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#### RESEARCH PAPER

## The Relationship between Employees' Creativity and Abusive Supervision: An Evidence from Automobile Sector of Pakistan

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT						
Received:	This study is an endeavor to investigate the aversion raised by abusive						
August 22, 2021	behavior of a supervisor impacting employees' creativity under the						
Accepted:	influence of informational justice as a mediator and resilience as a						
February 25, 2022	moderator. 461 employees from automobile sector of Pakistan were						
Online:	contacted to fill in a personally administered questionnaire using time						
March 31, 2022	lag technique. SPSS and AMOS were used as data analyzing tools. It was						
Keywords:	found out that abusive supervision has strong negative impact on						
Abusive	employees' creativity whereas the partial mediation of organizational						
Supervision,	justice informational also highlights the negative consequences among						
Employees'	the relationship between employees' creativity and abusive						
Creativity,	supervision. Resilience, being positive personality trait, moderates the						
Informational	forementioned relationship. All the hypotheses were accepted						
Justice,	providing sound footings for mangers to believe in the creativity of						
Resilience							
*Corresponding	employees as an asset for modern organizations. It is also highlighted						
Author:	that provision of an abuse free climate can result in more productive						
	and innovative employees whereas enriching the employees with						
odesseous@gmai	resilience through ploys of managerial prowess may further lead to						
l.com	achieving organizational goals. The mediation of informational justice						
1.00111	and moderation of resilience are the main highlights of the study,						
	proving to be meagre yet valuable share to enhance the body of						
	knowledge. The cross-sectional design and field settings are some of the						
	limitations that are suggested to be taken care of in future studies to sift						
	the findings further.						

#### Introduction

A leader's behavior is an important factor in employee motivation which does wonders in bringing out high performance and creativity out of employees (Katz, 2004). Where a lot has been investigated about positive leadership behaviors, there literature is also teemed with the studies suggesting to explore negative behaviors of leaders like abusive supervision as contextual factors impacting employees' creativity (Alisher et al., 2016).

Ashforth (1997) termed abusive supervision as "tyrannical" which included "belittling subordinates, displaying little consideration and using noncontingent punishment". Feng & Wang (2019) has studied positive effects of abusive supervision on employees' knowledge hiding behaviors. Present study reciprocates the previous researches and adds that abusive supervision also decreases employees' creativity.

Workplace injustice tarnishes employees' self and social image (Greenberg, 1990) and arises job dissatisfaction (Aquino et al., 1997). This perceived injustice is produced by negative work experiences like abusive supervision that may lead employees to a dissatisfied life (Tepper, 2000). Wang & Jiang (2015) have found that abusive supervision gives rise to interactional injustice that produces a negative impact on employees' extra-role behaviors

like prosocial voice and silence. Khalid et al., (2018) have found the same negative impact of abusive supervision on employees' perceptions of interactional justice and its further impact on knowledge hiding behaviors. Interactional Justice comprises of Informational and Interpersonal Justices; Since many studies have investigated the impact of interactional justice as an aggregate concept rather than bifurcating it into Informational and Interpersonal Justice so the examination of subtypes of interactional justice will lead to more understanding of the mediating role of types of organizational justice. Present study examines the mediating role of informational justice among the relationship between employees' creativity and abusive supervision.

Resilience is among such personality traits that enable one to face stressful environment. Resiliency enables employees to see beyond failures and give their best performance even in most challenging and adverse circumstances. Fredrickson and Jointer (2002) have studied such emotions and termed them as "upward aspiring efforts". Facing an abusive supervisor is a stressful situation but a resilient employee will bounce back thus shedding the negative effects of abusive behaviors.

#### **Literature Review**

Abusive supervision, being a destructive leadership behavior (DLB) or dysfunctional workplace behavior, is studied under the definition given by Tepper (2000). It is interpretation of supervisor's behavior by employees when they find their supervisor showing intimidating attitude both verbally and nonverbally, but that intimidation doesn't include physical aggression.

When supervisors use abusive language or any negative gestures in their routine dealings with the employees their behavior is interpreted as uninviting and intimidating. The effects of abusive leadership are far reaching and so many. It is one of the causes of stress for the employees that makes the psychological outcomes turn negative and increases depression among the abused, makes them dissatisfied with their jobs (Liu et al., 2012) and helps promote ill-being (Kernan et al., 2011). Many scholars define employee creativity to be an ability of an employee to generate new and fruitful ideas supporting organizational outcomes. These new ideas help to better products, services and other work practices (Zhou, 2003). If a person suggests new ways to achieve objectives and comes up with practical ideas to improve the he/she can be considered as creative (Framer, 1993).

Enhancing employee creativity is very important for organizations of modern times (Deci and Ryan, 2008). They further argue that creative individuals must be hired to increase creativity quotient of the organization and training should be imparted to existing employees to be more creative. Baumeister et al. (2001) deems it necessary to study negative contextual factors of employee creativity. Where there is need of an environment that engenders creativity in employees there is also need of studying a climate that decrease it. Abusive supervisory climate is one of them. It helps reduce employee creativity by affecting badly the psychological well-being of the employees. Abusive supervision being a dark side of leadership, must be study in a relationship with employee creativity. This will help in building theoretical foundations of understanding creative process and will also help creativity enhancement practitioners build an environment that helps creativity increase (Liu et al., 2016).

Informational justice is a dimension of interactional justice. It focuses on the passed information related to procedures. How much honestly and truthfully information has been passed and whether any part of the information was withheld or not and if withheld then why it was withheld. Further, informational justice refers to the authority figure to be candid in his communication, to be explaining the procedures to the subordinates reasonably and thoroughly and sharing details in time considering the specific needs of the receiver (Colquitt, 2001). The organizations that debate the issues of employees' empowerment and involve employees in decision making process are affected more by informational justice

perceptions if some of the information is withheld or not shared. Not only supervisor-subordinate relationship is based on informational justice rather co-workers also expect sharing of true and honest disclosure of the reasons behind certain actions or procedures from each other.

Luthans (2002) defined resilience at work place as the "the positive psychological capacity to rebound, to bounce back from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or even positive change, progress and increased responsibility". A person with high resilience is generous with his colleagues, recovers quickly from shocks, enjoys dealing with new challenges, gets over his anger reasonably quickly etc. Past studies have shown that positive emotions, even when the events are negative, augment resilience (Tugade, Fredrickson, & Barrett, 2004). "Success usually comes through renewed effort after failed attempts. It is resiliency of personal efficacy that counts", (Bandura, 1998). The research on such resilience is scant but some researchers (Luthans et al., 2005) found the significant relationships between the resilience of workers and their performance while going through a transformation stage of change in Chinese firms. In 2006 Larson and Luthans worked on the resiliency of factory workers impacting their job performance, satisfaction and commitment. In all the studies on resilience it is noted that the employees having resilience are able to see beyond setbacks and take failure as a learning to do the next job well.

#### **Theoretical Frame Work**

Abusive supervision being one the workplace stressors can make situations quite tense for employees making them show stressed reactions (Lin et al., 2013). These stressful situations demand utilization of personal resources to be handled and employees have a fear of resource loss (Hobofoll, 2002). Thus, employees have to utilize a lot of personal resource to survive in the abusive environment that is intimidating and stressful (Harvey ae al., 2007). This drains their psychological resources and they are mentally exhausted (Wu & Hu, 2009). Abused employees tend to lose their emotional and mental connection with their jobs (Chi & liang, 2013). Similarly, abused employees being absent in mind while being at their job are unable to create new ideas and generate novelty in their work, face a decline in creative attitude (Wu et al., 2016).

Although studies have explored the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity, however, their findings are inconsistent. Zhang et al., (2014) empirically found a negative relationship between the two whereas Lee et al., (2013) found a curvilinear relationship among them. The reason can be different population, yet the empirics are not generally established. Present study is using the COR theory to establish a theoretical foundation for the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity.

Piccolo & Colquitt (2006) argue that positive behaviors engender positive outcomes and negative influence will result in negative outcomes. Idealized influence, inspirational influence, intellectual influence and individualized consideration are four dimensions of a leader's influence on employee creativity. All these dimensions show that leader leave a lasting influence on the creativity of an employee. So, if the behaviors of the leaders are positive and encouraging then employee creativity will be increased and if the behavior of a supervisor is abusive then the creativity will decrease. Abusive supervision is a negative behavior and it effects employees' creativity negatively (Pengcheng, Jianqiao, Po & Jianghua 2015).

The relationships between Justice perceptions and its consequences are well explained by fairness theory of Folger & Cropanzano (1998). This theory states that after experiencing unfairness employees feel stressed and their behavioral performance somewhat decreases (Greenberg, 1993).

Perceptions of unjust interactional justice are produced when employees are demeaned, debased, disrespected etc. and when their personal wants are not catered for, or when they feel that their superiors are not following formal rules of treatments while treating them (Lamertz, 2002; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Tepper (2000) & Zellars et al., (2002) consider abusive supervision an important predictor of injustice perceptions. When employees face an abusive supervisor then their injustice perceptions are invoked further affecting employees work behaviors and health (Tepper, 2000) and performance (Greenberg, 1993).

It is already established by Wang & Jiang (2015) that abusive supervision damages employees' perceptions of informational justice that in return affects negatively to employees OCB. Wang & Jiang's study shows the impact of interactional justice as mediator between the relation among abusive supervision and employees' prosocial voice and silence but conceals the effect of sub types, informational and interpersonal justice. Taking informational justice as a separate mediator is perhaps the uniqueness of this study. So, it can be hypothesized as;

Moderating role of Resilience can be explained best with the help of COR theory It states that people seek, find, get, hold and protect their resources. These resources can be objects, conditions and personal characteristics that they value in their lives. With the help of these resources, they try to achieve their goals. Resources get amassed in "Resource Caravans" (Hobfoll, 2002). Similarly, people working in strenuous environment display more confidence in their skills and become hopeful in achieving their goals. Thus, stressful environment like abusive supervision can make resilient people more resilient as it is stated that it is such a state of development that enables an individual to perform and succeed at a challenging task with confidence. It enables one to not only succeed at present but also in future.

The bouncing back from every adversity and stress makes resilient individual to cope adverse situations successfully as well. calls resilience to recover from stress and every new recovery makes the resilient more immune to the new stress situation (Connor & Davidson, 2003). Instead of feeling stressed and outcast resilient individuals flourish in the times of adversity that may be caused by feeling of increased responsibility (Christensen & Knardahl 2010). So, it can be inferred that the relationship between employee creativity and abusive supervision will be lesser negative for individuals having higher level of resilience than the individual having lower levels of resilience. So, it can be hypothesized here that:

#### **Hypotheses**

- H1. Abusive supervision is negatively related to employee creativity.
- H2. Informational justice mediates the relationship between Abusive supervision and Employees' creativity in a way that abusive supervision negatively affects informational justice that further decreases employees' creativity.
- H3a. Resilience moderates the relationship between employee creativity and abusive supervision.
- H3b. Resilience moderates the relationship between informational justice and abusive supervision

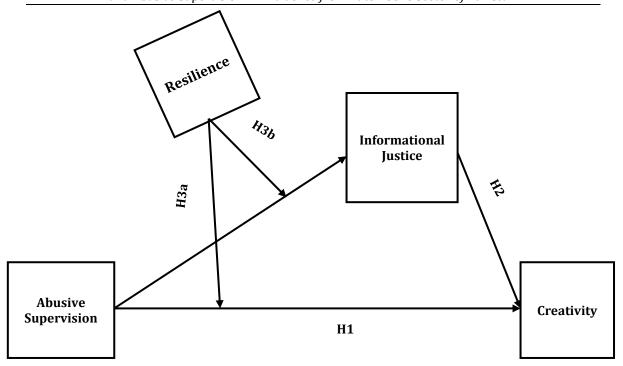


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

#### **Material and Method**

The target population of the study was all the employees of 2S and 3S dealerships of automobile sector across Pakistan. With an unknown population and no exact list of the respondents, researcher has to settle for a reasonable sample size of above 400 responses. 510 questionnaires were personally administered for this purpose, 49 of the questionnaires distributed were either not returned or were incomplete thus providing a response rate of 90.3 % to run analyses.

All the scales for the variables of the study were adopted. All these scales have been used by different studies with acceptable Cronbach's Alpha ranges. The scale adopted to measure Creativity was developed by Dul et al. (2011). The famous scale for organizational justice separating all the four types (Distributive, Procedural, Informational and Interpersonal) of Colquitt (2001) is used for measuring perceptions of Informational justice of employees. Scale for Resilience is adopted from Luthans et al. (2007).

For data collection Time Lag Technique was used in order to ensure that the responses are free of variable biasedness. The researcher collected data with 1- month time lag in different waves. Following the method suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003) to mitigate common method biasness which may arise if data on predictor, mediating and outcome variables are collected at the same time from a single source, potentially inflating hypothesized relationships' estimates among the variables (Law et al., 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2012). The predictor measures along with profile of the respondents like education, age etc. included in Time I, while mediators and moderator measures were included in Time II.

#### **Results and Discussion**

Skewness and kurtosis values were considered to analyze the data normality. As standard errors are reduced in case of large samples which inflates the kurtosis and skewness statistics values (Field, 2009). Following the recommendations of Tabachinik & Fidell (2001) the criterion of skewness values within the range of +1 and -1 and kurtosis values within the range of +3 and -3 (Cameron, 2001) was considered in the present study.

All of the study data was within the recommended range showing that the data was normally distributed.

Table 1
Skewness, Kurtosis, Alpha reliability coefficients and Co-relation (N=461)

	Co-relation									
S#	Variables	Items	Alpha	1	2	3	4	SD	Skew S E	Kurt SE
1.	AbuSup	15	.91	1				1.03	06 .11	80 .22
2.	OJInform	5	.85	.256**	1			.87	71 .11	.26 .22
3.	Creativity	3	.85	035	.350**	1		.90	-1.13 .11	1.47 .22
4.	Resilience	6	.87	.698**	.260**	.080.	1	.79	.59 .11	16 .22

AbuSup=Abusive Supervision, OJInfor= Organizational Justice Informational

The reliability value of all variables is within the acceptable range (>0.70). Henceforth, the values of Cronbach's alpha in this study indicate that the scales used in the instrument are adequate and suitable for the study. The table above also expresses the correlation among the study variables.

#### **Regression Analyses**

To test the relationship among dependent variables (Employee voice, Silence Creativity and work engagement) and the independent variable (Abusive supervision) linear regression analysis was carried out. First four hypotheses of the study were tested by using Liner Regression in SPSS. The relationships here are independent paths owing to one independent variable.

Table 2
Linear Regression for Abusive Supervision and Creativity

Model		В	SE	В	t	P
3	(Constant)	4.57	.14		30.94	.00
	Abusive Supervision	20	.034	27	-6.01	.00

 $R^2 = 0.073$ ; F = 36.138; p < 0.000

The table above shows that Abusive Supervision only explains 7.3% of the variance in Creativity (R²=0.073). Here the F and P values suggest the model to fit the data and that the model is statistically significant. Results show that Abusive Supervision is a negative and significant predictor of Creativity ( $\beta$ = -0.206; p=0.000). The results indicate that due to increase in abusive supervision employees' Creativity decreases implies that Hypothesis 1 is accepted. The beta value further explains this impact and shows that minute increase of one percent causes employee creativity to decrease by 20.6 percent ( $\beta$ = -0.206) which is very high percentage.

#### **Mediation Analyses**

Mediation and Moderation analyses for the hypotheses of the present study are done by applying Hayes (2013) method.

Table 3
Organizational Justice Informational as Mediators between Abusive Supervision and Creativity.

Greativity.							
		OJInf (M)		Creativity(Y)			
	Coef	SE	P	Coef	SE	р	
AS(X)	.21	.03	.00	25	.044	.00	
M	-	-	-	.15	.047	.00	
Const	2.64	.16	.00	5.06	.262	.00	
	Model 1			Model 2			
	$R^2 = .06$			$R^2 = .13$			

F = 32.4	F = 14.21
 p = .00	p = .00

AS=Abusive supervision, OJInf=Informational Justice.

The above table shows the results of mediation analysis by applying Hayes (2013) method. The results of Abusive Supervision (Independent variable) show significant relationship with Organizational Justice Informational (Mediator) (Coeff. 0.215, p<0.05) and Creativity (Dependent) (Coeff. -0.258, p<0.05). The results show that Abusive Supervision has significant impact with informational justice and Creativity. The results also show that Organizational Justice Informational has significant impact on Creativity (Coeff. 0.158, p<0.05) hence the mediation effects are proved.

While model M 1 shows  $R^2$  = 0.066, F = 32.240, p = 0.000 and model 2 shows  $R^2$  = 0.135, F = 14.212, p = 0.000. The model fit summary  $R^2$ , F value and p value are also showing significant effect of mediating variables. Some form of mediation is supported if the effect of M (path b) remains significant after controlling for X. If X is no longer significant when M is controlled, the finding supports full mediation. If X is still significant (i.e., both X and M both significantly predict Y), the finding supports partial mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1989; MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007; Hayes, 2013). So, we can conclude that our finding support mediation of informational justice hence hypotheses Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

#### **Moderation analyses**

Table 4
Resilience as moderator in the Relationship between Abusive Supervision and Creativity

			7			
Model Summary						
R	R-sq	F	Df1	Df2	P	
.49	.246	49.80	3.00	457.00	.00	
		Mod	lel			
	Coeff	SE	T	р		
Constant	.93	.50	1.86	.01		
Resilience (M)	.46	.14	3.22	.00	)	
AbuSup (X)	.50	.12	4010	.00	)	
Int_1	06	.03	-2.00	.00	)	
Interactions: int_1 = AbuSup x Resilience						
Outcome Variable: Creativity (Y)						

AbuSup = Abusive Supervision

The results of Abusive Supervision (X) show significant relationship with Creativity (Y) (Coeff. 0.506, p<0.05). Resilience (M) and Creativity (Y) has also significant relationship (Coeff. 0.464, p<0.05) and Interaction term (AbuSup x Resilience) is significant (Coeff. -0.068, p<0.05). On the basis of these values, we can say that Resilience is playing role as moderating variable in this model because all variables are significant with Creativity. Hence H3a is accepted.

Table 5
Resilience as moderator in the Relationship between Abusive Supervision and organizational Justice Informational.

0.80							
	Model Summary						
R	R-sq	F	Df1	Df2	P		
.28	.080	13.15	3.00	457.00	.00		
	Model						
	Coeff SE T P						
Constant	6.09	.46	13.20	.00	)		

Resilience (M)	46	.12	-3.80	.00		
AbuSup (X)	59	.11	-4.99	.00		
Int_1	.10	.02	3.79	.00		
Interactions: int_1 = AbuSup x Resilience						
Outcome Variable: OrgInfl (Y)						

AbusSup=Abusive Supervision, OrgJustInf=Organizational Justice informational

The results of Abusive Supervision (X) show significant relationship with Organizational Justice Informational (Y) (Coeff. -0.592, p<0.05). Resilience (M) and Organizational Justice Informational (Y) has significant relationship (Coeff. -0.462, p<0.05) and Interaction term (AbuSup x Resilience) is significant (Coeff. 0.029, p<0.05). these values suggest that Resilience is playing role as moderating variable in this model because interaction term is significant (p<0.05) with Organizational Justice Informational, thus accepting hypothesis 3b.

#### **Discussion**

Hypothesis 1 states that Abusive supervision is negatively related to employees' creativity. It was found out that abusive supervision significantly and negatively affected employees' creativity. It also implies that the supervisors who are more abusive are damaging the employee creativity badly. This finding is consistent with the work of Martinko et al., (2013). Abusive supervision is a workplace stressor that preoccupies the minds of the employees and they feel stressed instigating them to think less and worry more. A stressed mind generates lesser novelty and creativity (Martinko et al., 2013).

Hypothesis 2 states that Organizational Justice Informational mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' creativity, such that abusive supervision has negative impact on organizational Justice Informational that has further negative impact on employees' Creativity. The results showed that this is a partial mediation. Findings of present study reciprocate the findings of Liu et al., (2015) and Baumeister et al., (2001). Employee creativity is deemed essential for growth of organizations (Shalley et al., 2004). Partial mediation also highlights that there a direct relationship also exited between abusive supervision, interpersonal and informational justice.

Hypothesis H3 states that the relationship between creativity and abusive supervision is moderated by resilience in such a way that this relationship becomes weaker for higher levels of resilience and stronger for lower levels of resilience. Results showed that resilience moderated the relationship between employees' Creativity and abusive supervision. These findings are consistent with the findings of previous studies of Karatepe & Karadas (2015) and Utsey et al., (2008). Abusive supervision is a severe workplace stressor, faced by employees in an organization (Tepper, 2001). So, if employees are resilient the adverse effects of abusive supervision can be averted rather abusive supervision will make them more resilient and maintain a positive attitude. Fredrickson et al., (2008) stated that resilience makes employees more proactive in facing the adversity.

#### Conclusion

This research work explains that how abusive supervision hinders the creative process and also damages the justice perceptions of the employees. Further that if employees are resilient then the negative consequences of abusive supervision can be averted.

Cross Sectional design and field settings are some of the limitations of the study. Future research can employ other means to reduce the CMB like obtaining data from multiple sources by using longitudinal design for data collection.

Resilience, being a part of PsyCap, has been studied moderating the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' creativity. PsyCap has three other dimensions

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apart from resilience: Hope, Optimism and Efficacy. Future researches may use other dimensions of PsyCap as moderators over the relationship between abusive supervision and its strains.

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