

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

## ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	Impact of workplace incivility in hospitals on the work ability, career expectations, and job performance of Chinese nurses : A cross-sectional survey
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Zhang, Shu'e; Ma, Chongyi; Meng, Dexin; Shi, Yu; Xie, Feng zhe; Wang, Jinghui; Dong, Xinpeng; Liu, Jiao; Cang, Shuang; Sun, Tao;

## VERSION 1 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Karen H Morin University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, United States of America
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	19-Mar-2018

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>Reviewer Comments: Examining factors within the workplace that can influence how nurses perform, including work ability and career expectations is an important and timely undertaking. That said, there are several issues with the manuscript in its current form. Concerns are explicated the following paragraphs.</p> <p>A general comment: Please update references, as more than ¾ of the references cited are more than 5 years old. There has been considerable discussion about incivility in the last 5 years that warrants being highlighted.</p> <p>Abstract: Please clarify response rate by providing total number of participants versus those for whom completed data were available.</p> <p>Results: Please revise the first finding. The greater portion of the sample experience little to sometimes, indicating some experience. As presently stated, the occurrence of incivility is misrepresented and exaggerated.</p> <p>Introduction: Please present a concise couple of paragraphs addressing the problem to be addressed. One should not have to read 6 pages before reading the purpose of the paper. You could easily include a background heading to report your review of literature. Noticeably absent from the review of literature is any discussion of the theoretical underpinnings. It is not until the discussion that mention is made of theoretical underpinnings is discussed. Please remedy this omission. It would be helpful to place the research questions within the context of the theoretical underpinnings.</p> <p>Subjects: Please provide a power analysis, given the statistical tests performed. In addition, please clarify how participants were recruited. It sounds as though snow-ball technique was employed but that is not clear. Please clarify how the list of participants was generated, as it seems phone numbers were essential to recruitment.</p> <p>Ethical considerations: Please clarify what is meant by “oral informed consent was obtained..” Rather confusing given survey methodology employed. Please clarify how long it took to complete the questionnaire.</p>
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	<p>Instrumentation; More information is needed for all instruments used. Please provide more explicit information about validity and reliability – although I appreciate your reporting of the alpha for your sample.</p> <p>Data analysis: Please provide a little more information about steps taken before answering research questions. For example, please indicate how missing data were treated, whether data were inspected for normalcy, etc.</p> <p>Descriptive results: Please provide more descriptive information about the distribution of incivility scores – median, mode for each response. It is evident that participants experienced some incivility; however, if you remove the sometimes category, over half never or occasionally experienced incivility while ~ 15% did experience incivility frequently to very frequently. I did wonder whether you considered analyzing only those in that category instead of including everyone in the MR analyses.</p> <p>MR analysis: This section would be strengthened by clearly describing the steps or models resulting from the analysis. For example, it appears that you entered the demographic variables in Step 1, then entered other predictor variables. However, this is not clear from either the narrative or tables presented. In addition, it would be helpful to include a diagram with statistics obtained to convey the mediation and moderation effects. I could not make sense of Table 4. Somehow Table 5 prints out incorrectly thus impeding reviewer ability to evaluate it.</p> <p>Discussion: Please be more cautious in discussing findings, given most nurses did not experience incivility on a regular basis. The first sentence in this section oversteps the findings presented. In addition, percentage presented here is not the same as that reported in Table 2. Given cultural influences, one could question whether scores were not higher for incivility. It is possible that it is not politically or socially correct to report such behavior. Certainly incidence reported in this manuscript are consistent with recent reports of incivility – but not more than what is reported. It is unclear how Self-regulation is related to this study. In addition, the Affective Events Theory relationship to study variables warrants strengthening. For example, were instruments used in this study a proxy for emotion?</p> <p>Limitations: well done.</p>
<b>REVIEWER</b>	Foroozan Atashzadeh-Shoorideh School of Nursing & Midwifery, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	23-Mar-2018
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	The reviewer provided a marked copy with comments. Please contact the publisher for full details.
<b>REVIEWER</b>	Jessica Smith University of Pennsylvania United States
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	26-Mar-2018
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>Is the abstract accurate, balanced, and complete? There is not a brief opening sentence to inform the reader of the background of workplace incivility and why it is important. The results for mediation results are incorrectly stated.</p> <p>Are methods described sufficiently to allow the study to be replicated?</p>

	<p>Construction of the anonymous survey for online distribution was not discussed.</p> <p>Are the Outcomes Clearly Defined? There is not a clear definition of work ability as a concept. The authors instead discuss what work ability is linked to conceptually. There is not a direct definition of career expectation as a concept. The meaning of career expectation is suggested but it is not clear how the author's define career expectation for this study. There is not a clearly stated definition of job performance as a concept.</p> <p>If statistics are used are they appropriate and described fully? The response rate statistic is incorrect. The author's did not use the possible number of hospital nurses in the provinces as the denominator of the response rate formula. Instead, author's used the "number enrolled" as the denominator and the number of completed surveys as the numerator. What does "enrollment" mean for a voluntary anonymous survey? The original scoring method from Cortina et al in the reference cited by authors of this paper is from 0 (never) to 4 (many times). Scoring was changed from 1 to 5 without rationale.</p> <p>Are the references up-to-date and appropriate? There are many uncited statements made that are not based on the study results. Examples include the first sentence on page 20 and the third sentence on page 7.</p> <p>Are the discussion and conclusions justified by the results The discussion is not sufficiently informed by the results. There are many uncited statements that cannot be supported by the study results. There is no discussion about how results could be used to intervene to address the problem of workplace incivility. For example, here is a specific statement without a citation that are incorrect: • "this study focused on nursing workplace incivility and, for the first time, evaluates the current situation of nursing workplace incivility"(p. 22) – This is incorrect and reflects a lack of literature review Here is an incorrect interpretation of the study results: • "Namely, workplace incivility reduced job performance by weakening the work ability of new nurses" (p. 22) –This is not how to interpret your analysis. A mediator explains the relationship between an independent and a dependent variable. (In this sentence, you do not describe your mediator as having the explanatory effect).</p> <p>12. Are the study limitations discussed adequately? There is no discussion about how the time frame for measuring incivility could result in higher reported rates for incivility than limiting the reporting period to a shorter time frame, such as one month.</p> <p>Other Comments: The paper needs significant editing to ensure that English is used appropriately. Please edit for clarity, appropriate word choice, and sentence structure.</p>
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## VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer Name: Karen H Morin

Institution and Country: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, United States of America

Question 1: A general comment: Please update references, as more than ¾ of the references cited are more than 5 years old. There has been considerable discussion about incivility in the last 5 years that warrants being highlighted.

My response: Thanks for your scientific and reasonable suggestions. References were updated in this revision. And marked in red.

Question2: Abstract: Please clarify response rate by providing total number of participants versus those for whom completed data were available.

My response: Thank you very much for your relevant comments and suggestions. A total of 903 participants were invited in this survey. And I have added a sentence "A total of 903 participants were invited". It's marked with red.

Question3: Results: Please revise the first finding. The greater portion of the sample experience little to sometimes, indicating some experience. As presently stated, the occurrence of incivility is misrepresented and exaggerated.

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. Thank you for pointing out the miscalculation of the incidence of incivility behavior. In this modification, Table2 was re-produced. 60.7% of new nurses experienced workplace incivility in the past year. It's marked with red. We only removed the never experienced incivility. The incidence of incivility in our recalculation was 60.7% among new nurses. occurrence rate = 1-(total number of never experienced incivility/total number\*total item)

$$60.7\% = 1 - (77 + 64 + 356 + 199 + 149 + 171 + 364 + 503 + 361 + 246 + 333 + 459) / 696 * 12$$

Question3:

Introduction: Please present a concise couple of paragraphs addressing the problem to be addressed. One should not have to read 6 pages before reading the purpose of the paper. You could easily include a background heading to report your review of literature. Noticeably absent from the review of literature is any discussion of the theoretical underpinnings. It is not until the discussion that mention is made of theoretical underpinnings is discussed. Please remedy this omission. It would be helpful to place the research questions within the context of the theoretical underpinnings.

My response: Thanks for your valuable suggestion. According to your reasonable suggestions, I have revised the background part of this article. And marked in red.

Question4: Subjects: Please provide a power analysis, given the statistical tests performed. In addition, please clarify how participants were recruited. It sounds as though snow-ball technique was employed but that is not clear. Please clarify how the list of participants was generated, as it seems phone numbers were essential to recruitment.

My response: Thank you very much for reminding me. We have added more information about the sample to the manuscript. And marked in red. We have also extracted the additional parts for your review, as shown below.

In this study, the method of snowball sampling was used to collect the sample data. In the network survey, original deliverers used in this survey are alumni who maintain friendly contact with us, who work in nursing positions in various hospitals. Before a formal online survey begins, we have provided comprehensive survey training to these initial contacts. Then encourage them to invite their colleagues or classmates to fill out the questionnaire. This survey is to use their network of relationships for continuous expansion. The amount of data collected can be monitored in real time on the website's management platform. In other words, our group of people strictly in accordance with exclusion criteria for data management and quality control.

Question5:

Ethical considerations: Please clarify what is meant by “oral informed consent was obtained..” Rather confusing given survey methodology employed. Please clarify how long it took to complete the questionnaire.

My response: Thanks for your prudentially advice. Firstly, I'm very sorry that our language is not clear enough for you to understand “an oral consent is obtained from an online survey Instruments section” .Second, we describe the process to you. In this survey, we have provided an introduction to the questionnaire on the front page of the online questionnaire, if they do not agree to participate in our survey, they can give up access to the page. If they agree to participate in our survey, they can continue to go to the questionnaire page and fill out the questionnaire. So the participants who successfully completed the questionnaire, we default to them agree to participate in this survey. Finally, we have revised the sentence, as shown below, in the manuscript in red.  
It was identified that the nurses had acquiescently agreed to participate in our survey.

Instrumentation; More information is needed for all instruments used. Please provide more explicit information about validity and reliability – although I appreciate your reporting of the alpha for your sample.

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. The scale has been applied many times in other occupational groups in China ' s cultural background , and has been verified to have good cross - cultural property. The questionnaire is highly reliable and suitable for a Chinese population. Thank you again for asking this question. I have modified the cultural applicability in the manuscript. The revised part was marked in red.

References: Meng D, yu S, xie F. Measures and its influence on turnover intention of incivility behaviors by new nurses at workplace. Chinese Hospital Management 2017;37(5):62-64. (in Chinese)

Data analysis: Please provide a little more information about steps taken before answering research questions. For example, please indicate how missing data were treated, whether data were inspected for normalcy, etc.

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. There is no vacancy in this survey. This survey is to use their network of relationships for continuous expansion. The amount of data collected can be monitored in real time on the website's management platform. In other words, our group of people strictly in accordance with exclusion criteria for data management and quality control. These scales have been applied many times in other occupational groups in China ' s cultural background , and have been verified to have good cross - cultural property. The questionnaire is highly reliable and suitable for a Chinese population. Thank you again for asking this question. I have modified the cultural applicability in the manuscript. The revised part was marked in red.

Descriptive results: Please provide more descriptive information about the distribution of incivility scores – median, mode for each response. It is evident that participants experienced some incivility; however, if you remove the sometimes category, over half never or occasionally experienced incivility while ~ 15% did experience incivility frequently to very frequently. I did wonder whether you considered analyzing only those in that category instead of including everyone in the MR analyses.

My response: Thanks for your prudentially advice. In this modification, Table2 was re-produced. more descriptive information about the distribution of incivility scores was shown. It's marked with red. We think that occasionally experiencing incivility is considered experienced incivility. We only removed the never experienced incivility. The incidence of incivility in our recalculation was 60.7% among new nurses.

occurrence rate = 1-(total number of never experienced incivility/total number\*total item)

60.7% = 1-(77+64+356+199+149+171+364+503+361+246+333+459)/696\*12

Table 2 Incidence states of workplace incivility among new nurses (N=696)

Workplace incivility item

(N=696) Never

N (%) Occasionally

N (%) Sometimes



N (%) Frequently

N (%) Very Frequently

N (%)

Paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions 77 (11.1%) 217 (31.2%) 322 (46.3%) 72 (10.3%) 8 (1.1%)

Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility. 64 (9.2%) 267 (38.4%) 299 (43%) 60 (8.6%) 6 (1.9%)

Gave you hostile looks, stares, or sneers. 356 (5.1%) 252 (36.2%) 80 (11.5%) 7 (1%) 1 (0.1%)

Addressed you in unprofessional terms

either publicly or privately. 199 (28.6%) 290 (41.7%) 176 (25.3%) 26 (3.7%) 5 (0.7%)

Interrupted or "spoke over" you. 149 (21.4%) 319 (45.8%) 184 (26.4%) 41 (5.9%) 3 (0.4%)

Rated you lower than you deserved on an evaluation. 171 (24.6%) 314 (45.1%) 181 (26%) 27 (3.9%) 3 (0.4%)

Yelled, shouted, or swore at you. 364 (52.3%) 225 (32.3%) 85 (12.2%) 17 (2.4%) 5 (0.7%)

Made insulting or disrespectful remarks about you. 503 (72.3%) 156 (22.4%) 33 (4.7%) 4 (0.6%) 0 (0.00%)

Ignored you or failed to speak to you 361 (51.9%) 243 (34.1%) 77 (11.1%) 12 (1.7%) 3 (0.4%)

Accused you of incompetence. 246 (35.3%) 319 (45.8%) 114 (16.4%) 15 (2.2%) 2 (0.3%)

Targeted you with anger outbursts or temper tantrums. 333 (47.8%) 278 (39.9%) 72 (10.3%) 12 (1.7%) 1 (0.1%)

Made jokes at your expense 459 (65.9%) 174 (25%) 57 (8.2%) 5 (0.7%) 1 (0.1%)

MR analysis: This section would be strengthened by clearly describing the steps or models resulting from the analysis. For example, it appears that you entered the demographic variables in Step 1, then entered other predictor variables. However, this is not clear from either the narrative or tables presented. In addition, it would be helpful to include a diagram with statistics obtained to convey the mediation and moderation effects. I could not make sense of Table 4. Somehow Table 5 prints out incorrectly thus impeding reviewer ability to evaluate it.

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. According to your reasonable suggestions, I have revised the MR analysis, and added necessary the steps description, Table 3 is the mediating effect and the regulation effect data result, we used the linear regression published by Baron and Kenny to verify the mediation effect and the method of the book by Judd CM, Yzerbyt V, Muller D to verify the moderation effects. And the method is used by other scholars.

References1: Baron RM, Kenny DA. The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 1986;51(6):1173.

References2:Judd CM, Yzerbyt V, Muller D. Mediation and moderation. 2014

References3: BOLIN J H. Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis: A Regression-Based Approach by Andrew F. Hayes [J]. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 2014, 51(3): 335–7.

Discussion: Please be more cautious in discussing findings, given most nurses did not experience incivility on a regular basis. The first sentence in this section oversteps the findings presented. In addition, percentage presented here is not the same as that reported in Table

2. Given cultural influences, one could question whether scores were not higher for incivility. It is possible that it is not politically or socially correct to report such behavior. Certainly incidence reported in this manuscript are consistent with recent reports of incivility – but not more than what is reported. It is unclear how Self-regulation is related to this study. In addition, the Affective Events Theory relationship to study variables warrants strengthening. For example, were instruments used in this study a proxy for emotion?

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. In this study, we explore the causes and possible mechanisms of the results of this study, based on Self-regulation and Affective Events Theory the two theoretical frameworks. We believe that the interpretation of this study is more scientific based on

theory.

Reviewer: 2

Reviewer Name: Foroozan Atashzadeh-Shoorideh

Institution and Country: School of Nursing & Midwifery, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared': none

Please leave your comments for the authors below

Please see the comments in the attached file.

Reviewer:3

Reviewer Name: Jessica Smith

Institution and Country: University of Pennsylvania, United States

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared': None declared Please leave your comments for the authors below

Question 1: Is the abstract accurate, balanced, and complete?

There is not a brief opening sentence to inform the reader of the background of workplace incivility and why it is important. The results for mediation results are incorrectly stated.

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. According to your reasonable suggestions, I have revised the background and results part of this article. And marked in red.

I have revised the MR analysis, and added necessary the steps description , Table 3 is the mediating effect and the regulation effect data result, we used the linear regression published by Baron and Kenny to verify the mediation effect and the method of the book by Judd CM, Yzerbyt V, Muller D to verify the moderation effects. And the method was used by other scholars.

References1: Baron RM, Kenny DA. The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 1986;51(6):1173.

References2:

Judd CM, Yzerbyt V, Muller D. Mediation and moderation. 2014

References3: BOLIN J H. Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis: A Regression-Based Approach by Andrew F. Hayes [J]. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 2014, 51(3): 335–7.

M1: explains the influence of demographic variables on work ability; (step1)

M2: explains the influence of workplace incivility on work ability; (step1)

M3: explains the influence of demographic variables on job performance; (step2)

M4: explains the influence of work ability on job performance; (step2)

M5: explains the influence of workplace incivility on job performance; (step2)

M6: explains the influence of workplace incivility on job performance after bringing into the explanatory power of work ability; (step3)

M7: explains the influence of workplace incivility on job performance after bringing into the explanatory power of career expectation; (step4)

M8: explains the influence of workplace incivility on job performance after bringing into the explanatory power of career expectation and career expectation-interaction. (step4)

Question2: Are methods described sufficiently to allow the study to be replicated?

Construction of the anonymous survey for online distribution was not discussed.

My response: Thanks for your prudentially advice.The scale has been applied many times in other occupational groups in China ' s cultural background , and has been verified to have good cross - cultural property. The questionnaire is highly reliable and suitable for a Chinese population. Thank you again for asking this question. I have modified the cultural applicability in the manuscript. The

revised part was marked in red.

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. I've added and explained the anonymous survey for online distribution in the discussion section.

The method to self-reports of new nurses by an online survey may have led to response bias, and causation cannot be established due to the cross-sectional study design. And marked in red.

Question 3: Are the Outcomes Clearly Defined?

There is not a clear definition of work ability as a concept. The authors instead discuss what work ability is linked to conceptually.

There is not a direct definition of career expectation as a concept. The meaning of career expectation is suggested but it is not clear how the author's define career expectation for this study.

There is not a clearly stated definition of job performance as a concept.

My response: Thanks for your scientific advice. I have added the concept of work ability, career expectations, and job performance, and emphasized the importance of this variable in this study. The revised part was marked in red.

Question4:

If statistics are used are they appropriate and described fully?

The response rate statistic is incorrect. The author's did not use the possible number of hospital nurses in the provinces as the denominator of the response rate formula. Instead, author's used the "number enrolled" as the denominator and the number of completed surveys as the numerator. What does "enrollment" for a voluntary anonymous survey?

My response: Thank you very much for your relevant comments and suggestions. The "enrollment" for a voluntary anonymous survey which means a total of 903 participants were invited in this survey. And I have added a sentence "A total of 903 participants were invited". It's marked with red. In this study, the method of snowball sampling was used to collect the sample data. In the network survey, original deliverers used in this survey are alumni who maintain friendly contact with us, who work in nursing positions in various hospitals. Before a formal online survey begins, we have provided comprehensive survey training to these initial contacts. Then encourage them to invite their colleagues or classmates to fill out the questionnaire. This survey is to use their network of relationships for continuous expansion. The amount of data collected can be monitored in real time on the website's management platform. In other words, our group of people strictly in accordance with exclusion criteria for data management and quality control.

The original scoring method from Cortina et al in the reference cited by authors of this paper is from 0 (never) to 4 (many times). Scoring was changed from 1 to 5 without rationale.

My response: Thank you very much for your relevant comments and suggestions. We carefully checked the data. We think Numbers are just symbols. The actual score of this survey is from 1 (never) to 5 (many times), it does not affect the relationship between variables. It has been confirmed that the scale has good reliability and validity among new nurses in China.

References: Meng D, yu S, xie F. Measures and its influence on turnover intention of incivility behaviors by new nurses at workplace. Chinese Hospital Management 2017; 37(5):62-64. (in Chinese)

Question5: Are the references up-to-date and appropriate?

There are many uncited statements made that are not based on the study results.

Examples include the first sentence on page 20 and the third sentence on page 7.

My response: Thank you very much for reminding me. References are updated in this revision. And marked in red.

References:

- Exposure to violence and to the general working environment stressors as negative predictors of Work Ability Index. Croatian Congress on Occupational Health with International Participation, "essentials for Workers' Health; 2015.



- Itzkovich Y. The victim perspective of incivility: The role of negative affectivity, hierarchical status and their interaction in explaining victimisation. *International Journal of Work Organisation & Emotion* 2016; 7(2):126.

Question 6: Are the discussion and conclusions justified by the results

The discussion is not sufficiently informed by the results. There are many uncited statements that cannot be supported by the study results. There is no discussion about how results could be used to intervene to address the problem of workplace incivility.

For example, here is a specific statement without a citation that are incorrect:

- “this study focused on nursing workplace incivility and, for the first time, evaluates the current situation of nursing workplace incivility”(p. 22) – This is incorrect and reflects a lack of literature review

Here is an incorrect interpretation of the study results:

- “Namely, workplace incivility reduced job performance by weakening the work ability of new nurses” (p. 22) –This is not how to interpret your analysis. A mediator explains the relationship between an independent and a dependent variable. (In this sentence, you do not describe your mediator as having the explanatory effect).

My response: Thanks for your kind suggestion. Refer to your reasonable Suggestions, and modify the expressions as follows. The revised part was marked in red.

- This study focused on nursing workplace incivility and, for the first time, evaluates the current situation among China’s new nurses.
- Namely, Workplace incivility in hospitals towards new nurses could weaken their work ability and, in turn, gradually reduced job performance.

Question7: Are the study limitations discussed adequately?

There is no discussion about how the time frame for measuring incivility could result in higher reported rates for incivility than limiting the reporting period to a shorter time frame, such as one month.

My response: Thank you very much for your relevant comments and suggestions. The survey time frame is new nurses experience incivility in the past year. Time frame has been highlighted in the methodology section. The high incidence of incivility behavior is related to time frame, I've added time frame and explained it in the discussion section.

Other Comments:

The paper needs significant editing to ensure that English is used appropriately. Please edit for clarity, appropriate word choice, and sentence structure.

My response: Thank you very much for your kind suggestion. We could guarantee that the manuscript has been proofread by a native English speaker prior to resubmission. If language expression and content still need to be improved, we will ask a more professional native English speaker to help with the modification.

## VERSION 2 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Karen H Morin University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, United States
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	04-Jun-2018
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>Reviewer Comments: The authors are to be commended for trying to address reviewer concerns. That said, there are still several issues with this paper in its present form. These concerns are outlined below.</p> <p>A General Comment: This paper still had grammatical issues; although the number of old references has been decreased, at least ½ are still old. I wonder whether 52 references are truly needed and whether you might not be better served by only citing the most recent when appropriate.</p> <p>Abstract:</p>

	<p>Please review the objective as there seems to be some words missing. You need to name the mediating and moderating variables. Results: Please qualify the statement about the experience of workplace incivility. While everyone experienced incivility, the greater majority either did not experience it, or experienced it occasionally to sometimes. At no time did the majority of your sample experience it frequently or very frequently. Conclusion: Please consider removing “negative emotional experience” and replacing it with “workplace incivility” as that is what was measured. Strengths: I would think this study, using a sample from China, would add to the global understanding of workplace incivility- that it occurs in different cultures and healthcare systems. This is what is important from your findings.</p> <p>Introduction: Page 5, lines 15-16. There is something wrong with this sentence. Looks as though something has been omitted. I truly appreciate the revisions made in this section. However, what remains unclear is the rationale for identifying work ability as a mediator, and career expectation as a moderator. Moreover, if “work ability appears to be the external manifestation of job performance” are you not measuring the same thing?? Inspection of Table 3 does not indicate multicollinearity between them – a good thing.</p> <p>Subjects and Procedures: This section continues to be problematic. Please clarify how the 60 nurses from your units were selected [criteria, etc], what is meant by “original deliverers” [did these staff nurses sent the survey to others? If so, how?]. What is meant by “network” survey? By alumni – how were they contacted, etc? If I understand what is written, you invited staff nurses on your respective units, and reached out to alumni [were these people who used to work there? Former students of the school affiliated with the hospital?]. None of this is clear as presently written. How did you get the mobile cell numbers for your sample?</p> <p>Please clarify whether “regular” connotes nurses were employed full-time, “irregular” means part-time.</p> <p>Ethical Considerations: Please remove Line 53 from the manuscript. You did not obtain oral informed consent”. You indicated in the invitation that completion of the questionnaire was considered participant consent.</p> <p>Instruments: Thank you for adding more information to this section. While you indicate the WAI is most reliable, please provide some discussion of why you chose the single item. Your reference supports the use of a single item.</p> <p>Career expectations: It would appear that you used the same single item to measure career expectations – only changing the words in the scale. While you have literature to support using one item for work ability index, career expectations does not have the same degree of credibility. Please indicate whether you pre-tested this item before administering it. Indicating you developed this item based on the literature would strengthen this section.</p> <p>Job Performance Scale: Please provide some information on the validity and reliability of this instrument. While I appreciate you sharing the instruments are highly reliable in your response to the reviewer, this information needs to be present for each instrument, and when possible, reliability for your sample should be reported.</p> <p>Missing data: Although you have shared that data collection is monitored in real time, this is the first time you mention the website’s management platform. What happens if a person does not answer a question? Do they exist the survey at that point? Is it set up to require a response so there are no skipped answers? Answers to these questions would strengthen the manuscript.</p> <p>Results: Please indicate that you excluded those who did not report</p>
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	<p>experiencing workplace incivility at the beginning of this section. In addition, please qualify the experience. Line 16, Page 13. Should read "reported experiencing some level of workplace incivility"</p> <p>I really appreciated Table 2 – thank you. I was also anticipating see a median and mode score as well. I as in Table 3, the mean for workplace incivility is 1.89 (SD=.53). That indicates a range of 1.36-2.42. These are low overall scores. I am cognizant that you consider any occurrence as important – as one should – but please do not overstep your findings. While 60% experienced some kind, this occurred only occasionally for the majority of the sample.</p> <p>Hierarchical regression: I appreciate the additional information. I was, however, looking for a diagram that concisely presents the relationships between variables. The following website might be helpful and will give you an idea of what I am looking for in terms of the mediation model. <a href="http://my.ilstu.edu/~jhkahn/medmod.html">http://my.ilstu.edu/~jhkahn/medmod.html</a></p> <p>You write that workplace incivility is considered the dependent variable but that is inconsistent with Figure 1. Workplace incivility is the predictor variable; you are examining its impact on job performance, considering what happens when work ability and career expectation are included.</p> <p>Inclusion of theoretical discussion in the Discussion section: Thank you for your comments. However, theory drives research, it is not an add on after the fact. If these theories were so important, why were they not included as underpinnings for the study. Please realize you did not measure self-regulation nor affective events, making any discussion of them, and their relation to your findings questionable.</p>
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## VERSION 2 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer: 1

Reviewer Name: Karen H Morin

Institution and Country: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, United States of America

### 1.Comment

This paper still had grammatical issues; although the number of old references has been decreased, at least ½ are still old. I wonder whether 52 references are truly needed and whether you might not be better served by only citing the most recent when appropriate.

My response: Thanks for your scientific and reasonable suggestions. We could guarantee that the manuscript has been proofread by a native English speaker prior to resubmission. The language problems were solved. References were updated in this revision. And marked in red.

### 2.Abstract

Please review the objective as there seems to be some words missing. You need to name the mediating and moderating variables.

My response:

Thank you very much for your relevant comments .We further refined the research objectives according to your opinion. And marked in red.

“ This study's objectives were to investigate new nurses' experiences of workplace incivility; verify the mediating role of work ability in the relationship between workplace incivility and job performance; and examine the moderating role of career expectations in the relationship between workplace incivility and job performance.”

### 3.Results

Please qualify the statement about the experience of workplace incivility. While everyone experienced incivility, the greater majority either did not experience it, or experienced it occasionally to sometimes. At no time did the majority of your sample experience it frequently or very frequently.

My response: Thanks for your scientific and reasonable suggestions. Considering the adverse effects of past research on workplace incivility among nurses. We defined inclusion criteria: except for never have the experience of workplace incivility in the past year. The results of this study are different from those of other countries, which may be caused by cultural differences in China.

4. Conclusion:

Please consider removing “negative emotional experience” and replacing it with “workplace incivility” as that is what was measured.

My response: Thanks for your scientific and reasonable suggestions. we have replaced it with “workplace incivility”. And marked in red.

5. Strengths:

I would think this study, using a sample from China, would add to the global understanding of workplace incivility- that it occurs in different cultures and healthcare systems. This is what is important from your findings.

My response: Thank you for your reasonable and scientific supplement. We added this contribution to the Strengths

6 Introduction

Page 5, lines 15-16. There is something wrong with this sentence. Looks as though something has been omitted. I truly appreciate the revisions made in this section. However, what remains unclear is the rationale for identifying work ability as a mediator, and career expectation as a moderator. Moreover, if “work ability appears to be the external manifestation of job performance” are you not measuring the same thing?? Inspection of Table 3 does not indicate multicollinearity between them – a good thing.

My response: I'm sorry that our description misled you. The work ability is internal, the job performance is external, the two variables are essentially different, we're not measuring the same variable. Working ability directly affects working efficiency. Our study found that the influence of workplace incivility in the workplace on the performance of nurses was mediated by the variable of working ability.

According to your reasonable suggestion, we have explained the problem of multicollinearity. Thanks a lot.

“ The absolute value of the correlation coefficient was between 0.25 and 0.63, which indicated that each variable could be used in the subsequent regression analyses. There is no multicollinearity problem between variables. ”

7. Subjects and Procedures:

This section continues to be problematic. Please clarify how the 60 nurses from your units were selected [criteria, etc], what is meant by “original deliverers” [did these staff nurses sent the survey to others? If so, how?]. What is meant by “network” survey? By alumni – how were they contacted, etc? If I understand what is written, you invited staff nurses on your respective units, and reached out to alumni [were these people who used to work there? Former students of the school affiliated with the hospital?]. None of this is clear as presently written. How did you get the mobile cell numbers for your sample?

Please clarify whether “regular” connotes nurses were employed full-time, “irregular” means part-time.

My response: Thank you very much for reading this manuscript with patience and giving crucial caution.

① Among the members of the research team, one of them is a grade teacher of nursing major in medical college, who knows the graduation work and contact information of nursing major students. The members reached nearly three years graduate nursing students through the way of telephone, select 60 currently work in the nursing work of new nurses, and commissioned in the 60 nurses looking for the same period of the 10-20 nurses to answer the questionnaire. In China, new nurses will undergo induction training and establish contact with each other. The data is easy to obtain. A total of 903 questionnaires were collected in this study, of which 696 were effectively recovered.

② The term “irregular” in this study refers to nurses who have not signed legal contracts in hospitals,

such as nursing interns and probationary nurses.

#### 8.Ethical Considerations:

Please remove Line 53 from the manuscript. You did not obtain oral informed consent". You indicated in the invitation that completion of the questionnaire was considered participant consent.

My response: Thank you for your serious consideration in this manuscript review process. After discussion by our research group, we decided to delete relevant statements.

9.Instruments: Thank you for adding more information to this section. While you indicate the WAI is most reliable, please provide some discussion of why you chose the single item. Your reference supports the use of a single item.

Career expectations: It would appear that you used the same single item to measure career expectations – only changing the words in the scale. While you have literature to support using one item for work ability index, career expectations does not have the same degree of credibility. Please indicate whether you pre-tested this item before administering it. Indicating you developed this item based on the literature would strengthen this section.

Job Performance Scale: Please provide some information on the validity and reliability of this instrument. While I appreciate you sharing the instruments are highly reliable in your response to the reviewer, this information needs to be present for each instrument, and when possible, reliability for your sample should be reported.

My response: Thanks a lot.

①We chose the single item questionnaire as the measurement tool, mainly considering that the single item is more convenient to measure in the Chinese cultural background. Chinese nurses are busy at work and have limited time to answer questions. According to previous research experience, single item measurement reliability validity is better.

②We add the reliability coefficient of workplace rudeness and performance. And marked in red. "The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for this scales was 0.893.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for this scales was 0.934."

③I agree with the views from the peer reviewer. Past literature confirmed that an item questionnaire with a high validity and sensitivity, but the single item questionnaire still needs to be further tested in the survey of occupational expectations among new nurses. The validity and sensitivity need to be further confirmed. This limitation has been reported in the discussion in the modified versions.

10.Missing data: Although you have shared that data collection is monitored in real time, this is the first time you mention the website's management platform. What happens if a person does not answer a question? Do they exist the survey at that point? Is it set up to require a response so there are no skipped answers? Answers to these questions would strengthen the manuscript.

My response: Thank you very much for your comments.

In this study, a total of 903 questionnaires were collected in this study, of which 696 were effectively recovered. The 903 data included unanswered and incomplete responses and those not included in the study. In the process of data collation, if a person does not answer a question, we eliminated this part of data, and the questionnaire with too short time and too many blank items was also eliminated. In the process of collecting the online questionnaire, we did not set the required answer option, and the missing value may exist. But the existing missing value is within the tolerable range and does not affect the research results.

11.Results: Please indicate that you excluded those who did not report experiencing workplace incivility at the beginning of this section. In addition, please qualify the experience. Line 16, Page 13. Should read "reported experiencing some level of workplace incivility"

I really appreciated Table 2 – thank you. I was also anticipating see a median and mode score as well. I as in Table 3, the mean for workplace incivility is 1.89 (SD=.53). That indicates a range of 1.36-2.42. These are low overall scores. I am cognizant that you consider any occurrence as important – as one should – but please do not overstep your findings. While 60% experienced some kind, this occurred only occasionally for the majority of the sample.

Hierarchical regression: I appreciate the additional information. I was, however, looking for a diagram



that concisely presents the relationships between variables. The following website might be helpful and will give you an idea of what I am looking for in terms of the mediation model.

<http://my.ilstu.edu/~jhkahn/medmod.html>

You write that workplace incivility is considered the dependent variable but that is inconsistent with Figure 1. Workplace incivility is the predictor variable; you are examining its impact on job performance, considering what happens when work ability and career expectation are included.

My response:

① Thanks to the critical issues raised by the peer review. This manuscript added workplace incivility inclusion criteria and reformulates workplace incivility description results and discussion. And marked in red.

“Inclusion criteria: except for never have the experience of workplace incivility in the past year. Analyses revealed that 60.7% (n=696) of the new nurses had experienced some level of workplace incivility during the past year (Table 2) ”

② Thanks for the suggestions , we have added the mediation model.

Figure2. Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between workplace incivility and job performance as mediated work ability. Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between workplace incivility and job performance as mediated work ability, controlling for work ability, is in parentheses.

③ Thanks to the critical issues raised by the peer review. we have replaced it with “predictor variable”. And marked in red.

12. Inclusion of theoretical discussion in the Discussion section: Thank you for your comments. However, theory drives research, it is not an add on after the fact. If these theories were so important, why were they not included as underpinnings for the study. Please realize you did not measure self-regulation nor affective events, making any discussion of them, and their relation to your findings questionable.

Hope my comments help.

My response:

Thank you very much for your comments. I'm sorry for the confusion caused by the improper discussion part of this manuscript. Indeed, the two variables we introduced are not the variables we studied. In this manuscript, we introduced these two variables to better explain our findings and expand the scope of research. There are also new findings that have been explored by other variables or theories in previous studies. This manuscript also provides corresponding literature support in the discussion section. This manuscript has been modified to discuss this part, reducing the discussion of these two variables.

### VERSION 3 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Karen H Morin University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	30-Jul-2018
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	Thank you for addressing my concerns.