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Impacts of Abusive Supervision on Employee's Creativity: The Mediating role of Psychological Empowerment

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Abstract

In some organizations, abusive supervision or behaviors discouraging employees to be productive and creative are somehow increasingly entertained by some supervisors or even managers, which somehow drives the sensibility of employees to lose self-determination, self-efficacy, trust and competence whenever they face such unethical and hostile behaviors. The current research examined the effects and relationship of abusive supervision behaviors on employees' creativity, considering the mediating construct of psychological empowerment. However, very few studies and relevant literature existed on the topic but were of limited context. Thus, this study incorporated psychological empowerment as a mediator to test the effect and relationship mainly in the context of Afghanistan for the stated problem. This study applied statistical and quantitative research methodology and positivism philosophy with deductive reasoning based on existing theories and also used a convenient sampling method of non-probability type with a maximum sample size of 226 respondents, who were selected based on convenience and feedback to the adopted questionnaire. Meanwhile, item reliability, validity, normality of data, correlations of variables, and hypothesis testing through multiple regression analysis were performed post-data collection. The results showed normal data distribution across all variables. Therefore, parametric tests were applied to the analysis, which depicted significant and effective relationships and impacts between the variables of the study. The current study added more value to the concept of abusive supervision and its impacts on employee creativity through the mediation construct of psychological empowerment, which supported the study's needs for further exploration in wider perimeters in other countries as well. However, this study considered other variables of interest mentioned in the limitation of the current study for future research as well, which shall help and add to research further.

Keywords: *Employee creativity, abusive supervision, psychological empowerment, positive leadership, dark leadership style*

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of abusive supervision on employee creativity with the mediating role of psychological empowerment. Although previous studies have examined the various consequences of abusive supervision on employee outcomes, such as employee creativity (Liu et al., 2016 & Shen et al., 2020). However, limited research has been conducted by considering the mediating role of psychological empowerment in the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity. Employee creativity refers to the capacity for the generation and realization of new and novel ideas by employees, which leads to productivity, new products, services, and process development (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989). Abusive supervision refers to the behaviors engaged in by some leaders

or managers in terms of accusation, hostility, humiliation, information restriction, and repetitive mentioning of failures and mistakes of employees (Yu et al., 2018). Psychological empowerment, on the other hand, is an intrinsic motivation factor, which is the manifestation of self-determination, competence, meaningfulness, and impact in the workplace within an individual's psychological state (Shah et al., 2019). In addition, psychological empowerment is considered a source and a way of competitive advantage in terms of maintaining employees at work (Pigeon et al., 2017), and on the other hand, factors like self-efficacy, independence, and competence associated with psychological empowerment can lead to positive organizational behaviors (Shah et al., 2019). According to some literature, employees' creativity would be undermined when they face abusive supervision and will limit employees' competence to access resources (Wang et al., 2021), and it is inferred that abusive supervision affects employees' creativity (Liu et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2020) based on previous literature.

The dominant sectors which created chances for job attraction and capacity building have been the telecom sectors in the country, in which Afghans have been recruited but they have been treated mostly in an autocratic or abusive way, aiming at a productivity boost but turning into layoffs, productivity deteriorations, and dissatisfaction. While looking at the reason from a personal perspective, the engagement of dark and autocratic leadership was a dominant style of leadership in non-telecom and telecom sectors in Afghanistan based on the response factor from employees (Sadat, 2013). On the other hand, the exploitation of the opportunity window for foreign expats in the early stages of telecom services was investigated; they did capture job markets due to the lack of dominant knowledge reliance in Afghan citizens, and expats also attempted to expand the market for their own to remove uncertainties for their jobs. In telecommunication sector in Afghanistan, the creativity of employees is undermined due to the engagement of hostile or abusive supervision behaviors from middle and higher management. Hence, this study examined the same concept in the context of Afghanistan. The study suggested a quantitative type of research approach as the research gap was identified from the previous call (Liu et al., 2016). This study is of a cross-sectional nature; data is collected via questionnaires for the proposed variables (i.e., abusive supervision perception, psychological empowerment questionnaires) from various organizations in the same context. The main theme of the study is to address the deteriorating effect of abusive supervision on employees' creativity. Moreover, this study investigated the missing link between abusive supervision through psychological empowerment and employee creativity in the context of Afghanistan. In the context of Afghanistan, abusive supervision or the engagement of dark leadership from personal experience has been one of the challenges that have come to light across the country. **Figure.1.1** shows relationships between the variables of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Underpinning Theories

The study is supported by the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which explains how individuals behave when they undergo stressful situations and how they react to certain behaviors in the organization from their management. The theory also explains that individuals in organizations tend to limit their use of intellectual resources in a work environment when subjected to negative or abusive behaviors from their leaders or managers. The current study used this theory to test the direct relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity, as given in Figure 1. The componential theory of creativity (Amabile, 1983, 1988) is based on the combination of social and psychological factors that drive

individuals to produce creative work and behaviors in an organization. The theory relies on the production of novel ideas to achieve some goal. It encompasses individual domain-relevant skills, creativity in work-related processes, task motivation, and individuals' interaction with the social environment, for instance, their supervisors or leaders, or co-workers. This theory supports the current theoretical framework to test the indirect effects of psychological empowerment between abusive supervision and employee creativity. The relationship is shown in Figure 1.1.

2.2 Abusive Supervision and Employee Creativity

In addition to the positive imperatives and their impact on employee creativity, there have been some studies that have been enrolled and engaged in addressing and analyzing the dark side of leadership and its impact on the employees' creativity, but most of the notions on the dark side of leadership or abusive supervision have brought concepts with some ambiguities. According to some literature, an employee's creativity would be undermined when it faces abusive supervision and will limit the employee's competence to access resources (Wang et al., 2021), and it is inferred that abusive supervision affects employees' creativity negatively (Liu et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2020) based on previous literature. Abusive supervision as negative behavior is the manifestation of negative managerial behavior that affects the employee's creativity to a significant level (Shen et al., 2020). Some historical studies have found abusive supervision to negatively affect employee creativity using the trickle-down model (Liu et al., 2012), and some have found that a lower or higher level of abusive supervision would hinder the employee's creative ideas and suggest a moderate level (Lee et al., 2013). Furthermore, from the perspective of creativity, the novel thoughts' creation requires the involvement of different processes and considerable time and effort (Feng et al., 2018). Furthermore, the support for employees in terms of care, encouragement and positive support from leadership can lead the employee to show productivity and devotion with more effort (Zhang & Bartol, 2010; Dong et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2018). While the abusive supervision reflects the opposite, which involves hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, which do not involve physical contact but do involve mistreatment, for instance in terms of mocking employees' ideas to be incompetent and silly (Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2017). Some studies have shown that positive supervision leads to a positive exchange of behavior between subordinates and supervisors, while abusive supervision leads subordinates to be treated negatively or even supervisors to be treated negatively, envisaging their subordinates by showing lower productivity and creativity (Greco et al., 2019). Besides, abusive supervision would ultimately lead to dissatisfaction and employee turnover (Martinko et al., 2013). Some studies have also found that managerial sensitivity towards abusive supervision should be implemented and there should be no tolerance culture for it in organizations. Besides, it further explains that without rules, regulations, and systems aimed at preventing the occurrence of abusive supervision, employees' creativity and productivity get hindered (Shen et al., 2020). However, some studies have shown that abusive supervision may also negatively affect creativity with the engagement of intrinsic motivations (Zhang et al., 2012), while further studies also imply that the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity is curvilinear, which would imply complicated relations between leader and subordinate (Lee et al., 2013). Meanwhile, some studies also engaged further to test the relation through other mediating variables using theories like psychological safety, organizational identification, psychological availability, and performance improvement attribution (Liu et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021) and ultimately came to know that abusive supervision has a negative influence on an employee's psychological safety and sense of organizational identity, psychological availability, etc. However, maintaining subordinates'

psychological safety and developing a sense of organizational identity boost creativity (Liu et al., 2016). Therefore, based on the above literature review, the study argues that:

Hypothesis 1. *Abusive supervision has a negative impact on employees' creativity.*

2.3 Abusive Supervision and Psychological Empowerment

There has been different literature on the effective role of psychological empowerment in different contexts and towards different variables, while the importance of psychological empowerment is imperative here. The act of abusive behavior is inclusive of hostile behaviors without physical contact from leaders and supervisors, which can create a sense of demotivation towards employees, leading to a decline and reduction of employee engagement, productivity, discouragement, and mocking of employees' creative ideas (Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2017); moreover, engagement of abusive supervision towards employees may lead to interpersonal stressing factors that ultimately lead to employee creativity efforts reduction, while increasing sense of fear and defensive silence (Chen et al., 2014; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). In fact, as stated in the background of the study, abusive supervision has resulted in the employees' psychological state changing and they have been forced into anxiety, emotional exhaustion, being aggressive or deviant, distress, and even turnover (Tepper, 2000; Martinko & Harvey, 2013). It is worth mentioning that this study further incorporates the role of psychological empowerment of the employee to manage the engagement of abusive supervision from their supervisors, and based on some research, it has been suggested that the negative or dark side of the leadership impacts needs to be managed effectively to lead to leaders' positive behavior engagement towards employees (Liu et al., 2019). Some mechanisms or adaptable policies are essential to boost positive behavior from leaders, like zero-tolerance, cultivation of interpersonal abilities and relationships, management of self-control, and development of the potential to influence outcomes positively, which all basically contribute to and relate to employee psychological empowerment as an intrinsic motivation factor. Therefore, this study further argues that:

Hypothesis 2. *There is a negative relationship between abusive supervision and psychological empowerment.*

2.4 Psychological Empowerment and Employee Creativity

Psychological empowerment as an intrinsic motivation factor plays a vital role in engaging employees in creative behaviors and, rather, the components of PE are considered the potential predictors of creativity of employees in organizations. These components are self-determination, meaning, competence, and impact (Sangar et al., 2014). According to another study, psychological empowerment as a mediator towards employee creativity is found to predict creativity significantly, focusing that it is necessary for any leader to emphasize developing new ways of empowering subordinates psychologically. For instance, provisioning employees with autonomy, a realization of the intrinsic value of work, and supporting them to understand their roles in the organization is significant rather than imposing abusive behaviors (Javed et al., 2016). In addition, based on another study, psychologically empowered employees will desirably accept more challenges in their work and will also realize the autonomy to take calculative risks to come up with more creative ideas (Nuzul et al., 2020). Moreover, the involvement or inclusion of the employees in the process of decision-making and their perception of a higher value of autonomy are the important imperatives towards their engagement in workflow, which could link to the generation of creative ideas and encouraging results (Amabile et al., 2004). Therefore, the engagement of the employees in the mentioned process of decision-making and their sense of having greater autonomy could lead to their psychological empowerment, which would

ultimately affect individual creativity as well (Çekmecelioglu & Özbag, 2014). The contributing factors considered in the psychological empowerment process are supportive of creativity, while PE can reflect one's ability to influence their job roles and outcomes (Whiteman et al., 2013), thus the study argues that:

Hypothesis 3. *Psychological empowerment has a positive impact on employee creativity.*

2.5 Psychological Empowerment as a Mediator between Abusive Supervision and Creativity

There are very few studies that have shown an indirect or direct reflection on the impact of psychological empowerment as an intrinsic motivation factor between leaders' abusive or dark supervision behaviors and employees' innovative behavior or creative idea realization. Studies on PE have inferences from direct analysis of the variables. For instance, the psychological empowerment of employees can be enhanced if abusive supervision is properly managed at the management level (Liu et al., 2019). In addition, some studies have also come up with some findings on the mediating effects of psychological empowerment, stating that PE is a significant predictor of creativity provided that people are psychologically empowered in new ways, for example, through autonomy, role clarity, and intrinsic motivation factors (Javed et al., 2016). Psychologically empowered employees will desirably accept more challenges in their work and will also realize the autonomy to take calculative risks to come up with more creative and innovative ideas (Nuzul et al., 2020). On the other hand, some earlier studies on the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee creativity have come to infer that if employees feel self-reliance, given some autonomy and provided with sufficient resources, they will come up with creative ideas and innovative and attentive behavior, which will, in turn, be reflective of their psychological empowerment (Bartol & Zhang, 2010). Consequently, of all the aforementioned literature studies, the current study still needs to test the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity and would mainly focus on the role of psychological empowerment in mediating the relationship between the given variables. Therefore, the study further argues that:

Hypothesis 4. *Psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity.*

The conceptual Model with path directions is presented below in figure 1 as follows.

Fig.1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Author's Compilation

3. Methodology

3.1 Sampling and Procedures

This study incorporated the use of quantitative research methodology to investigate ties between the defined variables. It mainly focused on dimensions of the psychological empowerment perspectives to unleash ties between abusive supervision and employee creativity. The population in this study was unknown, while the study was aimed at targeting mainly telecommunication companies in the private or public sectors of Afghanistan, and the study used a non-probability convenient sampling method for data analysis and data collection, thus it targeted telecom companies like AWCC, Roshan, MTN, Etisalat, Salaam, and some non-telecom private business organizations like airlines, banks, and some SMEs in Afghanistan for population formulation, data collection, and analysis. Furthermore, this study used positivism philosophy and included deductive reasoning as it took advantage of existing theories and engaged more general concepts to reach specific outcomes regarding the relationship between the variables of the study.

3.2 Data Collection

The study used a quantitative research methodology, which focused on testing and analyzing known variables' effects interchangeably in the relevant context of the study through a sequence of data collection and distribution of questionnaires and direct structured or unstructured interviews. The data collection was done through direct contact with employees, through staff emails which were received from relevant organizations, WhatsApp groups, other messengers, and mainly through the use of Google Docs survey facilities shared with organizations' staff via relevant HR departments. The study adopted existing questionnaires from scholarly sources, composing 17 items in total related to the three variables of the study; they are given in the measure part of this study with the sample size defined.

Table 2: Demographic profile of respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender				
Male	194	85.8	85.8	85.8
Female	32	14.2	14.2	100.0
Total	226	100.0	100.0	
Education				
Graduate	93	41.2	41.2	41.2
Post Graduate or Master	132	58.4	58.4	99.6
Other	1	0.4	0.4	100.0
Total	226	100.0	100.0	
Type of Organization				
Telecom	73	32.3	32.3	32.3
Non-Telecom	153	67.7	67.7	100.0
Total	226	100.0	100.0	
Experience				
1-5 Years	29	12.8	12.8	12.8
6 -10 years	137	60.6	60.6	73.5
11 to 15 years	57	25.2	25.2	98.7
Above 15 years	3	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	226	100.0	100.0	
Age ranges				
20 to 30 years	30	13.3	13.3	13.3
31 to 40 Years	192	85.0	85.0	98.2
41 to 50 Years	4	1.8	1.8	100.0

Total	226	100.0	100.0
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Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

In the demographic part of the study, the orientation is to look at respondents' profiles at a different level. The given table 2 explains all the relevant information about the respondents, who were part of the data collection process. The variables of study for the respondent's profile encompass the respondent's gender, educational background, years of experience, organization employed, and age groups; the sample of the study was a total of 226 respondents. Based on table 2, a total of 226 respondents filled out the questionnaire, of which 194 (85.8%) were male and 132 (14.2%) were females, while on the other hand, from the respondents' experience perspective, 29 (12.8%) were of 1–5 years, 137 (60.6%) were of 6–10 years, 57 (25.2%) were of 11–15 years, and 3 (1.3%) of the respondents were of above 15 years of experience. However, from the stats, it is seen that a total of 93 (41.2%) of the respondents were holding bachelor's or graduate degrees and a total of 132 (58.4%) were postgraduate or master's degree holders. However, one respondent (0.4%) held a doctorate, which is entitled in the stats as other categories. Furthermore, from the relevant organizational perspective, the statistics show that 73 (32.3%) of the respondents were from the telecom sector, and 153 (67.7%) were from non-telecom sectors across Afghanistan. The non-telecom sectors were inclusive of NGOs, government agencies, and private sectors that work in different production or service-oriented businesses in the country. From an age perspective, the statistical data outputted shows a sum of 30 (13.3%) aged between 20 and 30 years, a sum of 192 (85%) aged between 31 to 40 years and a sum of 4 people (1.8%) aged 41 to 50 years out of the total sample of 226 people in the study. The study focused mostly on the aforementioned demographic characteristics to collect data relevant to the study and has further taken the study around the main variables of concern, which are abusive supervision (AS), employee creativity (EC), and psychological empowerment (PE), and has adopted existing questionnaire items referenced in the instrumentalization section. Furthermore, the APA format of data analytics presentation is used.

3.4 Measurements

The study operationalized the abstract concept of abusive supervision, psychological empowerment, and employee creativity through structured analysis based on the quantitative research methodology guidelines. Meanwhile, a 5-point Likert scale was incorporated by conducting questionnaires and interviews, and the preferred language or rhetoric used was English. The questionnaire used a 5 to 1 scaling method, including reactive feedback as: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree, and incorporated the questionnaires for all three variables, composed of a total of 17 questions as given in table 3. The study, as stated, adopted an existing questionnaire and used a 5 point Likert scale to measure relevant variables of the study, meaning abusive supervision, psychological empowerment, and employee creativity. The study measured abusive supervision using Tepper's (2005) 5 item scale. The items sampled were "My Supervisor tells me my thoughts and feelings are stupid" and "My Supervisor puts me down in front of others." Considering the psychological empowerment variable, the study used a 10-item scale developed by Zhang & Bartol (2010) and the sample items were "The work I do is important to me", "The work activities are personally meaningful to me" and for employee creativity, the study used a 4-item scale developed by Tierney et al. (1999). The sample items were "Creative employee tries new ideas and methods first", "Creative employee generates ground-breaking ideas related to the field". It is worth mentioning that two items related to psychological empowerment were left out of the study as their unique validity criteria did not meet the

study requirement, which suggests a value of more than 0.3 for each item of the study conducted.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Reliability and Validity tests

The study used SPSSv.25 software to check the reliability and validity criteria of the items in the adapted questionnaire. The focus was on using the Cronbach alpha scale to verify the reliability of the items and using the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) sampling adequacy test for factor analysis suitability. The results show that there is a relevant inter-item consistency between the items of the variables under study, for instance, the correlation amongst abusive supervision items is 0.87 and the inter-item correlation between employee creativity items is 0.812 and the inter-item correlation between psychological empowerment items also depict a Cronbach alpha output of 0.843 and with a total items correlation output of 0.789. The data shows there is no deviation or change from the standard items questionnaire (GAO, 2009) items and the results show that the Cronbach alpha condition of each variable item scale of > 0.6 is met and also the single item reliability test also shows a result above 0.3 as given below in the descriptive analysis:

Table. 3: Reliability Statistics

Constructs/Variables	Cronbach Alpha output	Deleted Items	Number of Items
Abusive supervision	0.87	0	5
Employee creativity	0.81	0	4
Psychological empowerment	0.84	2	10
Total	0.79	2	19

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

4.2 Validity Test

The study used the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) sampling adequacy measure, where the outputted values must exceed 50 or 50%, or in some references (.70 Neumann, 2003). Based on the outputs, it is inferred that the validity of the data is reflected in fair sampling adequacy, which means that the KMO percentage is around 60.2% and Bartlett's test of sphericity is also shown to be significant ($p = 0.000$) and is less than $p < 0.05$ as depicted in table 5. Besides, the test of sampling adequacy (MSA) also shows expected inter items interrelationships as given in Table.4

Table.4: Sampling Adequacy Measure

		0.602
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	65.134
	df	3
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for Means, Standard deviations, Reliabilities and Correlations

Variables	Mea	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	n										

Gender	1.14	0.35									
Age	1.88	0.37	0.02								
Position	2.55	1.35	.286**	.190							
Education	2.59	0.50	0.01	0.08	.203**						
organizational	1.68	0.47	.253**	-	0.09	.384*					
Experience	2.15	0.64	0.01	.725	.217**	.150*	0.04				
Abusive supervision	3.01	0.71	-0.07	-	-0.09	-	0.00	-0.05	(0.87)		
Employee creativity	4.15	0.56	-	0.08	-	0.05	0.06	.173**	-	(0.81)	
Psychological empowerment	3.98	0.61	.178**	0.09	.137*	-	.15	0.04	-	.424	(0.84)
						0.02	7**		.267**	***	4)

Notes: N = 226; Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (one-tailed) and significant at 0.05 level (one tailed); Alpha(a) reliabilities are given in parentheses, while its significance is depicted as ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

4.3 Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

Based on the results given in Table 5, the study shows the correlations between the three variables. The statistical analysis here shows that there is a negative relationship between abusive supervision (AS) and employee creativity (EC), as the correlation coefficients (CC) and p (significance value) show (CC-.242, $p < 0.000$) reading, while the statistics obtained also show that there is a negative relationship between abusive supervision (AS) and psychological empowerment (PE) with a depiction of (CC-0.267, $p < 0.000$). While on the other hand, the stats show that there is a significantly positive relationship between employee creativity (EC) and psychological empowerment (PE) with a (CC 0.422, $p < 0.000$) reading, the statistical outputs also show that psychological empowerment (PE) negatively affects abusive supervision and positively affects employees' creativity, thus mediating the relationship between EC and AS. The negative relation between PE and AS basically and the positive relation between PE and EC mean that as much as the employees' psychological attributes are empowered or PE is increased, it will inversely affect AS to redeem its negative impacts on employees' creativity. This would somehow mean employees would then reflect more creative behaviors and productivity and would socially engage in showing innovative behaviors and more use of their resources in the workplace according to the COR (Hobfoll, 1989) theory. Besides, they would come up with more creativity based on the CTC (Amabile, 1983,1988) theory. This is the claimed hypothesis. However, the correlation table shows the relations at a weak and somewhat moderate level, which could be associated with some parameters like culture, common sense, and know-legibility issues amongst Afghan nationals, but in general, the results show significant correlation amongst the variables. Thus, the general idea of the outputted correlations can be attributed to the fact that psychological empowerment of subordinates can socially engage them in redeeming the abusive impacts. As it is stated that the PE from a supervisor is not a trickledown effect on subordinates but depends on the connection of other elements like trust, self-reliance, and empowerment (Carsten et al., 2022), thus based on Table 5 outputs, the argued hypothesis are proved to be true in terms of directionality:

Hypothesis 1(H01). Abusive Supervision has a negative impact on employee creativity (significant correlation). Hypothesis accepted

Hypothesis 2(H02). There is a negative relationship between psychological empowerment and abusive supervision (significant correlation). Hypothesis accepted

Hypothesis 3(H03). Psychological empowerment has a positive impact on employee creativity (significant correlation). Hypothesis accepted

Hypothesis 4(H04). Psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity. Hypothesis Accepted, as a hypothesis is proved directional to both the dependent variable (EC) and independent variable (AS), which reflect the mediating relationship.

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

The main idea of regression for the study is to examine the effects that one variable has on another, either directly or through some mediation or moderation. So each variable's effect on one another is tested here, and how they are related based on the claimed hypothesis is the relevant point of analysis. Therefore, the study would perform multiple regression analysis to find out the effects. The study incorporated three variables of interest, meaning abusive supervision (AS), psychological empowerment (PE) and employee creativity (EC) and their impacts on one another, while using a third variable, which is PE, to mediate the relationship and effects amongst the dependent and independent variables.

STEP 1: H01 - Total effect of X on Y (Direct total effect of X on Y) or Effects of AS on EC

Tables 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.242 ^a	0.058	0.054	0.54734

a. Predictors: (Constant), Abusive supervision

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Table 6.1: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	4.159	1	4.159	13.881	.000 ^b
Residual	67.106	224	0.300		
Total	71.265	225			

- a. Dependent Variable: Employee Creativity
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Abusive supervision

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Table 6.2: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error				Beta	Tolerance
1	(Constant)	4.729	0.160		29.6	0.000		

Abusive supervision	-0.192	0.052	-0.242	3.70	0.000	1.000	1.000
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a. Dependent Variable: Employee Creativity

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

According to the results in the above regression Table 6, the analysis for the hypothesis is taken further and the positive R-square value shows that there is a significant though weaker around 5.8% of impact between dependent (EC) and independent variables (AS) directly and this relationship, which shows a depiction of (CC-0.242, $p < 0.000$) could be further checked in mediation analysis after PE as an intervening factor, but the impact is still considered significant with a p-value lower than 0.05 based on ANOVA output and a VIF value less than $VIF < 5$ in coefficient table. The analysis outputs hereby give a full reflection of the customized model; thus, the H01 hypothesis in the correlation table is proved true and shall be retained as well.

Hypothesis 1(H01). Abusive Supervision has a negative impact on employee creativity (significant correlation). Hypothesis accepted

STEP 2: H02, Effects of X on M, (direct effect of X over M) or effect of AS on PE

Tables 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.267 ^a	0.071	0.067	0.58632

a. Predictors: (Constant), Abusive supervision

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Table 7.1: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.890	1	5.890	17.134	.000 ^b
	Residual	77.006	224	0.344		
	Total	82.896	225			

a. Dependent Variable: Psychological Empowerment
b. Predictors: (Constant), Abusive supervision

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Table 7.2: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	4.672	.171		27.31	.000		
Abusive supervision	-.229	.055	-.267	-4.13	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Psychological Empowerment

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

The relationship between the independent variable (AS) and mediating variable (PE) is also inferred to have a significant impact on one another as depicted in the correlation table and based on the R-Square and ANOVA outputs of significant and positive impression in the above table 7, the second hypothesis can be claimed true and retained. As long as (PE) gets improved, the (AS) effects would reduce, which would depict a negative relation between the variables under study, which is already proven in correlation analysis, stating abusive

supervision (AS) and psychological empowerment (PE) with a depiction of (CC-0.267, $p < 0.000$) and a VIF < 5 in coefficient table. Thus,

Hypothesis 2 (H02). There is a negative relationship between psychological empowerment and abusive supervision (significant correlation). Hypothesis accepted.

STEP3: H03, Effects of M on Y or effects of PE on EC, direct effect

Tables 8: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.422 ^a	0.178	0.174	0.51137

a. Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Empowerment

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Table 8.1: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.690	1	12.690	48.527	.000 ^b
	Residual	58.575	224	0.261		
	Total	71.265	225			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Creativity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Empowerment

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Table 8.2: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.592	.226		11.45	.00		
	Psychological Empowerment	.391	.056	.422	6.96	.00	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Creativity

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

From the results of table 8, the correlation and regression analysis, it is evident that there are positive relations and effects between (PE) and (EC). Considering the 17,8% positive R-Square (effect) output and significant ANOVA outputs of the regression analysis as well, the stats reflected a significant correlation of $p < 0.000$ and a CC of 0.422, showing a significantly positive relationship between the two aforementioned variables, which proves the third hypothesis true as well, and a VIF < 5 in the coefficient table, thus:

Hypothesis 3(H03). Psychological empowerment has a positive impact on employee creativity (significant correlation and effect). Hypothesis accepted.

Mediation analysis using Andrew Hayes V4 mediation analysis process

H04: Mediating effect of M between X & Y (indirect effect of M)

Table: 9 Mediating Effect of PE between AS and EC

Model: 4

Y: EC

X: AS

M: PE
Sample
Size: 226

Outcome variable: PE

Table 9.1: Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.2666	.0711	.3438	17.1343	1.0000	224.0000	.0000
Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	4.6719	.1710	27.3139	.0000	4.3349	5.0090
AS	-.2289	.0553	-4.1394	.0000	-.3379	-.1199
Standardized coefficients						
	coeff					
AS	-.2666					
The covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates:						
	constant	AS				
constant	.0293	-.0092				
AS	-.0092	.0031				

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Outcome variable: EC

Table 9.2 Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4427	.1960	.2569	27.1814	2.0000	223.0000	.0000
Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.0615	.3077	9.9488	.0000	2.4551	3.6679
AS	-.1106	.0496	-2.2304	.0267	-.2084	-.0129
PE	.3569	.0578	6.1788	.0000	.2431	.4707
Standardized coefficients						
	coeff					
AS	-.1390					
PE	.3849					
Covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates						
	constant	AS	PE			
constant	.0947	-.0105	-.0156			
AS	-.0105	.0025	.0008			
PE	-.0156	.0008	.0033			
Test(s) of X by M interaction:						
F	df1	df2	p			
4.2352	1.0000	222.0000	.0408			

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Total effect model with Outcome variable: EC

Table 9.3 Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.2416	.0584	.2996	13.8812	1.0000	224.0000	.0002
Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	4.7289	.1597	29.6163	.0000	4.4143	5.0436

AS -0.1923 .0516 -3.7257 .0002 -.2941 -.0906

Standardized coefficients

coeff
AS -0.2416

The covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates:

	constant	AS
constant	.0255	-.0080
AS	-.0080	.0027

Correlations between model residuals

	PE	EC
PE	1.0000	.0000
EC	.0000	1.0000

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects of X on Y

Table 9.4 Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
-0.1923	.0516	-3.7257	.0002	-0.2941	-0.0906	.2416

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
-0.1106	.0496	-2.2304	.0267	-0.2084	-0.0129	.1390

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
PE	-.0817	.0299	-.1473 -.0316

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
PE	-.1026	.0352	-.1792 -.0409

Source: Data output from SPSS v 25.0

From the statistical analysis in the above tables starting from table 6 to table 8, the study found a significant correlation between psychological empowerment with abusive supervision and employee creativity, which were statistically calculated to be (CC = -0.267, p <= 0.000) between AS and PE and (CC = 0.422, p <= 0.000) between PE and EC. In addition, the Andrew Hayes v4 mediation analysis process also depicts R-Square positive value with the inclusion of control variable PE and shows 19.6% effects amongst the given variables, with a depiction of a moderate relation of 44.2% as the intervening control variable, with a reading (CC = -2.26 and p = 0.000) towards AS and a reading (CC = 0.389 and p = 0.000) towards employee creativity, as depicted in table 9. The conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) that the study adopted and conjoined with psychological empowerment can simply correlate here to directly test amongst the DV (EC) and IV (AS), thus the outcome is the significant correlations and significant effects amongst the variables in the current study. Therefore, the current study infers that abusive behaviors can truly engage employees to reduce their creative behavioral efforts and resource use when seeing abusive or hostile behaviors from supervisors. Psychological empowerment is a significant intervening factor here in the study, which is composed of employees' self-determination, meaningfulness about their work, competence, and their impact on the organization, and empowerment of these elements could change the behavior of subordinates through social interaction to release stressful mindset from being so conservative. However, the realization of the PE elements in the current study through the componential theory of creativity (Amabile, 1983, 1988), focusing on the combination of social and psychological factors that drive individuals to produce creative work and behaviors in

an organization, is the other impactful image to support the mediating variable PE. The componential theory of creativity (Amabile, 1983, 1988) relies on the production of novel ideas to achieve some goal. It encompasses individual domain-relevant skills, creativity in work-related processes, task motivation, and individuals' interaction with the social environment, for instance, their supervisors or leaders or co-workers, and, therefore, realization of all these can yield creative responses and mitigation of abusive behavior engagements from abusive supervisors as well. Therefore, by boosting the creativity of employees using the COC (componential theory of creativity) and significant correlations and effects of psychological empowerment between abusive supervision and employee creativity, the study infers positive impacts on (EC) employee creativity and negative impacts on abusive supervision (AS) engaged by a supervisor. Therefore, based on the correlation between AS and EC, the improvement of PE as a mediator would boost employee's creativity and the negative relation between psychological empowerment and abusive supervision could be mitigated this way, as organizational work and responsibilities would be carried out as expected. Thus, the study's claim that PE mediates between abusive supervision and employee creativity is true, meaning that as much as PE mediates the relationship between AS and EC, the subordinates show innovative behaviors, engage in more effort and their resource use, and thus, social interaction with the supervisor in a meaningful way creates a productive supervisor-subordinate behavioral change effect. Thus, the study states that:

Hypothesis 4(H04). Psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity. The claimed hypothesis H04 is accepted

Discussions

This study analyzed the effect of abusive supervision or behaviors on employees' creativity and further explored how psychological empowerment as an intervening factor mediated this relationship and how its involvement affected employees' creativity to change behaviors to certain supervision attitudes. Historically, few researchers explored the negative leadership impacts of abusive supervision on the creative aspects of employees (Baumeister & Slavasky, 2001; Wang et al., 2021), which has been entitled as the dark side of leadership. Furthermore, few researchers have inferred that abusive supervision could lead to psychological state changes, hauling the subordinates to distress and anxiety. In the same context, further studies have found that abusive supervision could weaken employee creativity and would lead to turnover intentions (Lyu et al., 2018). However, the current study used data collected and based on findings of the study that have been quantified and analyzed through SPSS. The study found significant relationships and effects between the AS and EC, and the initial analysis was built on the existing literature that addressed negative relations between abusive supervision and employee creativity, while on the other hand, some studies incorporated other intervening or moderating variables to test the same relation.

5. Conclusion

The current study was conducted by introducing a new variable, namely psychological empowerment (PE), as an intervening variable to test the relationship between AS and EC, and based on statistical outputs, it was found that there was a direct and significant relationship and effects between AS and EC, which were also consistent with existing literature findings. On the other hand, the study also found out that there is a significant and negative relationship between the AS and PE, meaning that as much as the employees are empowered psychologically, it affects inversely the abusive behavior engagement from supervisors and aligns with the COR (Hobfoll, 1989) theory, meaning the results appeared consistent with existing literature as well. Moreover, the study also found out that there is a

significant and positive relation and effect between PE and EC, which means if employees in the organization are empowered psychologically, they will turn out to show innovative behavior and creativity, and it aligns with the componential theory of creativity (Amabile, 1983, 1988). The study also shows that there is an indirectly significant relationship and effects between AS and EC through the intervening variable of PE. As for the contribution to the study, psychological empowerment (PE), as an intervening construct, was found to play an effective role as a mediator between AS and EC, because it was inferred that as long as the employees are psychologically empowered, their intellectual resource-conservative behaviors would change and they would engage in creative behaviors, which would ultimately mitigate the abusive behaviors of supervisors and, thereby, employees would be associated with productivity and commitment to work. However, the general conclusion is that the study proved the claimed hypothesis of PE to mediate between AS and EC effectively, using the support from conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989) to check the direct relationship between AS and EC. Meanwhile, the study contributed to testing the indirect effect of PE amongst the dependent (EC) and independent (AS) variables, which was proved significantly effective as well.

5.2 Theoretical and Analytical Implication

The current study contributed to the analysis and the literature from multiple perspectives, as it contributed to the existing literature to verify that abusive supervision affects employee creativity negatively (Wang et al., 2021). Furthermore, the engagement of abusive supervision or any other hostile or dark behaviors from supervisors or leaders can lead to weakening subordinates psychologically and would cause employees to exert fewer resources to engage in work, which aligns with the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) concepts. The introduction of psychological empowerment as an intervening construct contributed to the study in terms of indirect effects of abusive supervision on employees' creativity, supported by the componential theory of creativity (Amabile, 1983, 1988). The componential theory of creativity is based on a combination of social and psychological factors that drive individuals to produce creative work and behaviors in an organization. The theory relies on the production of novel ideas to achieve some goal. It encompasses individual domain-relevant skills, creativity in work-related processes, task motivation, and individuals' interaction with the social environment, for instance, their supervisors or leaders, or co-workers. The realization of all these can yield creative responses and mitigation of abusive behavior engagements from abusive supervisors as well. The practical implication of the study is that it is necessary for management at higher levels and also the subordinates at different organizational levels to engage socially, use psychological empowerment practices in their domains and relevant departments to realize and influence certain behaviors from supervisors, so that employees get engaged and free more resources to practice workplace responsibilities and boost their creativity, and lead the way forward to mitigate or eliminate abusive behaviors from relevant supervisors. In addition, the outlook of things in Afghanistan is not the way it is in other countries of the world, meaning to say that Afghanistan still faces issues in terms of corruption, insecurity, massive unemployment pressures, pressures from international society on human rights mess-conducts and so many other factors. Therefore, the additional effects of abusive supervision, if practiced towards employees, could undermine and affect employee's creativity negatively unless and only if supervisors get psychologically fit to address certain challenges in the workplace.

5.3 Limitation of study and Future Research Recommendation

This study is associated with some limitations, which needs to be taken into consideration in the future research study, encompassing the same dependent and independent variables, because abusive supervision and employee creativity are broader concepts, and studying them within the context of Afghanistan wouldn't suffice for the research to reflect a dependable research consensus. Thus, we need a more universal contextualization. Secondly, limitations in terms of the availability of valid journals in the country, lack of locally written books and documents for information collection, low literacy levels within the population, and many other limitations were an immense challenge to the study, but the study mostly relied on internationally available journals and some internet sources to collect information on the previous literature to investigate and contribute more to the study. In addition, observations in this study turned out that the variables of the study could have different reflections from people due to demographic differences, differences in cultures, psychological status of people, attitudes from other individuals, and different psychological perspectives in different contexts and different societies. Therefore, the study suggests that future research should focus on selecting other mediating or moderating control variables considering the aforementioned differentials.

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