

I'll Show You Who's the Boss: Subordinate Rejection as a Precursor of Abusive Supervision

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Abstract

Over the past few decades, scientists and practitioners have shown a great deal of interest in the topic of abusive supervision. The first generation of abusive supervision researchers focused on defining abusive supervision and understanding its consequences. Recently, the second wave of abusive supervision research has turned its attention to understanding what makes a supervisor abusive. The current study falls under the second wave of abusive supervision research. Drawing on abusive supervision, contextual leadership, and social identity theories, I examined the effect of rejection by subordinates (i.e. an acceptance threat) on the abusive behaviours of supervisors. Using the data collected from two samples of full-time employees and supervisors, I conducted an experiment and a longitudinal study. Overall, the results supported the claim that rejection by subordinates lead to abusive supervision via increased levels of frustration. However, the relationship between rejection, frustration, and abusive supervision did not change depending on supervisors' identification with leadership role. I discuss the theoretical and practical implications of these findings at the end of this dissertation.

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Dedication

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Every employee has, at one time or another, experienced a case of the “Mondays”; feeling reluctant to start the workweek. However, many employees who have been abused by their supervisors experience more strife than that. Between 10-30% of all employees in the USA report that their managers insult them in front of others, undermine their work, or coerce them into obedience (Aasland et al., 2010; Tepper et al., 2017). Tepper (2000) refers to such behaviours as abusive supervision, which is defined as employees’ perceptions of the hostile behaviours of their supervisors.

Research shows that abusive supervision is both a financial and a psychosocial burden for organizations. For example, Tepper et al. (2006) estimated that organizations pay \$23.8 billion annually due to reduced productivity and healthcare-related claims that occur as a result of abusive supervision in the US. Moreover, organizations may end up spending up to \$24,000 annually on legal costs due to abusive supervision (Tepper et al., 2006).

A plethora of studies have established relationships between abusive supervision and its negative outcomes for employees (e.g., Tepper, 2007), witnesses (e.g., Reich & Hershcovis, 2015), and even supervisors (Liao et al., 2018). For example, the meta-analyses conducted by Mackey et al. (2017) and Zhang and Liao (2015) documented that abusive supervision is related to decreased employee work performance (e.g., task performance, organizational citizenship behaviours, voice, and engagement), impaired

health and well-being (e.g., depression, emotional exhaustion), and unfavourable organizational attitudes (e.g., low levels of job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment).

Because of its potentially devastating impact on the functioning of organizations and the wellbeing of employees, researchers have shown a great deal of interest in the topic of abusive supervision ever since its inception. The first wave of abusive supervision research mainly focused on understanding what abusive supervision is and how it impacts employees and organizations in general. Convinced that it is a topic that is worthy of research efforts, researchers then diverted their attention to understanding the causes abusive supervision (e.g., Byrne et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2017; Mawritz et al., 2017; Simon et al., 2015).

The great majority of studies that examine why abusive supervision occurs focus on either leader or follower characteristics. These studies show that some supervisors are more prone to being abusive than others. For example, supervisors with a history of family aggression (Garcia et al., 2014), mental health problems (Byrne et al., 2014), or personality traits such as negative affectivity, authoritarianism (Gabler et al., 2014) or neuroticism (Wang et al., 2015) have been shown to be more likely to display abusive behaviours.

Although some supervisors may be more aggressive than others, they may not be equally abusive to all employees. Research has shown that some stable subordinate qualities can also trigger abusive supervision. For example, the prevalence rates of abuse treatment towards subordinates with performance issues (Khan et al., 2016; Liang et al.,

2016; Walter et al., 2015), dangerous world views (e.g., believing that people harm each other in an organization for no reason; Khan et al., 2017), deviance (Mawritz et al., 2017), counterproductive work behaviours and avoidance (Simon et al., 2015) or emotional instability and conscientiousness (Henle & Gross, 2014) are higher than other subordinates.

Although the aforementioned findings regarding supervisor and subordinate-related factors are immensely useful in uncovering the phenomena of abusive supervision, they are limited to answering the question of who is the perpetrator and who is the target. More studies are needed to understand when, why, and how abusive supervision takes place. Despite the upswing of interest in understanding predictors of abusive supervision, the role that contextual factors (e.g., situational or organizational) play in abusive supervision have largely been missing in the literature except for a few studies (e.g., Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Mawritz et al., 2012; Rafferty et al., 2010). While organizational factors can explain what kind of organizations provide a medium where abusive supervision grows, situational factors can give an answer to when exactly supervisors show their abusive sides.

The current study fills this gap by identifying a potential situational variable: identity threat. More specifically, by drawing on the contextual leadership framework (Oc, 2018), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), and the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Berkowitz, 1989), I test whether a particular situation (i.e. subordinate rejection) can lead to abusive supervision, and if so, what mechanism explains this relationship. I also examine a possible boundary condition (i.e. identification with the leadership role) of this relationship under the guidance of social identity theory. By

establishing a relationship between identity threat and abusive supervision, I provide an answer to *when* supervisors abuse their followers. Answering this question is important because without clear understanding of leaders' motivations to exert abuse on their subordinates, organizations cannot prevent it.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Abusive Supervision

Definition of Abusive Supervision

In his seminal paper, Tepper (2000) defined abusive supervision as subordinates' perception of sustained hostile behaviour by their supervisors such as public derogation or invasion of privacy. This definition had three characteristics. First, it viewed abusive supervision as a form of aggression; therefore, violent behaviours such as physical damage were excluded from the construct. Second, it was operationalized as subordinates' perception; therefore, it was coined as a subjective phenomenon instead of an objective phenomenon. Third, abusive supervision was referred to as sustained hostility; therefore, it was characterized as a leadership style instead of leadership behaviour.

These three features of the construct shaped all subsequent research on abusive supervision. For example, because of the subjectivity of the construct, in many studies (e.g., Mawritz et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2015) it was measured via subordinates' perceptions only. Similarly, because abusive supervision was construed as a style, many subordinates did not label their supervisors as such if they only displayed occasional

abuse (e.g., Byrne et al., 2014) or “tough love” (Tepper et al., 2017). These design-related limitations posed serious shortcomings when seeking to uncover the phenomenon of supervisor-initiated abuse. For instance, because of the inconsistency between subordinates’ perceptions and the actual behaviours of abuse, researchers were unable to accurately understand the actual motives behind supervisors’ hostility. For this reason, the prevalence rates were estimated to be lower than the actual occurrence (Tepper et al., 2017). In order to address this shortcoming, Tepper, et al. (2008) refined the definition of abusive supervision as “*sustained forms of nonphysical hostility perpetrated by managers against their subordinates*” (p.721).

Outcomes of Abusive Supervision

Tepper et al.’s (2017) review of the empirical studies on the topic of abusive supervision showed that the majority of the studies on the topic seek to answer what the consequences of abusive supervision are. Although a substantial number of studies documented the negative effects of abusive supervision both for individuals and organizations, Tepper et al. (2017) project that researchers will keep working on this question for a while. In the following section, I will provide a summary of the outcomes of supervisor abuse. Those outcomes will be organized as organizational, health and safety, and social and behavioural outcomes.

Organizational Outcomes. One of the variables which has a well-established relationship with abusive supervision is performance. Research has shown that abusive supervision is negatively associated with objective work performance (Walter et al., 2015), individual and organizational citizenship behaviours (Aryee et al., 2007; Decoster

et al., 2014), contextual work performance (Aryee et al., 2008), knowledge sharing (Kim et al., 2018), and employee creativity (Gu et al., 2016). Similarly, it is positively associated with both organization- and supervisor-directed deviance (Lian et al., 2012b) and work withdrawal (Chi & Liang, 2013). Besides performance, abusive supervision is also negatively associated with desirable organizational attitudes such as affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction (Tepper, 2000), perceived organizational support (Shoss et al., 2013), and perceived organizational cohesion (Decoster et al., 2013).

Health and Safety Outcomes. Abusive supervision is not only detrimental for organizations, but also for individuals. Researchers have found that abusive supervision is linked to employee mental health problems such as general well-being (Gulseren & Kelloway, 2019a), depression (Tepper et al., 2007), emotional exhaustion (Chi & Liang, 2013), paranoid arousal (Chan & McAllister, 2014), psychological distress (Harvey et al., 2007), and anger issues (Hobman et al., 2009). In addition to the psychological outcomes, Bamberger and Bacharach (2006) also found that when employees have low conscientiousness and agreeableness, abusive supervision could contribute to problem drinking among employees. Lastly, Gulseren and Kelloway (2019b) demonstrated that abusive supervision is negatively associated with safety outcomes such as safety climate, safety compliance, safety initiatives, and the number of health and safety incidents at work.

Social and Behavioural Outcomes. Researchers have observed that the negative effects of abusive supervision could also be reflected in employees' non-work behaviours and even spill over into their family lives. For example, Brees et al. (2014) and Burton

and Hoobler (2011) demonstrated that subordinates under abusive supervisors showed more aggressive behaviours at home. Employees also experienced increased work-family conflict (Carlson et al., 2012) and reduced family satisfaction (Carlson et al., 2011). Carlson et al. (2011) also observed that being exposed to abusive supervision in the workplace increased personal relationship tension due to heightened work-family conflict, and this intensified tension impaired partners' family functioning.

Antecedents of Abusive Supervision

As research on the outcomes of abusive supervision has accumulated, researchers have started inquiring into what makes supervisors abusive. Published studies on the antecedents of abusive supervision increased from zero between the years of 2001-2005, to sixteen between 2006-2010 and finally to sixty-one between 2011 and 2015 (Tepper et al., 2017). Two narrative reviews (i.e. Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper, 2007) and a meta-analysis (i.e. Zhang & Bednall, 2016) on this topic have also been published. This part of my dissertation reviews those studies that examined why supervisors exhibit abusive behaviours. First, I will review supervisor and subordinate-related antecedents of abusive supervision. Then, I will present the small number studies that examined the contextual (i.e., situational and organizational) antecedents.

Supervisor-Related Antecedents. Four theoretical perspectives guide the research on the supervisor-related antecedents of abusive supervision. These are: (1) personality theories, (2) social learning theory, (3) the resource depletion perspective, and (4) displaced aggression perspective. In the broad sense, personality theories suggest that some supervisors are more prone to display hostility than others because of their

personality characteristics (e.g., Breevat & de Vries, 2017). Supervisors with low levels of emotional stability, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and honesty/humility tend to be more abusive than their peers who score high in these measures (Breevat & de Vries, 2017; Camps et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2015). Abusive supervision is more common in people with other undesirable traits such as social dominance orientation (Hu & Liu, 2017), corporate psychopathy (Mathieu & Babiak, 2016), and trait anger (Liao et al., 2015).

Drawing on the social learning theory (Bandura, 1973), researchers showed that supervisors learn to be aggressive by observing their own social environments. For example, seeing aggressive managers as role models in the workplace (Liu et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2012), experiencing direct abuse (Gabbler et al., 2014), or experiencing vicarious abuse (Harris et al., 2013) were found to be associated with supervisors' abusive behaviours. This social learning is not limited to the workplace; for example, Garcia et al. (2014) demonstrated that supervisors with a history of family aggression were found to be more abusive than others. Similarly, Kiewitz et al. (2012) demonstrated being undermined in the family during childhood contributed to displays of hostility as a supervisor in the future.

Another explanation as to why supervisors act abusively comes from the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and resource depletion perspective (Baumeister et al., 2000; Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996; Muraven et al., 2000). The job of managers is complex and stressful; therefore, it requires the extensive use of mental resources (Tepper et al., 2017). Supervisors may experience resource depletion due the demands of their jobs and this can result in self-regulation impairment (Byrne et al.,

2014). Stressors such as difficult tasks (Collins & Jackson, 2015; Mawritz et al., 2014), mental health issues (Byrne et al., 2014), emotional labour (Yam et al., 2016), personal stress (such as work-family conflict; Courtright et al., 2016), emotional exhaustion (Lam et al., 2017), and work stress (Burton et al., 2012) are associated with increased abusive supervision. In contrast, resources such as emotional intelligence (Xiaqi et al., 2012), political skills (Whitman et al., 2013), mindfulness (Liang et al., 2016), and sleep (Barnes et al., 2015) are negatively associated with supervisory abuse. In their intervention, Gonzales-Morales et al. (2018) were also able to reduce abusive supervision levels by teaching support strategies such as apologising for past behavior to supervisors.

Finally, supervisors can direct hostility at their subordinates, even if the subordinates are not the direct causes of the aggression (Rafferty et al., 2010). For example, supervisors can display hostility to their subordinates as a result of receiving unequal treatment from upper management (Aryee et al., 2007). Similarly, injustice perceptions of the organization can cause supervisor aggression which can translate into abusive supervision (Rafferty et al., 2010).

Subordinate-Related Antecedents. As mentioned in the previous section, up until recently abusive supervision had been operationalized through the perceptions of the subordinates. Therefore, the great majority of studies on the subordinate-related antecedents of abusive supervision are unable to distinguish between the effect of subordinates' characteristics on abusive behaviours of supervisors' and subordinates' judgements of abuse. However, after refining the construct, researchers started to collect data from supervisors about their own behaviours (e.g., Liang et al., 2016; Lin et al., 2016). I will review the research on the subordinate-related antecedents of abusive

supervision in two groups: (1) research on the factors that trigger abusive supervision behaviours and (2) research on the factors that influence subordinates' perception of abusive supervision.

Drawing on the victim precipitation (Olweus, 1978) and moral exclusion (Opatow, 1990) theories, researchers have provided empirical support to the argument that some subordinates are at a higher risk for being a target of abuse. Victim precipitation theory suggests that people who are easygoing and vulnerable (i.e. submissive, Olweus, 1978) or annoying and infuriating (i.e. provocative, Olweus, 1978) are more likely to be picked up on an abusive supervisor's radar. For example, employees with high levels of emotional stability and conscientiousness are victimized less than their peers who score low in these qualities (Henle & Gross, 2014). Similarly, submissive targets such as subordinates with low levels of core self-evaluations (Neves, 2014) and poor performing employees (Wang et al., 2015) as well as provocative subordinates such as the ones with high levels of dangerous worldviews (Khan et al., 2017) are exposed to abuse more than others.

Moral exclusion theory suggests that supervisors may find some of their subordinates worthy of immoral treatment (Opatow, 1990). For example, when employees perform poorly, supervisors may not hesitate to perpetrate abuse (Liang et al., 2016; Walter et al., 2015). Similarly, perceived dissimilarity between supervisors and subordinates can be used to justify abusive supervision (Tepper et al., 2011). Lastly, supervisors may choose to abuse their employees if they perceive them to be in breach of a psychological contract (Wei & Si, 2013).

Because the majority of the studies on the topic uses subordinate reports as the measures of abusive supervision, one might argue that the way subordinates process social information (i.e. social information processing theory; Walther, 1992) and make attributions to their environments (i.e. attribution theory; Kelley & Michela, 1980) can shape their perceptions. For example, Wu and Hu (2009) found that subordinates with low core self-evaluations had a heightened perception of abusive supervision because they interpreted their environment in a way that verified their sense of self (e.g., my boss treats me badly because I am a worthless person). Similarly, employees with negative affectivity (Tepper et al., 2006) and cynical attribution styles (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Tepper et al., 2006) were also found to have tendency to attribute their supervisors' behaviours as abusive. Brees et al. (2014) identified a relationship between subordinates' agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion and their perceptions of abuse. Lastly, Kiazad et al. (2010) observed that organization-based self-esteem moderated the relationship between authoritarian leadership style and abusive supervision. This finding suggests that feeling valued (or not, as the case may be) in an organization can play an important role in abusive supervision.

Contextual Antecedents. Contextual antecedents include both situational factors (i.e., events that happen in a certain circumstance) and organizational factors (i.e., stable characteristics of organizations; Oc, 2018). Research on the contextual antecedents of abusive supervision is scarce and the limited studies on the contextual antecedents mostly focus on organizational factors. For example, the findings of Restuborg et al. (2011) suggest that organizational culture (such as where aggression is the norm) can pave the way for abusive supervision. In contrast, policies such as organizational sanctions (i.e.

punishing workplace aggression) can serve as a protective factor (Dupre & Barling, 2006). Finally, the small number of studies examining the effect of national culture found that in traditional cultures where power distance is a norm, employees perceive the behaviours of their supervisors as less abusive (Kernan et al., 2011; Lian et al., 2012a, Lin et al., 2013).

As one can see, the existing investigation on how situational factors shape abusive leadership is very limited. Comparatively, in many other studies of leadership, the role and importance of context is well documented (please see Oc, 2018 for a review). My study fills this gap by focusing on the role of a particular type of situation (i.e. rejection by subordinates at the group level) on the abusive behaviours of supervisors with high levels of leader identity. More specifically, I argue that being rejected by a group of subordinates will lead to abusive supervision through heightened negative affective responses.

I am driven to investigate this subject for three reasons. First, relationships between subordinates and leaders are dynamic, yet the research up to this point largely focuses on the role the stable characteristics of both parties play in developing abusive supervision behaviour. Second, rejection by subordinates, or insubordination, (Mackey et al., 2019) is a relevant and prevalent behaviour in the workplace (e.g., Jansen & Delahaij, 2020). It is also a fundamental concept in moral philosophy in which the construct of abusive supervision has its origins. However, our knowledge of the relationship between insubordination and abusive leadership is scarce. And finally, leader identity is a positively viewed construct in the literature (e.g., DeRue et al., 2010; Haslam et al., 2020). However, I criticize the literature for having an overly optimistic view of high

levels of leader identity. Due to the leadership roles being deeply engrained in the sense of self for supervisors with high levels of leader identity, I argue that supervisors with high levels of leader identity would be more vulnerable to threats against this identity. In the next section, I will provide an overview of the contextual leadership framework and discuss which category rejection by subordinates falls under.

The Contextual Leadership Framework

Leadership is defined in two different ways in the literature: (1) formal managerial positions and (2) social influence (Yukl, 2013). Although these two definitions are theoretically distinct from each other, in practice, people in a formal position of power usually have social influence over other people. Similarly, many studies operationalize leadership by combining both approaches (e.g., asking participants report the social influence of their immediate supervisors; e.g., Kelloway & Barling, 2010).

Researchers have stressed the importance of incorporating contextual factors in organizational research (e.g., Blickle et al., 2013; Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2017), particularly in the study of leadership (e.g., Gardner et al., 2010). However, due to the lack of an agreed definition of context and systematic efforts to study it (Oc, 2018), researchers were unable to test the effect of context in their studies. To address this need, Johns (2006) proposed a taxonomy for studying context in organizational research.

According to Johns' (2006) framework, there are two levels of context: (1) the omnibus and (2) the discrete. The omnibus context refers to macro level variables that shape organizations such as national culture or economic conditions. It has three dimensions: (1) where, (2) who, and (3) when. These dimensions refer to the location

where the observation is made, such as national culture or geographic location, the demographic composition of the organization of interest, and any macro level events and phases the organization experiences (such as economic crises) (Johns, 2006; Oc, 2018).

Unlike the omnibus context, the discrete context refers to the micro level factors such as social interactions or task characteristics. Similar to the omnibus context, the discrete context has three dimensions: (1) task, (2) social, and (3) physical context. Task context indicates the task-related factors such as job characteristics (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Social context is concerned with the organization's culture and social structure (Johns, 2006). Lastly, the physical context refers to the design related aspects of organizations including temperature, light, and décor (Johns, 2006).

Following Johns' (2006) framework, Oc (2018) proposed a classification for contextual factors which can be used in studying leadership (i.e. the contextual leadership theory). In addition to Johns' (2006) framework, Oc (2018) also included the temporal factors such as time pressure as the fourth dimension of the discrete context. The basic premise of the theory of contextual leadership is that context shapes leadership (Osborn et al., 2002). Contextual factors can be tested either as antecedents of leadership (i.e. leadership process) or moderators in the relationship between leadership and its outcomes (i.e. leadership outcomes; Oc, 2018).

In this study, I seek to understand when supervisors abuse their subordinates. More specifically, I examine the role of a form of threat to leaders' identity (i.e. rejection by subordinates) as a potential antecedent of abusive supervision. Rejection by subordinates is an example of discrete context. Previous research has recognized the

situational nature of identity threat (Breakwell, 2015; Kreiner & Sheep, 2009) because it is based on an event that occurs between supervisors and subordinates. It is also a social contextual factor because it involves social interactions. Therefore, rejection by subordinates falls under the categories of social and temporal factors.

Identity and Response to Identity Threat

Overview of the Concepts of Identity and Identity Threat

Social identity theory posits that individuals use social categories (i.e. identities) such as gender, occupational, organizational, or institutional affiliations to organize complex social information (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). These categories help people to construct who they are and understand where they stand in the society. The self-categorization theory proposes two levels of identity: social identity and personal identity (Turner & Oakes, 1989). Social identity is a group-level phenomenon which refers to how people view themselves as a part of a group (e.g., we as Industrial/Organizational Psychologists; Tajfel, 1972). In contrast, personal identity is an individual-level phenomenon which refers to how people define themselves differently from others (e.g., I as a persistent researcher; Tajfel, 1972). In this dissertation, I will use “identity” to refer to personal identities (i.e. “I” instead of “we”; Griffith, 2009, p. 41).

People may have both desired and undesired identities and these identities are viewed both internally (i.e. confirmed/rejected by the self) and externally (i.e. confirmed/rejected by others). Ideally, both the self and others should be in agreement in terms of a person’s identity (e.g., both the self and others should see the person as a successful executive; Petriglieri, 2011). However, inconsistencies in how people see

themselves and how their identities are perceived from the outside can occur in real life situations and this can lead to a tension between the self and others. These disagreements are referred to as threats to identity (Petriglieri, 2011).

Identity threat occurs when a person's identity is challenged (Breakwell, 2015). In their framework, Branscombe et al. (1999) identify four types of threats to identity. These are: (1) distinctiveness threats (2) threats to the value of social identity, (3) categorization threats, and (4) acceptance threats. The first two pertain to the subsistence of social identities. Distinctiveness threat occurs when others do not perceive a desired identity as a unique one (e.g., assuming all Asian countries have the same national culture). In the same way, threats to the value of social identity occur when others have a negative view of a social identity (e.g., negative stereotypes; Branscombe et al., 1999). The third and fourth threats relate to individuals' fit with their identities. Categorization threat occurs when others associate the individual with an undesired identity (e.g., parents' seeing their adult children as kids). In contrast, acceptance threat occurs when in-group members undermine the person's belongingness to a desired group (e.g., not welcoming immigrants in the host country; Branscombe et al., 1999).

Threats to identity are negatively associated with a number of desired organizational outcomes. Some of those include decreased job performance (Steele, 1997), self-esteem (Taylor & Brown, 1988), and motivation to lead (Davies et al., 2005). Identity threat is also positively correlated with undesired outcomes such as increased workplace conflict (Fiol et al., 2006), anti-social behaviours towards co-workers (Aquino & Douglas, 2003), employee turnover (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008; Schilling et al., 2012), and sexual harassment (Alonso, 2018).

People are motivated to act consistently with their identities (White et al., 2018). When individuals are faced with acceptance threats, they engage in identity reinforcing behaviours (Guendelman et al., 2011). For example, Guendelman et al. (2011) showed that Asian immigrants in the US consumed more stereotypically American food when their American identity was not recognized. In another study, Bosson et al. (2009) found that when men's masculinity is threatened, they engage in aggression, which is perceived as a traditionally masculine behaviour, in an attempt to restore their male identity. Similarly, in an experimental setting, Alonso (2018) threatened the masculinity of male participants by giving feedback that they are different from other men in an experimental setting. She observed significantly higher rates of male to male sexual harassment in the experimental group where the male identity was threatened.

Leadership, Social Identity, and Response to Acceptance Threat in Organizations

Social identities play an instrumental role in organizations (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Leadership is one of those many organizational identities. In the workplace, a leadership role is mostly assigned top down by the relevant authorities (Yukl, 2013). Assignment to leadership roles is usually regarded as a promotion and it is viewed positively (e.g., Vinkenburg et al., 2011); therefore, it is not uncommon to see high levels of role identification among leaders.

Leader identity is highly dependent on the followers' endorsement and commitment (Haslam et al., 2011; Hogg, 2001). Although leaders are appointed from the top down, and thus given legitimate and coercive power (Yukl & Falbe, 1991), the support of subordinates (i.e., referent and expert power; Yukl & Falbe, 1991) is needed

for sustainability. Just because some employees are promoted to leadership roles by their managers does not mean that these individuals' leadership will be accepted by their subordinates. I define rejection by subordinates as the subordinates' unwillingness to accept the leadership of their supervisors. For example, acts of insubordination, passive aggression, or incivility perpetrated by subordinates towards their supervisors can serve as examples of rejection by subordinates. According to this definition, subordinates are not opposed to the idea of having a supervisor; instead, what they are against is having a particular person as their supervisor.

Individuals can only be leaders with the existence of followers (Tee et al., 2013). Supervisors who occupy leadership roles need to be perceived as legitimate leaders to be able to perform their jobs. When their leadership is refused by subordinates, a supervisor's identity as a leader can be threatened. We can classify rejection by subordinates as an acceptance threat (i.e. threat from below; Tepper et al., 2017) to supervisors.

The multi-motive model of interpersonal rejection (Smart Richman & Leary, 2009) suggests that people respond to rejection in their social environments by lowering their self-esteem. When leaders receive a rejection from their subordinates such as a refusal to perform an assigned task, they may interpret this behaviour as sign of disrespect (Sy, 2010); as a result, their self-esteem can decrease. To restore their self-esteem and status within the group, they may engage in behaviours that would enact their identity as leaders (Hogg et al., 2012). Preferring higher power distance (Hogg et al., 2010) and exercising power and coercion (Turner, 2005) such as monitoring employees more closely or reminding them of their lower status in daily conversations would be typical

responses. Similarly, they may want to teach a lesson to their subordinates. Abusive supervision encompasses a range of hostile behaviours enacted by supervisors. These behaviours are usually performed instrumentally to teach a lesson to employees (Watkins et al., 2019). I argue that in the face of rejection, supervisors can use their legitimate power to exert abusive behaviours with the goal of reinstating their power. Therefore, I hypothesized that:

H1: Rejection by subordinates would be positively related to abusive supervision

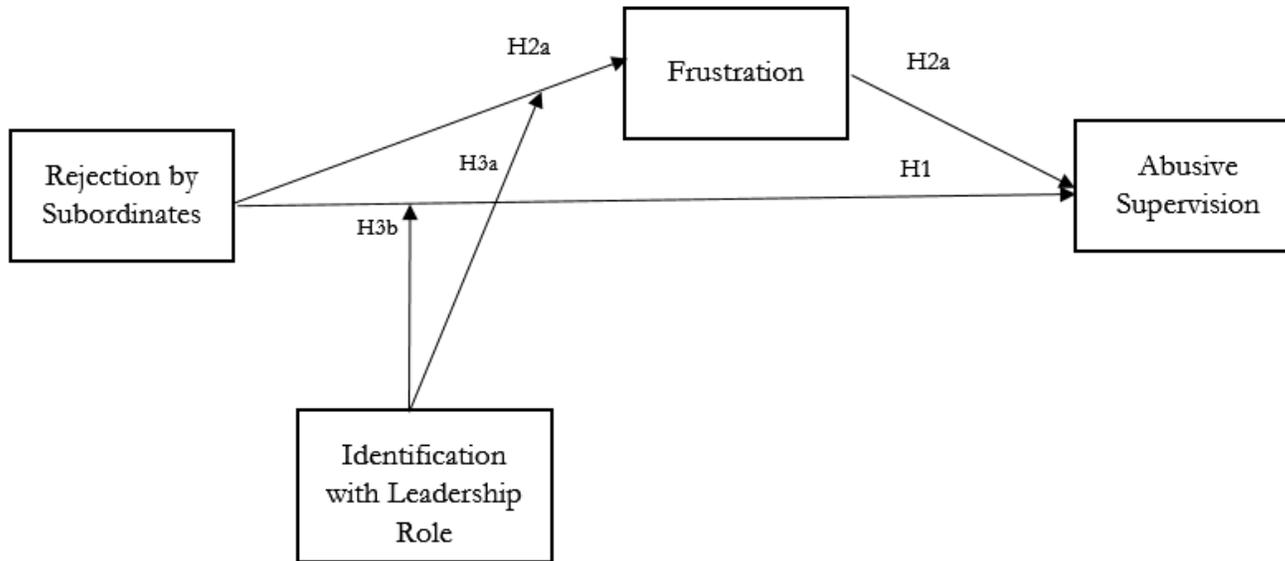
Achieving managerial goals such as maintaining high performing teams or delegating work efficiently requires power (Guinote, 2017). When rejected by subordinates, supervisors lose power and become less likely to achieve these managerial goals. Facing an interpersonal rejection also makes people feel anxious and angry (Smart Richman & Leary, 2009). Frustration-aggression hypothesis proposes that people feel frustrated when their goal attainment is hindered. As a result, they display aggression to communicate their frustration (Berkowitz, 1989). Based on these propositions, supervisors who receive interpersonal rejection at work (i.e. rejection by subordinates) may respond to the sources of rejection with heightened frustration which could be expressed as aggression. Therefore, I hypothesized that:

H2: Frustration would mediate the relationship between rejection by subordinates and abusive supervision; such that higher levels of rejection would be positively related with frustration and higher levels of frustration would be positively related to abusive supervision.

Petriglieri (2011) claims that individuals appraise identity threats and respond accordingly. Their reactions to those threats depend on the importance, frequency of exposure, form and source of the threat (Petriglieri, 2011). Similarly, the value of the identity that is being threatened can determine the type and strength of their reactions. When individuals place a high value on an identity, their identification becomes stronger (Postmes et al., 2013). Based on these premises, I argue that the reactions supervisors would give to the acceptance threat would depend on the extent to which they see leadership as a part of their sense of self. The more they identify with leadership, the bigger threat rejection by subordinates would be to their leader identity. Therefore, I hypothesized that:

H3: Leader identity would moderate the link between rejection by subordinates and (a) frustration, and (b) abusive supervision. At high levels of leader identity, the relationships between rejection by subordinates and frustration, and between rejection by subordinates and abusive supervision will be stronger.

Figure 1. The Proposed Model



Chapter 3: Study 1

The aim of Study 1 was to examine the hypothesized relationships in a real-life setting. I chose the field study method in this study because it would increase the external validity of the findings. I also chose a longitudinal approach because the hypotheses make predictions about within person dynamics. Moreover, longitudinal design would allow me to make inferences about the direction of the relationships.

Using data from full-time supervisors, I tested the hypotheses on a time-lagged mediation model and a moderated mediation model. Figures 2a and 2b show both models. Using a three-wave repeated measures design, I asked supervisors about their (1) perceived rejection levels, (2) frustration levels, and (3) abusive supervision behaviors in the last month. I also asked their identification with leadership role in the first wave. Considering that frustration could be a short-term affective reaction, I also tested the relationships using the first wave of cross-sectional data as a post-hoc analysis in the last stage of this study.

Figure 2a. Time-lagged mediation model

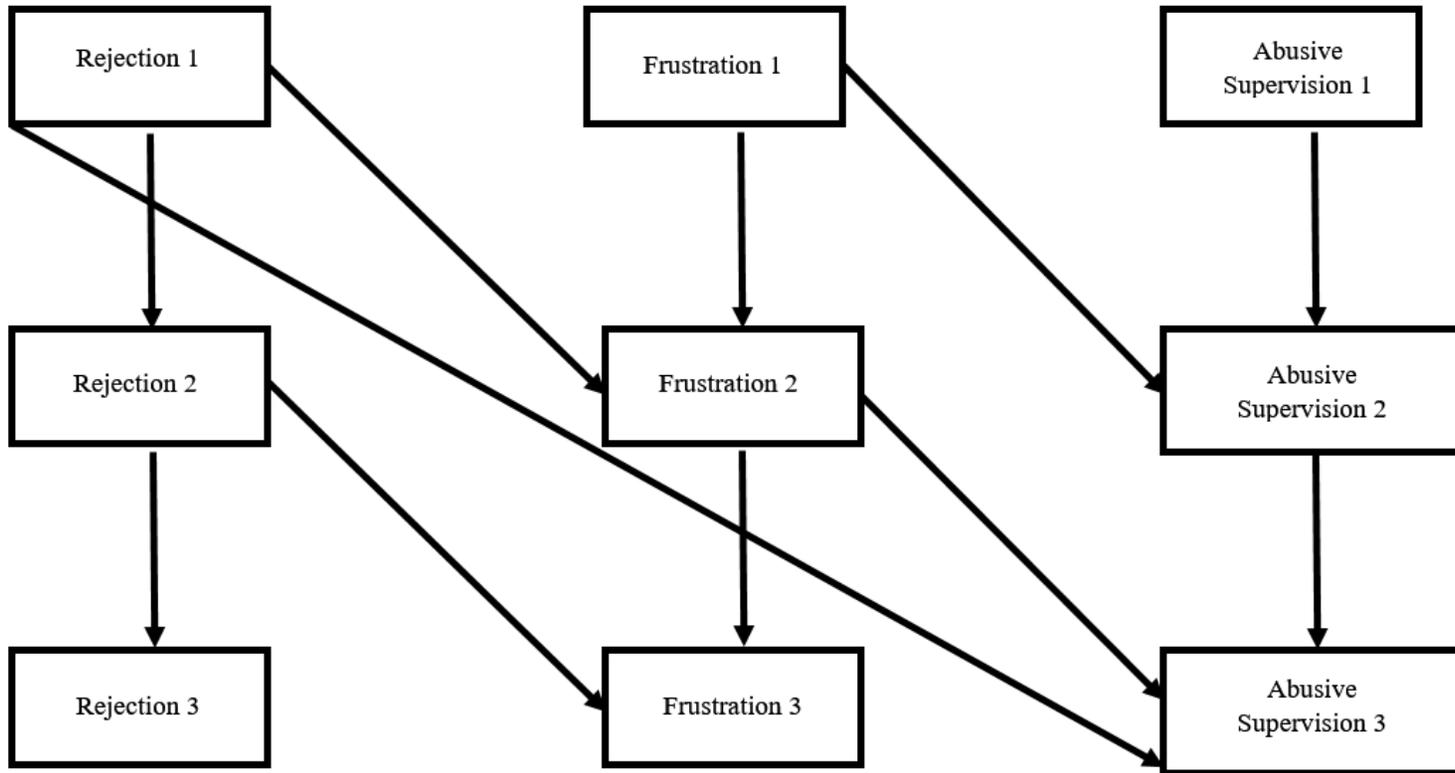
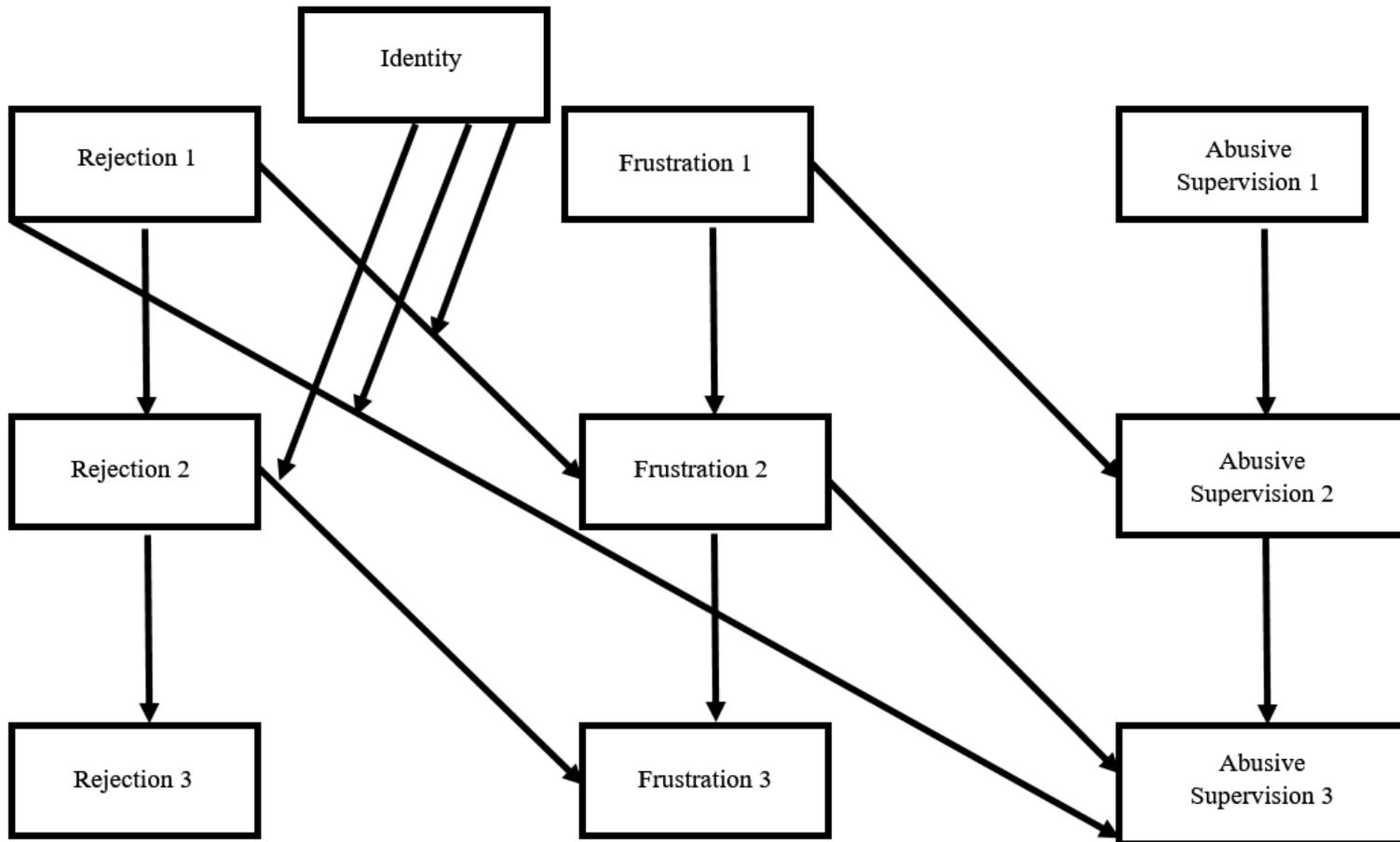


Figure 2b. Time-lagged moderated mediation model



Methods

Participants and Procedure

I recruited full-time supervisors from the US using Prolific, an online crowdsourcing platform (Palan & Schitter, 2018). The inclusion criteria involved (1) supervising at least one subordinate, (2) being employed full-time for the course of the study, and (3) being able to read and write in English. Participants who signed up for the study received three surveys with a one-month break between each phase of the study. Prolific identified 3,404 users who met the criteria, and a total of 350 people answered Survey 1. After removing the cases that failed attention checks, the final sample included 341 participants. Survey 2 was only open to the participants who answered Survey 1. Among the 341 people in the first survey, only 315 completed Survey 2 without failing attention checks. I distributed the final survey to the 315 participants from the second sample. A total of 275 participants answered the final survey. After removing the cases with failed attention checks and merging data across three time points, the final sample size was 253. The mean age of the participants was 36.75 (SD=10.90) and 65% were male.

Survey 1 assessed participants' leader identity, rejection by subordinates, frustration levels of the supervisors, and abusive supervision behaviours along with demographic and control variables (time 1). The second (time 2) and third (time 3) surveys repeated the same questions except for leader identity, demographic and control variables. All measures except for demographic variables and leader identity used the last month as a timeframe (e.g., How upset were you in the last month?). I created all surveys on Qualtrics.

Participants received compensation of \$1.30USD for the first survey and \$1.00USD for the consecutive surveys in exchange for their time. The study was approved by Saint Mary's University's Research Ethics Board (REB#20-077) and the University of Calgary's Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (REB#20-0434). Please see the appendices for the ethics certificates.

Measures

Control Variables. I asked participants their age and sex to control for these effects in the model. In addition to the demographical variables, I measured empathetic concern for others and rejection sensitivity to control for the effect of a potentially confounding individual difference on abusive supervision. To measure empathetic concern, I used Davis' (1980) Empathetic Concern Scale. A sample item was: "When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them." The scale was in Likert format. Response options ranged between 0 (does not describe me well) and 4 (describes me very well). The internal reliability of the seven-item scale was $\alpha=.91$. To measure rejection sensitivity, I used Bianchi et al.'s (2015) Interpersonal Rejection Sensitivity measure. The Likert-type scale was comprised of a single item and asked participants to indicate the degree to which they were sensitive to other people's criticism and rejections. The response option ranged between 0 (not at all) and 4 (very much).

Leader Identity. I used Cameron's (2004) Three-Factor Model of Social Identity scale. The scale measured three social identity factors: (1) in-group ties, (2) in-group affect, and (3) centrality of the social identity using four items for each sub-factor. I adopted the generic scale items to leader identity. In-group ties is defined as the extent to which a person feels close to the members of a particular social group (Cameron, 2004). It was measured with a 4-item scale

($\alpha=.81$, please see Appendix). A sample in-group ties item was: “I feel strong ties to other leaders.” In-group affect is defined as the extent to which a person attaches esteem to a particular social identity (Cameron, 2004). It was measured with a 4-item scale ($\alpha=.83$, please see Appendix). A sample in-group affect item was: “Generally, I feel good when I think about myself as a leader.” Centrality is defined as the extent to which a social identity is accessible to an individual (Cameron, 2004). It was measured with a 4-item scale ($\alpha=.77$, please see Appendix). A sample centrality item was: “I often think about the fact that I am a leader.” The identity scale was in Likert format. Response options ranged between 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). The internal reliability of the overall scale was $\alpha=.88$.

Rejection by subordinates. I used Mackey et al.’s (2019) 5-item insubordination scale to assess rejection by subordinates. A sample item was “How often did your subordinates refuse to follow your instructions in the last month?”. The scale was in Likert format. Response options ranged between 1 (never) and 5 (always). The internal reliability of the scale was $\alpha=.90$.

Frustration. I used the state anger subscale of Spielberger’s (1980) State-Trait Anger Scale to measure the frustration levels. A sample item was: “I was generally feeling furious in the last month.” The 10-item scale was in Likert format. Response options ranged between 1 (not at all) and 4 (very much so). The internal reliability of the scale was $\alpha=.93$.

Abusive Supervision. I assessed participants’ abusive behaviours in the last month. To obtain abusive supervision scores, I used Tepper’s (2000) 15-item abusive supervision scale. A sample item was: “In the last month, I ridiculed my employees.” The scale was in Likert format. Response options ranged between 1 (not at all) and 5 (very much so). The internal reliability of the scale was $\alpha=.90$.

Analytical Approach

Because the measures had good reliability scores (i.e., Cronbach's alpha > .80; Field, 2019) in general, I decided to work with observed variables. I used the structural equation modeling approach (Gulseren & Kelloway, 2019), MPlus software version 8.4 (Muthen & Muthen, 2019), and a maximum likelihood estimator. I also used the bootstrapping technique and repeated the bootstrap 10,000 times. I tested a time-lagged moderated mediation model in two steps. In the first step, I tested the mediational model excluding the moderator. Each variable was auto regressed on itself measured at the previous time point. Variables measured at the same time point were correlated with each other. Frustration measured at time 2 and 3 were regressed on rejection measured at time 1 and 2 respectively. Similarly, abusive supervision measured at time 2 and 3 were regressed on frustration measured at time 1 and 2 respectively. Additionally, abusive supervision measured at time 3 was regressed on rejection measured at time 1. Lastly, all endogenous variables were regressed on the control variables. Please see Figure 2a for a schematic representation of the mediation model.

In the second step, I added leader identity and interaction terms to the model. Frustration measured at time 2 and 3 were regressed on (1) identity, (2) rejection measured at the previous time point, and (3) the interaction terms¹ (i.e., the interaction of identity and rejection at time 1 and the interaction of identity and rejection at time 2 respectively). Abusive supervision at time 3 was also regressed on identity, rejection at time 1, and the interaction of identity and rejection at time 1. Please see Figure 2b for a schematic representation of the moderated mediation model.

¹ Identity and rejection were standardized before including them in the model.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Zero Order Correlations

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and inter-correlations of the study variables. Higher scores indicate higher values in each variable. Values in Table 1 are all based on observed scores.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations in Study 1

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Identification with leadership	4.70	.91	1													
<i>Time 1</i>																
2. Rejection by subordinates	1.29	.54	-.11	1												
3. Frustration	1.46	.57	-.15**	.29**	1											
4. Abusive supervision	1.15	.31	-.05	.43**	.38**	1										
<i>Time 2</i>																
5. Rejection	1.30	.52	-.06	.37**	.20**	.42**	1									
6. Frustration	1.50	.58	-.06	.30**	.71**	.32**	.33**	1								
7. Abusive supervision	1.17	.34	-.04	.29**	.36**	.70**	.50**	.39**	1							
<i>Time 3</i>																
8. Rejection	1.28	.49	-.03	.38**	.36**	.61**	.50**	.37**	.59**	1						
9. Frustration	1.45	.55	-.12	.37**	.72**	.43**	.40**	.79**	.37**	.44**	1					
10. Abusive supervision	1.17	.37	-.08	.43**	.42**	.79**	.50**	.37**	.70**	.70**	.51**	1				
<i>Control variables</i>																
11. Empathy	3.18	.58	.20**	-	-.09	-.19**	-.14*	-.07	-.17**	-.12	-.10	-.19**	1			
				.20**												
12. Sensitivity	2.87	1.19	.01	.14*	.30**	.07	.12	.31**	.12	.09	.26**	.07	.08	1		
13. Age	36.75	10.91	.07	-.13*	-.26**	-.21**	-.20**	-.22**	-.17**	-.17*	-.21**	-.21**	.13*	-.11	1	
14. Gender	-	-	-.08	-.02	.13*	.00	.01	.15*	-.08	-.04	.19**	-.04	.13*	.19**	-.01	1

Notes. Means, standard deviations, and correlations are based on observed scores. N= 253 ** p<.01, *p<.05. Gender (1=Male, 2=Female).

Time-Lagged Results

Hypothesis Testing. Based on Hu and Bentler's (1999) criteria for goodness of fit in structural equation models, the data showed a poor fit to the mediation model (χ^2 (68, N = 253) = 1470.599; CFI=.824, TLI=.572; RMSEA=.187; SRMR=.146). Similarly, the data showed a poor fit to the moderated mediation model (χ^2 (92, N = 253) = 2430.159; CFI=.078, TLI=.000; RMSEA=.417; SRMR=.279).

Mediation Model. The results showed that the relationship between rejection at time 1 and frustration at time 2 was significant and positive ($\beta = .112$, 95% [CI] = .020, .209, $p = .050$). Similarly, the path from rejection at time 1 and abusive supervision at time 3 was significant and positive ($\beta = .174$, 95% [CI] = .045, .306, $p = .027$). In contrast, the relationship between frustration at time 2 and abusive supervision at time 3 was not significant ($\beta = .042$, 95% [CI] = -.084, .164, $p = .576$). The indirect path from rejection at time 1 to abusive supervision at time 3 was not significant ($\beta = .005$, 95% [CI] = -.005, .027, $p = .616$); however, the total effect of rejection at time 1 on abusive supervision at time 3 was positive and significant ($\beta = .107$, 95% [CI] = .029, .200, $p = .038$)².

In addition to those, the path from frustration at time 1 to abusive supervision at time 2 ($\beta = .116$, 95% [CI] = -.017, .260, $p = .167$) as well as the path from rejection at time 2 to frustration at time 3 ($\beta = .107$, 95% [CI] = -.013, .260, $p = .104$)³ were not significant. Therefore,

² The significance levels of the results did not change when I re-ran the mediational model without the control variables.

³ All results are reported as standardized values except for the total effect of rejection at time 1 on abusive supervision at time 3.

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while H1 was supported, H2 was not supported by the data. Please see Table 2 for the results of the time-lagged mediation model.

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Table 2: Standardized Results for the Time-lagged Mediation Model

	β	SE	95% CI		p
			LLCI	ULCI	
Dependent variable: Frustration 1					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.198	.055	-.287	-.106	.000
Gender	.091	.068	-.016	.208	.183
Empathy	-.051	.059	-.148	.045	.388
Sensitivity	.234	.056	.135	.320	.000
Dependent variable: Frustration 2					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.008	.039	-.008	.064	.841
Gender	.059	.049	.059	.136	.228
Empathy	.005	.047	.005	.076	.921
Sensitivity	.091	.047	.091	.172	.056
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Rejection 1	.112	.057	.020	.209	.050
Dependent variable: Frustration 3					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.014	.036	-.072	.046	.707
Gender	.092	.045	.024	.173	.039
Empathy	-.035	.041	-.106	.030	.398
Sensitivity	.009	.043	-.061	.081	.834
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Rejection 2	.107	.066	.013	.206	.104
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 1					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.147	.052	-.231	-.060	.005
Gender	.018	.053	-.065	.112	.736
Empathy	-.98	.047	-.176	-.022	.036

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Sensitivity	.005	.053	-.081	.092	.924
<hr/>					
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 2					
<hr/>					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	.032	.041	-.032	.101	.435
Gender	-.113	.040	-.179	-.049	.005
Empathy	-.028	.041	-.093	.042	.494
Sensitivity	.060	.045	-.014	.133	.181
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Frustration 1	.116	.084	-.017	.260	.167
<hr/>					
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 3					
<hr/>					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.073	.041	-.1551	-.014	.075
Gender	.025	.043	-.043	.099	.564
Empathy	-.046	.044	-.124	.021	.293
Sensitivity	.049	.039	-.117	.012	.210
<i>Independent variables</i>					
Rejection 1	.174	.079	.045	.306	.027
Frustration 2	.042	.075	-.084	.164	.576

Note. N= 253

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Moderated Mediation Model. The relationship between frustration at time 2 and the interaction of leader identity and rejection at time 1 was not significant ($\beta = .165$, 95% [CI] = -.407, .632, $p = .614$). Similarly, the relationship between frustration at time 3 and the interaction of leader identity and rejection at time 2 was not significant ($\beta = -.176$, 95% [CI] = -.553, .298, $p = .509$).⁴ Therefore, H3a was not supported.

In contrast, the relationship between abusive supervision at time 3 and the interaction of leader identity and rejection at time 1 was significant and negative ($\beta = -.538$, 95% [CI] = -.652, -.221, $p = .001$). Rejection always led to abusive supervision; however, the strength of the relationship decreased as identification with leadership increased. For example, at low levels of identification with leadership (i.e., -1SD), the relationship between rejection at time 1 and abusive supervision at time 3 was stronger ($\beta = .457$, 95% [CI] = .111, .837, $p = .038$)⁵ than the same relationship at medium (i.e., mean) and high (i.e., +1SD) levels of identification ($\beta = .339$, 95% [CI] = .087, .616, $p = .035$)⁶ and $\beta = .221$, 95% [CI] = .060, .395, $p = .029$)⁷ respectively. Although identification with leadership moderated the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision, the direction of the moderation was the opposite of what I expected. Therefore, H3b was not supported.

⁴ The significance levels of the results did not change when I re-ran the moderated mediational model excluding the control variables except for the path from rejection at time 1 to abusive supervision at time 3 which became non-significant without the control variables.

^{5,6,7} MPlus does not provide standardized results for the estimates for the relationship at different levels of the moderator. Therefore, I reported unstandardized estimates in this section.

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Lastly, the index of moderated mediation for the path between rejection at time 1 on abusive supervision at time 3 over frustration at time 2 moderated by identity was not significant ($\beta = .001$, 95% [CI] = $-.003, .016$, $p = .828$).

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Table 3: Standardized Results for the Time-lagged Moderated Mediation Model

	β	SE	95% CI		p
			LLCI	ULCI	
Dependent variable: Frustration 1					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.198	.055	-.287	-.106	.000
Gender	.091	.068	-.016	.208	.183
Empathy	-.051	.059	-.148	.045	.388
Sensitivity	.234	.056	.135	.320	.000
Dependent variable: Frustration 2					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.009	.036	-.064	.053	.804
Gender	.063	.045	-.006	.143	.160
Empathy	-.001	.043	-.074	.066	.983
Sensitivity	.089	.045	.031	.182	.046
<i>Independent variables</i>					
Rejection 1	-.039	.308	-.502	.475	.898
Identity	-.035	.142	-.247	.201	.807
Rejection 1*Identity	.165	.327	-.407	.632	.614
Dependent variable: Frustration 3					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.011	.031	-.065	.037	.725
Gender	.082	.039	.036	.169	.033
Empathy	-.025	.036	-.091	.029	.500
Sensitivity	.011	.037	-.048	.074	.761
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Rejection 2	.264	.224	-.140	.568	.238
Identity	.026	.124	-.200	.200	.834
Rejection 2*Identity	-.176	.266	-.553	.298	.509
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 1					

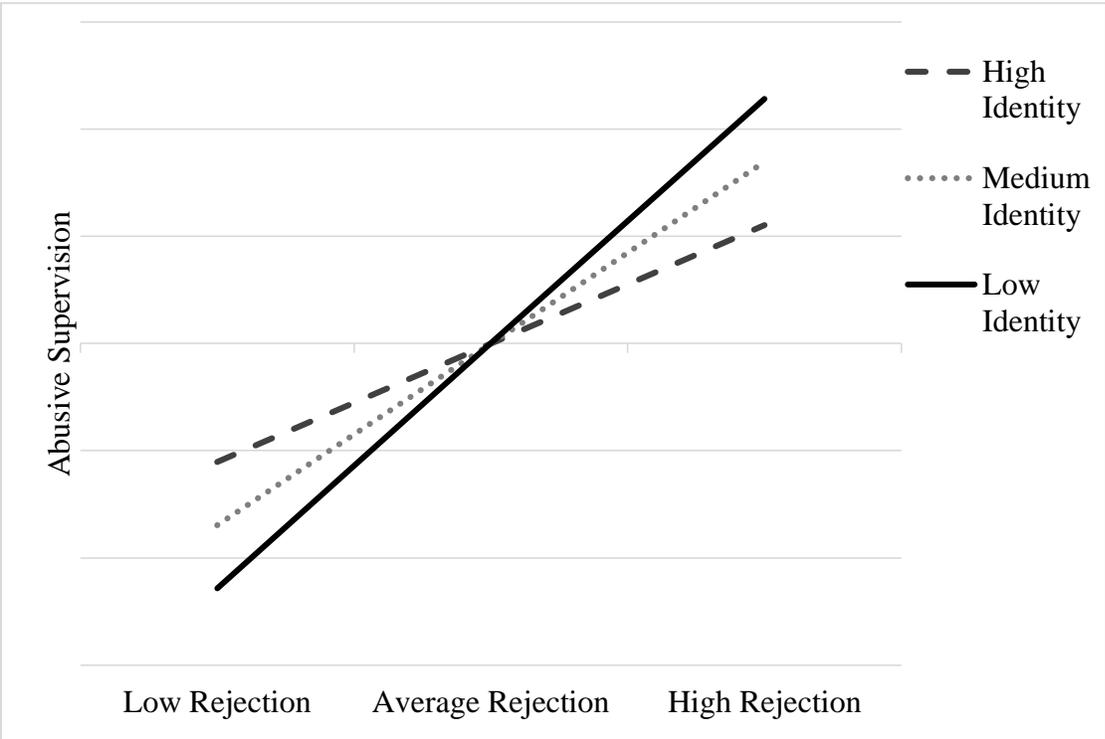
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<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.147	.052	-.231	-.060	.005
Gender	.018	.053	-.065	.112	.736
Empathy	-.098	.047	-.176	-.022	.036
Sensitivity	.005	.053	-.081	.092	.924
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 2					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	.032	.041	-.032	.101	.434
Gender	-.113	.040	-.178	-.049	.005
Empathy	-.028	.041	-.093	.042	.494
Sensitivity	.060	.045	-.014	.133	.181
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Frustration 1	.116	.084	-.016	.260	.167
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 3					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.039	.029	-.106	-.005	.177
Gender	.011	.026	-.028	.058	.677
Empathy	-.022	.029	-.077	.019	.449
Sensitivity	-.025	.025	-.075	.007	.302
<i>Independent variables</i>					
Rejection 1	.601	.157	.289	.701	.000
Identity	.192	.077	.054	.273	.013
Rejection 1*Identity	-.538	.166	-.652	-.221	.001
Frustration 2	.031	.053	-.056	.112	.559

Note. N= 253

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Figure 3. The relationship between rejection and abusive supervision at different levels of leader identity



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Supplementary Analysis. I also tested the role of each of the sub-dimensions of leader identity as moderators of a supplementary analysis. Like leader identity, the sub-dimensions of in-group ties ($\beta = .069$, 95% [CI] = -.415, .823, $p = .823$), in-group affect ($\beta = -.080$, 95% [CI] = -.421, -.352, $p = .742$), and centrality of leadership role ($\beta = .347$, 95% [CI] = -.218, .714, $p = .714$) did not moderate the relationship between rejection at time 1 and frustration at time 2. Similarly, in-group ties ($\beta = -.149$, 95% [CI] = -.503, .272, $p = .540$), in-group affect ($\beta = -.143$, 95% [CI] = -.466, .257, $p = .520$), and centrality of leadership role ($\beta = -.125$, 95% [CI] = -.535, .291, $p = .291$) did not moderate the relationship between rejection at time 2 and frustration at time 3.

While, in-group ties ($\beta = -.539$, 95% [CI] = -.644, .301, $p = .000$) and in-group affect ($\beta = -.449$, 95% [CI] = -.602, .001, $p = .034$) moderated the relationship between rejection at time 1 and abusive supervision at time 3, centrality of leadership role ($\beta = -.276$, 95% [CI] = -.604, .368, $p = .361$) did not. Like the overall identity score, the relationship between rejection at time 1 and abusive supervision at time 3 was positive and significant. However, the relationship was stronger at lower levels of in-group ties (i.e., -1 SD; $\beta = .438$, 95% [CI] = .160, .703, $p = .009$)⁸ compared to the same relationship at medium (i.e., mean; $\beta = .326$, 95% [CI] = .121, .518, $p = .007$)⁹ and higher (i.e., +1SD; $\beta = .213$, 95% [CI] = .082, .333, $p = .006$)¹⁰ levels of in-group ties. Figure 4 shows the interaction effects.

Similarly, the relationship between rejection at time 1 and abusive supervision at time 3 was significant and positive at all levels of in-group affect. However, at low levels of in-group

^{7,8,9} MPlus does not provide standardized results for the estimates for the relationship at different levels of the moderator. Therefore, I reported unstandardized estimates in this section.

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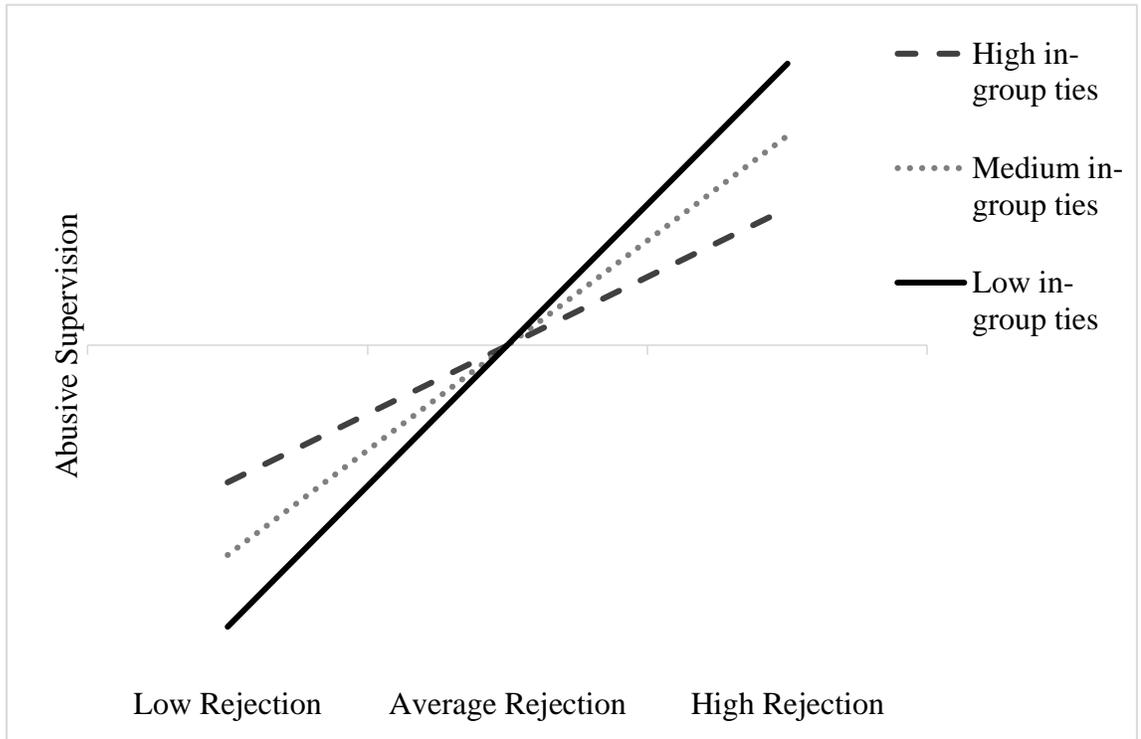
affect (i.e., -1 SD), the relationship was stronger ($\beta = .338$, 95% [CI] = .014, .706, $p = .107$)¹¹ than when it is as medium (i.e., mean) and high (i.e., +1SD) levels ($\beta = .258$, 95% [CI] = .017, .533, $p = .098$ ¹² and $\beta = .178$, 95% [CI] = .019, .359, $p = .084$ ¹³¹⁴ respectively). Figure 5 shows the the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision at different levels of in-group affect.

^{11,12,13} MPlus does not provide standardized results for the estimates for the relationship at different levels of the moderator. Therefore, I reported unstandardized estimates in this section.

¹⁴ Because the confidence intervals are bias corrected and bootstrapped, I relied on confidence intervals instead of p values in my conclusion.

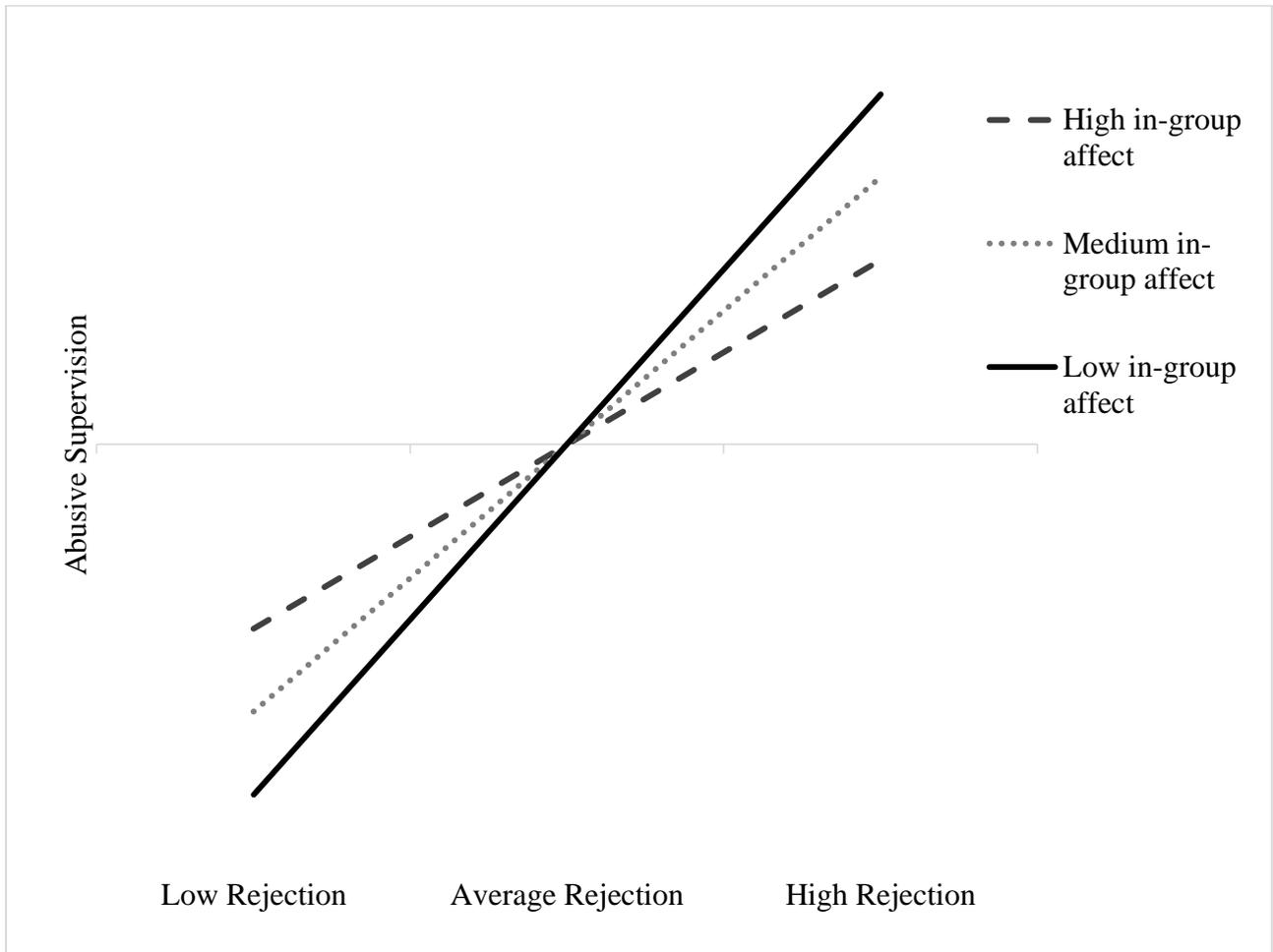
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Figure 4. The relationship between rejection and abusive supervision at different levels of in-group ties



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Figure 5. The relationship between rejection and abusive supervision at different levels of in-group affect



Post-hoc Analysis: Cross-Sectional Results

Hypothesis Testing.

In addition to the time-lagged results, I tested the relationships between identity, rejection, frustration, and abusive supervision measured at time 1 cross-sectionally. Following the two-step approach, I first tested the mediation model, then, I examined the moderated mediation model. I used the same analytical approach as in the longitudinal analysis (i.e., structural equation modeling with MPlus version 8.4; maximum likelihood estimator with 10,000 bootstraps).

Mediation Model. The data showed support for the mediation model. The relationship between rejection and frustration was significant and positive ($\beta = .220$, 95% [CI] = .095, .344, $p = .004$). The relationship between frustration and abusive supervision was significant and positive ($\beta = .276$, 95% [CI] = .149, .276, $p < .001$). The relationship between rejection and abusive supervision was also significant and positive ($\beta = .332$, 95% [CI] = .149, .332, $p = .002$). The indirect relationship between rejection and abusive supervision via frustration was significant and positive ($\beta = .035$, 95% [CI] = .013, .071, $p = .041$). Lastly, the total relationship between rejection and abusive supervision was significant and positive ($\beta = .226$, 95% [CI] = .117, .355, $p = .002$). Therefore, H1 and H2 were supported. Please see Table 4 for a summary of the results.

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Table 4: Standardized Results for the Cross-Sectional Mediation Model

	β	SE	95% CI		p
			LLCI	ULCI	
Dependent variable: Frustration 1					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.195	.054	-.284	-.104	.000
Gender	.089	.067	-.016	.205	.184
Empathy	-.050	.058	-.146	.044	.388
Sensitivity	.231	.055	.133	.316	.000
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Rejection 1	.220	.076	.095	.344	.004
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 1					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.091	.048	-.166	-.008	.059
Gender	-.007	.055	-.094	.087	.901
Empathy	-.083	.044	-.157	-.011	.062
Sensitivity	-.059	.052	-.143	.025	.255
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Frustration 1	.276	.075	.149	.394	.000
Rejection 1	.332	.109	.149	.506	.002

Note. N= 253

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Moderated Mediation Model. Leader identity did not moderate the relationship between the rejection and frustration ($\beta = 1.013$, 95% [CI] = .052, 1.971 $p = .083$) and the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision ($\beta = -.336$, 95% [CI] = -1.331, .529, $p = .552$). The direct relationship between rejection and frustration at time 1 was not significant ($\beta = .736$, 95% [CI] = -1.677, .182, $p = .192$), but the direct relationship between identity and frustration at time 1 was significant and negative ($\beta = -.537$, 95% [CI] = -.913, -.140, $p = .022$). Similarly, the relationships between rejection and abusive supervision ($\beta = .647$, 95% [CI] = -.249, 1.645, $p = .260$) and identity and abusive supervision ($\beta = .199$, 95% [CI] = -.204, .592, $p = .408$) were not significant. Therefore, neither H3a nor H3b was supported with the cross sectional data. Please see Table 5 for a summary of the results.

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Table 5: Standardized Results for the Cross-Sectional Moderated Mediation Model

	β	SE	95% CI		p
			LLCI	ULCI	
Dependent variable: Frustration 1					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.192	.053	-.279	-.104	.000
Gender	.075	.064	-.024	.188	.243
Empathy	-.022	.060	-.121	.077	.720
Sensitivity	.226	.056	.128	.312	.000
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Rejection 1	.736	.564	-1.677	.182	.192
Identity	-.537	.235	-.913	-.140	.022
Rejection 1*Identity	1.013	.584	.052	1.971	.083
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision 1					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.090	.049	-.165	-.006	.065
Gender	-.001	.056	-.090	.095	.986
Empathy	.096	.046	-.173	-.023	.038
Sensitivity	-.061	.050	-.141	.023	.227
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Frustration 1	.289	.075	.165	.411	.000
Rejection 1	.647	.575	-.249	1.645	.260
Identity	.199	.241	-.204	.592	.408
Rejection 1*Identity	-.336	.565	-1.331	.529	.552

Note. N= 253

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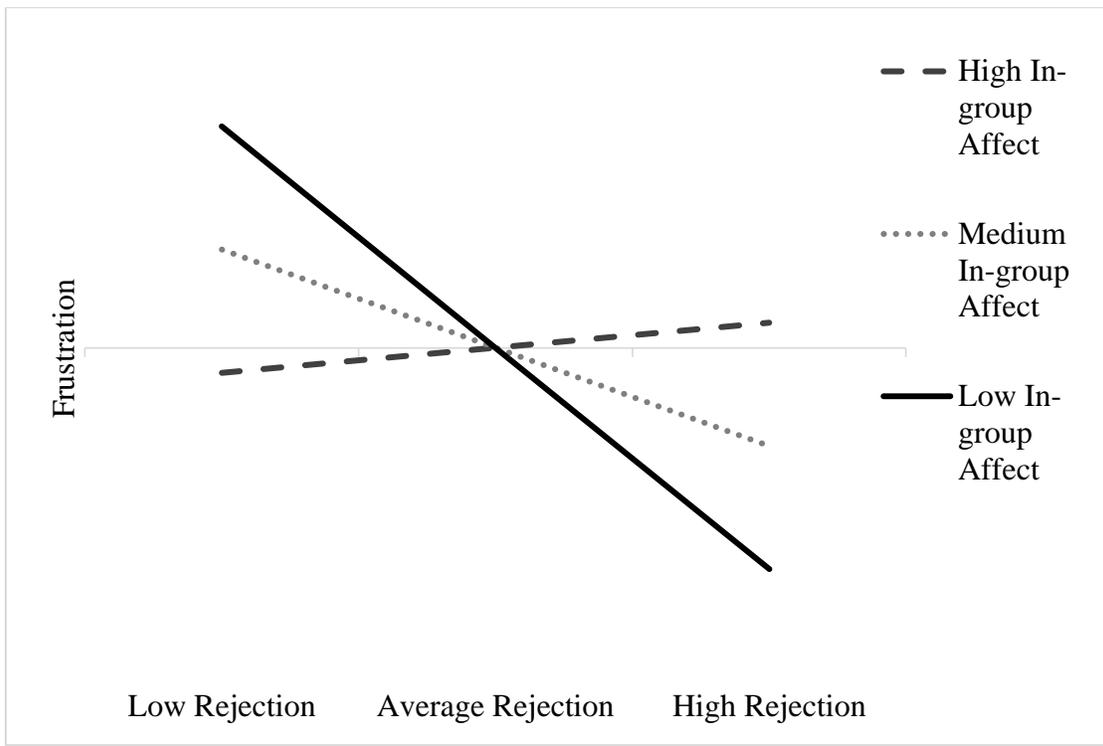
Supplementary Analysis. I also repeated the post-hoc analysis as in the cross-sectional results and tested the moderating role of each sub-dimensions of leader identity as moderators. In-group ties ($\beta = .425$, 95% [CI] = $-.424, 1.428$, $p = .451$) and centrality of leadership role ($\beta = .221$, 95% [CI] = $-.710, 1.168$, $p = .699$) did not moderate the relationship between rejection and frustration, but in-group affect ($\beta = 1.349$, 95% [CI] = $.663, 1.937$, $p < .001$) did. The relationship between rejection and frustration was significant and negative at low ($\beta = -1.377$, 95% [CI] = $-2.096, -.590$, $p = .002$) and medium levels ($\beta = -.611$, 95% [CI] = $-.961, -.226$, $p = .006$) of in-group affect respectively; however, the same relationship was significant and positive at high levels of in-group affect ($\beta = .156$, 95% [CI] = $.080, .246$, $p = .002$)¹⁵. Figure 6 shows the interactions.

Lastly, in-group ties ($\beta = -.302$, 95% [CI] = $-1.015, .424$, $p = .493$), in-group affect ($\beta = -.437$, 95% [CI] = $-1.431, .454$, $p = .407$), and centrality of leadership role ($\beta = .165$, 95% [CI] = $-.646, 1.011$, $p = .744$) did not moderate the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision.

¹⁵ All results are reported as standardized values except the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision at different values of in-group affect.

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Figure 6. The relationship between rejection and frustration at different levels of in-group affect



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Discussion

Study 1 was a longitudinal study attended by full-time supervisors and it used a three-wave repeated measures design. Controlling for age, gender, empathetic concern, and sensitivity to rejection, first, I tested the hypotheses using the structural equation modeling with a time-lagged model. The results showed support for the direct relationship between rejection and abusive supervision as well as the direct relationship between rejection and frustration. However, the indirect relationships between rejection and abusive supervision over frustration and the moderated mediation hypothesis in which identification with leadership was the moderator were not supported.

Mediation Model

One reason for not finding support for the mediation hypothesis from a longitudinal perspective might be the short life duration of an affect such as frustration. In this study, frustration was operationalized as a state affect instead of trait affect. However, time-lagged analyses examined the relationship between rejection and frustration that were measured one month apart from each other. Similarly, there was a month-long time lag between frustration and abusive supervision. Because like many emotions, frustration experienced as a reaction to a specific situation is unlikely to be carried for a long period of time (Tamir, 2016). Moreover, even if individuals still feel frustrated from an earlier event, the magnitude of their emotions are unlikely to be big enough for them to act on their anger (Tamir, 2016).

In relation to the previous point, it is also worth noting the distinction between abusive supervision behaviours and abusive supervision style. Tepper (2000) defines abusive supervision as sustained behaviours perpetrated by subordinates. This definition refers to an abusive style.

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Momentary behaviours enacted as a result of frustration might be different from abusive supervision as theorized by Tepper (2000).

Based on this logic about the tranquilizing effects of time, I also tested the hypotheses cross-sectionally as a post-hoc analysis. Using this approach, I found support for the mediation hypothesis. I explain the difference in the results of this hypothesis between longitudinal and cross-sectional perspectives by information processing and sense-making arguments (Zabrodska et al., 2016). Previously, Olson-Buchanan and Boswell (2008) proposed that victims of mistreatment, supervisors who were rejected by their subordinates in this example, ruminate about the initial incident before making sense of the situation. Therefore, from a longitudinal perspective, supervisors might have time to think about why they were rejected. Time and sense making might attenuate their frustration. As a result, they might have chosen a more constructive approach to fix the source of rejection instead of enacting abusive supervision. On the other hand, in the cross-sectional perspective, the same supervisors would not have enough time to think about why they were rejected and they might have reacted with frustration and abusive supervision as immediate responses. Thus, from a conceptual perspective, the results from both designs could be answering different questions.

Another possible explanation as to why I found support for the mediation model with cross-sectional data but not with the longitudinal data might be the spurious correlations among rejection, frustration, and abusive supervision that potentially inflated the size of indirect relationship. Many researchers (e.g., Taris et al., 2021; Spector, 2019) highlight the superiority of multi-wave repeated measures design or experimental design over cross-sectional design. Thus,

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from a methodological perspective, the results from the time-lagged analysis can be more reliable than the results from the cross-sectional analysis.

The Moderating Effect of Identification with Leadership

The results of both the time-lagged and cross-sectional analyses did not support the exacerbating role of identification with leadership in the relationship between rejection and frustration as well as the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision. However, while the findings from the cross-sectional analysis rejected a possible moderating effect, results from the time-lagged analyses found support for an attenuating effect of identification with leadership.

The difference in the results between different analyses can be explained by the role of time. The cross-sectional analysis is concerned with the relationship between rejection and immediate abusive supervision reactions that take place during the same point in time. It is possible that supervisors might be cognitively busy with processing rejection and their identification with leadership may not be salient for them. Because supervisors' leadership identity is potentially unnoticeable, it might not have played a role in their abusive supervision reactions. In contrast, from a longitudinal perspective, supervisors' might have more time to process the incidents of rejection and what they mean for their identities as leaders. With time, supervisors might also have more opportunities to plan and control their future behaviours such as abusive supervision. Accepting the superiority of longitudinal findings, I also would like to draw attention to the direction of the moderating effect of identification with leadership in the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision. I expected that rejection would trigger abusive supervision behaviours more when supervisors identified with their roles as leaders. However, the results showed that identification with leadership served as a buffer in this

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relationship. Previous research on identification with a role provides consistent claims with this result. For example, Stryker and Burke (2000) argue that individuals derive meaning and purpose through identifying with a (usually positive) role and this meaning and purpose regulate their actions, reactions, and interactions with others (Dumas & Stanko, 2017). To put differently, identification with a social role can offer guidance and psychological resources to individuals in different situations (Miscenko & Day, 2016). In this case, supervisors who had high levels of identification with leadership role might have perceived abusive supervision as an inappropriate response a leader would give when faced with rejection.

Limitations of Study 1

Study 1 had two main limitations. First, rejection by subordinates had a low base rate, which limited the inferences I could make. Second, despite the time order, due to high external validity and low internal validity of the design in Study 1 (Mitchell, 2012), I needed a more robust test to claim causality between rejection and abusive supervision. To address these shortcomings, I conducted Study 2.

Conclusion of Study 1

To sum up, in this study, I collected data from full-time supervisors on their levels of identification with leadership role, perceptions of rejection by their subordinates, frustration levels, and abusive supervision behaviours at three time points with a month time lag between each measurement. Using the data, I tested the hypotheses using two different analyses (i.e., time-lagged and cross-sectional). The findings regarding the moderating role of identification with leadership role was mixed. However, I found support for the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision overall.

Chapter 4: Study 2

To solve the conflict caused by the results of the different analyses in Study 1, I tested the same set of hypotheses using a different sample. In addition, in this study, I used an experimental approach to balance the external validity of Study 1 with internal validity. I manipulated the rejection by subordinates through e-mails and observed the affective and behavioural reactions (i.e., frustration and abusive supervision) of a sample of full-time employees to the content of these e-mails.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

For the experimental study, I recruited 297 full-time employees using Amazon's Mechanical Turk platform (Paolacci et al., 2010). The mean age was 37.08 (SD=10 years) and 61.3% of the sample were male. All of the participants were either from the United States or Canada and they were able to read and write in English. They were also from a diverse occupational background ranging from restaurant chefs to software developers.

I created an experiment on Qualtrics (Barnhoorn et al., 2015). Mechanical Turk users who met the eligibility criteria (i.e., over 18 years old, working full-time, able to read and write

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in English) were able access the Qualtrics survey link. Besides the consent form, the survey was comprised of four parts. The first part asked demographical questions such as age, sex, and work experience. It also included a measure of leader identity. The second part contained the experimental manipulation. The survey randomly assigned participants to one of the three conditions (i.e. rejection, acceptance, and neutral). In all conditions, participants were given the role of a supervisor (for details please see the appendices). Depending on the condition they were assigned to, participants read e-mails in which someone from their team spoke on behalf of the entire team and openly rejected (vs. accepted or stayed neutral to) them as the leader of their team. Participants in the neutral condition received neither a positive nor negative manipulation. The third section asked subjects to report their anxiety and frustration levels after reading the e-mails. Finally, the last section included a measure of abusive supervision in which participants reported their intentions to enact abusive supervision. Following the survey, participants were compensated for their time in accordance with the university's Research Ethics Board policy. The study received clearance from Saint Mary's University's Research Ethics Board (REB#19-123). Please see the appendices for the ethics certificate.

Measures

All measures (e.g., leader identity, frustration, abusive supervision, age, gender, empathy, and rejection sensitivity) were the same as in Study 1. To measure whether the manipulation worked or not, I used a single question (i.e. To what extent does your team accept you as a leader?). I presented the question in Likert format. Response options ranged between 1 (not at all) and 7 (very much).

Analytical Approach

Because the measures I used had good reliability scores (i.e., Cronbach's alpha > .8; Field, 2019), I decided to work with observed variables. I analyzed the data using PROCESS macro version 3.4 (Hayes, 2020), which is based on linear regression (Hayes, 2018). There were three conditions in this experiment: (1) rejection, (2) neutral, and (3) acceptance conditions. PROCESS converted the experimental conditions into two dummy variables, keeping the third condition as the reference category. The rest of the variables (i.e., continuous variables) were constructed by taking their means. All predictors were centralized during the analysis.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Zero Order Correlations

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics and inter-correlations of the study variables. Higher scores indicate higher values in each variable. Values in Table 1 are all based on observed scores.

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Table 6: Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations in Study 2

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Acceptance (manipulation check)	4.30	2.25	1							
2. Identification with leadership	4.20	1.13	.10	1						
3. Frustration	1.39	.65	-.47**	-.07	1					
4. Abusive supervision	1.36	.76	-.17**	-.07	.70**	1				
<i>Control variables</i>										
5. Empathy	3.12	.74	.04	-.32**	-.09	-.23**	1			
6. Sensitivity	2.60	1.26	-.06	-.20**	.29**	.31**	-.03	1		
7. Age	37.08	10.00	-.06	-.03	-.03	-.13*	.16**	-.20**	1	
8. Gender	-	-	-.01	-.07	-.07	-.11	.18**	.10	.17**	1

Notes. Means, standard deviations, and correlations are based on observed scores. $N= 297$ **
 $p<.01$, * $p<.05$

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Manipulation Check

The manipulation check question asked participants to indicate the extent to which they perceived to be accepted by their subordinates. Using their reports to this question, I compared the acceptance, rejection, and neutral conditions. The one-way ANOVA test results showed a significant difference in the answers across groups ($F(2,294) = 229.50, p < .001$). Post-hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test indicated that the average manipulation check score reported by the participants in the rejection condition ($M = 1.78, SD = 2.11$) was significantly lower than the average score reported in the acceptance condition ($M = 5.79, SD = .81$) and neutral condition ($M = 5.19, SD = 1.00$). Similarly, the average manipulation check score reported in the neutral condition ($M = 5.19, SD = 1.00$) was also significantly lower than the average score in the acceptance condition ($M = 5.79, SD = .81$). Therefore, I concluded that the manipulation was successful.

Preliminary Analysis

To test differences in outcomes (i.e., frustration and abusive supervision) across different experimental conditions, I conducted a series of one-way ANOVAs. The test results showed a significant difference in the frustration levels across groups ($F(2,294) = 37.19, p < .001$). Post-hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test indicated that the average frustration score reported by the participants in the rejection condition ($M = 1.81, SD = .70$) was significantly higher than the average score reported in the acceptance condition ($M = 1.15, SD = .46$) and neutral condition ($M = 1.23, SD = .57$). However, the average frustration score reported in the neutral condition ($M = 1.23, SD = .57$) was not significantly different from the average score in the acceptance condition ($M = 1.15, SD = .46$).

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The test results showed a significant difference in the abusive supervision levels across groups ($F(2,294) = 3.32, p = .037$). Post-hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test indicated that the average abusive supervision score reported by the participants in the rejection condition ($M = 1.53, SD = .81$) was significantly higher than the average score reported in the acceptance condition ($M = 1.27, SD = .70$), but not significantly different from the neutral condition ($M = 1.31, SD = .77$). Similarly, the average abusive supervision score reported in the neutral condition ($M = 1.31, SD = .77$) was not significantly different from the average score in the acceptance condition ($M = 1.27, SD = .70$).

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1 predicted that rejection by subordinates and abusive supervision would be positively related. Moreover, Hypothesis 2 predicted that frustration would mediate the link between rejection and abusive supervision. To test Hypotheses 1 and 2, I ran Model 4 with PROCESS (Hayes, 2018) by entering experimental conditions as categorical independent variables and selecting the bootstrapping ($m=10,000$) option. PROCESS turned the experimental conditions into two dummy variables (i.e., rejection vs others and acceptance vs others) and treated the neutral condition as the reference point.

The results showed that, when controlling for age, sex, empathy, and rejection sensitivity, the direct relationship between rejection (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision was negative and significant ($\beta = -.318, 95\% [CI] = -.475, -.161, p < .001$); however, the direct relationship between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision was not significant ($\beta = -.003, 95\% [CI] = -.139, .146, p = .963$). The path from rejection (vs. neutral) condition to frustration ($\beta = .573, 95\% [CI] = .415, .730, p < .001$) was significant; however, the

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path from acceptance (vs. neutral) condition to frustration ($\beta = -.060$, 95% [CI] = $-.214, .095$, $p = .450$) was not significant. The path from frustration to abusive supervision was also significant ($\beta = .879$, 95% [CI] = $.773, .986$, $p < .001$). These results indicated that the indirect relationship between rejection (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision via frustration ($\beta = .503$, 95% [CI] = $.336, .693$) was also significant, but the indirect relationship between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision via frustration ($\beta = -.052$, 95% [CI] = $-.173, .066$) was not significant. Based on the findings of Study 2 H1 and H2 were supported. Table 7 displays the results of the mediation model.

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Table 7: Results for the Mediation Model in Study 2

	β	SE	95% CI		p
			LLCI	ULCI	
Dependent variable: Frustration					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	.003	.003	-.004	-.004	.414
Gender	-.104	.066	-.233	-.233	.114
Empathy	-.050	.045	-.138	-.138	.269
Sensitivity	.152	.026	.100	.100	.000
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Rejection Condition (vs. neutral)	.573	.080	.000	.415	.730
Acceptance condition (vs. neutral)	-.060	.079	.450	-.214	.095
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.005	.003	.145	-.011	.002
Gender	-.049	.061	.421	-.168	.070
Empathy	-.157	.041	.000	-.238	.076
Sensitivity	.053	.026	.039	.003	.104
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Frustration	.879	.054	.773	.986	.000
Rejection condition (vs. neutral)	-.318	.080	-.475	-.161	.000
Acceptance condition (vs. neutral)	.003	.725	-.139	.146	.963

Note. $N = 297$

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Hypotheses 3a and 3b predicted that leader identity would moderate the link between frustration and abusive supervision respectively. To test these hypotheses, I ran Model 8 with PROCESS (Hayes, 2018) controlling for age, sex, empathy, and rejection sensitivity. The results showed that leader identity did not moderate the relationship between rejection (vs. neutral) condition and frustration ($\beta = -.07$, 95% [CI] = $-.070, .203$, $p = .340$) and well as the relationship between rejection (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision ($\beta = -.040$, 95% [CI] = $-.166, .086$, $p = .530$). Similarly, leader identity did not moderate the relationship between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and frustration ($\beta = .030$, 95% [CI] = $-.113, .174$, $p = .676$) and well as the relationship between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision ($\beta = -.022$, 95% [CI] = $-.110, .154$, $p = .740$). Therefore, the findings of Study 2 H3a and H3b were not supported. Table 8 displays the results of the moderated mediation model.

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Table 8: Results for the Moderated Mediation Model in Study 2

	β	SE	95% CI		p
			LLCI	ULCI	
Dependent variable: Frustration					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	.003	.003	-.004	.010	.374
Gender	-.093	.066	-.224	.037	.160
Empathy	.064	.048	-.159	.031	.186
Sensitivity	.157	.027	.104	.211	.000
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Identity	-.006	.051	-.107	.107	.094
Rejection	.578	.081	.419	.737	.000
Condition					
Acceptance	-.062	.079	-.218	.094	.433
Condition					
Rejection * Identity	.066	.069	-.070	.203	.340
Acceptance * Identity	.030	.073	-.113	.174	.676
Dependent variable: Abusive Supervision					
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	-.004	.003	-.010	.002	.189
Gender	-.045	.061	-.165	.076	.464
Empathy	-.172	.045	-.260	-.085	.000
Sensitivity	.057	.026	.005	.109	.032
<i>Independent variable</i>					
Frustration	.879	.054	.773	.986	.000
Identity	.029	.047	-.064	.122	.537
Rejection	-.319	.081	-.477	-.160	.000
Condition					
Acceptance	.005	.073	-.139	.149	.945
Condition					
Rejection * Identity	-.040	.064	-.166	.086	.530
Acceptance * Identity	.022	.067	-.110	.154	.740

Note. N = 297

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Supplementary Analysis with Sub-Facets of Leader Identity

Although the hypotheses did not make specific predictions regarding the moderating role of different leader identity sub-facets, I still explored whether in-group ties (with other leaders in the organization), in-group affect (felt towards other leaders in the organization), and centrality (of the leadership role) behaved in the same way as overall leader identity. Results of the post-hoc analysis showed that in-group ties did not moderate the link between rejection (vs. neutral) condition and frustration ($\beta = .08$, 95% [CI] = $-.042, .201$, $p = .200$), and the link between rejection (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision ($\beta = -.05$, 95% [CI] = $-.160, .065$, $p = .409$). Similarly, in-group ties did not moderate the link between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and frustration ($\beta = .05$, 95% [CI] = $-.071, .170$, $p = .416$), and the link between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision ($\beta = .01$, 95% [CI] = $-.097, .125$, $p = .809$).

Like in-group ties affect, in-group affect did not moderate the link between rejection (vs. neutral) and frustration ($\beta = .10$, 95% [CI] = $-.029, .231$, $p = .127$), as well as the link between rejection (vs. neutral) and abusive supervision ($\beta = -.02$, 95% [CI] = $-.143, .098$, $p = .719$). Similarly, in-group affect did not moderate the link between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and frustration ($\beta = .02$, 95% [CI] = $-.107, .155$, $p = .716$), and the link between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision ($\beta = .01$, 95% [CI] = $-.115, .126$, $p = .927$).

Lastly, centrality did not moderate the link between rejection (vs. neutral) and frustration ($\beta = .00$, 95% [CI] = $-.113, .104$, $p = .939$), as well as the link between rejection (vs. neutral) and abusive supervision ($\beta = -.02$, 95% [CI] = $-.123, .076$, $p = .640$). Similarly, centrality did not moderate the link between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and frustration ($\beta = -.01$, 95% [CI]

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= -.118, .104, $p = .903$), and the link between acceptance (vs. neutral) condition and abusive supervision ($\beta = .02$, 95% [CI] = -.086, .117, $p = .768$).

Discussion

Study 2 was an online experiment in which rejection by subordinates was manipulated. I tested the same hypotheses in Study 1 using data from participants who were full-time workers. While I found support for the first and second hypotheses, the data did not support the third hypothesis. These findings were overall consistent with the results of Study 1.

One difference between the results of the time-lagged analysis and the results of Study 2 pertains to the moderation hypothesis. While the time-lagged analysis showed that identification with leadership was a significant moderator in the association between rejection and abusive supervision, the experimental results differ from those findings. I attribute the lack of support for the moderating effect of leader identity on the direct and indirect relationship between rejection and abusive supervision to the participants' leadership experience. Because leader identity is not a variable that could be experimentally manipulated, I measured existing identity levels of participants. However, the sample consisted of full-time employees regardless of whether they held a supervisory role or not. I did not specify holding a leadership role as a criteria for participation; thus, leadership identity questions might not be relevant for participants, the majority of whom I assume to be non-leaders.

Limitations of Study 2

Although experimental approach is appropriate to make causal inferences, in the context of abusive supervision, it also had limitations. First of all, the manipulation involved a priori written e-mails. Participants did not see or interact with the writer of the e-mails during the

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experiment. Therefore, instead of showing an actual behaviour of abuse towards a target coworker, participants could only report their intentions of abuse after reading the e-mails. As previous research as shown, intentions do not always translate into behaviours (Ajzen, 1991). Unfortunately, the gap between actual behaviours of abuse and intentions to abuse limits the conclusions of the study.

Similarly, participants reported how frustrated they felt reading the e-mails. I must note that the participants learned about rejection through written forms of communication. They also knew that the e-mails were written by hypothetical characters. These two factors might have alleviated the affective reactions they had given to the manipulation. I expect that frustration felt by supervisors would be much higher if rejection came verbally from someone they worked with. Although I acknowledge the limitations of using vignettes in experimental studies, I still pursued this design. As Aguinis and Bradley (2014) also discussed, experimental vignette design can still be an effective form of manipulation in behavioural studies and previous research on the antecedents on abusive supervision also used this approach (e.g., Camps et al., 2020).

Conclusion of Study 2

To sum up, in Study 2, I tested the hypotheses using an experiment with full-time employees. The findings were consistent with the results of Study 1. I could not find a support for the moderating role of identification with leadership in the relationship between rejection by subordinates and abusive supervision. However, I found support for the prediction that rejection by subordinates leads to abusive supervision.

Chapter 5: General Discussion

Drawing on the abusive supervision literature, contextual theories of leadership, and social identity theory, I examined the role of rejection by subordinates as a possible predictor of abusive supervision behaviour. The first and second hypotheses predicted that rejection would make supervisors feel frustrated and that supervisors would enact abusive supervision as a result of this frustration. Moreover, the third hypothesis predicted that the association between rejection, frustration, and abusive supervision would be stronger when supervisors have higher levels of leader identity because at higher levels of leader identity, they could perceive rejection by subordinates as a bigger threat.

The results of two different analyses (i.e., time-lagged and cross-sectional) from field data and results from an experimental study showed support for (1) the direct relationship between rejection by subordinates and abusive supervision as well as (2) the indirect relationship between rejection and abusive supervision via increased levels of supervisor frustration. In contrast, I could not find any support for the exacerbating effect of identification with leadership in the link between rejection and abusive supervision. Table 9 summarizes results of the hypothesis testing across both studies.

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Table 9: Summary of the results across studies

Hypothesis	Prediction	Study 1		Study 2
		Time-lagged	Cross-sectional	Experimental
H1	Rejection → Abusive Supervision	Supported	Supported	Supported
H2	Rejection → Frustration → Abusive Supervision	Not supported	Supported	Supported
H3a	Rejection*Identity → Frustration	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported
H3b	Rejection*Identity → Abusive Supervision	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported

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The finding regarding the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision was consistent with other research on workplace mistreatment. For example, previously, Klaussner (2014) had found that abusive supervision could be a response to negative supervisor and subordinate interactions stemming from subordinates' perceptions of injustice. Supporting this finding from an opposite perspective, Smallfield et al. (2020) showed that victims' reconciliation efforts can stop abusive supervision. Overall, these findings highlight the role of social context in general and interactions with subordinates in particular when predicting abusive supervision behaviour (Hershcovis et al., 2020).

I controlled for age, gender, trait empathy, and sensitivity to interpersonal rejection across both studies and all analysis. Although empathy did not have a significant relationship with frustration and abusive supervision in the majority of the analyses, sensitivity to interpersonal rejection did. This observation is not surprising given that both frustration and abusive supervision were reactions to rejection by subordinates. Previous research found that individuals who are sensitive to interpersonal rejection could be more sensitive to negative interpersonal experiences (Bunk & Magley, 2011). As a result, they may react more negatively when they face with rejection in social relationships. Additionally, because the rejection by subordinates was rated by supervisors, supervisors with higher levels of social rejection sensitivity might have reported higher levels of rejection by subordinates.

Theoretical Implications

This study drew from and contributed to the abusive supervision, contextual leadership, and social identity literatures. The social identity perspective is commonly discussed in abusive supervision research (Tepper et al., 2017). With this dissertation, I extended the social identity

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perspective of abusive supervision by introducing identity threat as a predictor of abusive supervision. To date, most of the discussions on the role of social identity in abusive supervision were theoretical. I also contributed to the discussion by testing identity threat as a possible trigger of abusive supervision and finding empirical support for it.

Another contribution of this study is to the abusive supervision literature from a contextual leadership perspective. In my detailed literature review, I could only identify two studies that tested contextual antecedents of abusive supervision. This was a surprising realization as many scholars agree that leadership is a socially constructed phenomena (Johns, 2006; Oc, 2018), and therefore should be examined in relation to the context. By introducing rejection by subordinates as a social contextual antecedent, this dissertation extended our knowledge on the contextual factors in a negative form of leadership, namely abusive supervision.

Lastly, this study extends the research on abusive supervision by providing insights from the perspective of supervisors. Historically, the majority of the findings on the causes and consequences of abusive supervision come from victim reports (Farh & Chen, 2014). More recently, researchers have turned their attention to understand the role of observers in this process (e.g., Reich & Hershcovis, 2015). However, studies that examine the problem from the perpetrators' perspective are very limited with a few exceptions (e.g., Liao et al., 2018). Ironically, understanding this perspective is critical when attempting to understand and prevent abusive supervision. By asking supervisors if they perpetrate abusive supervision and why, this dissertation offers insight into the perspective of supervisors and makes a valuable contribution to abusive supervision research.

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Practical Implications

This dissertation also offers practical implications. First, the findings indicate a reciprocal relationship of mistreatment between subordinates and supervisors. This suggests that neither supervisors nor subordinates might be solely responsible for negative acts in the workplace. Moreover, this recursive relationship might signal a bigger problem such as a toxic workplace culture or ineffective policies and regulations. Organizational leaders and policymakers should consider the role of context and the involvement of multiple parties investigating abusive supervision complaints in organizations.

Second, the findings show that acting on frustration can lead to dangerous outcomes for individuals and organizations. Senior managers and other third party mediators should acknowledge the mediating role of frustration in the dynamic relationship between rejection by subordinates and abuse by supervisors. They should consider strategies to extinguish the anger to prevent abusive supervision. As findings from the longitudinal analysis of this dissertation shows, giving time to supervisors following an incident of rejection can be helpful achieving this goal.

Not only the mediating parties, but also supervisors should acknowledge the importance of time to regulate their behaviours. As the results across the two studies showed, giving a time lag before showing reactions to rejection could allow supervisors to think about the causes of rejection and make sense of subordinates' behaviours. This way, supervisors can regulate their frustration and gain more control over their behaviours as leaders.

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Lastly, although the results regarding the role of identification with leadership is mixed, the results of Study 1 might suggest an attenuating effect of identification with leadership in supervisors' reactions to rejection. Despite the limited support for the evidence, organizations may consider methods to increase identification of their supervisors with leadership in various ways. Reminding supervisors about their influence on their subordinates, introducing supervisors as leaders during intra-organizational communications, or rewarding positive leadership of supervisors could be some examples to efforts to promote identification with leadership.

Limitations and Future Research

Although this dissertation had a number of strengths, it also had shortcomings. First of all, in this study, supervisors reported their own abusive behaviour. Even from victims' perspective, abusive supervision has been a low-base phenomenon. Using supervisors' self-reported behaviours, abusive supervision ratings might be lower than their actual occurrence in this dissertation. Supervisors might have either intentionally or unintentionally underreported their negative behaviours.

I would like to note that the identity measure used in these studies only captures the in-group ties, in-group affect, and centrality aspects of leader identity. Other aspects that are not covered in this measure such security in the leadership role or leadership self-efficacy might be more relevant. In the relationships among rejection, frustration, and abusive supervision. Future studies can use alternative measures of identity in these relationships.

Another limitation is using a single data source to test the hypothesis. Although I was particularly interested in the supervisors' perspective and some variables such as identity and

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frustration could only be reported by supervisors, common method bias (Conway & Lance, 2010) was a shortcoming. Obtaining data from both sources (i.e., subordinates and supervisors) could increase my confidence in the results.

The choice of time-lags between measurement points has been an important question in all longitudinal studies (Ford et al., 2014). Unfortunately, there is not yet a theory to guide the choice of intervals in order to answer my research question in this study. My decision on a one-month-interval was based on previous studies that asked similar questions (e.g. Wang et al., 2015) as well as practical constraints. Considering the findings from the time-lagged analysis, I reflect that one-month might not be the ideal duration. I recommend that future studies should try a shorter period of time such as a day or a week to test the same or similar relationships.

Lastly, in the experimental study, I asked participants about their imagined behaviours instead of actual behaviours. I was limited by the design in that decision; however, measuring actual abusive supervision behaviours in response to rejection by subordinates would be ideal.

To overcome these limitations and expand the theory, future studies could use other research methods such as critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954) to examine the relationship between rejection, affect, and abusive supervision. Additionally, future research could incorporate organizational factors to understand this relationship and move the discussions further. Last but not least, future studies could measure the perceived identity threat to provide more nuance to the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision.

Conclusion

This dissertation investigated the role of a type of identity threat (i.e., rejection by subordinates) in the development of abusive supervision behaviour. It suggested an emotional mechanism (i.e., supervisors' frustration) and a boundary condition (i.e., leader identity) in the relationship between rejection and abusive supervision. While the frustration served as a significant mediator between rejection and abusive supervision, leader identity did not find support as a moderator in general. These findings make a contribution to the abusive supervision, contextual leadership, and social identity literatures by providing insights from the perpetrators' perspective, examining the role of identity threat in the development of abusive supervision, and testing a social contextual predictor.

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Appendices

STUDY 1

CONSENT FORM

Workplace Interactions Study

REB File #20-077

Saint Mary's University

Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Duygu Biricik Gulseren

email: duygu.gulseren@ucalgary.ca; phone 403.220.8364

Department of Psychology, Saint Mary's University

& Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary

Please read this letter. If you agree to participate in this study, please click the “Agree” button at the bottom of this page to provide your consent.

INTRODUCTION

We are inviting you to participate in a research project to examine the relationship between subordinates' rejection of their supervisors and supervisors' responses at work. This project is being conducted by Duygu Biricik Gulseren, under the supervision of Dr. Kevin Kelloway of Saint Mary's University and Dr. Nicholas Turner of the University of Calgary.

PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

The goal of this study is to understand the relationship between subordinates' rejection of their supervisors and supervisors' responses. We will be examining behaviours and emotions at work. We will ask questions about your supervisors' negative behaviours such as refusing to follow your instructions, your negative emotions such as stress and strain, or your behavioural responses to your subordinates such as giving them a silent treatment.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO TAKE PART?

Participants aged 18 and over, who are fluent in English, who supervise at least one employee, and have access to a computer or other device with internet capabilities are eligible to participate.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This project includes 3 repeated online surveys.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

1st survey:

The first survey is expected to take approximately 10 minutes. The first survey involves completing a brief survey of your demographics, attitudes, behaviours and emotions.

2nd & 3rd surveys:

The second and third surveys will take about 5 minutes each. They will only include brief measures of your attitudes, behaviours, and emotions. There will be one month between each survey.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING

There are no direct benefits to participating in this study. However, you may find participation in this study valuable to gain better insight about yourself and your leadership by answering the survey questions. Through your participation, you will make a contribution to Industrial/Organizational psychology research.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATING

There are minimal risks in participating in this research. We are aware that adverse work experiences can be stressful. Although the information you will be providing us through this study is very important, if at any point in completing this survey causes your stress or anxiety levels to increase, we encourage you to stop filling out the survey. Should you wish to talk to someone about similar incidents you have witnessed, please contact your local distress centre helpline.

WHAT TYPE OF COMPENSATION IS AVAILABLE FOR PARTICIPATION?

Completing this survey will allow you to receive £1 for the first survey. You will also receive £.75 for every additional follow up survey you participate. Payments will be handled through Prolific.

Please note that there will be limits on your compensation (for example, should you speed through the survey, not meet eligibility requirements). Please also note that we have built attention checks into the survey to ensure that participants are carefully responding to the items; if you fail an attention check, you will be terminated (i.e. removed) from the study, and this will impact your compensation.

PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to stop participating before a survey session is completed, this can be done by closing down your browser. Please note, however, that the Qualtrics program saves partial data, which may still be used by the researchers. If you would like to withdraw your data from the study, prior to closing your browser, please click to a page where a text box appears and write in the box that you would like your data withdrawn, and then click “next”. In this case, we will remove your data and not include it in the study results. You may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. Please also note that, except for a few forced questions, you may choose to not answer any questions you do not feel comfortable

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

answering. If you would like your data to be withdrawn from the study after the completion of the survey, you can do so within the 10 days of completion. Please indicate your request to the researchers along with your Prolific ID using Prolific's anonymous messaging option. Researchers will find the data associated with your Prolific ID and delete them from the dataset.

WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH MY INFORMATION/WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO IT?

The survey provider for the research is Qualtrics (for more information, see qualtrics.com). Data, for Saint Mary's University, are stored on servers in Canada. Access to the complete survey data will be limited to the researchers involved in the study and any research assistants hired for the study. To ensure that your responses are anonymous (i.e., where we cannot tell who you are) to the researchers and to Qualtrics, please only provide your Prolific ID throughout the survey. Researchers will not be able to identify you through your Prolific ID. Once downloaded by the researchers, all data from this study will be stored on password-protected computers and will be presented as a group in any publication of this work and no individual participants will be identified. Please note that unless you identify yourself, your survey responses are anonymous to the researchers and to Qualtrics. Upon completion of the study, the researcher will email a summary of the overall results to participants if requested (please see contact information below). Please note that data from this study may also be shared with other researchers, however, any personally identifiable information would be removed from the data file prior to sharing.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION OR FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS STUDY?

If you have any questions, please contact Duygu Biricik Gulseren at Duygu.Gulseren@ucalgary.ca.

CERTIFICATION

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions or concerns about ethical matters, you may contact the Chair of the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board at ethics@smu.ca or 902 420-5728.

Please click "agree" if you agree to participate. Otherwise, please click "disagree". By agreeing to participate, you understand what this study is about, appreciate the risks and benefits and you do not waive any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm. You acknowledge that you have had adequate time to think about this and have had the opportunity to ask questions. You understand that your participation is voluntary and that you can end your participation at any time.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Please keep one copy of this form for your own records.

- Agree (I consent to participate in this study)
- Disagree (I do not consent to participate in this study)

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

SURVEY

Workplace Interactions Study
REB File # #20-077
Saint Mary's University
Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Age:

Gender:

Male

Female

Other _____

Prefer not to say

Have you worked in a job before?

Yes

No

What was your most recent job?

Are you still working in this job?

Yes

No

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Please indicate how much each of the following statements describes you.

1 (Does not describe me well)	2	3	4 (Describes me very well)
-------------------------------	---	---	----------------------------

When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them.

When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.

I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.

I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.

Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.

Often people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.

I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.

In your daily life, do you feel particularly sensitive to another person's judgment and criticism, with the recurrent fear of being rejected [this resulting, for instance, in stormy relationships, inability to sustain long-term relationships, problems at work, difficulties initiating contacts, pervasive fear of embarrassment]?

1 Not at all	2	3 Moderately	4	5 Very much
-----------------	---	-----------------	---	----------------

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
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I have a lot in common with other leaders.

I feel strong ties to other leaders.

I find it difficult to form a bond with other leaders.

I don't feel a sense of being "connected" with other leaders.

I often think about the fact that I am a leader.

Overall, being a leader has very little to do with how I feel about myself.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

In general, being a leader is an important part of my self-image.

The fact that I am a leader rarely enters my mind.

In general, I'm glad to be a leader.

I often regret that I am a leader.

I don't feel good about being a leader.

Generally, I feel good when I think about myself as a leader.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements

1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
------------	-------------	----------------	------------	-------------

How often did your subordinates...

... refuse to follow your instructions in the last month?

... defy your authority in the last month?

... willfully violate your expectations in the last month?

... go out of their way to resist your instructions in the last month?

... neglect your instructions, even when they knew there would be consequences in the last month?

A number of statements which people have used to describe themselves at work are given below. Read each statement and then select the option that indicates how you felt reading the e-mails. There is no right or wrong answers.

Do not spend too much time on any one statement but give the answer which seems to describe your feelings best.

1 Not at all	2 Somewhat	3 Moderately so	4 Very much so
-----------------	---------------	--------------------	-------------------

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

I was generally feeling...

Angry in the last month.

Furious in the last month.

Mad in the last month.

Burned up in the last month.

Irritated in the last month.

I generally ...

... felt like breaking in the last month.

... felt like banging in the last month.

... felt like swearing in the last month.

... felt like yelling in the last month.

... felt like hitting in the last month.

Please read the following statements and indicate the option that describes you the best.

1 (Not at all)	2	3	4	5 (Very much so)
----------------	---	---	---	------------------

In the last month, I ...

Ridiculed my employees.

Told my employees their thoughts or feelings were stupid.

Gave my employees the silent treatment.

Put my employees down in front of others.

Invade my employees' privacy.

Reminded my employees of their past mistakes and failures.

Didn't give my employees credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort.

Please select three.

Blamed my employees to save myself embarrassment.

Broke promises I made.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Expressed anger at my employees when I was mad for another reason.

Made negative comments about my employees to others.

Was rude to my employees.

Did not allow my employees to interact with their coworkers.

Told my employees they were incompetent.

Lied to my employees.

APPENDIX D

FEEDBACK FORM
WORKPLACE INTERACTIONS STUDY

REB File #20-077

Saint Mary's University

Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

duygu.Gulseren@ucalgary.ca

Thank you for your participation in this study.

The goal of this study is to understand the employee – supervisor interactions at work. We will examine how rejection by subordinates affects supervisors' emotions and leadership behaviours at work.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant will be kept confidential by the researchers (i.e., we will not share your responses with those outside of this research group). Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, we will share our research findings with relevant academic and industry outlets through presentations and publications.

If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Duygu Gulseren at Duygu.Gulseren@ucalgary.ca. The study is expected to be completed by October 1, 2021.

In the event of any adverse experience resulting from participating in the present research, please contact Duygu Gulseren. You may also want to look at the following online resources to deal with uncomfortable emotions:

- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/women-s-mental-health-matters/201509/7-ways-deal-negative-thoughts>
- <https://www.wikihow.com/Deal-With-Negative-Thoughts>
- <https://psychcentral.com/blog/how-to-sit-with-painful-emotions/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/critical-feeling/201608/5-ways-deal-feelings-you-d-rather-not-feel>

As with all Saint Mary's University projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. Should you have any comments or concerns about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board, at 902-420-5728 or ethics@smu.ca.

Thank you again for your time!

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Researchers:

Duygu Biricik Gulseren, PhD Candidate, duygu.Gulseren@ucalgary.ca

Supervisors:

Dr. E. Kevin Kelloway, email: Kevin.Kelloway@smu.ca

Department of Psychology, Saint Mary's University

Dr. Nick Turner, e-mail: Nicholas.turner@ucalgary.ca

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary

STUDY 2

RECRUITMENT MESSAGE

Workplace Interactions Study
REB File #19-123

Saint Mary's University
Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Title: Workplace Interactions Study

Description: Participate in a short survey about social interactions at work and share your experiences with us

Keywords: workplace, social interactions, role play

Reward response: CA\$3

Approximate completion time: 15 minutes

Instructions:

We are conducting an online academic study to understand social interactions at work and looking for full-time employees who can read and write in English. The study takes about 15-20 minutes and participants will have chance to receive up to \$2.15 for their participation

Make sure to leave this window open as you complete the survey. When you are finished, you will return to this page to paste the code into the box.

CONSENT FORM

Workplace Interactions Study

REB File #19-123

Saint Mary's University

Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Duygu Biricik Gulseren, email: Duygu.Gulseren@smu.ca; phone (902) 491-8616

Department of Psychology, Saint Mary's University

Please read this letter. If you agree to participate in this study, please click the “Agree” button at the bottom of this page to provide your consent.

INTRODUCTION

We are inviting you to participate in a research project to examine the social interactions at work. This project is being conducted by Duygu Biricik Gulseren, under the supervision of Dr. Kevin Kelloway of Saint Mary's University as a part of her thesis.

PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

The goal of this study is to understand the employee – supervisor interactions at work. We will be examining behaviours and emotions at work.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO TAKE PART

Full-time employees aged 18 and over, who are fluent in English, and have access to a computer or other device with internet capabilities are eligible to participate.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This project includes a brief online session, expected to take approximately 10 minutes. The session involves completing a brief survey of your demographics, attitudes, and emotions. We will also ask you to reply to two e-mails.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING

There are no direct benefits to participating in this study. However, you may find participation in this study valuable to gain better insight about yourself by answering the survey questions. Through your participation you will make a contribution to Industrial/Organizational psychology research.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATING

There are minimal risks in participating in this research. We are aware that adverse work experiences can be stressful. Although the information you will be providing us through this study is very important, if at any point in completing this survey causes your stress or anxiety levels to increase, we encourage you to stop filling out the survey. You may also want to look at the following online resources to deal with uncomfortable emotions:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/women-s-mental-health-matters/201509/7-ways-deal-negative-thoughts>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Deal-With-Negative-Thoughts>

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

<https://psychcentral.com/blog/how-to-sit-with-painful-emotions/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/critical-feeling/201608/5-ways-deal-feelings-youd-rather-not-feel>

WHAT TYPE OF COMPENSATION IS AVAILABLE FOR PARTICIPATION?

If you are registered on Amazon Mechanical Turk's system, you can receive monetary compensation for your participation. Completing this survey will allow you to receive CA\$2. If you wish to withdraw from the study at any time, you will automatically be compensated CA\$1 for your time. Throughout the survey, we added attention checks to identify participants who put a good faith effort. Participants who fail at least one of the attention checks will not receive any monetary compensation.

Researchers will not collect personally identifiable data from participants for compensation purposes. Payment will be handled by Mechanical Turk.

PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to stop participating before a survey session is completed, this can be done by closing down your browser. Please note, however, that the Qualtrics program saves partial data, which may still be used by the researchers. If you would like to withdraw your data from the study, prior to closing your browser, please click to a page where a text box appears and write in the box that you would like your data withdrawn, and then click “next”. In this case, we will remove your data and not include it in the study results. You may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. Please also note that, you may choose to not answer any questions you do not feel comfortable answering.

WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH MY INFORMATION/WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO IT?

The survey provider for the research is Qualtrics (for more information, see qualtrics.com). Data, for Saint Mary's University, are stored on servers in Canada. Access to the complete survey data will be limited to the researchers involved in the study and any research assistants hired for the study. To ensure that your responses are anonymous (i.e., where we cannot tell who you are) to the researchers and to Qualtrics, please do not provide any identifying information (e.g., do not include your name). Once downloaded by the researchers, all data from this study will be stored on password protected computers and will be presented as a group in any publication of this work and no individual participants will be identified. Please note that unless you identify yourself, your survey responses are anonymous to the researchers and to Qualtrics. Upon completion of the study, the researcher will email a summary of the overall results to participants if requested (please see contact information below). Please note that data from this study may also be shared with other researchers, however, any personally identifiable information would be removed from the data file prior to sharing. The findings of this study will be shared in the scientific outlets and the results will not be used for commercial purposes.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION OR FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS STUDY?

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

If you have any questions, please contact Duygu Biricik Gulseren at Duygu.Gulseren@smu.ca.

CERTIFICATION

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions or concerns about ethical matters, you may contact the Chair of the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board at ethics@smu.ca or 902 420-5728.

Please click “agree” if you agree to participate. Otherwise, please click “disagree”. By agreeing to participate, you understand what this study is about, appreciate the risks and benefits and you do not waive any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm. You acknowledge that you have had adequate time to think about this and have had the opportunity to ask questions. You understand that your participation is voluntary and that you can end your participation at any time.

Please keep one copy of this form for your own records.

Agree (I consent to participate in this study)

Disagree (I don't consent to participate in this study)

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

SURVEY

Workplace Interactions Study
REB File #19-123
Saint Mary's University
Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Age:

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other _____
- Prefer not to say

Have you worked in a job before?

- Yes
- No

What was your most recent job?

Are you still working in this job?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate how much each of the following statements describes you.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

1 (Does not describe me well)	2	3	4 (Describes me very well)
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When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them.

When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.

I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.

I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.

Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.

Often people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.

I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
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I have a lot in common with other leaders.

I feel strong ties to other leaders.

I find it difficult to form a bond with other leaders.

I don't feel a sense of being "connected" with other leaders.

I often think about the fact that I am a leader.

Overall, being a leader has very little to do with how I feel about myself.

In general, being a leader is an important part of my self-image.

The fact that I am a leader rarely enters my mind.

In general, I'm glad to be a leader.

I often regret that I am a leader.

I don't feel good about being a leader.

Generally, I feel good when I think about myself as a leader.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

In your daily life, do you feel particularly sensitive to another person's judgment and criticism, with the recurrent fear of being rejected [this resulting, for instance, in stormy relationships, inability to sustain long-term relationships, problems at work, difficulties initiating contacts, pervasive fear of embarrassment]?

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all Moderately Very much

Which of the following objects or statements do you have a positive or negative feeling towards?

1 (very negative) 2 3 4 5 6 7 (very positive)

Some groups of people are simply not the equals of others.

Some people are just more worthy than others.

This country would be better off if we cared less about how equal all people were.

Some people are just more deserving than others.

It is not a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others.

Some people are just inferior to others.

To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on others.

Increased economic equality.

Increased social equality.

Equality.

If people were treated more equally we would have fewer problems in this country.

In an ideal world, all nations would be equal.

We should try to treat one another as equals as much as possible. (All humans should be treated equally.)

It is important that we treat other countries as equals.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

You are the supervisor of a team of 5 software developers in a mid-sized tech company. You were on a vacation last week and you put the most senior developer in your team in charge of supervising others while you were away.

When you checked your e-mails on Monday morning, you found the following e-mails in your mailbox.

Please click next to read the e-mails.

Hello,

I am trying to book a meeting with the client organization. You previously suggested to meet on Friday. Is this still a good time for you? Do you want me to go ahead and schedule the meeting?

Please reply to this e-mail below.

Hello,

I sent the project to the client directly and cc'd you.

While you were away, we all noticed that as the software development team, we have been having issues ever since you became the manager of this department. We all like you as a person but we don't like you as our manager. We don't recognize you as the leader of this team. Everything was much better when you were away.

Yesterday, Randy told me that he contacted to the upper management and asked for a manager change. If they don't replace the manager, he will ask for his retirement.

Dylan has also started looking for jobs somewhere else just because of you. I thought you needed to know this. The team doesn't accept you as a leader.

Please reply to this e-mail below.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Hello,

I sent the project to the client directly and cc'd you.

While you were away we noticed that, as the software development team, we have been very productive ever since you became the manager of this department. We all like you as a person and we appreciate you being our manager. We recognize you as the leader of this team. We all missed you when you were away.

Yesterday, Randy told me that he contacted to the upper management and deferred his retirement because he would like to work with you for a few more years.

Dylan has also declined a new job offer just because of you.

I thought you needed to know this. We are happy to have you as our leader.

Please reply to this e-mail below.

Hello,

I sent the project to the client directly and cc'd you.

Yesterday, Randy told me that he contacted to the upper management and scheduled a meeting to present the recent version of the project.

Dylan will do the presentation with him.

I thought you needed to know this. Everything runs as normal.

Please reply to this e-mail below.

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Based on the last e-mail you read, to what extent do you think your team accepts you as their leader?

1 (Not at all) 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very much)

A number of statements which people have used to describe themselves at work are given below. Read each statement and then select the option that indicates how you felt reading the e-mails. There is no right or wrong answers.

Do not spend too much time on any one statement but give the answer which seems to describe your feelings best.

Reading the e-mail, I felt ...

1 Not at all	2 Somewhat	3 Moderately so	4 Very much so
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Angry

Furious

Mad

Burned up

Irritated

like breaking

like banging

like swearing

like yelling

like hitting

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Please read the following statements and indicate the extent to which you would give the following reactions to your employees.

After reading this e-mail, I would...

1 (Not at all)	2	3	4	5 (Very much so)
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Ridicule them

Tell them their thoughts or feelings are stupid

Give them the silent treatment

Put them down in front of others

Invade their privacy

Remind them of their past mistakes and failures

Don't give them credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort

Please select three

Blame them to save myself embarrassment

Break promises I make

Express anger at them when I am mad for another reason

Make negative comments about them to others

Be rude to them

Do not allow them to interact with their coworkers

Tell them they are incompetent

Lie to them

ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

FEEDBACK FORM WORKPLACE INTERACTIONS STUDY

REB File #19-123

Saint Mary's University

Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Duygu.Gulseren@smu.ca

Thank you for your participation in this study.

The goal of this study is to understand the employee – supervisor interactions at work. We will be examining behaviours and emotions at work.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant will be kept confidential by the researchers (i.e., we will not share your responses with those outside of this research group). Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, we will share our research findings with relevant academic and industry outlets through presentations and publications.

If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Duygu Gulseren at Duygu.Gulseren@smu.ca. The study is expected to be completed by March 1, 2020.

In the event of any adverse experience resulting from participating in the present research, please contact Duygu Gulseren. You may also want to look at the following online resources to deal with uncomfortable emotions:

- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/women-s-mental-health-matters/201509/7-ways-deal-negative-thoughts>
- <https://www.wikihow.com/Deal-With-Negative-Thoughts>
- <https://psychcentral.com/blog/how-to-sit-with-painful-emotions/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/critical-feeling/201608/5-ways-deal-feelings-you-d-rather-not-feel>

As with all Saint Mary's University projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. Should you have any comments or concerns about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board, at 902-420-5728 or ethics@smu.ca.

Thank you again for your time!

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ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

Supervisor:

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