if an inquiry confirms employee claims. 6. To ensure a successful resolution of the issue, follow up on all cases (Connell, 1991).

Although, there are no general organizational policies and procedures concerning deviant behavior that all companies abide by, by looking into disciplinary policies and procedures, we can gain a better understanding how deviant behavior can be dealt with in the workplace.

Below in is a disciplinary model that describes the sequence of steps commonly taken with disciplinary actions.

**Figure 3: Disciplinary model – steps commonly taken with disciplinary actions**



Source: Belcourt, Singh, Bohlander, & Snell, 2014

Examples of disciplinary problems where this model might be used can range anywhere from absenteeism, theft, work-performance problems, all the way to on the job behavior problems such as intoxication, fighting, abusive language, sexual harassment. Before any disciplinary actions are taken, managers should ensure that the organizational rules should be known and understood by the employees, otherwise, the blame is on the manager for overlooking the enforcement of the same rules that the employee broke. In order to find this out a manager should conduct an investigative interview to make sure that the employee is fully aware of the violation that they have committed as well as to give them an opportunity to explain their side of the story (Janove, 2004). If the investigation shows that corrective action is needed, one of the following two can be used, progressive discipline or positive discipline.

The more traditional corrective action of the two can be seen with progressive discipline in which the levels of corrective action increase in severity if the unsatisfactory behavior has not been corrected by the employee. However, this approach can be seen as counterproductive for its intended purpose, which is why certain organizations have started to use positive discipline as corrective measures towards deviant behavior.



Positive discipline is an approach that focuses on the employee and their supervisor reaching joint solutions in which the employee takes full responsibility for correcting the problem at stake (Redeker, 1985).

According to Belcourt, Singh, Bohlander & Snell (2014), the positive discipline process follows three steps:

1. Meeting between supervisor and employee to discuss and find a solution to the problem at stake without reprimanding the employee or keeping a written record of it.
2. Supervisor and employee discuss why the improvement has not been made since the first meeting, and this time a written record is kept which also states the improvement is the employee's responsibility.
3. If both conferences lead to no improvement, a one-day paid leave is given to the employee, in which the employee must decide whether he or she intends to continue working for the organization.

However, the focus of many variations of such disciplining procedures tends to be on viewing the problems from an organizational perspective which can end up being counterproductive. Therefore, the need for people-centered strategies to deviant behavior, specifically, workplace incivility, need to be introduced.

Andersson and Pearson (1999) claim: "We have established that incivility involves acting rudely or discourteously, without regard for others, in violation of norms of respect in social interactions. It follows, then, that workplace incivility involves acting with disregard for others in the workplace, in violation of workplace norms for respect. Norms are defined as acceptable standards of behavior within a group that are shared by the group's members (Robbins & Judge, 2015). Therefore, workplace norms are standards at work that are established through policies, rules and procedures. These standards vary depending on the organization/community, but it would be safe to assume that in each workplace there are norms (policies, rules and procedures) that prevent uncivil and promote civil behaviors. Considering that research shows an increase in incivility in the workplace, surely there are organizations that "encourage" and maintain norms that support deviant behavior. Furthermore,

research shows deviant workplace behavior is likely to flourish where it's supported by group norms (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1996).

When dealing with deviant behavior in the workplace, it is common for organizations to rely on human resources departments to evaluate the situation and conduct appropriate training in order to ensure the reparation of the issue involved. However, many companies tend to create an image that they focus on problem-centered solutions.

Approaching a difficult interpersonal situation with problem-centered solutions will be helpful to reduce these mistakes in the future, but it is very likely that the actual root of the problem has not been treated although there could be visible improvement in the work climate. The reasoning behind this is because when faced with incivility in the workplace, the focus will often be on all the negative aspects that arise with an employee acting in an uncivil manner. Instead, by using solution focused thinking, we can stop wasting our time on finding out why this event occurred, and use that time on how to treat the targets as well as instigators of deviant behaviors.

Research has shown that using people-centered solutions in the events on interactional injustice is more effective than traditional organizational-centered solutions (Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009).

Barclay and Skarlicki (2009) suggest that if employees have been treated unjustly, having opportunities to express their frustration has been shown to reduce their desire for retribution. The study focused on victim-centered solution by allowing the targets of incivility to understand the root of their negative feelings, to acknowledge what is happening to them, as well as to teach them how to deal with these traumatic experiences. Writing thoughts and emotions about being treated unfairly at work increased those employees physiological and psychological well-being as opposed to those that did not do this (Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009).

This approach differs from traditional organizational-centered solutions due to the fact that organizational-centered solutions focus on what is ultimately best for the organization and it does not directly help workers with trauma experienced at work.

In the study of Barclay and Skarlicky (2009) participants of this study were instructed to write about an unfair workplace experience on 4 different days with different conditions. Firstly, they wrote with their emotions only, in which they described their emotions and feelings surrounding the unfair experience at work. Then, they were instructed to write about the unfair experience with thoughts only. On the third sessions, they used both emotions and thoughts surrounding the experience. Lastly, the participants were instructed to write objectively about their last 24 hours as part of a control condition for this study. Individuals that wrote with their emotions only recorded expressing more anger than others, whilst those that used thoughts only seemed to have more discrepancy in their descriptions (i.e. should, could, would). They concluded that employees who wrote about both their emotions and thoughts reported significantly higher psychological well-being compared to the emotions only ( $d=.69$ ) and thoughts only ( $d=.79$ ). Additionally, individuals who wrote about both their emotions and thoughts reported better in sense making of the experience as well as significantly less anger at the end of the intervention as compared to the other groups (Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009).

In summary, one can mask discrimination, even without realizing it, behind every day acts of incivility and still maintain an unbiased image. That is why it is crucial for leaders to begin putting importance on workplace incivility, how to treat it as well as how to prevent it with proactive policies and procedures. Unfortunately, many of these policies and procedures remain with a focus on viewing the problems from an organizational perspective. Therefore, if employees have been treated unjustly, having opportunities to express their frustration has been shown to reduce their desire for retribution. These interventions with expressive writing will help employees who experience workplace injustice to better manage their reactions. By directly mending to the employees and their traumas, it will inevitably create a much better understanding of the employees themselves, which in turn will aid towards creating an organizational culture of civility and fairness.

As important as setting up organizational policies and procedures concerning deviant behavior is, fostering trust between employees and management is key to both developing better policies as well as using those policies for correcting/disciplining such behavior. Additionally, considering the fact that workplace incivility and its impact remains largely undermined, very few organizations will invest the time to come up with specific policies that tend to such behavior. However, bearing in mind that workplace incivility revolves around interpersonal relationships at work, understanding the role

of trust and justice at work will not only reduce acts of workplace incivility but also allow for better development of policies concerning such issues in the future. To gain a better understanding on how trust impacts the effectiveness and development of organizational policies we should examine justice and its facets to be able to understand how fairly employees are being treated by their employers. This will allow us to understand how justice in the workplace determines the trustworthiness of the authority in that same workplace. Studies have shown that the role of justice strongly correlates with the trust of employees in the workplace (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Therefore, it is safe to assume that employees that trust their authorities are more prone to conduct themselves in a civil manner at the workplace as opposed to those that do not.

### **3. National Culture and its influence in organizational settings**

#### **3.1 Role and influence of national culture in organizational settings**

A large part of the world is becoming more and more “westernized” each passing day, which can be seen anywhere from political philosophies to everyday tenets of life such as eating McDonald’s and drinking Coca-Cola. Due to this westernization, it is of no surprise that a North American might assume that conducting business in a similar manner across different nations should work fairly smoothly. However, no matter the similarities that modern globalism has created across the globe, one must understand that below that globalism, deep cultural differences still remain which govern the way organizations conduct business in that particular culture.

Geert Hofstede, an expert on cross-cultural dimensions and management has defined culture as “The collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others”. Therefore, culture is said to be the shared values, beliefs, motives, identities, and interpretations that from common experiences of members of a society and are transmitted across generations (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

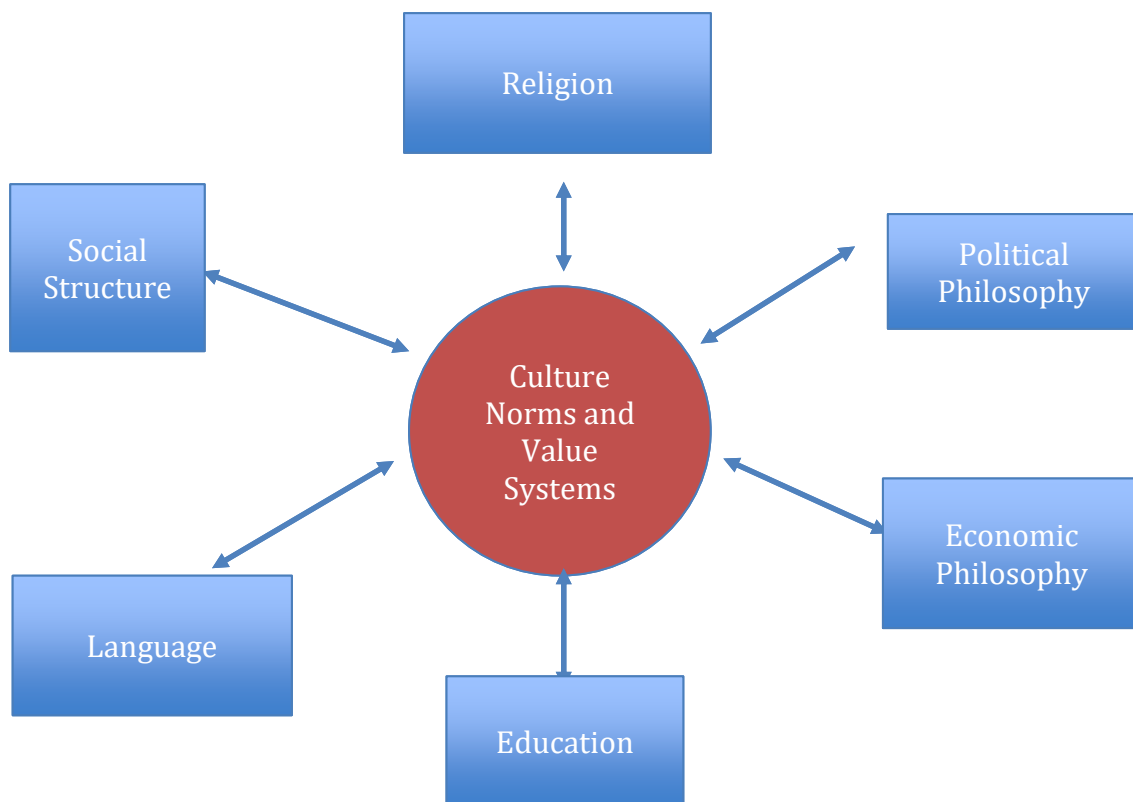
Moreover, culture can be seen as a system that is ruled by the shared values and norms by a group of people which make up a standard for living within that group. Values are what a certain group believes to be good, desirable and just, whilst, norms represent societal rules and guidelines on how to behave within specific situations. These values form the foundation of a culture anywhere from democracy, freedom, the role of women, justice, etc. In fact cultural values can be so deeply emotionally embedded within a society to the point where its people will fight and even die for them, which can be seen in Croatia’s not so distant past. Additionally, understanding the values of a specific culture allows for context on how their norms are formed. Norms are societal rules throughout which its people learn the acceptable and unacceptable behaviors in that particular culture. A simple example of a difference in cultures between Canada and Croatia can be seen when being invited for dinner. In Canada, when invited for a dinner at 8:00 PM to someone’s home, it is a norm to arrive either on time or just a few minutes late. On the other hand, Croatian culture is a little more relaxed on punctuality

in this case, therefore, being invited at 8:00 PM, usually means arrive around 8:15 PM or even a little later.

Values and norms do not come out fully established. They can change, develop and fluctuate during the course of time depending on multiple factors such as religion, language, political philosophy, etc. As an example, the values and norms in Croatia are significantly different today as opposed to 40 years ago if we were to simply just look at the political philosophy that ruled the area then (communism), as opposed to today (democracy).

Below is a figure of culture norms and value systems which are formed by determinants of culture such as religion, political philosophy, economic philosophy, education, language and social structure. Followed by that is a discussion on how these determinants form culture norms and values as well as the influence that one might have on another.

**Figure 4: Determinants of Culture**



Source: Hill, 2021

As we can see above, the determinants of culture have been clustered into a few categories that form the basis of culture norms and value systems. Each one of these can develop and change throughout the course of time, which inevitably have a great influence on the values and norms of that same culture. Additionally, a change or development in only one of these facets has to impact and influence the other five. To illustrate these influences, a culture that is ruled by a democratic system tends to prioritize individualism, which in turn tends to result in an economic philosophy of a free market economy. On the other hand, a totalitarianism political ideology which emphasizes collective goals over individual ones tend to go hand in hand with a command economy in which the goods and services are controlled and planned by the government. It is also easy to assume that if a culture changes their political philosophy, i.e. from totalitarianism to a democracy, that its people will adapt to a highly individualistic society from a collectivistic one. However, culture is way more complex than that, which can be seen in Croatia's example of still valuing collectivism highly in its culture despite the shift from a communist regime to a democracy more than a couple of decades ago (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Each of these facets of culture intertwines and mingles with each other to form a culture's values and norms. Therefore, it is of no surprise that a culture that places high value on religion will inevitably center a lot of its values and norms through that religion. For example, a culture that is ruled by theocratic law such as Islamic law which is primarily a moral law and governs all aspects of life (Lippman, 1995), will inevitably impact the norms and values of organizations that conduct business in these cultures. However, even in cultures where theocratic law is not the ruling law, research has shown that religious fundamentalism can influence prejudiced behavior such as modern racism and benevolent sexism (Hill, Cohen, Terrell, & Nagoshi, 2010).

Furthermore, a study done in 1966 has shown that one third of the variability in managerial attitudes are due to human differences, whereas absolutely two thirds may be attributed to national differences (Haire, Ghiselli, & Porter, 1966). Building on such studies, research on managers from Central Europe, Greece, Scandinavia, Spain, and the United States has shown that American managers were found to be the most belligerent, risk taking, and trusting in all five classes and that they also ranked substantially higher in their belief in internal locus of control ( Cummings, Harnett , & Stevens Insead, 1971).

Hofstede's model on national culture provided us with many insights into the role of national culture in organizational settings of which one is the ineffectiveness of certain practices like management by objectives in high power distance societies like China as opposed to a low power distance society such as the US. According to Hofstede (2001), the reasoning behind this is that managers in high power distance societies in which less powerful members of an organization accept unequal distribution of power are expected to express their authority. Additionally, subordinates expect their superiors to obtain specific instructions and believe they will be told what to do (Hofstede, 2001). Because of this a common US management practice such as management by objectives in which employees are expected to cooperate with their supervisors on setting personal goals is going to have little success in a country like China where one expects their supervisor to tell them what to do as opposed to coming up with it together with the subordinate.

### **3.2 Hofstede model of national culture**

The most well-known taxonomy of cultural values that will be used to discuss the differences between the two cultures of Canada and Croatia is the Hofstede's model of national culture. Hofstede's model of national cultures is the most well-known taxonomy of cultural values, which to date has analyzed data from over more than 90 countries.

The model of national culture came about in the late 1960s with Hofstede founding the personnel research department of IBM Europe where Hofstede initially conducted survey questionnaires on 117000 IBM employees across 40 different countries in which this corporation had subsidiaries. At first, Hofstede himself says that he could not have predicted the importance of the model that is widely used in empirical research concerning national culture in the workplace (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991). However, the reasoning why this study worked out well in respect to the findings that we know today, is because the samples across these 40 countries were similar in all aspects besides nationality, therefore, making the responses on national differences quite obvious. Hofstede's model on national culture has been used in wide ranges of exploring and understanding culture, anywhere from management to educational setting.



A new paradigm was formed when it comes to studying cultural differences from Hofstede's initial research findings in the 1970s. As the model gained traction as a breakthrough in the scientific community, it became the foundation for cross-cultural research as a model for exploring cultural differences across an array of disciplines. Prior to Hofstede's model, the statistical difference between two ethnic groups with no direct cause would explain culture as a singular variable. Hofstede's model on national culture put emphasis on the demand for an approach on culture using defined variables, those being the newly introduced dimensions. Furthermore, researchers argued that this model does not account for cultural evolution. However, a study done throughout the 1970 to 2006 (Inglehart, 2008) showed that although since the 1970s countries in West Europe have evolved in those 36 years, the cultural pattern has not shown changes during this observation. Therefore, Hofstede's suggestion that cultures do evolve but they move together in the same cultural direction was shown to uphold.

One of the main limitations of the Hofstede model lies in its generalization. Hofstede himself explained that this model is constructed on a national level and that the answers are tendencies in answers from each country; "There is hardly an individual who answers each questions exactly by the mean score of his or her group" (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991). Another limitation of this model is the amount of time that has passed since the original study was done. Since the 1970s, immense changes have occurred such as the boom of social media, globalization, revolutions have occurred, leading to critiques of Hofstede's claim that cultures are static. As already mentioned, Hofstede has said that cultures do evolve but they move in the same direction. However, it does not account for the radical political, social, educational reforms that have occurred in the countries since the original collection of data. Furthermore, it can be said that the study is limiting as it uses only one company (IBM) in its research, therefore, it cannot possibly provide insight on the cultural system of a country as a whole. However, Hofstede agreed that the study was not absolute and that using one corporation diminishes the effect of different corporate practices from difference countries (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991).

Hofstede's research showed that employees across different cultures and societies prioritize different values and those values were put together to form dimensions; the early stages of his research involved 4 different dimensions, but with additional research, there are up to 6 different dimensions upon which cultures can be compared (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991). Diving into these dimensions and examining the differences across these between Croatia and Canada later in this work will allow for a better

understanding of the impact of national culture on organizations as well as insights on how this impact can affect workplace incivility. Firstly, each of the 6 dimensions should be understood before a comparison between the two cultures can be made. The Hofstede model of national culture is made up of 6 dimensions: **1. Individualism vs. Collectivism, 2. Power distance Index, 3. Masculinity vs. Femininity, 4. Uncertainty Avoidance Index, 5. Short term orientation vs. Long term orientation, 6. Indulgence vs. Restraint.**

### **1. Individualism vs. Collectivism**

According to Hofstede (1991), in individualistic cultures, the culture is a loosely knit social framework in which people take care of themselves and their immediate family. Individual goals and rights are seen as most important. On the other hand in collectivistic cultures, the culture is a tight social framework in which people take care of the members of a broader in-group that they are a part of. Focus is on group goals as well as what is best for the group. An example of a person in an individualist society if a person identifies as a homosexual; he/she will likely celebrate their orientation even if it may go against the grain of the group as personal freedom is highly valued in Individualist societies, i.e. The Netherlands. On the other hand, a person of homosexual orientation in a collectivist society in which such orientation goes against the harmony of the group, he/she is expected to keep it undisclosed as it may be considered detrimental to the harmony of the group, i.e. China.

### **2. Power Distance Index**

The second dimension in Hofstede's model of National Culture is Power Distance Index. Power distance refers to the extent to which inequality and power are tolerated. In this dimension, inequality and power are viewed from the viewpoint of the followers – the lower level (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991). In low power distance cultures, the culture strives to equalize the distribution of power and demands justification for inequalities of power, i.e. The Netherlands. Furthermore, in high power distance cultures, the culture accepts that power is unequally distributed within organizations. Usually can be seen through hierarchies in which everybody has a place and it needs no further justification, i.e. China (Hofstede, 2001). An example of low power distance at work can be seen when subordinates are expected to be consulted and may more openly express disagreements and suggestions. In contrast,

in high power distance cultures, subordinates expect leaders to provide specific directions and are taught from an early age to be submissive towards authority.

### **3. Masculinity vs. Femininity**

Another dimension that Geert Hofstede found across cultures is Masculinity vs. Femininity. At first glance, one would assume this refers to some sort of division or differences in cultures between males and females. However, this dimension refers to the type of traits that the culture values which Hofstede described as stereotypically male (tough and assertive) and female traits (tender and more caring about quality of life) (Hofstede, 2001). A National culture that scores high on masculinity is a culture that values stereotypical male traits like acquisition of wealth, things, as well as assertiveness, i.e. Japan. While, a national culture that scores high on femininity is a culture that values stereotypical female traits like quality of life and caring for others (relationships), i.e. The Netherlands. Examples of high masculinity include “Girls cry, boys don’t cry. Boys fight, girls don’t.” Additionally, failing is seen as a disaster, which can be commonly seen in Japan with a score of 95 making it a culture that highly values these stereotypically masculine traits (Hofstede Insights, 2020). Examples of the opposite side of this dimension are “both boys and girls cry, neither boys nor girls fight.” Also, whilst cultures with a high score on masculinity see failing as a disaster, cultures that align more with femininity see failing is a minor accident which can be observed in The Netherlands with a low score of 14 on this dimension (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

### **4. Uncertainty avoidance Index**

Furthermore, the fourth dimension in Hofstede’s model of national culture is **Uncertainty avoidance Index** which refers to the extent to which uncertainty and ambiguity are tolerated. This dimension discusses how unknown situations and unexpected events are dealt with (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991). According to Hofstede (1991) Cultures that score low on uncertainty avoidance are cultures that tolerate uncertain and ambiguous situations as well as values unusual ideas and behavior. On the other hand, high uncertainty avoidance cultures feel threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and rely on rules to create stability. Hofstede’s insights (2020) show that Jamaica with a score of 13 on this dimension makes it a low uncertainty avoidance culture and an example of cultures that score low

on this dimension is that they are more tolerant towards people who behave different and who come from elsewhere. Russia on the contrary scores a 95 on this dimension making it a high uncertainty avoidance culture. People in such cultures tend to be more afraid of people who are different and who come from elsewhere which is often described as Xenophobia (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

### **5. Short term orientation vs. Long term orientation.**

The fifth dimension in Hofstede's model of national culture is Short term orientation vs. Long term orientation. This dimension refers to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991). Therefore, short term orientation cultures emphasize values that are more past and present oriented such as respect toward tradition and norms, while they view changes in society with doubt. On the other end of this dimension is long term orientation which Hofstede defined as cultures that are more future oriented and they emphasize thrift in education in order to prepare for the future. Additionally, Hofstede (1991) has found that people in long-term oriented cultures are willing to sacrifice short-term gratification/material rewards with the purpose of preparing for the future. An example of this in the workplace would be managers offering an increase towards an employee's retirement fund as an incentive for motivation. That being said, employees in short-term orientation cultures are more concerned with immediate gratification, therefore, offering a bonus, a short-term incentive would be seen as a better way of motivating them (Hofstede, 2001).

### **6. Indulgence vs. Restraint**

The last dimension of Hofstede's model is 6. Indulgence vs. Restraint and it is the most recent dimension. These terms were coined by Dr. Michael Minkov while he was analyzing cross-country data collected through the World Value Survey. This dimension refers to feelings of subjective happiness/unhappiness as well as the control over one's life or the opposite (Hofstede & Minkov, 1991). Indulgence cultures allow rather free gratification of basic and natural human desires and they promote enjoying life and having fun. Restraint societies suppress the gratification of needs and people's lives are regulated by strict social norms. According to Hofstede insights (2020) an example of Indulgence cultures would be where people have a perception of personal life control; they are the masters of their own life which is exemplified in Venezuela with the highest score of 100 making it a

highly indulgent society. On the contrary China with a score of 24 makes it a restraint society in which people tend to feel that what happens to them is not their own doing but rather is determined by other factors to which they are powerless to (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

### **3.3 Connection among national culture and deviant behavior**

When we think about culture, often the first thought that comes to mind is tradition and traditional values that the people of that culture held. These same values are carried on by its people through the socialization with peers and parents, therefore, largely influencing their attitude, values, beliefs, etc. A study in 2008 has considered the influence of an important facet of culture being religion as the influence on how individuals in that society view deviant behavior. (Rothwell & Hawdon, 2008) Some scholars have even gone as far as arguing that religion is key when it comes to maintaining social order and building common beliefs and values among its members (Durkenheim, 1915). These common beliefs tend to be about the morality of actions and the individual is said to carry these beliefs even when separated from the group (Benda, 2005).

As the world is rapidly developing and globalization is at the doorstep of every country, the increase in scientific research is inevitably leading to humans using science and secularism to “explain the world” whilst religion is falling in the background for such uses (Weber, 1964). The reason why this is important is because religion tends to stray away from deviant behavior whether constructive or destructive. Thus, Hawdon (2005) argues that science makes us be critical of those traditions aforementioned as rationalism is used to tackle once “unquestioned understandings of the world”. Additionally, as these traditional views are questioned, a consensus on the “truth” is much harder to reach (Habermas, 1985). As a consequence, individuals become more focused on satisfying their immediate needs and their personal interests shift from being collectively defined to more privately defined (Parsons, 1951).

Meaning that conformity to the collective becomes less important and individualism which promotes “standing out” or being deviant to social norms rises significantly in importance. The reason why this is important is because Hawdon (2005) claims that individualism should then logically be more tolerant of deviance. For example, individuals in the USA which is an individualistic and rationalized

society would then tend to be more tolerant of deviance as opposed to those who accept more of a traditional view of the world. In fact, that study done in 2008 has shown that the more an individual embraces individualism and a scientific worldview, the more tolerant he/she becomes of deviance in others (Rothwell & Hawdon, 2008).

Since, we are using Hofstede's model of national culture, it is important to dive into how these dimensions of culture interact and influence with deviant behavior. To begin with, in individualistic cultures, people are more inclined to take care of themselves whilst the ones in collectivistic cultures are more prone to a tightly knit social network in which the group needs are more important than one selves' needs (Hofstede, 2001). A study in 2020 showed that individuals in individualistic cultures deem the achievement of their own personal goals more important than other goals, therefore, are less likely to refrain themselves from counterproductive behaviors (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2020). Additionally, people in individualistic cultures place less importance on controlling their negative emotions as opposed to those in collectivistic cultures, therefore, the inability to control emotions such as frustration and anger will result in more counterproductive behavior (Gunkel, Schlagel, & Engle, 2014). On the other hand, collectivistic cultures value and naturally motivate individuals to develop better relations with their colleagues which inevitably will increase their citizenship behavior as well as reduce counterproductive work behavior.

As already discussed, masculine societies are ones that place higher value on assertiveness and accomplishment whilst feminine societies tend to focus more on cooperation and quality of life (Hofstede, 2001). Therefore, individuals in feminine societies will lean more towards being altruistic as well as more inclined to suppress destructive behaviors as such behaviors are much more highly regarded and valued in such societies. In contrast, masculine societies tend to value assertiveness and aggressiveness more and promoting citizenship behavior is of less importance making them more likely to lash out and participate in counterproductive work behavior (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2020).

Furthermore, uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which the individuals in a society are comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity (Hofstede, 2001). Individuals in high uncertainty societies are more encouraged to display and use emotions to avoid misunderstandings and unpleasant situations

(Gunkel, Schlagel , & Engle , 2014). Due to this, individuals in high uncertainty avoidance societies are better at regulating their emotions which directly reduces counterproductive behavior at work (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2020).

Power distance as already mentioned defines how individuals in a society deal with the inequality among people and how power is distributed in a society (Hofstede, 2001). In high power distance societies, individuals are less inclined to question the unequal distribution of power and are more inclined to regulate their emotions in order to conform to authority. In contrast, individuals in low power distance societies are more inclined to question the unequal distribution which will directly increase their participation in counterproductive work behaviors if said distribution is unequal without fair reasoning (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2020).

Long term orientation societies are more inclined to plan for the future as opposed to short term orientation societies that focus on immediate gratification (Hofstede, 2001). Naturally, individuals in long term oriented societies will tend to care about forming long lasting relationships than their counterparts in short term orientation societies. That being said, individuals in long term orientation societies are more inclined to display citizenship behavior and reduce counterproductive behaviors as that will ease the facilitation of relationships and trust which are highly valued and rewarded in such societies (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2020),.

Last but not least, indulgence versus restraint societies refers to how much a culture permits self-gratification and enjoying life (indulgence) as opposed to restraint societies which suppress the gratification of human needs and regulates these desires and impulses (Hofstede, 2001). Since restraint societies put more value and reward into suppressing and regulating one's emotions, they will naturally be better at regulating their emotions at work which directly reduces counterproductive behaviors (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2020).

## **4. Empirical research on the impact of national culture on workplace incivility**

### **4.1 Methodology of research**

The aim of this study was to gain a better understanding of the impact of national culture on workplace incivility and in order to do so both primary and secondary data was collected. Primary data was collected through survey questionnaires which examined workplace incivility between two countries: Croatia and Canada. Secondary data was collected through Hofstede insights (Hofstede Insights, 2020) which examined national differences according to 6 dimensions in Hofstede's model on national culture.

Furthermore, convenience sampling was used to gather participants for the survey. Google forms was used to conduct the survey and all participants in the survey were informed that the survey is for the purpose of observing workplace incivility in two different cultures – Croatia and Canada. 105 responses were completed by employees in Croatia, whilst 38 responses were completed by employees in Canada. All survey participants were informed that their answers will be anonymous. The survey questionnaire was made up of two parts. Firstly, there were 4 demographics questions which required the participants to state their gender, age, work experience, and job position. Secondly, following the demographics questions, 7 questions regarding experienced incivility and 7 of the same questions regarding perpetrated incivility were answered by the participants. The questions regarding incivility in the workplace were taken from the WIS scale designed by Cortina and Magley (2001). Respondents were asked to give their opinion on each statement using 1 to 7 scale (1 – never, 2 – rarely, 3 – sometimes, 4 – often, 5 – always).

Below are tables that describe sample characteristics, that is, respondents' gender, age, work experience, and job position.



**Table 1: Sample characteristics according to gender (%)**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Canada</b>
<b>Male</b>	35,2	65,8
<b>Female</b>	64,8	34,2

As we can see in the table 1 above, out of responses completed by employees in Croatia, 65% of the responses were given by female employees whilst 35% were by male employees. On the other hand, in Canada, 66% of the responses were completed by male employees and 34% by female employees.

**Table 2: Sample characteristics according to age (%)**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Canada</b>
<b>&lt;25</b>	4,8	18,4
<b>25-30</b>	13,3	34,2
<b>31-35</b>	15,2	13,2
<b>36-40</b>	11,4	7,9
<b>41-45</b>	15,2	15,8
<b>46-50</b>	20	5,3
<b>51- 55</b>	8,6	5,3
<b>56 - &lt;</b>	11,4	0

Table 2 above describes the responses of employees from both countries according to the age group that the participants belong to. Therefore, out of the responses by Croatian employees the largest age group was **46-50** which represented 20% of the responses whilst the smallest age group was **<25** which represented 4.8% of the responses. At the same time, the largest age group of Canadian employees' responses was **25-30** which constitute 34.2% of the responses and the smallest age group of responses being **56 - <** to which there were none.

**Table 3: Sample characteristics according to their work experience (%)**

<b>Work experience</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Canada</b>
<b>Less than 6 months</b>	3,8	10,5
<b>1 year</b>	6,7	13,2
<b>1 year to 2 years</b>	8,6	13,2
<b>2 years to 5 years</b>	15,2	36,8
<b>5+ years</b>	65,7	26,3

Table 3 above describes the responses of employees from both countries according to the amount of work experience that they had in the organization. The largest group of participants in Croatia were made up of employees that had worked **5+ years** at their organization which amounted to 65.7% of the participants, whilst the smallest group was those that worked **less than 6 months** amounting to 3.8% of the participants. On the other hand, the largest group of the responses from Canadian employees were those with **2 years to 5 years** of work experience which amounted to 36.8%, while the smallest group were those with **less than 6 months** of work experience which equated to 10.5% of the responses by employees in Canada.

**Table 4: Sample characteristics according to their job position (%)**

<b>Job position</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Canada</b>
<b>Managerial position</b>	18,1	34,2
<b>Non-managerial position</b>	81,9	65,8

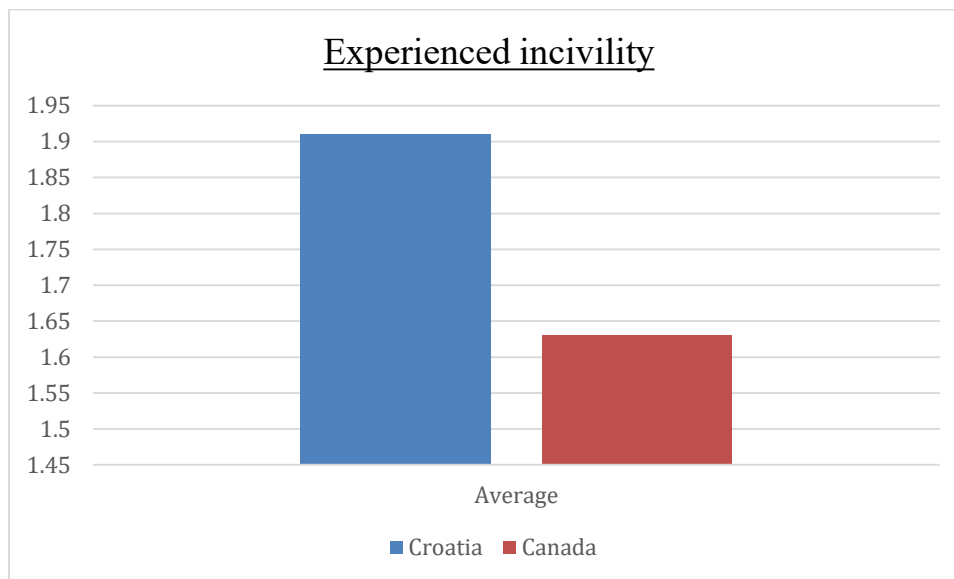
Lastly, table 4 above represents last demographic question posed to participants from both countries to which they had to indicate the title of their position being either a managerial or non-managerial position. As we can see, out of the participants from Croatia **18.1%** were on managerial positions whilst **81.9%** were on non-managerial positions. **34.2%** of the employees from Canada were on managerial positions and **65.8%** on non-managerial positions.

## 4.2 Research Results

In this section, we will begin by observing the responses to both experienced and perpetrated incivility in the workplace in both Croatia and Canada. Following those results, Hofstede's model on national culture was used to collect data on the cultures of the two countries across the 6 dimensions in the model.

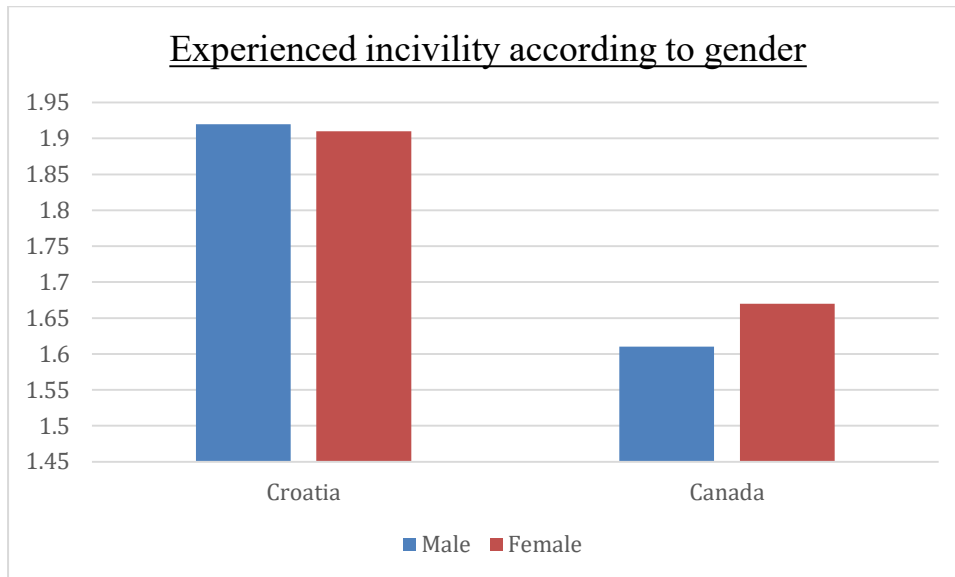
Below is the graph that represent the responses of experienced incivility in Croatia and Canada and following it are the graphs representing experienced incivility according to the 4 demographic differences – gender, age, work experience and job position.

**Graph 1: Experienced incivility**



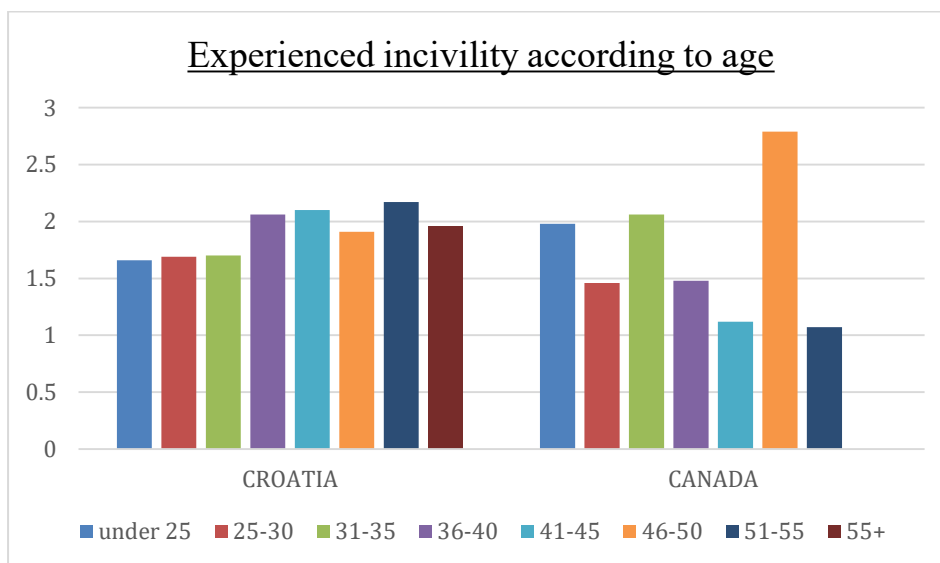
As we can see in the graph above incivility was reported to be on average experienced more by employees in Croatia than in Canada. The average value for experienced incivility in Croatia being **1.91** whilst the average in Canada being **1.63**.

### **Graph 2: Experienced according to gender**



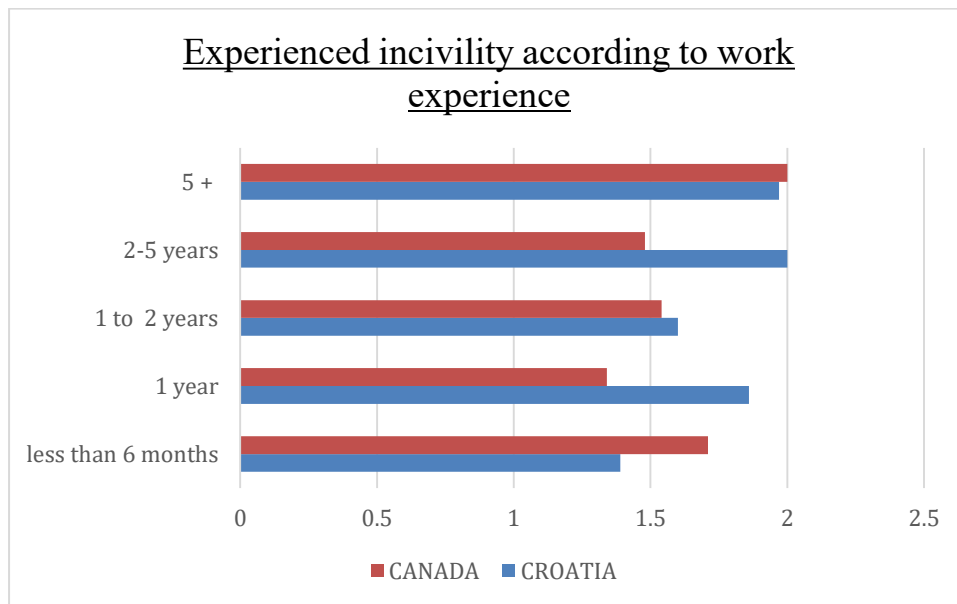
In the graph above we have the values for the reported experienced incivility according to gender in Croatia and Canada. The responses indicate that experienced incivility according to gender had little variation by employees in Croatia. However, experienced incivility by male employees in Canada was **1.61** whilst the same for female employees was **1.67**. Thus, Canadian female employees expressed that they experienced incivility in the workplace more often than their male counterparts.

### **Graph 3: Experienced incivility according to age**



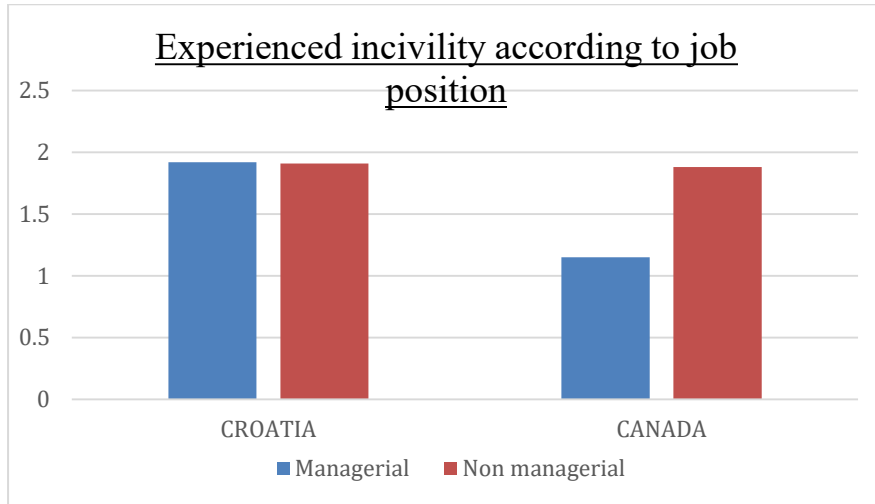
Graph 3 above pertains to the values for the reported experienced incivility according to age in Croatia and Canada. Participants from Croatia showed a trend of incivility being experienced more by older employees with the highest reported experienced incivility being the group of **51-55** with a value of **2.17** whilst the age group of **under 25** reported to experience the least incivility with a value of **1.66**. On the other hand, employees in Canada on firsthand seem to gravitate towards the fact that younger employees experience more incivility in the workplace, however, the highest reported experienced incivility was by the age group of **46-50** with a value of **2.79** which is also the group that reported experienced incivility the most out of all age groups in both countries.

**Graph 4: Experienced incivility according to work experience**



The graph 4 above are the results of experienced incivility according to the amount of work experience that the employees had with the organization in Canada and Croatia. The group that reported the largest incivility experienced in both countries were those employees that had been employed at their organization for **more than 5 years**. Furthermore, the group that reported the least incivility experienced in Croatia were those that were employed **less than 6 months**, whilst Canadian employees that had been employed for **1 year** reported the lowest number of incivility experienced at work.

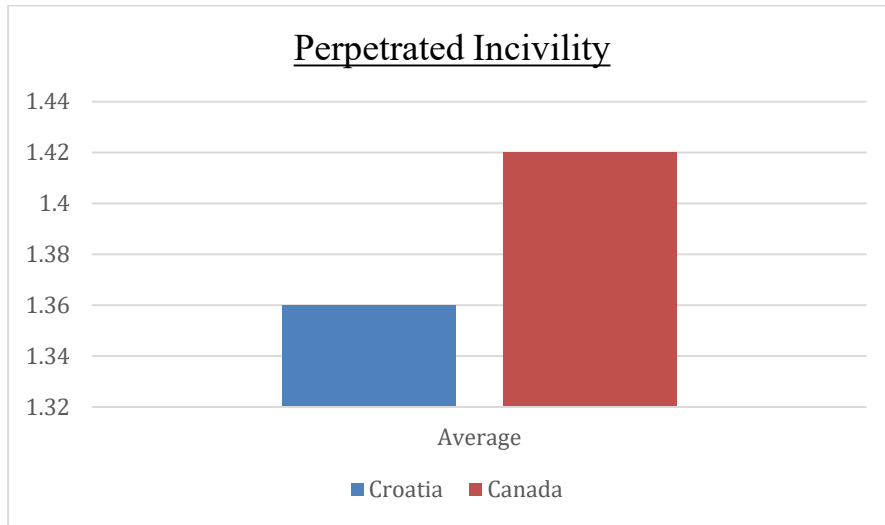
**Graph 5: Experienced incivility according to job position**



In graph 5 above are the results of experienced incivility according to job position in both countries with the distinction being made between managerial and non-managerial positions. The participants from Croatia have reported to experience incivility in the workplace at almost an equal rate regardless of whether they held a managerial or non-managerial position. On the other hand, Canadian employees who held non-managerial positions reported to have experienced **63%** more incivility in the workplace with a value of **1.88** as opposed to those who held managerial positions with a significantly lower value of **1.15**.

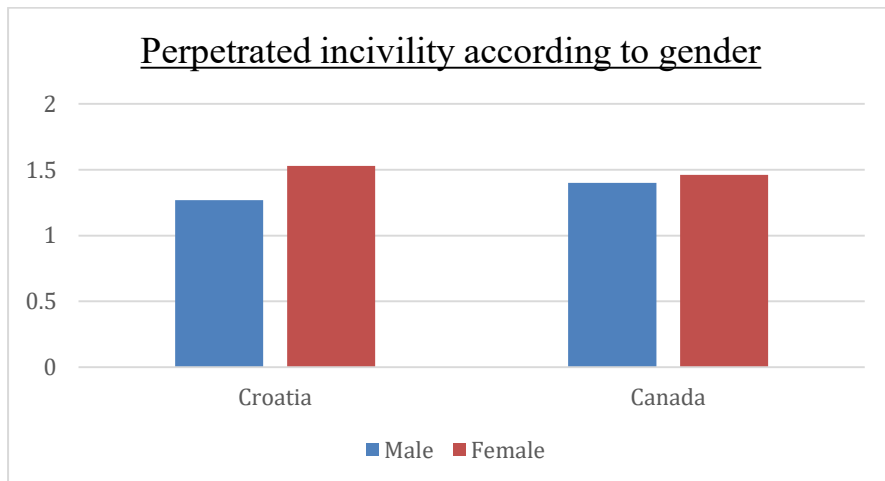
The graphs shown so far all concerned experienced incivility in the workplace and below is the graph that represent the responses of perpetrated incivility in Croatia and Canada. Following it are the graphs representing perpetrated incivility according to the 4 demographic differences – gender, age, work experience and job position.

### **Graph 6: Perpetrated incivility**



As we can see in graph 6 above, incivility in the workplace was reported to be on average perpetrated more by employees in Canada than in Croatia. The average value for perpetrated incivility by Croatian employees is **1.36** whilst the average reported by Canadian employees is **1.42**.

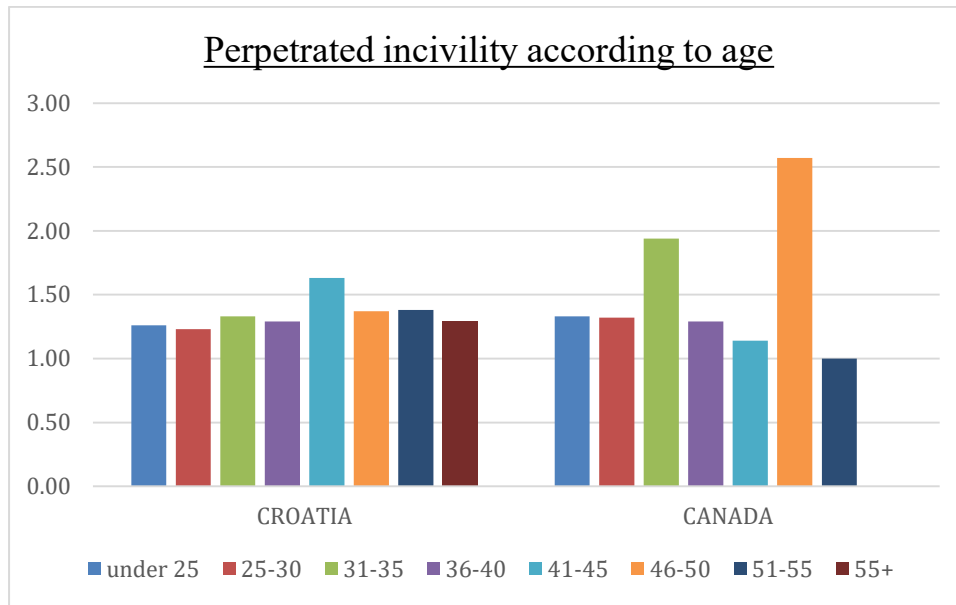
### **Graph 7: Perpetrated incivility according to gender**



The graph 7 above are the values for the reported perpetrated incivility according to gender in Croatia and Canada. The responses indicate that incivility was instigated by female employees more in both countries. However, that difference is only so slight with Canadian employees whilst Croatian employees indicated that the values for perpetrated incivility by male employees was **1.27** whilst the

same for female employees was **1.53**. Thus, female employees in both countries reported to have instigated incivility in the workplace more often than their male counterparts.

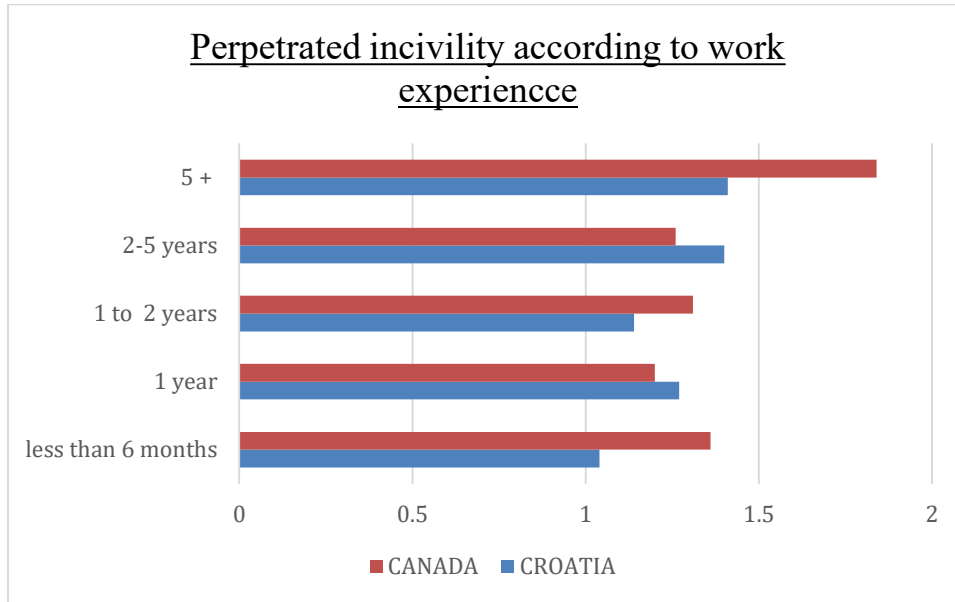
**Graph 8: Perpetrated incivility according to age**



Graph 8 above pertains to the values for the reported perpetrated incivility according to age in Croatia and Canada. Participants from Croatia showed no trend of incivility being perpetrated more by older/younger employees, however, the age group that reported to have instigated incivility the most were those in the **41-45** group with a value of **1.63** whilst the age group **25-30** with a value of **1.23** reported to have instigated incivility the least. On the other hand, the age group that perpetrated incivility the most in Canada is the age group of **46-50** with a value of **2.57** which is also the same age group that reported to have experienced the most incivility in the workplace. Additionally, Canadian employees aged **51-55** are the age group that reported the least perpetrated incivility with a value of **1.00** which also happens to be the age group of Canadian employees that reported the least amount of experienced incivility in the workplace.

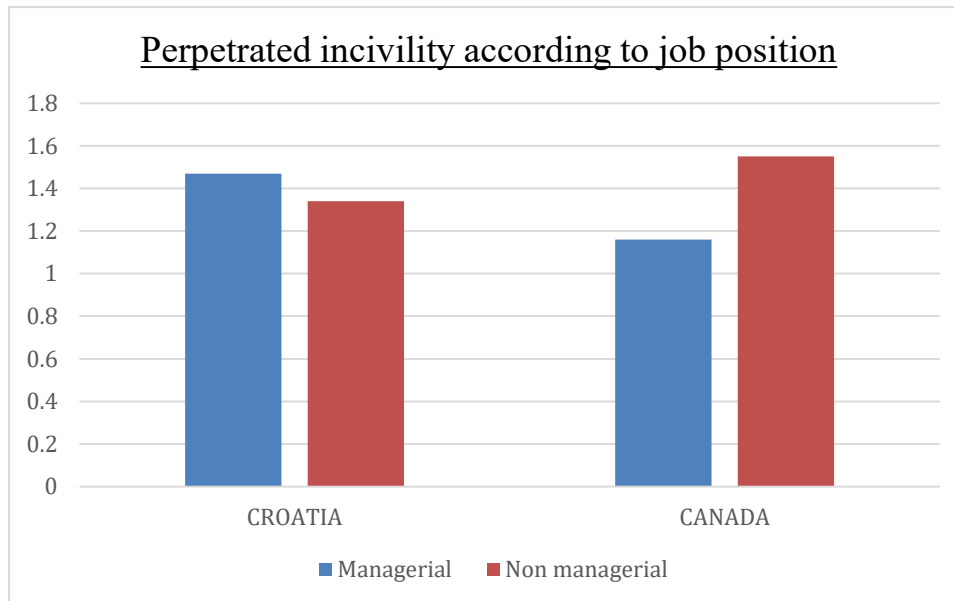


**Graph 9: Perpetrated incivility according to work experience**



In the graph 9 above are the results of perpetrated incivility according to the amount of work experience that the employees had with the organization in Canada and Croatia. The group that reported the largest incivility perpetrated in both countries are those that have stayed with their organization for **more than 5 years**, which happens to be the same group that reported to have experienced the most incivility in both countries. Moreover, the group that reported the least incivility perpetrated in Croatia were those that were employed for **less than 6 months** with a value of **1.04**, whilst Canadian employees that had been employed for **1 year** reported the lowest number of incivility perpetrated at work. Additionally, the two groups that reported the least incivility perpetrated in both countries were also the same groups that previously reported the lowest number of incivility experienced at work.

**Graph 10: Perpetrated incivility according to job position**



Last but not least, graph 10 above is showing the results of perpetrated incivility according to job position in both countries with the distinction made between managerial and non-managerial positions. The participants from Croatia have reported to instigate incivility in the workplace more often by those who held managerial positions. On the contrary, employees in Canada that held non-managerial positions reported to have instigated incivility more often than those that held managerial positions. Interestingly enough, those that held non-managerial positions by respondents from Canada also reported to have experienced the highest amount of workplace incivility.

Now that we have observed the results that were collected through a survey questionnaire as a source of primary data, below are the results of the two countries' values according to the 6 dimensions in Hofstede's model on national culture. In light of these data from Hofstede model, results of this thesis's personal research on incivility are discussed.

**Graph 11: Values of Croatia and Canada across the six dimensions in Hofstede’s model of national culture**



Source: Hofstede Insights. (2020). Hofstede Insights: Country comparison. Retrieved August 20, 2020, from Hofstede Insights: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/canada,croatia/>

### **1. Individualism vs. Collectivism country comparison**

Croatia scores **33** out of 100 which is considered a collectivistic society. Loyalty is of great importance in such societies in which everyone should be taking responsibility for the fellow members of their group (Hofstede Insights, 2020). Croatia was a part of Yugoslavia up until a few decades ago which was ruled by a communist regime that values collectivism as a core and fundamental value. Therefore, it is of no surprise that collectivism still prevails on a national level. Canada scores **80** out of 100 which is its highest dimension score, making it an individualist culture. Alike its neighbor, the USA, Canada is a loosely knit society in which one is expected to take care of themselves and their immediate family (Hofstede, 2001). As it’s already been mentioned, a study in 2008 showed that

people that embraced individualism and a scientific worldview became more tolerant of deviance in others. (Rothwell & Hawdon, 2008). According to the results of this thesis questionnaire, Canadian employees reported significantly less experienced incivility which may be due to the fact that greater tolerance to deviance may result in less perceived incivility experienced therefore less report of actual incivility occurring as opposed to less incivility occurring due to this. On the other hand, collectivistic culture values and intrinsically motivate individuals to focus on developing relations with their colleagues which naturally are supposed to increase their citizenship behavior as well as reduce counterproductive ones. This may be the reason for the fact that employees in Croatia perpetrated less incivility as opposed to Canadian employees as they naturally may be more inclined to please others that are part of the group in order to ensure harmony within the group.

## **2. Power distance country comparison**

Croatia scores **73** out of 100 on the power distance dimension. This implies that Croatian people accept a hierarchical order in which everyone has a place which needs no further justification. In addition to that centralization is popular in Croatia and employees tend to expect to be told what to do. On the other hand, Canada scores 39 out of 10, implying that there is less of a distinction between the classes. It is more common for managers and subordinates to consult one another and to share information freely as opposed to high power distance societies such as Croatia. In societies that have such high power distance, the relationship between authority and subordinates could be seen in some cases as treating their subordinates like a child which is actually a common example of workplace incivility. As submission to authority is taught from an early age and the fact that subordinates expect to be told what to do, this can often resemble a relationship between a parent and a child leading to such incivility being more common as opposed to lower power distance societies. This may be the reason why employees in Croatia holding managerial positions reported to have instigated incivility more than those that held non-managerial positions.

## **3. Masculinity vs. Femininity**

Croatia scores **40** out of 100 making it a more feminine society. This implies a focus on “working in order to live” as well as quality of life being more representative of success. In addition to that, people

in feminine cultures like Croatia tend to value equality and solidarity in their work lives as opposed to highly masculine societies. Canada scores **52** out of 100 which characterizes it as a moderately “masculine” society. Canadians do aim for high performance at work; however, being on the verge of a masculine society it also implies a focus on work-life balance. Incivility can be largely caused by stress and anger due to increasing workload. The stress from more masculine societies to be the “best” will inevitably result in environments in which incivility is more likely to occur as opposed to more feminine societies like Croatia where caring for others and quality of life is more valued. Although, one would argue that due to this on average Canadian employees will experience less incivility, however, the results from the questionnaire have shown that Croatian employees on average experience 17% more incivility despite it being a more feminine society.

#### **4. Uncertainty avoidance**

Croatia scores **80** out of 100, its highest dimension score makes it a society that prefers avoiding uncertainty. In such cultures, there is a high need for rules and its people are intolerant of behaviors that go against the grain of such rules. Canada scores **48** out of 100, making it more accepting of uncertainty. This can be seen with more tolerance to freedom of speech as well as tolerance to ideas and opinions that are unusual and different. Uncertainty avoidance can certainly impact incivility in the workplace. In high uncertainty avoidance cultures like Croatia, job security will be of high importance. With the rapid changing pace of the business environment across the globe which must impact Croatian organizations, the ability to maintain the same job for longer periods of time is becoming much scarcer. Additionally, research has shown that job insecurity can lead to incivility (Blau & Lynne, 2005). Therefore, in cultures where avoiding uncertainty is high, a higher amount of incivility due to job insecurity should be expected as opposed to lower uncertainty avoidance cultures where employees are inclined to be more tolerant of such uncertainty.

#### **5. Short-term vs. Long term**

Croatia has a higher score of **58** out of 100 which makes it more of a long-term orientation society. Pragmatic societies as such exhibit a higher aptitude to adapt traditions to changed conditions which can be exemplified with its immense change in the last few decades after its recent disturbing past.

Canada scores **36** out of 100 making it a more normative society in which there is a lesser tendency to save for the future and a larger focus on reaching quick results. Increases in organizational change which is more likely in short-term orientation society due to the focus on quick and short term results could certainly lead to increased incivility. Due to the pressure of achieving quick results, subordinates may be reprimanded more often to the point where they feel they are being berated rather than reprimanded for their bad performance/behavior. Such instances may be the case as to why Canadian employees that held non-managerial positions reported significantly higher amounts of experienced incivility as opposed to those that held managerial positions.

## **6. Indulgence vs. Restraint**

Croatia with a low score of **33** out of 100 makes it a restrained country in which people feel their actions are restrained by societal norms and indulging themselves is somewhat wrong. Canada with a score of **68** makes it an indulgent society in which people are more likely to indulge in their desires and impulses; in addition to that, they tend to be more optimistic than restrained societies. If stress and anger are major leading cause to workplace incivility, one could assume that individuals in more indulgent societies like the Canadian one, will place a greater importance on enjoying life. Therefore, being more inclined to enjoy life should reduce the stress and anger caused at work. This will in return lead them to being less likely to be rude or to take offense easily as opposed to restrained societies in which developing ways to release stress and anger through indulging in their desires is less common. However, indulgent societies might be more inclined to introducing more casual wear at work, which can add to incivility due to the fact that people tend to behave less formally and less respectfully when in casual attire (Rucker, Anderson, & Kangas, 1999). Although, freedom of religion is protected by the constitution in both Canada and Croatia, the majority of people declare they identify themselves with a religion in both countries. Canada having 76% and Croatia having 93% of its population identify with a religion (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011) (National Household Survey, 2013), which increases the possibility of religious fundamentalists having prejudiced values which in turn could translate into incivility in the workplace.

In the end, it can be said that national culture represents the way of life in a certain region which is learned at an early stage of life and can be said to be fairly subconscious learning. This in turn will

inevitably impact the organizational culture which is something that is learned at a stage where we are young adults due to the fact that we already have core beliefs, values and assumptions of how behaviors should be according to our national culture. Gender is part of the social structure aspect of culture and the way a national culture views these can impact the behaviors exhibited within an organizational setting. It can be said that Croatian culture is predominantly patriarchal. Although, men and women are almost equally as educated, with patriarchy being predominant in the culture, there should be a higher percentage of incivility where the instigator is male and the target is female, however, results of the questionnaire for Croatian employees showed the opposite. Gender as a concept of discussion is a fairly recent concept in Croatia; therefore, incivility based on gender could also be occurring without either party perceiving it as such. On the other hand, the progressive nature of Canadian culture and the immense discussion on gender in the workplace, such behavior could be seen as a clear violation of norms in certain organizations in Canada. However, the results from the questionnaire done for this paper show that female employees did in fact experience more incivility as opposed to their male counterparts but experienced it less often than female employees in Croatia.

### **4.3 Limitations and future studies**

When it comes to the limitations of this study several issues can be discussed. Firstly, the convenience sampling method was used to gather participants due to the fact that this was the easiest method of collecting the responses. Additionally, the number of respondents from each country differed significantly. There were 105 Croatian respondents versus 38 Canadian employees which may have limited the accuracy of the comparison. The responses from the questionnaire were self-reported which inherently influenced the participants' results as they are relying on their own perception of experienced and perpetrated incivility.

Furthermore, the sample in Canada was mostly individuals that work in Ottawa which is part of the Ontario province. In fact even Hofstede himself mentioned that when observing countries such as Canada that are a "mosaic of culture", the difference between an English speaking culture in Ontario and a French speaking one in the province of Quebec had carried differences across the 6 dimensions significant enough to question whether nationwide values were indeed valid (Hofstede, 2001). In

addition to that, the sample in Croatia was exclusive to employees in Zagreb which is North of Croatia to which there might be differences in answers by employees in the South of Croatia.

Another important limitation of this study is the fact that both samples did not represent individuals from the same company and in many cases not in the same department, therefore, the differences in corporate practices across the sample may have influenced the answers to an extent.

Last but not least, perhaps using Hofstede's model on national culture has more of a focus on the nationwide values that the entire society may relate to on an average, therefore, using this model and applying them to an individual or company level may not be as applicable.

A recommendation for future research could exploit the data to look at the growth of the topic that I studied through models that relate national values to an individual level in order to differentiate culture from differing management practices. Additionally, including participants from the different cultures mixed in Canada will not only allow for greater understanding of the nature of their subcultures but will also allow for observation whether ethnic background has an influence on experienced/perpetrated workplace incivility.



## **5. Conclusion**

In this particular paper, I sought to gain insights concerning the role of national culture and its elements when it comes to deviant behavior, more specific workplace incivility. Additionally, I attempted to find whether Hofstede's model of national culture can aid in predicting such behavior.

Based on the findings of this paper, it is evident that national culture can both increase and decrease workplace incivility. The findings show that on average Croatian employees reported more incidents of workplace incivility compared to Canadian employees. Additionally, female employees reported to have experienced and perpetrated incivility more than their male counterparts. In addition, employees from both countries showed a trend of an increase in incivility experienced and perpetrated depending on the amount of work experience with the highest being after they have worked for 5 years or more with their organization.

Furthermore, Hofstede's model of national culture allowed for a greater understanding of both positive and negative impacts of national culture elements on deviant behavior such as workplace incivility. However, the model was found to not be suitable at the individual and organizational level, therefore, the model did not predict how gender, age, work experience, job position affect the amount of incivility experienced/perpetrated at work.

The findings of this study indicate that there are still many loose ends when it comes to understanding the way national culture plays a role on employees' behaviors at work and that it is evidently increasing in importance for companies and corporations that continue to function on a global scale.

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## Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire on Croatian language

# Neuljudno ponašanje na radnom mjestu - Ante Grubisic

Svrha ove ankete je prikupiti informacije o neuljudnom ponašanju na radnom mjestu u svrhu istraživanja u mom magistarskom radu - Nacionalna kultura i njezin utjecaj na neuljudno ponašanje na radnom mjestu.

Anketa bi trebala trajati samo 5 minuta, a vaši su odgovori potpuno anonimni.

\* Required

### Demografska pitanja

Molimo odgovorite na sljedeća pitanja.

1. Koliko imate godina? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Manje od 25
- 25 - 30
- 31 - 35
- 36 - 40
- 41 - 45
- 46 - 50
- 51 - 55
- 55+

2. Navedite svoj spol. \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Ženski
- Muški
- Drugo

3. Koliko dugo ste zaposleni u svojoj organizaciji? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Manje od 6 mjeseci
- 1 godina
- 1 do 2 godine
- 2 do 5 godina
- 5+ godina

4. Navedite naslov radnog mjesta. \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Menadžerska pozicija
- Ne menadžerska pozicija

Pitanja o neuljudnom ponašanju  
na radnom mjestu -  
DOŽIVLJAVANJE neuljudnog  
ponašanja

Navedite svoj odgovor zaokruživanjem odgovarajućeg  
odgovora pored svakog pitanja u vezi s iskustvom  
neuljudnog ponašanja na radnom mjestu.



5. Da li ste tijekom protekle godine dana bili u situaciji gdje je netko od vaših suradnika (nadređenih ili kolega) \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Nikada	Rijetko	Ponekad	Često	Uvijek
Omalovažavao vas ili pokazivao superiornost prema vama/promatrao vas "s visoka"?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pridavao malo pozornosti vašim izjavama ili pokazivao malo interesa za vaše mišljenje?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Izgovarao ponižavajuće ili uvredljive primjedbe o vama?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obraćao vam se neprofesionalno, u javnosti ili privatno?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zanemarivao ili isključio vas iz poslovnih krugova?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sumnjao u vašu prosudbu glede nečega nad čime vi imate odgovornost?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inzistirao u razgovorima o vašim privatnim stvarima, iako vi to niste htjeli?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pitanja o neuljudnom ponašanju na radnom mjestu - POTICANJE neuljudnog ponašanja

Navedite svoj odgovor zaokruživanjem odgovarajućeg odgovora pored svakog pitanja u vezi s poticanjem neuljudnog ponašanja na radnom mjestu.  
Pitanja koja slijede identična su onima iz prethodnog odjeljka, ali se odnose na POTICANJE neuljudnog ponašanja, za razliku od prethodnog odjeljka koji se odnosio na DOŽIVLJAVANJE neuljudnog ponašanja.

6. Da li ste tijekom protekle godine dana bili u situaciji gdje ste Vi: \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Omalovažavali ili pokazivali superiornost prema suradnicima/promatrali ih "s visoka"?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pridavali malo pozornosti izjavama suradnika ili pokazivali malo interesa za njihovo mišljenje?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Izgovarali ponižavajuće ili uvredljive primjedbe o suradnicima?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obraćali se suradnicima neprofesionalno, u javnosti ili privatno?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zanemarivali ili isključili suradnike iz poslovnih krugova?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sumnjali u prosudbu suradnika glede nečega nad čime oni imaju odgovornost?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inzistirali u razgovorima o suradnikovim privatnim stvarima, iako oni to nisu htjeli?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## Appendix 2: Survey questionnaire in English language

### Workplace Incivility survey - Anthony Grubisic

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on incivility in the workplace for the purpose of research in my master thesis - National culture and its impact on workplace incivility.

The survey should only take 5 minutes, and your responses are completely anonymous.

\* Required

#### Demographics questions

Please respond to the following questions.

1. How old are you? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Less than 25
- 25 - 30
- 31 - 35
- 36 - 40
- 41 - 45
- 46 - 50
- 51 - 55
- 55+

2. Please indicate your gender. \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Female
- Male
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How long have you been employed at your organization? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Less than 6 months
- 1 year
- 1 year to 2 years
- 2 years to 5 years
- 5+ years

4. Please indicate the title of your job position. \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Managerial position
- Non-managerial position

Workplace Incivility  
questions -  
EXPERIENCING incivility

Please indicate your answer by checking the appropriate answer beside each question regarding experiencing incivility in the workplace.

5. During the past year while employed at your organizations, have you been in a situation where your coworkers/supervisors: \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Put you down or was condescending to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paid little attention to your statement or showed little interest in your opinion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Made demeaning or derogatory remarks about you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ignored or excluded you from professional camaraderie?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you have responsibility?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Made unwanted attempts to draw you into a discussion of personal matters?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Workplace  
Incivility  
questions -  
INSTIGATING  
incivility

Please indicate your answer by checking the appropriate answer beside each question regarding instigating incivility in the workplace. The questions that follow are identical to the ones in the previous section, but they relate to **INSTIGATING** incivility as opposed to the previous section which related to **EXPERIENCING** incivility.

6. During the past year while employed at your organizations, have you been in a situation where YOU: \*

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Put down or was condescending to your coworkers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paid little attention to your coworkers' statements or showed little interest in their opinion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Made demeaning or derogatory remarks about your coworkers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressed your coworkers in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ignored or excluded your coworkers from professional camaraderie?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doubted your coworkers' judgment on a matter over which they have responsibility?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Made unwanted attempts to draw your coworkers into a discussion of personal matters?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

**Anthony Ante Grubisic**

Palmoćiceva 82, 10000 Zagreb

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Phone no.: 091-4488-800

### PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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Multilingual self-motivated student native in English and Croatian, proficient in French with limited knowledge in German. Having lived, studied in four countries, I am flexible and able to adapt to new and challenging situations. In addition, well developed interpersonal communications skills allow me to thrive independently and excel within team environment.

### EDUCATION

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**University (2013-Present)**

**University of Ottawa (Telfer School of Management) – Ottawa, Canada**

- Completed Honors Bachelor of Commerce (International Management)

**High School (Four years)**

- Colonel By Secondary School (OSSD, International Baccalaureate) – **Ottawa, Canada** (2011-2013)
- X. Gimnazija – **Zagreb, Croatia**(2010-2011)
- St. Kilian’s German School – **Dublin, Ireland** (2009-2010)

**Primary School (Eight years)**

- St. Kilian’s German School – **Dublin, Ireland** (2007-2009)
- Osnovna Škola Petra Preradovića – **Zagreb, Croatia**(2003-2007)
- Institut de la Vierge Fidèle – **Bruxelles, Belgium** (2000-2003)

### EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

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**Dalma Forming Inc.-2014 (Ottawa)**

Construction laborer

- Assistant to other trades (i.e. concrete finishers)
- Use of blasting, hand tools, power tools, air tools, and small heavy equipment

### VOLUNTEERING

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**Wuestenrot Stambena Stedionica 2016**

- Observed business functions across finance, accounting, and management
- Developed knowledge on team coordination between departments

**HWF-2012 UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN**

- Developing teamwork efficiency
- Coordination and relocation of room refurbishing and arrangement
- Assisting in the delivery process of furniture to ‘families in distress’

**Children’s wish foundation of Canada 2012**

- Drafting and compiling response information, as well as design for ‘thank you’ notes for the ambassador’s spouse
- Assortment and distribution of gifts for the children of the foundation

**Ottawa animation festival 2011**

- Providing pass holders with necessary assistance and information for the event
- Identifying and legitimizing pass holders
- Packaging of goods for festival pass holder

**OUTSTANDING AWARDS**

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- The 'Ontario Scholar' - Graduated with honors
- Over 40 medals in swimming and basketball

**SYSTEMS PROFICIENCIES**

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- Microsoft office suite: Word, Power Point, Excel

**LANGUAGES**

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- English – *native*
- Croatian – *native*
- French – *proficient*
- German – *limited knowledge*

**TRAVELS**

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- Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Singapore, Slovenia, Switzerland, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, The Vatican.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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- Australian & Croatian citizenship