

Relationship of Abusive Supervision and Team Performance: The Mediating Role of Individual Efficacy

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Abstract: There is emergent concern about the association of abusive supervision and team performance in recent years, but very few researchers have focused on the intervening mechanism between them. By eroding workplace productivity, efficiency, and general morale, an abusive relationship between a boss and an employee can have a detrimental effect on economic growth. In Pakistan, research on such mediating mechanism between abusive supervision and team performance is approximately blank. In this research paper, we focus on finding the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance, the mediating role of individual efficacy between abusive supervision and team performance by analyzing the sample of 154 teams working in different banks of different areas of Punjab using the partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS SEM), and we draw two conclusion from our study that abusive supervision influence the team performance and individual efficacy mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance. Due to individual efficacy, team performance can be increased despite of presence of abusive supervision in organization. In this paper we show relationship of abusive supervisor indirectly effect the team performance through individual efficacy. The data collection through questioner with use of Likert scale and for statistical testing use Smart PLS for testing Construct validity and Reliability and Structured Equation Modeling. Study indicated that individual efficacy shows the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance. Structural equation modeling result also show that individual efficacy mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance.

Keywords: Abusive Supervision, Team Performance, Individual Efficacy, Individual Performance

Introduction

Abusive behavior of supervisor is related with negative outcomes both for employees and organization. Schat et al. (2005) focused on health and attitudinal outcomes for the employees who are exposed to the aggressive workplace behavior or abusive supervision. They concluded that abusive supervision is negatively associated with attitudinal and health related outcomes. Job performance is considered as central contribution of employees to the effectiveness of organization. In the light of utmost importance of performance in organization it is necessary to investigate the influence of abusive supervision on performance, the intervening mechanism of different variables such as individual efficacy between abusive supervision and team performance. The physical and emotional behaviors of subordinates under abusive supervision are negatively impacted, which negatively affects the organization. The reason why abusive supervision really happens in companies is still a mystery, even if some organizational managers are well aware of the detrimental effects it has on management and subordinates. Employee creativity is one of the most important good work habits, and it is crucial to the survival and success of any firm. Drawing on earlier research, we focus on mitigating the role of precarious work. The research indicates that insecure employment is negatively impacted by abusive supervision and ceasing may have negative effects on this relationship. According to studies, workers' creativity is negatively impacted by abusive management and unstable employment.

Abusive supervisors constantly make fun of and degrade their direct reports, infringe upon their privacy, remind them of their prior transgressions, give them the silent treatment, fail to keep their word, and disparage them in public. Views of subordinates regarding the degree to which their managers exhibit

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persistently hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors. However, a substantial body of studies indicated that leaders frequently behave inappropriately toward their subordinates. Numerous research on leadership has been done to motivate followers to work productively toward the organization's objectives. Bass (1990) Abuse includes, among other things, intimidating people with the prospect of losing one's job, hiding information from them, making eye contact with force, and embarrassing or making fun of the organization's staff (Detert & Burris, 2007). Because of the supervisor's disparate behavior, the employees feel discriminated against and are led to believe that there is injustice and inequality in the company, with some employees receiving favorable treatment because they have a close relationship with the supervisors and others receiving unfair treatment because they do not (Tepper, 2000). Aggressive behavior is a critical issue because it negatively affects both people and companies. Aggression in the workplace has been shown to negatively affect employees' self-esteem, mental health, and productivity in the past (Sulea et al., 2012). It is hypothesized that deep-level variations in temperament, standards, hubris, and relationship conflicts with subordinates are what led to supervisors' abusive behavior. Supervisors who act in this way undermine employees' loyalty to the company and encourage them to engage in negative activities that are detrimental to the company. In order to lessen the harmful consequences of abusive supervision on victims, a different study. Hao et al. (2022) offered two strategies for getting assistance from coworkers and creating happy emotions. There are several negative effects of workplace rudeness, such as mental stress, decreased job satisfaction, and elevated anxiety (Fox et al., 2001). Because workers typically engage in deviant workplace behavior in these kinds of situations, counterproductive and irresponsible work behavior is sometimes referred to as incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). On a larger scale, abusive workplace cultures have the potential to hinder the full potential of human capital development by discouraging labor participation, particularly among disadvantaged groups. In the end, this stifling of creativity and skill hinders economic advancement and diminishes the sustainability and inclusivity of economic prosperity.

Literature Review and Hypothesis

Abusive Supervision

"Abusive supervision is defined as the negative perception of subordinates about the supervisor. It is the extent to which supervisor is involved in continuous display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behavior towards their subordinate excluding physical contact (Tepper, 2000). In abusive supervision, supervisor withholds information and criticizes the subordinates in front of others (Keashly & Harvey, 2005). According to Zellars et al. (2002) abusive supervision is "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact". In Tepper (2000), reported that abusive supervision has many important elements. Firstly, abusive supervision is personal assessment which subordinates develop about their supervisor on the basis of their gut feelings or observation towards immediate supervisor's attitude and behavior. Personality and other demographic variables of both supervisor and subordinate himself and situational factors also play an important part in developing subjective assessment about abusive supervision. Secondly abusive supervision includes persistent display of verbal and nonphysical hostile behavior towards subordinates. Sometimes supervisor shows abusive supervisor behavior for some purpose such as to accomplish task, but his main motive is not to harm or hurt any person. For example, to accomplish task in limited time frame supervisor warn the subordinate that no mistake will tolerate to increase quality, effectiveness and efficiency of work, behavior of such type will not include in abusive supervision because their ultimate objective is to increase efficiency and effectiveness of organization or not to hurt feeling of any human being. So, if motive of leader to show abusive supervisor behavior is increase in quality of work, then it does not fall under the domain of "aggression" as defined in past research. (Baron & Richardson, 1994; Kiazad et al., 2010).

Abusive Supervision and Performance

According to Zellars et al. (2002) abusive supervision influence outcomes negatively. Both social exchange theory and conservation of resource theory (COR) is used to describe the link between abusive supervision and performance. According to conservation of resource theory, tension / stress results in decreased

performance in these four specific conditions: firstly, when employees have perceived risk of resource loss, secondly when employee's loss resources in reality, thirdly when resources available to meet job demands are insufficient, fourthly when utilization of resources does not result in expected return (Harris et al., 2007; Wallace et al., 2009). According to Harris et al. (2007) abusive supervision can result in any of above mentioned four conditions situations, which results in decreased performance. Abusive supervision creates these four situations due to threatening behavior, withholding of information and unreasonable demands. Social exchange theory (Aryee et al., 2007; Cropanzano et al., 2005) also explains the relationship between abusive supervision and performance. According to Mitchell & Ambrose (2007) one essential element of social exchange theory is reciprocity or return. There are two thoughts of reciprocity positive reciprocity and negative reciprocity. In positive reciprocity positive behavior is returned with positive behavior and in negative reciprocity negative actions is repaid with equal negative actions i.e. adverse action results equal harmful reaction from other side (Ambrose, 2007). According to social exchange theory abusive supervision results in negative behavior such as decreased performance from subordinate. So, both conversation of resource theory and social exchange theory predicts that abusive supervision results in decreased performance.

Leadership style prevailing in organization also determine the degree of workplace bullying in the organization, if the leadership style is autocratic and abusive then it leads to workplace bullying in organization (Ambrose, 2007). Workplace bullying influences the organization both directly and indirectly, it leads to lower individual and team performance and higher negative workplace behavior in organization. (Tepper 2007; Hershcovis et al., 2015; Hershcovis et al., 2012). According to Indradevi (2016) destructive leadership influence the team performance negatively i.e. due to destructive leadership, team productivity decreases. According to COR theory, abusive leadership results in decreased employee's resource, due to which employees remained unsuccessful in meeting demand of works. According to Restubog et al. (2011) decrease in employee's resources due to abusive supervision results in increased job stress which result in decreased performance.

The Mediating Effect of Individual efficacy

According to Bandura (1986) self-efficacy is individual's belief that he/she is capable to achieve set goals. Individual efficacy is personal resource which influences outcomes. Manojlovich (2005) reported that due to high level of self-efficacy, individual consider threats as opportunity to excel, because high level of efficacy motivates the individuals to move further despite of all challenges. According to Wang et al. (2014) due to high level of individual efficacy, commitment with work increase which leads to increase in performance. According to social cognitive theory situational resources such as verbal motivation impacts the individual efficacy that leads to increased team performance. According to Boddy (2011) abusive supervisor behavior results in stress, burnout, emotional exhaustion and decrease in individual efficacy.

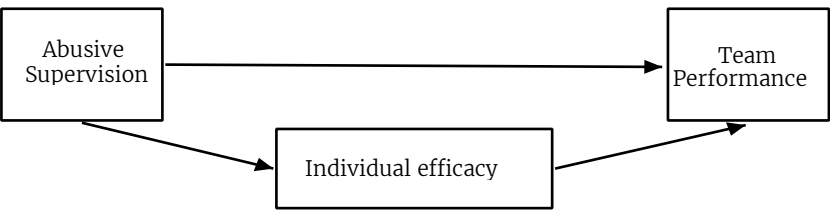
According to Walumbwa et al. (2008) individual efficacy partially mediate affiliation between a transformational supervision and team performance. According to Martinko et al. (2013), abusive supervision results in decreased self-efficacy, due to which performance decreased. (Chen, G. & Bliese, 2002) also confirmed the mediating relationship of self-efficacy between transformational supervision and performance. Durham et al. (1997) explored the mediating effect of individual efficacy between visionary leadership and team performance and found strong mediation. Knight et al. (2001) in their research found that individual efficacy did not facilitate connection between leadership and performance. Shea et al. (1999) investigated about mediating role of individual efficacy between charismatic leadership and performance; they found no mediating relationship of individual efficacy between charismatic relationship and team performance. According to Wang et al. (2011) supervisor or top management can achieve high performance by focusing on their behavior and attitude of the subordinates, so attitude of subordinates mediates the relationship between leader behavior and performance. Abusive supervision negatively influences the individual efficacy. Schaufeli (2007) reported that individual efficacy mediates the relationship between leadership and work engagement; if employees are more engaged in work, then performance will also increase. So, these variations in finding recall for further research in role of mediation of self-efficacy between leadership and performance.

- Hypothesis 1:** Abusive supervision negatively influences team performance.
Hypothesis 2: Abusive supervision negatively influences individual efficacy.
Hypothesis 3: Individual efficacy negatively influences team performance.
Hypothesis 4: Individual efficacy mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance.

Research Framework

On the basis of literature review on abusive supervision, individual efficacy and team performance we develop a research framework as shown in given figure no. 1. The given framework shows the direct link between abusive supervision and individual efficacy, also intermediary role of individual efficacy between abusive supervision and team performance.

Figure 1
Indirect Effect of Abusive Supervision on Team Performance through Individual Efficacy



Research Method

Samples

We selected banking sector as study context in our study. Convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from different branches and back offices of different branches were selected on based of ease of access. In our research questionnaires were distributed in two hundred teams working in different banks operating in different area of Punjab. Out of 200 teams 175 response back, out of these 154 teams response was useful. The response rate was 86%, which was very satisfactory in such type of research. Basic situation of sample is reflecting in table no. 1.

Table 1
Sample Information

Panel A: Composition of sample on the basis of Department					
Department	Frequency	%	Department	Frequency	%
Cash	192	36.6	Operations	324	61.8
Others	8	1.5			
Panel B: Configuration of sample on the base of Age Group (in years)					
Age Group	Frequency	%	Age Group	Frequency	%
20-30	364	69.5	31-40	120	22.9
41-50	34	6.5	51 or more	6	1.1
Panel C: Composition of sample on the base of Gender					
Gender	Frequency	%	Gender	Frequency	%
Male	400	76.3	Female	124	23.7
Panel D: Composition of sample on the basis of Qualification					
Qualification	Frequency	%	Qualification	Frequency	%
Undergraduate	21	4.0	Graduate	173	33.00
Masters	314	9.9	MPhil	16	3.1
Panel E: Composition of sample on the base of Job Experience					
Work Experience	Frequency	%	Work Experience	Frequency	%
Less than 1	92	17.6	1-10	344	65.6
11- 20	55	10.5	Above 20	33	6.3
Panel F: Composition of sample on the basis of Response Type					
Response Type	Frequency	%	Response Type	Frequency	%
Supervisor	154	29.4	Subordinate	370	70.6

Measures

We measured each variable in our study on a seven point Likert scale extending from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha was used to measured internal uniformity/reliability of each scale. Abusive supervision was measured using (Tepper, 2000). 15 items scale that was developed to gather information prevalence of abusive supervision or how many times subordinate have abused by their supervisor. Individual efficacy was measured using Bandura (1997) 8 items scale that was developed to gather information on ability or capacity of one person/himself. Team performance is measured using. De Dreu & Weingart (2003) 6 items scale.

Statistical Method

In our research we used Smart PLS for testing Construct validity and Reliability and Structured Equation Modeling,

Experimental Results

The complete model is analyzed into two steps. In first step, all measurement models are analyzed and evaluated in terms of reliability and validity. 3 items from Individual Efficacy are deleted because their loadings were less than 0.7. In 2nd step, all structural relationships are evaluated.

Assessment of Measurement Model Estimates

All latent variables used in the model are reflective. In reflective model, direction of causality is from latent to items. Items of reflective model are closely interchangeable and measure the same concept. It means that the removal of an item does not change the essential nature of the underlying construct. Reflective constructs are examined via convergent validity, reliability and discriminant validity.

Construct validity is measured through Convergent and Discriminant Validity. Convergent validity measures the extent to which items of a reflective construct are appropriate to measure it. The components of convergent validity are outer loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). As indicated by Table-1, all retained items have loadings greater than threshold level of 0.7. Average variance extracted tells how much variation, on average, a reflective construct explains in its indicators. AVE of all retained indicators is higher than the threshold level of 0.5.

Discriminant validity ensures that two different constructs are statistically different. Low discriminant validity is the signal of multicollinearity among constructs. The value of HTMT coefficient for each combination of construct is less than threshold value of 0.85 and confidence interval of HTMT statistic also does not include "1". Referred to Table-1, all constructs are valid.

Internal Consistency Reliability refers to the extent to which a test or measuring procedure measures the same results on repeated trials. Internal consistency reliability is assessed through Cronbach's alpha. Table 2 shows that Cronbach alpha for all construct is greater than threshold value of 0.7.

Table 2

Measurement Model Assessment (Reflective Constructs)

Latent Variables	No of Indicators after CFA	Convergent Validity		Reliability	Discriminant Validity
		Loadings	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	
Criteria		≥0.70	≥0.50	≥0.7	HTMT Confidence interval does not include 1
Abusive Supervision	12	.759 to .909	.695	.969	Yes
Individual Efficacy	8	.769 to .821	.535	.780	Yes
Team performance	7	.781to .920	.751	.933	Yes

Assessment of Structural Model Estimates

Direct and Indirect Effects

Path estimates presented in Table 3 are obtained by running PLS Algorithm. All missing values in the data set are replaced with mean. The only way to get statistical significance of various inner model and outer model estimates in Smart PLS is bootstrapping (re-sampling). 2000 bootstrap sub-samples are selected for obtaining p values. All path estimates are evaluated at 95% confidence level (two tailed).

The part of the exposure effect which is not mediated by any other variable is called direct effect. As indicated by table-2, the direct effect from Abusive Supervision (I.V) to Individual Efficacy (M) is statistically significant because the bootstrapped p value is less than the significance level of 0.05. Direct effect from Individual Efficacy (M) to Team performance (D.V) is also statistically significant but direct effect from Abusive Supervision (I.V) to Team performance (D.V) is not significant as indicated by p-value. Therefore, the mediation type suggested by the model is *full mediation*. Whether the mediation is full or partial depends upon the significance of direct path coefficient from independent variable to dependent variable. As indicated below, indirect effect of Abusive Supervision (I.V) on Team performance (D.V) through mediation of Individual efficacy (M) is statistically significant at 5% level but the direct effect is insignificant. So, the effect of Abusive Supervision on Team performance is fully mediated by Individual efficacy.

Table 3

Direct Effects			
From	To	Standardized Coeff.	p-value
Abusive Supervision	Individual Efficacy	-.530	.000
Individual Efficacy	Team performance	.683	.000
Abusive Supervision	Team performance	-.119	.088
Indirect Effects			
From	To	Standardized Coeff.	p-value
Abusive Supervision	Team performance	-.362	.009

Evaluation of path model through Goodness of Fit Criteria

Size and significance of structural relationships are discussed above. This part includes the assessment of goodness of fit through Coefficient of Determination (R^2), and Predictive Relevance (Q^2).

R^2 measures the predictive accuracy or variation jointly explained by all exogenous variables in respective endogenous constructs. As indicated in table 4, the R^2 value of Individual efficacy and Team performance are .281 and .501 respectively. Variation explained in Individual efficacy is 28.1% that is not meeting the minimum criteria for good model fit. However, R^2 value of Team performance is greater than threshold value of .5 representing good variation accounted for by Abusive Supervision and Individual efficacy jointly.

Table 4

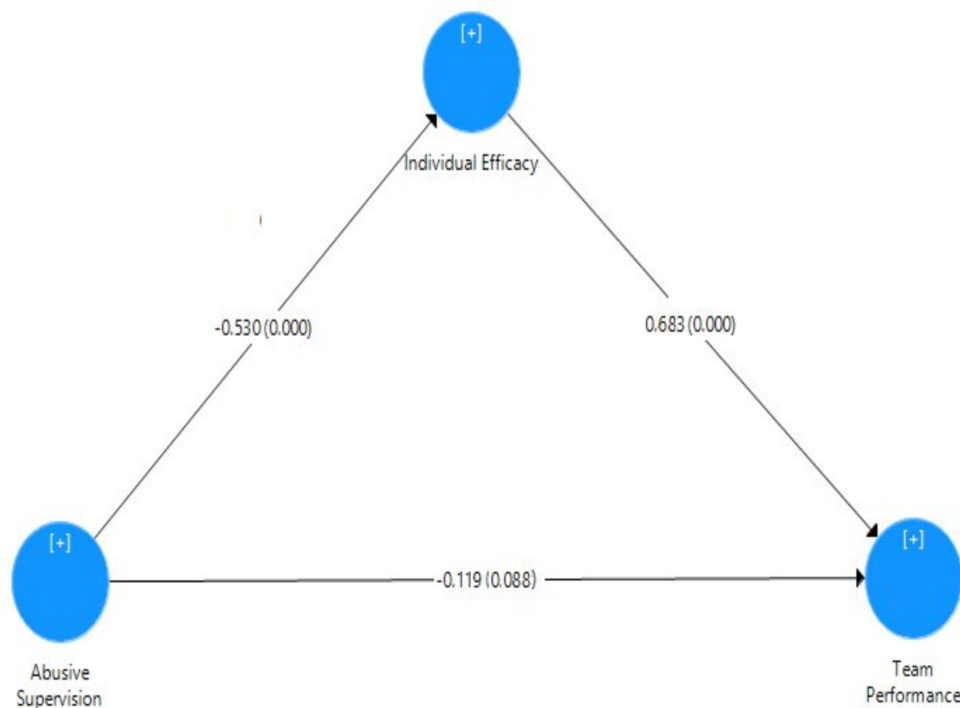
Fitness Indices	Criteria	Individual efficacy	Team performance
R2	≥0.50	.281	.501
Q2	Positive	.232	.453

Predictive relevance of the path model is assessed and analyzed through Blindfolding procedure. Blindfolding is a technique used to measure “Out of sample predicting power” for a reflective endogenous construct. If predictive relevance is high, it means that the model can accurately predict values not used in model estimation. Higher predictive relevance shows the appropriateness of path model to measure reflective endogenous constructs. Positive value of Q^2 reflects that sample power is high and its results can be generalized to the overall population. An omission distance of 7 was selected for blind folding procedure. The scores presented in the table are obtained through cross validated redundancy approach. As indicated

above, Individual efficacy and Team performance have positive Q^2 values. Therefore, it can be concluded that predictive relevance of the model is also high.

Figure 2

Path Model



Discussions

Results of our study indicated a statistically significant relationship between abusive supervision and team performance. According to our findings the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance is very significant, both abusive supervision and team performance negatively related to each other. Due to abusive supervision over all team performance will be reduced which is loss to the organization. Results of previous studies also support our findings such as abusive supervision is negatively related to team performance. Abusive supervision in form of workplace bullying influence team performance negatively which support our results that abusive supervision is negatively related to team performance (Schat, 2005; Harris et al., 2007). Similarly, findings of research by Transleadership, Wilson-Starks (2003) show that destructive leadership and performance has negative relationship also support findings our research. Similarly, our findings also match with the Restubog et al. (2011) study that abusive supervision decrease the performance, abusive supervision decrease the resources which results in increase in stress level which ultimately results in decreased performance.

Results of our study indicated that individual efficacy mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance. Structural equation modeling result also support that individual efficacy mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance. Our study also supports previous studies such as Gibson et al. (2000) that individual efficacy leads to team performance. Result of our study according to SEM result also support Zhang et al. (2011) study that individual efficacy mediates the relationship between leadership and team performance. Result of study that individual efficacy mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and performance also support other previous studies findings that individual efficacy mediates the relationship between team inputs (leader behavior) and outputs (performance) (Bandura, 1993; Bandura, 2000).

The findings of our research have significant implications for abusive supervision researcher. Firstly, our study validates that abusive supervision occurs at team level also. Thus, an immediate supervisor is abusive towards as a whole team also. Abusive supervision influences the performance of team as a whole. Abusive supervision influences individual efficacy and team performance negatively.

Suggestion for Future Research and Limitation

Although this research work has significance, but it also has some limitation, we collect data from employees of different bank operating in Punjab region which results in limitation of both diversity and amount of sample size. Secondly, we collected cross-sectional data, future studies should be conducted on longitudinal data, thirdly we collected data from one industry only i.e. banking sector. Future researchers can collect data from different region of Pakistan. Data from different organizations in different industries can facilitate the comparison of abusive supervision and its influence on team performance across different industries. In future, different variables other than efficacy can be taken as mediator and dependent variable can also be changed.

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