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**UNMET EXPECTATIONS: HOW AND WHEN
ILLEGITIMATE TASKS AND PERCEIVED SUPPORT SPARK
WORKPLACE INCIVILITY**

Abstract:

Oftentimes employees are asked to undertake tasks that are unreasonable or unnecessary, referred to as the illegitimate tasks. Such tasks constitute a distinct and often over-looked stressor that violates employees' expectations about what can legitimately be demanded of them. The current research proposes that such violation of employees' expectations due to illegitimate tasks can turn into impetus form is directed retaliation towards co-workers in the form of workplace incivility. Following social cognitive theory, the current study proposes that such misdirected retaliation materializes through the process of moral disengagement by which employees rationalize and justify their mistreatment of co-workers. Moreover, the current study proposes that an employees' tendency to undertake moral disengagement due to illegitimate tasks further intensifies when perceived support is high rather than low. The current study there fore proposes a moderated mediation model and finds its sup-port through two studies. First, we employed a time-lagged survey design, collecting data at three time points from hospitality employees from the United States (N = 222), then a three-wave panel design with lagged measures across different industries in the United States (N = 244). The theoretical and practical implications along with limitations and future research are discussed.

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