

HIGH PERFORMANCE AND ABUSIVE SUPERVISION: COMPARISON BETWEEN ORGANIC AND MECHANISTIC WORK STRUCTURES

Dr. Sania Usmani

ABSTRACT

Individuals are the intellectual capital of an organization and the driving force of a company. It is their treatment which is of the prime importance that leads to their retention for long time. Thus, management should focus on improving the relationships between managers and their respective subordinates. This research investigates the factors which lead to abusive behavior of managers. One such factor is the high performance of subordinates which posits a threat to their hierarchy, thus managers involve in abuse. Furthering the study, the role of mechanistic and organic work structures has also been measured. This study was carried out in Karachi, Pakistan and a comparison was made between the mechanistic work structure of a government agency and organic structure of a software house. Total of sixty employees and their respective supervisors were taken as sample of the study. It was found that organic structures are more conducive for abuse as compared to mechanistic structures, where managers are socially dominant and exert power over resources. From this study the human resource professionals can gain insight into the effect of work structures on employees' performance. It is important for organizations to highlight and identify abuse even if it is subtle or done indirectly by the supervisors for the wellbeing of employees and goodwill of companies. The paper corroborates results from previous studies. A novelty in the study is its attempt to use the work structure as a moderator and the findings highlight the likely impact of organic versus mechanistic structures which have not been addressed previously.

Keywords: Performance, Work Structure, Organic Structure, Mechanistic Structure, Abusive Supervision.

INTRODUCTION

Abusive Supervision is a curse in an organization when supervisors use their right in an otherwise improper manner to control employees and abuse them. Majority of the literature in the recent past has given attention to the harmful and destructive outcomes of abusive supervision (Tepper, 2007). Individual variables such as job dissatisfaction, emotional exhaustion, psychological distress, intention to quit, workplace deviance, work withdrawal, aggression and creativity have been associated with abusive supervision in the past. While few studies have been conducted in which situational variables such as; stress, conflict, injustice, and supervisor characteristics such as; family history of abuse, emotional intelligence, machiavellianism and self-control have been studied, while subordinate characteristics such as, negative affect, narcissism, hostile personality style, and core self-evaluation, have been analyzed (Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013; Burton & Hoobler, 2011; Martinko, Harvey, Sikora, & Douglas, 2011; Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007; Tepper, Duffy, Henle, & Lambert, 2006).

There is a possibility that subordinates own behavior causes the supervisor to treat him in an abusive manner. This idea resonates to the theory of victim precipitation and few studies have validated this hypothesis that the subordinate behaviors also trigger abusive supervision. Few studies have studied this phenomenon including, Walter, Lam, Van der Vegt, Huang, and Miao (2015), which demonstrated that supervisors are involved in abusive behaviors with their subordinates, if their subordinates are perceived to be low performing individuals. They concluded that these subordinates further reduce their performance as a response to the abusive behavior by their superiors. Tepper, Moss, and Duffy (2011), also concluded that supervisors treat their employees in an abusive manner if their performance is low. The same results have been found by Walter et al. (2015), in their research conducted in a controlled environment. On the contrary, latest researches conducted by Walter et al. (2015); Kim and Glomb (2014); Jensen, Patel, and Raver (2014); and Tepper, Duffy, and Breauz-Soignet (2012), found that even high performers induce supervisors to treat them abusively. Several theories have given the premise of abusive supervision such as victim precipitation theory, conservation of resources theory, moral exclusion theory and social dominance theory.

This research focuses on both victim precipitation theory and the social

dominance theory similar to Khan, Moss, Quratulain, and Hameed (2016), which focuses on the fact that supervisors who have high social dominance, feel threatened by high performers and this induces them to treat the high performers with abuse. If the supervisor has a high level of social dominance, he desires more power and status in the organization, that would conflict with the new passionate employee who is a high performer, because he may pose a threat to his position and the status quo (Duckitt, 2001). The supervisors perceive high performing employee, capable of achieving equal or even higher status based on his high performance, specifically if he might get a prominent position. Thus, the supervisors protect their socially dominant image by victimizing the subordinates (Shao, Resick, & Hargis, 2011).

Several studies on performance and abusive supervision have focused on moral exclusion (based on ethnocentric views of the groups), and victim precipitation theory (based on the fact that subordinates arouse the abused due to their low performance). Both the theories explain the negative or indirect association between performance and abuse. On the contrary, social dominance theory explains a positive approach towards the explanation of high performance and abusive supervision (Tepper et al., 2017; Khan et al., 2016; Walter et al., 2015). Therefore, social dominance is taken as a the control variable in this study, such that the supervisor's evaluation of subordinate is high, and it will threaten his position in the organization if he has high social dominance which leads to abusive supervision. The model is similar to Khan et al. (2016), with an exception of a moderating variable, the work structure, and the strength of the entire mediated model is dependent on the moderator. This research tests the mediation of perceived threat to hierarchy between high performers and abusive supervision, by hypothesising that work structures (mechanistic and organic) strengthen this relationship.

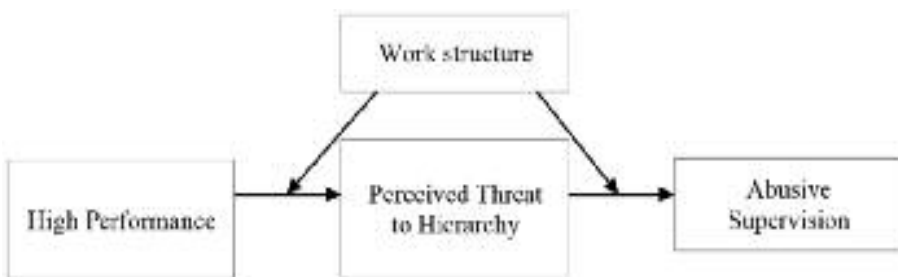


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

Abusive Supervision

Abusive supervision is referred to the degree to which supervisors involve in persistent hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, other than physical harm (Huang & Miao, 2015). It is a subjective assessment which might vary but usually includes using offensive names, yelling or screaming at someone with disagreement, threatening to fire, concealing information, staring someone aggressively, treating them silently, and humiliating a worker in front of staff (Keashly, 1997).

Several features create durability in abusive relationships, firstly; the targets of abuse feel powerless to take any action, they may be financially dependent on the abusive supervisor, they fear the uncertainty that will come with the separation even more than the abuse, the supervisor combines the abusive behavior with normal behavior which reinforces an individuals expectation that the abuse will end. Secondly, many times the supervisors involved in abuse, do not recognize or take responsibility for their behavior, rarely modify, and many times identify it as non-abusive (Khan et al., 2016).

Performance and Abusive Supervision

Tepper et al. (2011), conducted the pioneering research on this specific concept and utilized both moral exclusion and victim precipitation theory to establish the relationship between subordinate's poor performance and supervisor's abusive behavior. Moral exclusion theory states that, within the confines of justice, there is a psychological limitation which separates people into categories that are either entitled to a fair treatment or deprived of it. People who perceive the ones as belonging to the less entitled group are likely to treat them with hostility and refer them as morally excluded (Opatow, 1990). Moral exclusion theory also reflects upon the fact that people deserve fair treatment based on their perceived utility (Ibid). Poor performers can thus be categorized as unworthy of fair treatment and hence be abused by the supervisors based on their perceived low utility (Tepper et al., 2011). The victim precipitation theory examines individual dispositions that lead to hostile reactions from supervisors (Elias, 1986). Poor performance of subordinates frustrate and annoy their supervisors which further provokes them to abuse the subordinates. Supervisors select these poor performers as a target as they are apparently weak, vulnerable and susceptible to threat (Tepper et al. 2011). Studies on performance and abusive supervision which have used moral exclusion and victim

precipitation theories have explained the indirect or negative association between low performance and abuse, while social dominance theory explains a positive approach towards the explanation of high performance and abusive supervision (Khan et al., 2016; Walter et al., 2015; Tepper et al., 2011).

According to social dominance theory, if supervisor has a high level of social dominance, he will desire more power and status in the organization that would conflict with the new passionate employee who is a high performer because he may pose a threat to his position and status quo (Duckitt, 2001; Pratto, Stallworth, Sidanius, & Siers, 1997).

The supervisor will perceive this employee to be capable of achieving equal or even higher status based on his high performance specifically if he might get a top management position or a new opportunity (Shao et al., 2011). Therefore, the supervisor would protect his socially dominant status by victimizing the subordinate. This research focuses on victim precipitation and social dominance theory similar to Khan et al. (2016). Thus, the first hypothesis is as follows;

Hypothesis 1: High performance increases abusive supervision.

Performance and Perceived Threat to Hierarchy

Abusive supervision not only undermines individual, or departments' performance but also disrupts the smooth functioning of an organization and its profitability. The threats that produce abusive supervision may come from provocation, mistreatment by top management, or threat to the status quo (Tepper, Simon, & Park, 2017). High performers may pose a challenge to their supervisor's current position in the organization and threaten their hierarchical status and authority. It is threatening to have subordinates who outperform their supervisors. This high performance undermines the supervisor's authority and status. Also, the resources given to the high performers seem unjustly distributed (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994).

Thus, supervisors who want to sustain and retain their dominant position in the organization may strategically victimize high performers to reinstate the order. The purpose of supervisors is then to strategically victimize a high performer in order to maintain his social dominance in the organization which has threatened his position and status. This hierarchical loss is important because it includes chances for promotion, recognition from, and accessibility to, the top management. The supervisors then

exchange this loss in return for injustices done to the individuals and punish them for getting the resources they don't deserve (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994). In this regard, the second hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 2: High performance increases perceived threat to hierarchy.

Perceived Threat to Hierarchy and Abusive Supervision

According to social dominance theory, hierarchy-based structures are constructed to promote the desire to differentiate status and power among groups (Pratto, Sidanius, & Levin, 2006; Sidanius, Pratto, Van Laar, & Levin, 2004). These structures also promote the superiority of dominant groups as compared to the inferior groups. Dominant groups have privileges and access to better resources as compared to inferior groups. Supervisors perceive a threat when they feel that the actions and values of the inferior group will harm their status in the current hierarchy. According to Davis and Stephan (2011), threat is felt when there is a perceived possibility of physical, emotional or psychological damage and there aren't enough resources to cope with that uncertainty. Supervisors who experience this threat then involve in actions to reduce it by exhibiting abusive behavior and ill-treatment directed towards the perpetrator who was responsible for the threat in the first place. Supervisors see these offenders as inferior thus feel it is right and just to treat them badly (Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998). The third hypothesis is thus derived as follows:

Hypothesis 3: Perceived threat to hierarchy increases abusive supervision.

Mediation of Perceived Threat to Hierarchy between Performance and Abusive Supervision

Supervisors who have high social dominance are aware that they hold a higher position in the organization as they are part of management and thus would always want to maintain their status in the current hierarchy by any means. Therefore, the higher performance of a subordinate will be construed as a threat to his current position. Supervisor feels that his subordinate will surpass him and become his boss or at least he will get hold of more resources which are only the privileges of the supervisor due to his greater position. The supervisor responds by using ill-treatment or abusive behavior towards his high performing employee. Various studies have concluded that dominant groups react aggressively towards inferior groups when they pose a threat to their hierarchical status and authority (Davis & Stephan, 2011). Furthermore, empirically it has been identified that people diminish the root cause of threat and target the high performer.

Thus, the mechanism through which high performance leads to abusive supervision is the threat to hierarchy. Hence it is hypothesized that threat plays is an important mediator in the relationship between the high performance of individuals and abusive behavior of supervisors. The fourth hypothesis to test the mediation of perceived threat to hierarchy between performance and abusive supervision is as follows:

Hypothesis 4: Perceived threat to hierarchy mediates the relationship between high performance and abusive supervision when the supervisor's social dominance is higher.

Moderation of Work Structures in Performance and Abusive Supervision

This study postulates that the work structures moderate the mediated relationship between high performance, threat to hierarchy and abusive supervision. Work structures are defined as how the tasks and responsibilities are divided among the organizational members and how are they grouped to form a combined whole. Work structures are divided into two extreme degrees; namely mechanistic and organic structure (Ambrose & Schminke, 2003).

Mechanistic structures illustrate the work of Weber (1947), who gave the notion of ideal bureaucracy. They are characterized by high task specialization, centralization, high standardization, high formalization, top-down communication and rigid control and authority. On the contrary, organic structures have the features of low task specialization, decentralization, low standardization and formalization, open communication channels, and flexible control and authority (Slevin & Covin, 1997).

Abusive supervision tends to excel in organizational structures which are more mechanistic rather than organic, as the organic structures tend to be constraining the abusive supervision. Whereas, the mechanistic structures support the power difference between management and employees and thus emphasize the status of the supervisor as compared to his subordinates. This tolerance and acceptance of difference promotes dominance and conformity, which fosters overbearing and abusive supervision.

A comparison between bureaucratic (mechanistic), and adhocratic (organic) organizations was made by Ashforth (1994), in which he identified that centralization versus decentralization is the key factor in

stimulating abusive supervision in the organization. Centralized decision-making gives courage to the supervisor to involve mistreatment of his subordinates. He further stated that decentralization gives less autonomy and acceptance for abusive supervision. Likewise, Salin (2003), also observed that institutionalized bullying tends to exist in organizations where there are great power inequities.

The Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) conceptualizes that organic work structures act as a resource for subordinates and does not let the supervisors involve in abusive supervision. Particularly, decentralized decision making in organic structures help to mitigate the power imbalance between juniors and seniors, thus reducing the tendency of seniors to be insulting and abusive. Organic structures provide a conducive and a healthy environment for high performers and they can excel without any fear of unnecessary abuse by the supervisors. While the mechanistic structures encourage abusive supervision. Hence, it is expected that work unit structures tend to moderate the relationship between the high performance of subordinates, threat to hierarchy and abusive supervision.

This research has proposed a contrary idea to the study of Aryee, Sun, Chen, and Debrah (2008), in which work structures moderated abusive supervision and contextual performance and it was found to be significant. Conversely, this study has tested the reciprocal impact of Aryee et al., (2008), i.e. work structures (particularly mechanistic) moderate the mediated relationship of high performance of subordinates, hierarchical threat and abusive supervision. The final hypothesis of this study tests the moderated mediation of organic and mechanistic structures with respect to the entire model, which is as follows:

Hypothesis 5: Work unit structures moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and high performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted on the new employees who are considered to be more passionate and therefore their performance is higher. It is assumed that the new high performer will be treated badly by his/her supervisor for threatening their status in the organization and this will be higher in mechanistic work structures as compared to organic work structures. Two organizations were taken to form a comparison between organic and mechanistic work structures; one is a government agency and the other

one is a software house in Karachi, Pakistan. The study is a comparative case study of the two organizations. Twenty-two subordinates and their respective supervisors were taken from the software firm which had perceptions of organic structures from employees while thirty-eight subordinates and their respective supervisors were taken from a government agency which had perceptions of mechanistic structures from their employees. Total sixty employees and their respective supervisors were taken in the study. It was assumed that a government firm must be bureaucratic, centralized and have predetermined rules and regulations to guide the employee behavior. While a privately owned software house has more flexibility, decentralization, and fewer rules and regulations. The names of the firms are not disclosed for anonymity. Social dominance was treated as a control variable, thus only those respondents were taken, who were high on dominance.

Measures

Abusive supervision was tested using the 15 items scale (Tepper, 2000), with 0.692 Cronbach Alpha. Work unit structure was measured using 7 items divided by mechanistic or organic characteristics (Khandwalla, 1977), with 0.848 Cronbach Alpha. Perceived threat to hierarchy was measured using 3 items (Khan et al., 2016), with Cronbach Alpha of 0.711. Lastly, subordinate performance was tested using a 4 items scale (Liden, Wayne & Stilwell, 1993), with Cronbach Alpha 0.735. Social dominance orientation was measured by 16 items (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994), and was used as a control variable, with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.629. Each variable was measured on a different scale but was categorized from 1 to 5 and the questionnaire was divided into two parts; one to measure subordinate's perceptions (abusive supervision and work structures), and the other to measure supervisor's perceptions (high performance, perceived threat to hierarchy and social dominance).

RESULTS

Table 1 represents the correlations, reliability statistics, item numbers, mean and standard deviations of all the variables in the model. Factor analysis was applied on all the items to check the structure of all the items; few items were removed from the study because their coefficients had values less than 0.5 (AB2, AB3 AB13, STR4, SD1, SD2, SD3, SD4, SD5, SD15, TTH2). Table 2 shows that the total variance explained by 5 factors was 76.94 %. Factors were fixed because the scale was adapted from previous studies. KMO was 0.630 while Bartlett test of Sphericity was

significant at 0.000 level. Table 3 shows the retained items amongst all the variables with coefficients greater than 0.5.

Table 4 shows the overall mediation analysis between high performance of subordinate, threat to hierarchy and perceptions towards abusive supervision. Social Dominance (SD) has a high correlation with work structures only. Supervisor evaluation of performance, perceptions of abusive supervision, and perceived threat to hierarchy have a high correlation with all variables except work structures. Work structure has no correlation with any variable except social dominance.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD	Items	Reliability	1	2	3	4	5
AS	3.2331	.58684	15	0.692	-	-	-	-	-
WS	2.6043	.95370	7	0.848	-.055	-	-	-	-
TH	2.4263	.92178	3	0.711	-.201	0.635***	-	-	-
P	3.1180	1.08648	4	0.735	-.087	0.574***	0.402**	-	-
SD	3.2954	.39418	16	0.629	0.42**	.038	.025	0.161	-

N=60; P<0.000***, p<0.001**, p<0.05*

Table 2. Total Variance Explained

Component	Total Variance Explained		
	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.374	24.426	24.426
2	3.707	16.117	40.542
3	2.834	12.880	53.422
4	2.841	12.354	65.776
5	2.568	11.165	76.941

Harman Single Factor test was carried out to identify any common method biasness in the data set. All the items were entered and only one factor was fixated to know how much variance is explained by each factor. Table 4 in the appendix shows only one factor explained as 18.525 % of the data on 34 items retained after the initial exploratory factor analysis. This shows that the common method variance or biasness was not a major threat in the data set. KMO value is > 0.5 (0.595) and significance value of Bartlett’s test of sphericity is less than 0.05.

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix					
Components Extracted					
Items	1	2	3	4	5
AB9	.787				
AB8	.735				
AB7	.680				
AB12	.658				
AB10	.647				
AB14	.645				
AB1	.614				
AB15	.613				
AB4	.573				
AB6	.570				
AB11	.526				
AB5	.522				
STR1		.776			
STR2		.707			
STR3		.640			
STR5		.571			
STR7		.536			
STR6		.508			
SD12			.780		
SD9			.725		
SD14			.713		
SD11			.646		
SD10			.639		
SD13			.551		
SD16			.546		
SD7			.688		
SD8			.556		
EP1				.813	
EP4				.743	
EP2				.719	
EP3				.576	
TTH3					.733
TTH1					.624

Table 4. Harman Single Factor Test

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.299	18.525	18.525	6.299	18.525	18.525
2	4.413	12.979	31.504			
3	2.750	8.089	39.592			
4	2.414	7.101	46.694			
5	2.289	6.732	53.425			
6	1.630	4.794	58.219			
7	1.353	3.978	62.198			
8	1.292	3.800	65.998			
9	1.264	3.719	69.716			
10	1.118	3.287	73.004			
11	.980	2.884	75.887			
12	.942	2.772	78.659			
13	.812	2.388	81.047			
14	.723	2.127	83.174			
15	.712	2.093	85.267			
16	.638	1.876	87.143			
17	.551	1.621	88.764			
18	.472	1.390	90.154			
19	.420	1.236	91.390			
20	.408	1.200	92.590			
21	.384	1.128	93.718			
22	.342	1.005	94.723			
23	.291	.856	95.580			
24	.251	.739	96.319			
25	.225	.662	96.981			
26	.179	.527	97.508			
27	.175	.515	98.023			
28	.152	.447	98.471			
29	.139	.409	98.879			
30	.119	.349	99.228			
31	.096	.283	99.512			
32	.073	.216	99.728			
33	.067	.198	99.926			
34	.025	.074	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 5. Mediation Analysis

	Coefficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	.3543	.2944	1.2035	.2336	-.2348	.9435
THREAT	.4986	.1015	4.9117	.0000	.2955	.7017
EP	.3336	.0861	3.8738	.0003	.1613	.5059

Table 6. Indirect effect of X on Y

	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
THREAT	.1704	.0714	.0643	.3538

The overall Mediation Analysis show that supervisor evaluation of performance increases the threat to the supervisor’s hierarchy which in turn increases subordinate’s perceptions of abusive supervision. Table 5 and 6 explain the significance of the relationship between the variables. The lower and upper bounds show that there is a significant effect. Also, there is a 17.4% effect of independent variable on dependent variable via a mediator.

Table 7. Overall Mediated Moderation Analysis

STRUCTURE	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
2.6714	.2423	.1149	2.1084	.0396	.0120	.4727
3.2551	.3337	.0874	3.8165	.0003	.1585	.5089
3.8389	.4250	.1120	3.7955	.0004	.2006	.6494

The overall mediation moderation analysis shows that supervisor evaluation of performance increases the threat to supervisor’s hierarchy which in turn increases subordinate’s perceptions of abusive supervision which is significant at all levels of the moderator (structure). Table 7 shows the overall mediated moderation analysis. The lower and upper bounds show that there is a significant effect. While if we compare the mechanistic and organic structures, the results are significant in organic structures rather than mechanistic structures. As organic structures allow subordinates to achieve higher performance targets which may pose a threat to the hierarchy of their superiors. This, in turn, triggers abuse from the supervisors. While in mechanistic structures, such as government firms, firstly, employees are not high performers and secondly, they do not pose a threat to their superiors as their superiors already are stable on their positions and anyone can get promotion via nepotism, political source or reference and bribe. Therefore, abuse is not prevalent in government firms and it’s not so frequent as well (see table 8 and 9). Table 10 shows the hypotheses assessment summary of the study and the relevant status for each respective hypothesis.

Table 8. Mechanistic Structure Mediated Moderation Analysis

STRUCTURE	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
2.3143	.1749	.1626	1.0753	.2957	-.1655	.5152
2.6140	.2493	.1654	1.5075	.1481	-.0969	.5955
2.8600	.3105	.2118	1.4658	.1590	-.1329	.7538

Table 9. Organic Structure Mediated Moderation Analysis

STRUCTURE	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
3.2979	.3365	.16052	.0963	.0438	.0099	.6632
3.6241	.3844	.10823	.5523	.0012	.1642	.6046
3.9502	.4323	.1456	2.9682	.0055	.1360	.7286

Table 10. Hypotheses Assessment Summary

Hypotheses	p-value	Status
<i>H1: High performance increases abusive supervision.</i>	.0003	Accepted
<i>H2: High performance increases perceived threat to hierarchy.</i>	.0001	Accepted
<i>H3: Perceived threat to hierarchy increases abusive supervision</i>	.0000	Accepted
<i>H4: Perceived threat to hierarchy mediates the relationship between high performance and abusive supervision when the supervisor's social dominance is higher.</i>	.0003	Accepted
<i>H5: Work unit structures moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and high performance (stronger for organic structures).</i>	.0055	Accepted

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study replicated the research of Khan et al. (2016), with addition to work structures in the model. This research identified that organic work structures have proved to be significant in affecting the performance-abuse relationship. Subordinates with high performance tend to become the target of their superiors as they pose threat to their positions and status within the organization. Managers in mechanistic organizations seem less caring about their subordinates' performance as performance is not the factor which leads to promotions, instead, political source or affiliations along with bribes or strong references provide career advancement opportunities. Meanwhile, in organic structures, there is a cut-throat competition to survive and sustain. Sustainability of jobs is only possible with better performances in organic structures. Thus, it poses a threat to the well-being of the superior's positions which may be taken over by their successors (most probably their juniors). This study gives an insight into

the challenges faced by subordinates who want to survive, succeed, and sometimes succumb to the abuse of their supervisors to safeguard their future careers.

Managers, thus need to understand that eventually, they need to plan for their successors and high performers do not pose a threat but an opportunity for the well-being of the organization itself. If managers focus on the organization's interests rather than the individual interests, then there will be a more positive work environment. Future studies may focus on the generational patterns; differences in work values and attitudes among the employees and supervisors which lead to abuse.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

This study contributes to the development of work structures and positive antecedents to abusive supervision. The study provides intriguing insights to scholars and practitioners that the context or work structures create a conducive platform for abuse. It is highlighted that government organizations do not have individuals with high performance, as there are no KPI's or employee development path, therefore, they do not pose any threat to their supervisors. For an organic or multinational firm, employees are conditioned in the work environment and the abusive interactions are a reality, thus it is crucial for management to identify inappropriate consequences in interpersonal interactions which can accumulate and lead to disastrous outcomes (Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2017; Chan & McAllister, 2014). Supervisors must detect and correct misunderstandings with subordinates in the early stages to reduce the damage which can become permanent over time. Furthermore, human resource department must reinforce explicit policies to counter such actions such as creating a feedback channel to report abuse anonymously which must be investigated for further actions (Sutton, 2007). Also, training on proactive and prohibitive behaviors; constructive conflict, and expression must be given to clarify acceptable and unacceptable interpersonal behaviors, which can help supervisors to improve their interactions with their subordinates. Abusive supervision can deteriorate the morale of high performers, and thus those employees which increase profitability will reduce their efforts and instead switch to other organizations. It is costly and a cumbersome process to find high performers, train them and retain them, thus it is important to focus on their well-being for the future of the organization. The findings of this study convey a crucial message to the administrators, managers and academicians alike, especially in the eastern context.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research can focus on the role of leadership, organizational culture and team dynamics with respect to abusive supervision (Tepper, Simon, & Park, 2017). Future research can also use supervisor self-reports and objective measurement of high performance of employees i.e. performance appraisal from the HR department. Scholars can also use experimental designs to test the same conceptual model. Other than that difference between the coping strategies of high versus low performers can also give insight into the outcomes and response to abuse. In future studies, the sample size can be increased to provide more generalized results which will enhance this relationship. Further, the role of coworkers in the supervisor-subordinate abusive relationship might also give interesting results. This study can also be applied in different cultures to compare results using Hofstede's cultural profiles.

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