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Disentangling the Effects of Abusive Supervision on Employee Creativity: The Role of Affect, Mindfulness, and Team Conflict

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DISENTANGLING THE EFFECTS OF ABUSIVE SUPERVISION ON EMPLOYEE
CREATIVITY: THE ROLE OF AFFECT, MINDFULNESS, AND TEAM CONFLICT

By

Yuanmei (Elly) Qu

A DISSERTATION

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SUPERVISION ON EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY: THE ROLE
OF AFFECT, MINDFULNESS, AND TEAM CONFLICT

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<u>Disentangling the Effects of Abusive Supervision</u>   (August 2017)
<u>on Employee Creativity: The Role of Affect,</u>
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This dissertation explores how to attenuate the negative influence of team abusive supervision on followers' creativity. First, it is not feasible to interfere with these negative impacts without the knowledge of the underlying processes. Essay 1 unravels how team abusive supervision gradually leads to followers' creativity from a team process perspective by identifying team state mindfulness, team state negative affect, team task conflict, and team relationship conflict as critical mechanisms. Using a time-lagged multi-level field study of 92 teams, I found that abusive supervision aggravated relationship conflict via diminishing mindfulness levels in employees, and that abusive supervision exacerbated task conflict through elevating negative affect and decreasing team mindfulness levels. The augmented levels of relationship conflict in turn harmed individual creativity. However, followers' creativity is not only influenced by team processes, but by leaders' and followers' individual differences as well. As such, essay 2 introduces leaders' and followers' individual differences (i.e., state positive affect) and examines how the state positive affect of both leaders and followers alters followers' interpretations of leader mistreatment. Analyses of multilevel, multisource, and multiphase data show that leaders' and followers' state positive affect interactively determine the extent to which followers attribute abusive behaviors to their leaders' performance promotion motives. Such

attributions in turn benefit followers' creativity. Implications and future directions are discussed.

To God

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

MOTIVATION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Abusive supervision, which is defined by Tepper (2000) as followers'
perceptions of their leaders' sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal
behaviors, has aroused great attention among scholars. More specifically,
numerous undesirable effects have been discovered for this style of leadership. For
example, scholars have found that abusive supervision might interfere with
followers' performance (Peng, Schaubroeck, & Li, 2014), creativity (Lee, Yun, &
Srivastava, 2013; Liu, Liao, & Loi, 2012), and organizational citizenship behavior
(Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002), and that it results in employees' deviance
behavior (Lian, Ferris, & Brown, 2012), supervisor-directed aggression (Lian,
Brown, Ferris, Liang, Keeping, & Morrison, 2014), and work-family conflicts
(Tepper, 2000). Hence, an important question is how to attenuate the negative
effects of abusive supervision on followers' behaviors.

Creativity is one kind of follower behavior that demonstrates increasing value
for organizations. For instance, companies such as Apple, Tesla, and Google have
aimed at bringing creative services or products to dynamic markets to compete for
competitive advantages. However, in the meantime, many employees have been
reported to struggle with abusive supervision while striving to seek novel ideas in
the workplace (Kantor & Streitfeld, 2015). Scholars including Liu, Liao, and Loi
(2012), Lee, Yun, and Srivastava (2013), and Zhang, Kwan, Zhang, and Wu
(2014) have endeavored to probe the influence of abusive supervision on
followers' creativity, in the aim of relieving the suffering of followers and

increasing their creativity. Nevertheless, studies that investigate the link between abusive supervision and followers' creativity are still limited in that even the most recent meta-analysis (i.e., Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2015) did not mention creativity as an outcome of abusive supervision. This lack of attention is unfortunate both practically and theoretically.

Practically, employees generally pay more attention to negative incidents than positive ones (Dasborough, 2006). For instance, they tend to remember negative events more intensely and with more detail. As such, negative styles of leadership, compared with positive styles (e.g., transformational leadership), exert an even stronger influence on followers' behaviors (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). It is therefore imperative to unravel how much destruction to creativity might result from abusive leaders. Theoretically, it is not possible to interfere with the impacts of abusive supervision on individual creativity unless the road that causes abusive supervision to individual creativity is identified and blocked. Moreover, the detection of the underlying pathways also paves the road for finding effective contingencies to lessen the potential hurt from abusive supervision on followers' creativity.

Thereby, in this dissertation, I seek to enrich this line of research by revealing the processes regarding how team abusive supervision influences followers' creativity. This dissertation in a two-essay format centers on two core themes: (1) exploring the mechanisms underlying the relationship between abusive supervision and followers' creativity, and (2) detecting moderators that may constrain the negative influences of abusive leaders on followers' creativity.

Specially, essay 1 focuses on state negative affect (state NA) as a reflection of emotional resource availability; the higher the state NA, the fewer the emotional resource that is available to followers. On the contrary, essay 2 emphasizes state positive affect (state PA) as a favorable resource that builds up followers' positive interpretations of their leaders' behaviors and enhances followers' creativity.

OVERVIEW AND ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation consists of two related essays. Table 1 presents the specific research focus of each essay, main theoretical foundations, and specific methods (key constructs, samples, and analyses). Both essays involve the same phenomenon (abusive supervision), research setting (organizational contexts), and level of analyses of independent variables (team level) and dependent variable (individual level). However, they differ in terms of research focuses, with essay 1 highlighting followers' state NA and essay 2 giving an emphasis to leaders' and followers' state PA. These two essays also draw from different theories and contribute to the abusive supervision literature from different perspectives.

Table 1. Overview of the Two Essays

	Essay One	Essay Two
Overall research question	How does abusive supervision influence individual follower's creativity?	
Specific research focus	The mechanisms underlying the relationship between team abusive supervision and individual creativity	The moderators and the mechanism for the relationship between team abusive supervision and individual creativity
Main theoretical foundations	Conservation of resources theory	Attribution theory and leader-member affect synchrony theory

Key constructs	Abusive supervision, state negative affect, state mindfulness, relationship conflict, team conflict, and creativity	Abusive supervision, state positive affect, performance promotion motives, and creativity
Samples	522 employees from 92 teams in six organizations in China	616 employees from 61 teams in one organization in China
Analyses/ Level	Hierarchical linear modeling/ multilevel model (team level and individual level)	Hierarchical linear modeling/ multilevel model (team level and individual level)

Figure 1 illustrates how the two essays contribute to the current literature on abusive supervision, affect, attribution, mindfulness, and creativity. There are two main foci to this contribution— unravelling team conflict, state negative affect (state NA), and state mindfulness as the underlying processes influencing how abusive supervision affects individual creativity, and detecting leaders' and followers' state positive affect (state PA) as a contingency that shifts followers' attributions of abusive supervision, which in turn benefits followers' creativity.

To clarify, essay 1 explores how team abusive supervision gradually impacts followers' creativity. I incorporate team conflict as the main mechanism and introduce team state negative affect and state mindfulness as reflection of how many emotional and attentional resources are consumed prior to the arise of team conflict. Essay 2 describes the effect of abusive supervision, leaders' state PA, and followers' state PA on followers' creativity. Drawing on attribution theory (Heider, 1958; Martinko, Harvey, & Douglas, 2007) and leader-member affect synchrony (LMAS) theory (Cropanzano, Dasborough, and Weiss, 2017), I also propose performance promotion motives as a mediator for this effect.

Figure 1. Theoretical Structure of the Two Essays

	Essay 1	Essay 2

Leadership

Negative Style:
Team Abusive
Supervision

Leader, Follower, and
Team Characteristics

- Team State Negative Affect
- Team Mindfulness

State Positive Affect of
both the Team Leader
and Individual Followers

Mediators

Team Conflict
- Relationship Conflict
- Task Conflict

Individual Follower-
Attributed Performance
Promotion Motives

Follower
Outcomes

Individual Follower
Creativity

More specifically, in essay 1, I looked into the underlying processes that link abusive supervision with employees' creativity. Examining the damaging influence of abusive supervision in workplaces, scholars have delved into opening the black box of how abusive supervision functions. I argue that one important yet neglected mechanism of the relationship between abusive supervision and creativity is team conflict. I thereby introduce relationship conflict and task conflict as two potential mechanisms to unravel the negative effect of abusive supervision on individual creativity. I then explore these mechanisms further by proposing negative affect and mindfulness as two important underlying processes that help explain the emergence of conflict in teams with abusive supervision. In a time-lagged multi-

level field study of 92 teams, I found that abusive supervision aggravated relationship conflict via diminishing mindfulness levels in employees, and that abusive supervision exacerbated task conflict through elevating negative affect and decreasing team mindfulness levels. The increased levels of relationship conflict in turn harmed individual creativity. My findings thereby advance our understanding of the mechanisms of abusive supervision and the emergence of team conflict.

However, essay 1 highlights abusive supervision as a kind of workplace stress that results in followers' emotional resource loss, as manifested in incremental levels of state NA. Nevertheless, state affect includes both state NA and state PA. Thus, essay 2 takes a novel view by investigating how state PA plays a role in the abusive supervision-individual creativity link.

Furthermore, essay 1 only looks into this abusive supervision and individual creativity issue from a team process perspective. Other than team processes, followers' creativity might be altered by their individual differences, their leaders' individual differences, and their individual attributional processes as well. As such, to broaden and deepen our understanding regarding abusive supervision, I conduct essay 2 to focus on leaders' and followers' individual differences, in this case, state positive affect, and incorporate individual follower's attributional process, that is, follower-attributed performance promotion motives (PPM) to tap into the issue of abusive supervision and individual creativity.

More specifically, essay 2 sheds light on abusive supervision and employee creativity by investigating when and how team abusive supervision has an effect on individual creativity. Analyses of multiphase, multisource, and multilevel data

show that leaders' and followers' state positive affect interactively determine the extent to which team abusive supervision interferes with followers' creativity. Followers' attributions of performance promotion motives to abusive supervisors — abusive leaders' intent of using mistreatment to improve followers' performance (Liu et al., 2012), mediate the combined effect of team abusive supervision, leaders' and followers' state positive affect on followers' creativity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To examine the theoretical models of essay 1 and essay 2, I collected data from China and used a variety of data sources and research methods to examine the research questions posed in each essay. As shown in Table 1, Essay 1 utilized survey data of 522 employees from 92 teams in six organizations in China. Essay 2 made use of survey data on 616 employees from 61 teams in one company in China. All data were collected in two waves to enhance my examination of the causal relationships in the models.

Methodologically, I employed hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to test all hypotheses. I entered abusive supervision and team processes including state affect, state mindfulness, and team conflict (i.e., relationship conflict and task conflict) at the team level and explored how these team processes impacted team abusive supervision's influence on individual creativity. Essay 2 adopted a multilevel three-way interaction moderated mediation model; abusive supervision and leaders' state PA were theorized as team-level constructs that interact with individual follower's state PA to alter individual attributions of the underlying motives of leaders' mistreatment, namely, performance promotion motives (PPM).

Individual attribution of PPM thus enhances individual follower's creativity. Simple slope tests and slope difference tests were also provided to clarify the results.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Essay 1 builds upon conservation of resource (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) (Hobfoll, 1989), applies heuristic information processing (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken & Trope, 1999), and extends the team conflict literature. COR theory holds that abusive supervision is a stress that causes severe resource loss in followers. In particular, I distinguish between and highlight the importance of emotional resources (i.e., state NA) and attentional resources (i.e., state mindfulness). Followers are more likely to experience relationship conflict and team conflict when they are suffering from significant resource loss. I argue that rising levels of team conflict can distract followers from fully focusing on developing creative ideas.

In essay 2, I illustrate that the negative impact from abusive supervision on employees' creativity is mediated by attributions. Established studies (e.g., Liu et al., 2012) have found performance promotion motives (PPM) to be effective in influencing followers to interpret abusive behaviors in a positive manner. However, according to attribution theory (Heider, 1958), I argue that PPM is more of an outcome of attributional processes than an existing contingency that moderates the relationship between abusive supervision and individual creativity. As such, I propose PPM as a mechanism that connects abusive supervision with employees' creativity.

Leader-member affect synchrony (LMAS) theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017) holds that shared state PA of leaders and followers helps to build high quality interpersonal relationships. Building on this theory, I further argue that this synchrony also clouds followers to see abusive mistreatment as driven by positive intentions of their leaders (i.e., PPM). As such, I apply and advance the LMAS theory to the abusive supervision context.

Specially, I propose state PA as an important contingency for the previously described effect to occur. Changing other types of individual differences such as personality and values is relatively difficult due to their relative entrenchment in individual personal history (Parks & Guay, 2009). On the contrary, state PA is relatively unstable and trainable. Although previous scholars (e.g., Tepper, Duffy, Henle, & Lambert, 2006) have called for conducting more state affect research in the field of abusive supervision, numerous scholars including Simon, Hurst, Kelley, and Judge (2015) and Oh and Farh (2017) have looked into state NA; related empirical studies on state PA are still inadequate. This paper thus responds to this call by utilizing state PA as an effective coping method in helping followers to realize their creativity potential despite damage caused by abusive supervision.

OVERALL CONTRIBUTIONS

Together, both essays provide one core contribution—to advance our understanding of the negative influences of abusive supervision on followers' creativity. I propose an overarching theoretical foundation and conduct related empirical testing to reveal processes and boundary conditions regarding how and when abusive supervision impacts individual creativity. I add new insights to the

relatively limited research on the underlying processes. Current studies on abusive supervision have provided rich findings on team conditions and individual emotions as bridges to connect abusive supervision with organizational outcomes (e.g., Priesemuth, Schminke, Ambrose, & Folger, 2014; Simon, Hurst, Kelley, & Judge, 2015), but have largely ignored team conflict and individual attributions of leaders' intentions as two potential mechanisms (with exceptions, see Farh & Chen, 2014). I argue that the negative impacts of abusive supervision on followers are mediated by team conflict and individual attributed PPM.

Creativity enhancement requires that followers have sufficient resources. As such, I highlight the extent of resource depletion experienced by employees when working in an abusive workplace and discuss how the depleted resources change team conflict and individual creativity. Moreover, even when faced with the same abusive supervision, different team members might form distinct attributions of such behaviors. It is individual attributions for these abusive behaviors that really matter in terms of how much effort they are going to put in developing novel ideas. As such, employing the state PA of both leaders and followers as moderators, I find that the combination of high state PA of both leaders and followers is the most favorable condition for followers' positive attributions of their leaders' mistreatment, which in turn bolsters their creativity.

My dissertation thereby contributes to the literature on abusive supervision and creativity from the perspectives of team processes, leaders' individual differences (i.e., state PA), and followers' individual differences (i.e., state PA). Building on this, I am able to provide novel insights to the abusive supervision and creativity

literatures. In addition, my findings also provide important and timely managerial implications for organizations that have abusive leaders, particularly those organizations that aim to develop high employee creativity.

In addition, the results help managers understand what influences abusive supervision has on employees' creativity and how abusive supervision triggers the occurrence of team conflict in the course of the leader's abuse. In addition, I also employ state NA and state mindfulness to reflect emotional and attentional resource availability in followers. My findings also emphasize the critical role that the state PA of both leaders and followers plays in uplifting followers' creativity in an abusive work setting.

Thus, to counteract the negative effects of abusive supervision, it is important for organizations to develop a pleasant work environment to help followers build up state PA rather than state NA. Also, to enhance followers' positive attributions of their leaders' abusive behaviors, leaders might express their PPM when delivering those behaviors. Furthermore, this dissertation reveals the depleting resource problems that followers face when having an abusive leader. Organizations should be aware of the destruction of creativity imposed by abusive supervision and proactively replenish followers with sufficient resources to cope with this adversity. For instance, scholars have recommended that organizations give followers mindfulness training to increase their attentional resource levels (for a review, see Good et al., 2016).

Overall, this dissertation carefully unravels how and when team abusive supervision impairs followers' creativity. By proposing pivotal underlying

processes such as team conflict and PPM, I shed light on how team abusive supervision affects individual creativity. Through introducing an important and trainable individual difference as a contingency—state PA of both followers and leaders, this dissertation suggests when abusive supervision might be interpreted in a positive manner. In this vein, this dissertation broadens and deepens the abusive supervision literature by considering factors involving leaders, followers, and team processes in diminishing abusive leaders' undesirable influences on followers' creativity.

CHAPTER 2: ESSAY 1 THE EFFECTS OF ABUSIVE SUPERVISION ON TEAM TASK CONFLICT AND RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

According to the U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey in 2014, 48% of employees have suffered from abusive conduct directly or indirectly, and given their higher status, supervisors tend to be the main bullies in the workplace (http://www.workplacebullying.org/2014-employer). Abusive supervision has been conceptualized as a leader's sustained hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact (Tepper, 2000). Abusive behaviors include taking credit for subordinates' achievements, and yelling at and ridiculing subordinates. Moreover, these behaviors could adversely impact crucial organizational outcomes, such as subordinate productivity (Nandkeolyar, Shaffer, Li, Ekkirala, & Bagger, 2014; Schaubroeck, Peng, & Hannah, 2016; Tepper, 2000, 2007), silence (Kiewitz, Restubog, Shoss, Garcia, & Tang, 2016; Xu, Loi, & Lam, 2015), and citizenship behaviors (Rafferty & Restubog, 2011; Simon et al., 2015).

The last decade has witnessed a burgeoning of research on figuring out ways to counteract the undesirable effects of abusive treatment (e.g., Liu, Liao, and Loi, 2012). However, solutions would not be to the point unless the underlying pathways through which abusive supervision obstructs favorable organizational outcomes are identified, interrupted, or even removed. As such, over the past decade, researchers have delved into probing the underlying individual level mechanisms regarding why and how abusive supervision causes negative consequences (e.g., Ferris, Yan, Lim, Chen, & Fatimah, 2016; Mackey, Frieder,

Brees, & Martinko, 2015; Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013; Schat, Frone, & Kelloway, 2006; Simon et al., 2015; Tepper, 2000, 2007). While these approaches enrich and advance our understanding of the functions of abusive supervision, they do not consider the nature of interdependence among members in team settings (Guzzo & Shea, 1992). However, modern organizations generally use teams as the basic work unit; facing abusive leaders, employees might form similar types of thinking and acting toward their leaders (Hackman, 1992). Thus it is important to explore how abusive supervision functions via team processes. Fortunately, more recently scholars such as Farh and Chen (2014), Mitchell, Vogel, and Folger (2014), Ogunfowora (2013), and Priesemuth et al. (2014) have applied team-related theories and explored team processes to examine team-relevant consequences of leaders' abuse. Building on this line of abusive supervision research, this essay delves into one pivotal but not widely studied team process, team conflict.

Team conflict is defined as "a process that begins when an individual or group perceives differences or opposition between itself and another individual or team about interests or resources, beliefs, values, or practices that matter to them" (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008, p.6). During team member interactions, employees might inevitably experience friction due to different opinions, preferences, or even interpersonal animosity. Farh and Chen (2014) first tapped into the relationship between team abusive supervision and one type of team conflict, relationship conflict, and empirically tested how team abusive supervision impairs individual voice, team-role performance, and turnover intentions via team relationship

conflict. Building on this research, I consider individual creativity as a consequence of abusive supervision and further explore how team conflict transmits the effects of team abusive supervision to employees.

I choose creativity as an outcome first because compared with other outcomes (such as performance and turnover intentions), research that sheds light on how abusive supervision affects employees' creativity is inadequate. For instance, even the most recent meta-analysis of Mackey et al., (2015) did not mention creativity as an outcome. Additionally, Liu, Liao, and Loi (2012) have called for more studies on creativity in abusive workplaces, mainly because (1) creativity is in great need for modern organizations as an increasing proportion of economic benefits come from employees' novel ideas and creative solutions; (2) compared to positive styles of leadership, such as transformational leadership, the influence of abusive supervision is stronger (Baumeister et al., 2001). Therefore, it is vital to clarify how and to what extent abusive supervision impedes each employee's creativity. Here I focus on the creativity of individual employees as a response to Farh and Chen (2014)'s and Tepper (2007)'s calls for more research to scrutinize individual members' reactions to the team and to advance our understanding of abusive supervision as a multilevel phenomenon. Also, given that employees reside in interdependent team contexts, my inquiry regarding team conflict as a vehicle to connect team abusive supervision with individual employee's creativity is both timely and important.

The goal of this paper is therefore to introduce team conflict as a pivotal mechanism to explain how abusive supervision affects individual team member

creativity. Specifically, I focus on relationship conflict (i.e., disputes among team members over interpersonal relationships) and task conflict (i.e., disputes over work-related assignments) as two types of team conflict which have been extensively studied in the conflict literature (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Integrating conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) with heuristic information processing (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken & Trope, 1999), I argue that abusive supervision drains necessary resources from employees and engenders team task conflict and relationship conflict, which in turn impair individual creativity.

To provide a more thorough explanation for the emergence of conflict in response to abusive supervision, I incorporate state negative affect (state NA) that is defined as unpleasant feelings, including both negative emotions and negative moods in general (Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), and state mindfulness that describes a mode in which people are aware of and accept their present-moment experiences (Bishop et al., 2004). I argue that abusive supervision in teams (1) triggers affective resource loss, which increases team members' state NA, and (2) depletes attentional resources, which reduces team members' mindfulness. In doing so, I introduce state NA and state mindfulness as means by which abusive supervision can arouse conflict between team members. To empirically examine the relationships between abusive supervision, state NA, mindfulness, and team conflict, I collected data from 522 employees working in 92 teams using a time-lagged, multilevel, multi-source study design.

More specifically, I do not examine trait NA and trait mindfulness because they are conceptualized as stable individual characteristics rather than short-term experiences (Blanke, Riediger, & Brose, 2017; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). To fit with COR theory, it is feasible to investigate individuals' momentary resource availability (i.e., emotional and attentional resources) in the course of dealing with abusive supervision. Trait NA and trait mindfulness, however, do not fulfill this purpose because they represent personal characteristics that are difficult to change.

Overall, my research makes several contributions to the abusive supervision and the team conflict literatures. First, extending a multilevel perspective on abusive supervision, I focus on team conflict as an important mechanism and demonstrate how abusive supervision might harm individual creativity through this pathway. Specially, I argue that abusive supervision might spark task conflict and relationship conflict in teams because of the attentional and affective resources that are drained from team members working under an abusive supervisor. Second, I am the first to examine the team level influence of abusive supervision on team conflict via state NA. While conflict research recognizes the important role of the relationship between conflict and affect (De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012; Todorova, Bear, & Weingart, 2014), scholars know little about hostile supervision, affect, and the emergence of team conflict. Third, this paper first introduces state mindfulness as a mediator between abusive supervision and team conflict. Although research on mindfulness has gained importance (Liang et al., 2016), the links between mindfulness and the emergence of team conflict remain largely unexplored.

Finally, I demonstrate the insights about abusive supervision and team conflict that can be obtained by integrating conservation of resources theory with heuristic information processing (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken & Trope, 1999). Overall, by integrating research on abusive supervision with state NA, mindfulness, and team conflict, I offer a more comprehensive understanding of how team abusive supervision produces its negative effects on team interactions, and ultimately on individual creativity.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

I draw on conservation of resources theory (COR) to develop my theoretical arguments about the effects of abusive supervision on team conflict. COR theory suggests that individuals possess a limited set of resources, such as time, attention, and energy (Hobfoll, 1989). Scholars have conceptualized abusive supervision as a workplace stressor that depletes employees' resources (e.g., Harris, Kacmar, & Zivnuska, 2007; Wu & Lee, 2016). More specifically, faced with abusive supervision, employees are likely to experience ongoing affective resource loss, as reflected by increasing levels of state NA and to suffer from attentional resource loss, as revealed in diminishing levels of mindfulness.

Studies have indicated that when resources (e.g. attentional and affective resources) are limited, individuals tend to use heuristics to protect their diminishing resource pools (Wiest, 1967). The heuristic processing approach (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken & Trope, 1999), in addition, describes a tendency for individuals to rely on established routines, habits, and accomplish work assignments through shortcuts (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken & Trope, 1999; Fennis & Janssen, 2010). Their

dependence on heuristics and established schemas (Bless, Clore, Schwarz, Golisano, Rabe, & Wolk, 1996; Langer, Blank, & Chanowitz, 1978) can in turn spark more team conflict, as reflected in increasing levels of task conflict and relationship conflict in particular.

Next, I outline each of the constructs in my model (abusive supervision, state NA, mindfulness, task conflict, relationship conflict, creativity) and the proposed relationships to be tested (see Figure 2.1). First, I develop theoretical arguments about the relationship between abusive supervision, team conflict, and individual creativity. Then I elaborate on the two team member states in my model, state NA and mindfulness, to explain the relationship between team abusive supervision and team conflict.

Relationship between Abusive Supervision and Individual Creativity: The Mediating Role of Team Relationship Conflict

Relationship conflict has been defined as undesirable interpersonal relationships among team members, such as interpersonal tensions, frictions, or personality clashes (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Simons & Peterson, 2000). Studies have widely indicated that relationship conflict impairs positive team interactions (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012) and desirable individual behaviors (Farh & Chen, 2014). For example, studies have reported low levels of interpersonal attraction and performance, less voice, more turnover intentions, and ineffective collaboration as relationship conflict increases (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Farh & Chen, 2014; Jehn, 1995; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999).

Figure 2.1. Theoretical Model
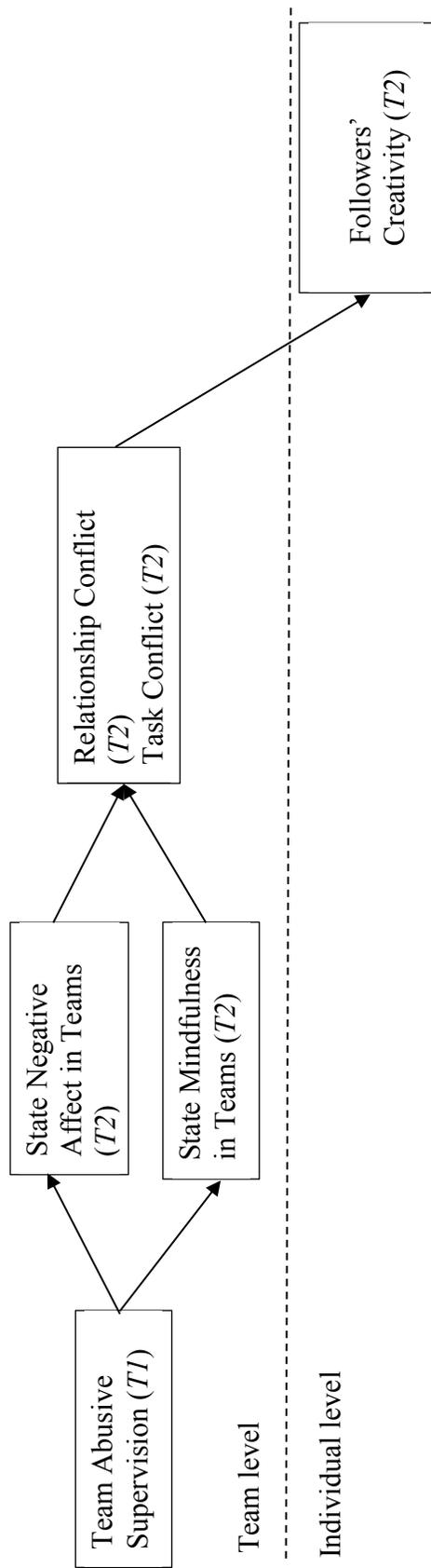
Note: *T1* = Time 1; *T2* = Time 2

Abusive supervision, as a workplace stressor, has been found to propel the advent of team relationship conflict (Farh & Chen, 2014). Dealing with an abusive supervisor is highly demanding, requiring employees to consume valuable resources. With limited resources left, employees are more likely to try and protect those resources by employing a heuristic approach (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken & Trope, 1999) to interpret related information (Wiest, 1967). In these scenarios, when relying on cognitive shortcuts, criticism and different viewpoints from coworkers are likely to be misinterpreted as personal attacks and competence challenges. When such misinterpretations arise, emotional friction might be induced (Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

Moreover, to prevent further resource loss, employees might rely on heuristics to react to adverse situations (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Helton & Warm, 2008). Thus when under high pressure, imprudent behaviors such as yelling at coworkers or criticizing them without thinking might occur. These behaviors can create a downward spiral for interpersonal relationships; these deeds might be interpreted as personal animosity, and coworkers in turn may retaliate with more hostility. As a consequence, interpersonal frictions rise up under conditions of stained personal resources.

Relationship conflict, as a result, interferes with individual task creativity. As predicted by COR theory, relationship conflict is a threatening stimulus that depletes individual energies and attentional resources. Nevertheless, high creativity requires ample resources. Therefore, creativity might decrease when an individual is distracted to deal with relationship conflict within their work team. To

summarize, I propose that abusive supervision breeds team relationship conflict, which in turn damages individual creativity through the resource depletion process.

Hypothesis 1: Team relationship conflict mediates the negative effect of team abusive supervision on individual creativity.

Relationship between Abusive Supervision and Individual Creativity: The Mediating Role of Team Task Conflict

Task conflict involves team members' having different opinions, goals, or perspectives about work tasks (De Wit et al., 2012; Jehn, 1995; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). It describes disagreements among members regarding resource distribution, work policies and procedures, and individual understanding and judgments of facts (De Dreu, 2006; Jehn, 1995, 1997). Studies have widely found undesirable effects of task conflict on team and individual outcomes, such as individual performance (e.g., De Dreu & Weingart, 2003).

Abusive leaders, who create a hostile work environment could instigate task conflict among the team members they are leading. With most of their attention directed towards coping with their abusive supervisor, team members have fewer emotional and attentional resources available to scrutinize the content, background information, and related conclusions regarding tasks at hand. With limited resources left, they are more likely to rely on heuristics or established schemas to interpret task-related information (Chaiken & Trope, 1999). As a consequence, different aspects of information picked up by individual team members could lead to various misunderstandings over work tasks; while having distinct focuses on task assignments, members might also form different views in respect of resource

distribution, work policies and procedures. In these circumstances, team task conflict is more likely to arise.

Further, as previously mentioned, research findings in respect to the consequences of task conflict on team and employee outcomes have been generally negative (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012). Task conflict has been associated with low levels of team creativity, team member satisfaction, and decision making quality (De Dreu, 2008; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). For instance, Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, and Jundt (2005) argued that rather than task conflict, effective teams require a cooperative environment in which individuals build harmonious relationships with each other. Similarly, Langfred (2007) detected that team task conflict negatively influenced team creativity. Clearly, it is difficult for each individual team member to achieve high creativity when the team is engaged in task conflict. To sum up, I propose:

Hypothesis 2: Team task conflict mediates the negative effect of team abusive supervision on individual creativity.

The Relationship between Abusive Supervision and Team Conflict: The Mediating Effect of State NA

Negative state affect describes unpleasant feelings, including both negative emotions and negative moods in general (Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). More specifically, state NA incorporates a variety of undesirable feelings, such as distress, guilt, shame, irritability, nervousness, anxiety, and fear (Watson et al., 1988). While Dasborough (2006) outlined leader behaviors that evoke negative feelings in employees, her study was not specifically about abusive

supervision. In the case of abusive supervisors, aroused state NA is likely to be particularly strong (Hoobler & Hu, 2013). For instance, there has been empirical evidence demonstrating the role of abusive supervision on exacerbating employees' psychological distress (e.g. Restubog, Scott, & Zagenczyk, 2011), work-related negative affect (Michel et al., 2016), and specific negative emotions such as fear (Kiewitz, Restubog, Shoss, Garcia, & Tang, 2016).

Particularly, in Tepper's (2007) review of the abusive supervision literature, he indicates that state NA is a proximal outcome of abusive supervision. Irritation and fear are likely to result from abusive supervision, and in his proposed model he includes employee anger as an outcome. More recently, Oh and Farh (2017) propose state NA, including anger, fear, and sadness as directed emotional responses to the mistreatment. More specifically, sadness would only be elicited after multiple episodes of abuse. While these studies have focused on probing individual state NA as a proximal outcome of abusive supervision, I further argue that individual state NA could accumulate to the team level, manifesting the availability of team affective resources. In other words, abusive supervision increases the levels of state NA at the team level.

As an immediate response to abusive supervision, state NA might promote undesirable judgments and behaviors. Empirical studies contend that state NA impairs interpersonal liking (Van Kleef, 2009), because individuals might vent anger and frustration by responding more harshly to different opinions in team meetings; they might also shout at or give stronger criticisms to those coworkers whom they dislike. Interpersonal frictions might as a result accumulate within the

team. Thus, abusive supervisors could engender relationship conflict via aggravating team state NA.

State NA might also over power rational and instrumental reasoning, resulting instead in an emphasis on heuristic cues (Brief & Weiss, 2002; Greer & Jehn, 2007; Thomas, 1992). For instance, Pillutla and Murnighan (1996) found that anger could propel negotiators to reject offers that were in their best interests as indicated by purely economic standards. Also, state NA might propel individuals to perceive more conflict since individuals with limited resources are likely to employ their negative feelings as heuristic cues and notice or recall thoughts with similar valence (Bower & Forgas, 2001; Dasborough, 2006). Following this line of logic, employees high on state NA (due to abusive supervision) are more likely to focus on negative information cues, leading to more relationship conflict and task conflict.

Likewise, state NA inhibits team constructive communication about disagreements (Allred, Mallozzi, Matsui, & Raia, 1997; Ayoko, Härtel, & Callan, 2002). Task conflict levels might as a result arise. In support of this, Aquino, Lewis, and Bradfield (1999) argued that state NA might produce more task conflict in teams due to the negative mindset associated with state NA. Jordan, Lawrence, and Troth (2006) also detected a deteriorating effect of state NA on team task conflict. Building on these research findings, I propose that high team member state NA sparks more task conflict in teams.

Hypothesis 3a: State NA mediates the positive effect of abusive supervision on relationship conflict.

Hypothesis 3b: State NA mediates the positive effect of abusive supervision on

task conflict.

The Relationship between Abusive Supervision and Team Conflict: The

Mediating Effect of State Mindfulness

Brown and Ryan (2003) define mindfulness as being open and receptive, having

awareness and attention for things happening in the present moment. There are two

components in mindfulness: moment-to-moment attention and acceptance (Bishop

et al., 2004; Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011). More specifically, high

awareness permits individuals to fully attend to their ongoing experiences (Brown,

Ryan, & Creswell, 2007). With high acceptance, mindful individuals are able to

simply accept this experience without necessarily acting on it, be it good or bad

(Glomb et al., 2011).

Mindfulness can be both a state and a trait, as it can be trained with meditative

exercises and it can also vary naturally from person to person (e.g. Brown & Ryan,

2003). Here, I am interested in the state mindfulness of team members. Individuals

in a mindful state are alert to internal and external stimuli in a nonjudgmental way,

and are more likely to attend to their internal feelings and thoughts, as well as to

the external team environment (Glomb et al., 2011).

Abusive supervision, as a workplace stressor, might consume lots of

psychological efforts and energies of employees (Tepper, 2007). For instance, it is

very easy for individuals to ruminate about negative events by probing the reasons,

occurrences, and consequences of these occasions (Chan & McAllister, 2014).

Also, it takes time and effort for individuals to accept that on-going abusive

treatment is happening to them (Perloff & Fetzer, 1986). Rather, counterfactual thoughts, such as comparing what actually happened to what might have been, is very likely to occur, as it is generally assumed that leaders should support, encourage, and prime positive affect in individuals rather than ridiculing, criticizing, and humiliating them (Yukl, 2013). All of these retrospective thinking and counterfactual thoughts manifest a low level of state mindfulness.

Low state mindfulness might trigger more team conflict. Low attention propels individuals to fall back on well learned associations (i.e., previous experiences), as suggested by the heuristic approach (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken & Trope, 1999). For instance, from past experience, an individual may learn that before interpersonal frictions appear, team members tend to debate with each other over different opinions (Chaiken, 1980). With this "disagreement implies interpersonal frictions" heuristic in hand, a situation that involves disagreements is more likely to be interpreted as threatening to individuals. A mocking joke in this case might be interpreted as contempt from coworkers. Such perceptions have been consistently linked to lower levels of relationship quality over time (Saavedra, Chapman, & Rogge, 2010).

The low availability of attentional resources due to abusive supervision also bolsters the ascent of task conflict. More specifically, employees who spend a lot of time ruminating about rude behaviors or silent treatment from their leaders are likely to exhibit low levels of attention to their current assignments. With that said, such attention lapses distract individuals from seeing, hearing, and feeling the whole, real, and detailed picture of their tasks (Brown & Ryan, 2003). As a result,

individuals might perceive different parts of reality, based on which they form different understandings about their tasks and set different goals. Moreover, inspired by distinct well-established schemas, team members might form premature judgments and hold different opinions for work-related objectives, leading to increased task conflict.

Furthermore, low acceptance is characterized by counterfactual thoughts and fulfillment with premature judgments, which depletes self-regulatory resources (Liang et al., 2016). It also constricts an individual's potential response repertoire (Borders, Earleywine, & Jajodia, 2010). For example, individuals might not have sufficient attentional resources to focus on long term benefits (e.g., maintaining harmonious relationships with coworkers), and instead focus only on short term relief (e.g., venting anger and frustration). They are more likely to choose effortless reactions, such as releasing negative feelings and exhibiting hostile attitudes toward others (Liang et al., 2016). Those impatient and even spiteful reactions have a high likelihood of triggering more relationship conflict in teams.

These low levels of acceptance to abusive treatment could also result in more task conflict. More specifically, to conserve their diminished resource pool due to abusive leaders, individuals are more inclined to attend to information that is consistent with their prior judgments. This might lead team members to become entrenched in their preselected standpoints, ignoring new possibilities for completing the task. Moreover, all the reality-escaping thoughts including ruminating about the past or worrying about the future could also distract employees from carefully scrutinizing the context, content, and other task-related

details. These distractions from the task further deprives employees of the opportunity to absorb new perspectives from others and reinforces their established viewpoints. Hence, task conflict is more likely to ensue.

Hypothesis 4a: Mindfulness mediates the positive effect of abusive supervision on team relationship conflict.

Hypothesis 4b: Mindfulness mediates the positive effect of abusive supervision on team task conflict.

RESEARCH METHOD

Samples

I collected data from full time employees and leaders from six organizations in China.[1] All these organizations employed team-based organizational structures. In each team, team members had close physical proximity and cooperated with each other, supervised by one formal leader. There were 2 to 22 members per team (average team size = 7). I sent out surveys to each employee and leader during their weekly meetings. I also instructed all team members and leaders to fill out surveys according to their real perceptions and to ensure confidentiality, I directed them to return completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes to me.

I collected my data at two points in time, with a time interval of two weeks in between. Because my concern was with state NA and state mindfulness as states (rather than as traits), which were formed during a short period of time (e.g., one or two weeks, Robinson & Clore, 2002), I chose two weeks as the time interval to allow the influence of the abusive behaviors to be reflected on followers' exhibited

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[1] This study is a part of a larger data collection designed and implemented together with Dr. Marie T. Dasborough and Dr. Gergana Todorova.

NA and mindfulness. Surveys were coded to allow matching of data collected from time 1 and time 2. At time 1, I sent out 588 questionnaires to all members of the 102 working teams. Participants were asked to answer questions with respect to their demographic characteristics, team size, and abusive supervision. Two weeks later, I asked team members to rate their mindfulness, state NA, and their perceptions of relationship conflict and task conflict in teams; I also requested all team leaders to assess their employees' creativity. At time 1, I received usable evaluations from 519 team members (response rate of 88.27%) in 97 teams; at time 2, I collected surveys from 538 team members (response rate of 91.50%) in 94 teams and creativity evaluations from 89 leaders (response rate of 87.25%). I then combined the surveys from time 1 and time 2 and removed invalid data. My final sample comprised of 522 employees (response rate of 88.78%) from 92 teams. The employees had an average age of 31.51 years (SD = 8.31) and average tenure of 6.95 years (SD = 8.00). 54% of the participants were women.

Measures

All items were measured using a 7-point Likert-type scale (e.g., 1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). I had all surveys written in Chinese. Following the advice of Brislin (1980), I asked two bilingual experts to translate all items from English into Chinese and then requested two other experts to independently translate those items back into English. I also made sure that no experts had previous knowledge with regard to my research questions. Finally, two bilingual management scholars discussed all discrepancies between the initial English items

and the back-translated English descriptions. The final questionnaires were not employed until all disagreements had been completely settled.

Abusive supervision. I used Tepper's (2000) 15-item scale to rate abusive supervision at time 1. All employees were asked to rate their leaders based on descriptions such as "My leader ridicules me", "My leader gives me the silent treatment", and "My leader puts me down in front of others". The alpha reliability of abusive supervision scale was 0.96. This measure has been widely adopted and examined by scholars such as Kiewitz et al. (2016) and Lian, Ferris, Morrison, and Brown (2014), and has exhibited high coefficient alpha internal consistency reliability and anticipated relationships in these studies.

Mindfulness (state). I measured the construct of mindfulness as a state by employing the MAAS scale developed by Brown and Ryan (2003) at time 2. This scale has demonstrated high reliability and significant relationships in previous organizational behavior research and is also recommended by Qu, Dasborough, and Todorova (2015). Employees were instructed to evaluate items such as "Over the past week, to what extent did you find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present." Due to the negative wording of the items, I reverse coded them so that higher scores indicate higher mindfulness. State mindfulness had an alpha reliability of 0.89.

Negative affect (state). I adopted the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) scale developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) to access state NA, mainly because this scale extensively demonstrated high reliability and validity in previous studies (e.g., Hoobler & Hu, 2013; Tepper, Duffy, Henle, &

Lambert, 2006). During the data collection, team members were instructed to evaluate their negative affect during the past two weeks at time 2. Similar to previous research that employed some of the ten items (e.g. Hoobler & Hu, 2013 used only four items), I selected seven items to represent state NA. These seven items were: distressed, guilty, ashamed, irritable, nervous, jittery, and afraid. Confirmatory factor analyses revealed that the factor loadings of the other three items ("upset", "hostile", and "scared") were smaller than .40; thus, I discarded them from further analyses (Kline, 2011). The alpha reliability of the state NA scale with the seven items was 0.80.

   Relationship conflict. Relationship conflict was measured using four items from Jehn (1995) at time 2. This measure has been widely supported by studies such as Simons and Peterson (2000) and Bono, Boles, Judge, and Lauver (2002) for its high reliability and validity. All team members were instructed to evaluate the relationship conflict within their own teams. An example item was: "To what degree personality conflicts are evident in my team". Please note, the only negatively worded item ("There is not much tension among members of my team") was deleted because it reduced the alpha reliability of the scale; the reliability with four items was .35, while the final alpha reliability with the three positively worded items was 0.84.

   Task conflict. I used the four items developed by Jehn (1995) to measure an employee's perception of task conflict at time 2. Similar to the measure of relationship conflict, this scale also exhibited high construct validity and reliability in previous studies (e.g., Bono, Boles, Judge, & Lauver, 2002; Simons & Peterson,

2000). Individuals were asked to evaluate the frequency of their team members' disputes over work related assignments. A sample item was: "How often do people in your team disagree about opinions regarding the work being done?". Task conflict demonstrated an alpha reliability of 0.83.

Creativity. I used the 13-item measure developed by Zhou and George (2001) at time 2. The reliability and construct validity of this measure were also widely tested and supported by previous creativity studies such as Liu et al. (2012) and Černe, Nerstad, Dysvik, and Škerlavaj (2014). All leaders were asked to evaluate their employees' creativity using items, such as "This employee suggests new ways to achieve goals or objectives" and "This employee often has new and innovative ideas". This construct held an alpha reliability of 0.89.

Control variables. Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 described cross-level effects of abusive supervision on individual creativity. As such, I controlled for employees' age, team size, and organizations to exclude potential impacts of personal and contextual characteristics on individual creativity. Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 were both with regard to team level effects. Thus, I only controlled for contextual characteristics including team size and organizations to exclude the influences of team level characteristics on team conflict. Moreover, affect literature (e.g., Rafaeli, Rogers, & Revelle, 2007) highlights individuals' display of mixed emotions in which state NA and state PA are simultaneously experienced. I therefore consider that these mixed emotions could also accumulate to the team level, reflecting a simultaneous existence of state PA and state NA in teams. Thus,

I also controlled for state PA in teams to exclude its potential impacts on team conflict.

Data Aggregation. I conceptualized abusive supervision, relationship conflict, and task conflict at the team level. To further demonstrate that I aggregated these variables appropriately, both intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC) (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979) and Rwg (Bliese, 2000; James, 1982) were calculated. Generally, significant F tests of the ICC(1) values are used to determine the appropriateness of data aggregation (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). In my study, F tests for all ICC(1) values were significant: Regarding abusive supervision, ICC(1) was .15, $F(91, 380) = 1.95$, $p < .001$. In terms of relationship conflict, ICC(1) was .08, $F(91, 359) = 1.44$, $p < .01$. For task conflict, ICC(1) was .10, $F(91, 358) = 1.56$, $p < .01$.

I got ICC(2) values of .49 for abusive supervision, .31 for relationship conflict, and .36 for task conflict. Although these ICC(2) values are lower than the traditional criterion of .70 reported by other scholars (Bliese, 2000), some researchers (e.g., Chen & Bliese, 2002; Kozlowski & Hattrup, 1992) have suggested that if theory, Rwg, and between-group variances all pointed to the aggregation of a construct, a low ICC (2) should not deter aggregation. Also, as noted by Bliese (1998), ICC(2) is a function of team size. My study had on average six employees that rated each leader. Similar to previous studies (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Zhang, Li, Ullrich, & van Dick, 2015), my low ICC(2) scores could be due to my small team sizes.

Rwg scores of all three variables were above the aggregation standard of 0.80 as indicated in Bliese (2000). More specifically, Rwg was .82 for abusive supervision,

.88 for relationship conflict, and .90 for task conflict. The null distribution that I used to calculate Rwg was moderate skew. Hence, based on my results, I aggregated abusive supervision, relationship conflict, and task conflict to the team level.

Concerning state NA, state PA, and state mindfulness at the team level, I proposed that these concepts are team phenomena that appear due to the accumulation of individual psychological states. My multilevel conceptualization of these two variables fit the additive model requirements proposed by Chan (1998), because I did not conceptualize these constructs in terms of agreement among team members. Thus, group means of state NA, state PA, and state mindfulness were calculated and used to test my structural model.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

I examined the discriminant validity of all constructs by conducting confirmatory factor analysis with Maximum Likelihood estimation (MPlus 6.0). The results revealed that the hypothesized five-factor model (when abusive supervision, state NA, mindfulness as a state, relationship conflict, and task conflict were all incorporated) fit the data well (χ^2(512) = 1322.96, p< .001; CFI = .92, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .04). Moreover, the hypothesized model yielded a better fit than the alternative four-factor, three-factor, two-factor, and one-factor models (see Table 2.1). Hence, these CFA results supported the discriminant validity of my constructs and I proceeded with further analyses.

Table 2.1. Confirmatory Factor Analyses Comparing Alternative Models[a]

	Model	χ^2	df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$
M0:	Hypothesized five-factor model	1322.96	512	.06	.92	.91	.04	
M1:	Four-factor model by combining task conflict and relationship conflict into one factor	1574.18	516	.06	.90	.89	.05	251.22***
M2:	Four-factor model by combining state NA and mindfulness as a state into one factor	1688.22	516	.07	.89	.88	.06	365.26***
M3:	Three-factor model by combining task conflict, relationship conflict, and state NA into one factor	2013.88	519	.08	.86	.84	.07	690.92***
M4:	Three-factor model by combining task conflict, relationship conflict, and mindfulness as a state into one factor	2184.05	519	.08	.84	.83	.07	861.09***
M5:	Two-factor model by combining task conflict, relationship conflict, state NA and mindfulness as a state into one factor	2534.15	521	.09	.81	.79	.08	1211.19***
M6:	One-factor model by combining all variables into one factor	4339.72	522	.12	.63	.61	.15	3016.76***

[a] n=525. * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001. Two-tailed tests.

Analytical Strategy

In order to test Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 in regard to cross-level effects of team abusive supervision on individual follower creativity, I employed Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) 7 (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Abusive supervision, task conflict, and relationship conflict were entered at the team level (level 2). Since I collected my data from six organizations, I dummy coded the organizations and added them as control variables during my data analyses at the team level (level 2). Furthermore, at level 2, I also controlled for team size. At the individual level (level 1), I controlled for employees' age.

I adopted hierarchical regression analyses and used SPSS to examine Hypothesis 3a, Hypothesis 3b, Hypothesis 4a, and Hypothesis 4b, because these hypotheses were centered on team-level effects of abusive supervision on team processes. As such, I conducted these analyses at the team level utilizing variables including abusive supervision, state NA, state PA, state mindfulness, relationship conflict, and task conflict. I controlled for team size and organizations during the analyses.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations are displayed in Table 2.2. All reliabilities are above .80, and all correlations are in the expected directions. For example, state NA is negatively related with mindfulness ($r = -.42$, $p < .01$). Also, abusive supervision is positively associated with relationship conflict ($r = .30$, $p < .01$) and task conflict ($r = .19$, $p < .01$).

TABLE 2.2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations[a]

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 Employee age														
2 Team size	.09													
3 Organization 1	.39**	.17**												
4 Organization 2	-.47**	.07	-.43**											
5 Organization 3	.17**	-.07	-.20**	-.25**										
6 Organization 4	-.09	.09*	-.16**	-.20**	-.10*									
7 Organization 5	-.10*	-.21**	-.13**	-.16**	-.07	-.06								
8 Abusive supervision_T1	.13**	.07	-.16**	-.12**	.11*	.07	-.06	(.96)						
9 State NA_T2	.07	.12*	-.02	-.12*	-.03	-.05	.01	.10*	(.80)					
10 State PA_T2	-.08	-.01	-.28**	.20**	-.05	.02	-.06	-.14**	-.17**	(.87)				
11 State mindfulness_T2	.01	-.07	-.03	.03	.01	-.07	.06	-.20**	-.42**	.38**	(.89)			
12 Relationship conflict_T2	.08	.10*	.17**	-.10*	.09	-.07	-.11*	.30**	.32**	-.23**	-.49**	(.84)		
13 Task conflict_T2	-.01	.11*	.06	.04	-.01	-.02	-.08	.19**	.25**	-.07	-.33**	.54**	(.83)	
14 Creativity_T2	.03	.01	-.01	.03	.03	-.25**	.04	-.19**	-.06	.07	.06	-.09	.00	(.97)
Mean	31.51	7.05	.17	.27	.10	.08	.08	2.11	1.89	3.15	5.87	2.09	2.69	5.40
S.D.	8.31	4.19	.38	.45	.30	.27	.27	1.10	.60	.76	.95	.98	.84	1.03

[a] $n = 525$; coefficient alpha internal consistency reliabilities for the scales are in the diagonals with parenthesis. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. Two-tailed tests.

TABLE 2.3. HLM Results: The Main and Mediating Effects on Individual Creativity[a]

Variables	Relationship Conflict		Task Conflict		Individual Creativity		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Intercept	2.03***	2.02***	2.62***	2.61***	5.41***	5.42***	5.51***
Level 1 variables							
Employee age	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	.01	.01	.02*
Relationship conflict							-.01
Task conflict							.09
Level 2 control variables							
Team size	.02+	.02*	.01	.01	.01	.01	.02+
Organization 1	.30	.15	.12	-.01	-.34	-.06	.25
Organization 2	-.16	-.21+	.09	-.04	-.10	-.02	-.05
Organization 3	.29	.10	-.10	-.25	-.07	.16	.25
Organization 4	-.28+	-.50***	-.10	-.27+	-1.18**	-.86*	-1.02**
Organization 5	-.45**	-.47**	-.28	-.29	.35	.30	.06
Level 2 variables							
Abusive supervision		.31***		.24**		-.41**	-.30*
Level 2 Mediators							
Relationship conflict							-.48*
Task conflict							.25
R^2[b]	.01	.04	.06	.09	.04	.11	.54
ΔR^2	.01	.03	.06	.03	.04	.07	.43

[a] $n = 92$ at the group level; n=525 at the individual level.
[b] R^2 is calculated according to the proportional decrease resulting from predictors at level 1 and level 2 (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)
+ $p <.10$; * $p <.05$; ** $p <.01$; *** $p <.001$. Two-tailed tests.

TABLE 2.4. Regression Results: The Main and Mediating Effects on Relationship Conflict and Task Conflict[a]

Variables	State Mindfulness		State NA		Relationship Conflict			Task Conflict		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Intercept	5.96***	6.34***	1.99***	1.80***	1.94***	1.44***	3.71***	2.60***	2.25***	2.73**
Level 2 control variables										
Team size	-.02	-.01	.02*	.02+	.03+	.02	.01	.02	.01	-.00
Organization 1	.10	.23	-.40**	-.46***	.15	-.02	.20	-.07	-.19	.21
Organization 2	.14	.17	-.38***	-.39***	-.21	-.24+	-.11	.01	-.02	.21
Organization 3	.02	.17	-.46**	-.53***	.18	-.01	.18	-.28	-.41*	-.05
Organization 4	-.23	-.12	-.39*	-.45**	-.47*	-.61**	-.59**	-.17	-.27	-.10
Organization 5	.36+	.36+	-.29+	-.29+	-.50*	-.50*	-.26	-.45*	-.45*	-.12
Level 2 variables										
Abusive supervision		-.23**		.11*		.31***	.18**		.21**	.09
Level 2 Mediators										
State NA in teams							.18			.50**
State PA in teams							.07			.19+
State mindfulness in teams							-.45***			-.32**
R^{2b}	.08	.18	.20	.24	.21	.35	.51	.09	.16	.39
ΔR^2	.08	.10	.20	.04	.21	.14	.16	.09	.07	.23

[a] $n = 92$ at the group level.
[b] R^2 is obtained from the output of SPSS.
+ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Two-tailed tests.

Hypothesis Testing

Results from the HLM analyses are summarized in Table 2.3. In Hypothesis 1, I predicted that relationship conflict would mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and individual creativity. Using procedures suggested by Mathieu and Taylor (2007), I first tested the main effect between abusive supervision and perceived relationship conflict. As shown in Table 2.4 Model 6, this relationship was significant (β = .31, p <. 001). This result met the first criterion set by Mathieu and Taylor (2007) to examine meso-mediational relationships. As shown in Table 2.3 Model 6, the main effect of team abusive supervision on individual creativity was significant (β = -.41, p <. 01), thereby fulfilling the second criterion. In Table 2.3 Model 7, this result was still significant (β = -.30, p <. 05) once team relationship conflict was entered in Table 2.3 Model 7 (β = -.48, p <. 05), thus satisfying the fourth criteria but not the third one. Thus, I consider these results partially supported Hypothesis 1. I also conducted the indirect effect test by using RMediation (Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2011): 95% confidence interval (CI) = [-0.32, -0.01]. This result therefore provided additional support for Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 predicted task conflict as a mediator for the abusive supervision and individual creativity relationship. Following the same procedures for testing Hypothesis 1, I first examined the main effect between abusive supervision and individual task conflict. The result was significant (β = .21, p <. 01), giving support to the first criterion of Mathieu and Taylor (2007). Second, as shown in Table 2.3 Model 6, the main effect between abusive supervision and individual creativity was significant as well (β = -.41, p <. 01), thereby supporting the second criterion.

When task conflict was included in Table 2.3 Model 7, although the main effect of team abusive supervision became not significant (β = -.30, p <. 05), which supported criterion 4, the coefficient for team task conflict was not significant (β = .25, p > .05), failing to satisfy criterion 3. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

    Team state NA (Hypothesis 3a) and state mindfulness (Hypothesis 4a) were hypothesized to mediate the effect of team abusive supervision on team relationship conflict. I estimated these indirect effects using SPSS software. Following the instructions put forward by Baron and Kenny (1986), I first tested the main effect between abusive supervision and relationship conflict. As shown in Table 2.4 Model 6, this relationship was significant (β = .31, p < .001), satisfying the first criterion set by Baron and Kenny (1986). I then looked at the main effects between team state NA (Hypothesis 3a) and state mindfulness (Hypothesis 4a) on relationship conflict. The results were significant for both state NA (Model 4: β = .11, p < .05) and state mindfulness (Model 2: β = -.23, p < .01), rendering support for the second criterion of Baron and Kenny (1986). Furthermore, the relationship between abusive supervision and relationship conflict is still significant (β = .18, p < .01) when state NA (β = .18, p > .05) and state mindfulness (β = -.45, p < .001) were incorporated in Model 7, partially supporting the fourth criterion. However, considering that the coefficient for team state NA was not significant, the third criterion was not met, and thus Hypothesis 3a was not supported. The coefficient for team state mindfulness was significant, satisfying the third criterion. Thus Hypothesis 4a was partially supported. In addition, both the RMediation (Tofighi

& MacKinnon, 2011) also demonstrated statistical support for Hypothesis 4a: 95% confidence interval (CI) = [0.03, 0.20].

Team state NA (Hypothesis 3b) and state mindfulness (Hypothesis 4b) were also hypothesized to mediate the effect of team abusive supervision on team task conflict. Following the same procedures used for Hypothesis 3a and Hypothesis 4a, I first investigated the main effect between abusive supervision and task conflict. As shown in Table 2.4 Model 9, this main effect was significant (β = .21, p < .01), thus supporting the first criterion set by Baron and Kenny (1986). Second, I looked at the main effects between team state NA (Hypothesis 3b) and state mindfulness (Hypothesis 4b) on task conflict. I obtained significant findings for both state NA (Model 4: β = .11, p < .05) and state mindfulness (Model 2: β = -.23, p < .01), satisfying the second criterion. Moreover, in Table 4 Model 10, team state NA (β = .50, p < .01) and state mindfulness (β = -.32, p < .01) both significantly influenced task conflict, whereas the significance regarding the relationship between abusive supervision and task conflict disappeared (β = .09, p > .05), thus providing support for both Criterion 3 and Criterion 4. Also, the RMediation tests (Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2011) also provided support for Hypothesis 3b and Hypothesis 4b: 95% confidence interval for state NA (CI) = [0.001, 0.13] and 95% confidence interval for state mindfulness (CI) = [0.02, 0.16] .

DISCUSSION

There has been growing interest among abusive supervision scholars to explore the links between abusive supervision and team interactions, as mistreatment occurs in teams and it is hard to isolate its impact among individual team members.

Through the lens of COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), I examined an essential yet generally neglected team process, team conflict, that connects abusive supervision with individual creativity in teams. In particular, I found that abusive supervision ignited more relationship conflict and task conflict, and that relationship conflict passed on the negative influence of mistreatment to individual employee creativity. I found that relationship conflict and task conflict were a result of diminishing resources. Specifically, relationship conflict was a consequence of an attentional resource drain; task conflict resulted from both an affective resource drain (i.e., rising levels of state NA) and an attentional resource drain (i.e., reduced levels of state mindfulness).

However, my hypothesis regarding the mediating role of team task conflict on the relationship between team abusive supervision and follower creativity was not supported. Neither did my result support state NA act as an underlying process for the team abusive supervision and relationship conflict relationship. These findings might be due to my Chinese samples or my two-wave study design in which I was not able to collect state NA in teams, team conflict, and followers' creativity at different points in time. I thus call for future studies to replicate and extend my research findings with multi-wave or experimental study designs or in other cultural settings. Overall, this essay contributes to the abusive supervision and team process literature by carefully and clearly unravelling the underlying pathways that link abusive supervision with individual team member creativity. I also make several theoretical contributions to the literature, as outlined next.

Theoretical Implications

My findings add to the abusive supervision literature by offering important and novel insights on why and how abusive supervision interferes with individual creativity. Previous research has made great effort to investigate the mechanisms for abusive supervision from individual level perspectives including individual psychological states and perceived justice (Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007; Lian, Ferris, Morrison, & Brown, 2014; Thau & Mitchell, 2010; Restubog et al., 2011; Tepper, 2000). However, since most mistreatment happens in a work team context, we should not assume that abusive supervision only affects individual employees. More complex and dynamic team interactions should also be taken into consideration.

Recently, scholars have extended the underlying processes to the team setting and incorporated coworker interactions (i.e., third party anger and contentment; Mitchell et al., 2014), peers (i.e., peer abusive supervision; Peng et al., 2014), interpersonal teamwork process (i.e., group identification; Priesemuth et al., 2014), and task team process (i.e., collective efficacy; Priesemuth et al., 2014) to offer more comprehensive interpretations of the functioning of abusive supervision. Following this line of research, my study first introduces team conflict as a pivotal process and argues that abusive supervisors trigger and heighten team members' perceptions of conflict, which in turn weakens individual creativity. I thus enrich the abusive supervision literature by providing another lens to explain why and how abusive supervision harms individual outcomes in team contexts.

My study also contributes to the conflict literature by introducing the dark side of leadership, abusive supervision, as a critical antecedent. Previous literature on the antecedents of team conflict has been focused on diversity, faultlines, personality, and team needs (e.g., Choi & Sy, 2010; Chun & Choi, 2014; De Jong, Song, & Song, 2013; Jehn et al., 1999). Typically, scholars expect that a certain type of leadership would influence team conflict management strategies (Zhang, Cao, & Tjosvold, 2011), but not produce or alleviate team conflict in the first place. Nevertheless, I take a fresh view by looking into how abusive supervision may ignite team conflict. When abusive supervision acts as a constant workplace stressor, employees' emotional and attentional resources are exhausted, and thus they are unable to manage their negative feelings and are unable to attend to all related information, instead relying on heuristic cues. In this scenario, individuals are more likely to perceive and produce more relationship conflict and task conflict. While COR theory has been applied to the study of conflict (e.g. Sonnentag, Unger, & Nägel, 2013), it has not previously been used to connect abusive supervision to conflict within teams. I therefore offer a new approach to understand why conflict occurs in teams led by abusive supervisors.

I also extend prior theoretical work on mindfulness. Recently, Kroon, Menting, and van Woerkom (2015) proposed COR theory as a framework for explaining why mindfulness may contribute to employee creativity. I add to their propositions by incorporating conflict as the mediating mechanism to explain why creativity is harmed by lower levels of state mindfulness. I consider mindfulness to be a psychological state that reflects the availability of attentional resources. When

these resources are depleted in the face of abusive supervision, the increased conflict then harms employee creativity.

Kiewitz et al. (2016) and Oh and Farh (2017) provided evidence that abusive supervision evoked state NA in employees. I extend these findings by providing the first empirical study to test the relationship between abusive supervision and team conflict via team state NA. Normally, state NA has been examined as an individual reaction to mistreatment, which subsequently elicits undesirable outcomes (e.g. defensive silence, in Kiewitz et al., 2016). Extending previous research, I propose that abusive supervision could induce serious affective resource depletion in teams and propel team members to perceive more team conflict. From this perspective, I contend that team conflict is more likely to appear when team members are lacking emotional resources (high in state NA) due to abusive supervision.

Practical Implications

My findings suggest that managers should be especially cognizant of the conflict caused by abusive supervision in team settings, as it is harmful to individual employee creativity. More specifically, to ensure high levels of employee creativity, managers should help employees prevent and manage relationship conflict and task conflict that may arise under abusive supervision. Potential solutions include training individual employees to improve their conflict management skills, as well as promoting a positive group atmosphere that enables speedy resolution of such conflicts within teams (Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

As indicated by my findings, team conflict may be reduced if employees are high on mindfulness. Mindfulness is a type of psychological state that can be improved through personal training, self-reflection, and meditation exercises (see also Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013). To reduce team conflict, managers could introduce mindfulness training for employees. Although we do not have evidence showing the impact of mindfulness training on employee conflict, we have evidence on the impact of mindfulness training on mindfulness states (for a review, see Good et al., 2016). Since I find that mindfulness mediates the effects of abusive supervision on team conflict, interventions that help increase mindfulness during abusive supervision episodes may interrupt the dysfunctional effects of abusive supervision on team conflict. Therefore, employee conflicts should be less likely following mindfulness interventions.

The final suggestion for managers is related to employees' state NA. To reduce conflict in teams arising from employee state NA, managers need to identify their own behaviors which evoke negative emotions in their employees (see Dasborough, 2006; Gonzalez-Morales, Kernan, Becker, & Eisenberger, 2016). If they are unable to avoid such behaviors, then employees will need to manage their emotional responses to them, by using their emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence can be developed by focusing on improving specific emotion skills (see Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2003). Interestingly, emotional skills have been empirically shown to be linked to conflict resolution methods (see Jordan & Troth, 2004). Hence, emotional intelligence training is especially valuable for employees

working under an abusive supervisor, where conflicts are more likely to arise due to depleted resources.

Limitations and Future Directions

As with other field studies, I acknowledge limitations in the drawing of causal conclusions (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). However, I designed a longitudinal study with abusive supervision having temporal precedence over the mediators, used multiple sources to collect my data, and conducted multilevel analyses to reduce common method bias concerns (Lai, Li, & Leung, 2013; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Additionally, my data collection from six real work settings also strengthened the contextual realism that experimental designs could not provide. Despite these advantages, I encourage future studies to enhance knowledge of causalities in my model through experimental designs or cross-lagged panel designs (Kenny, 2005; Qu, 2016).

My second limitation is with regard to generalizing my study to other countries, given that my data were collected in China. National cultural values of employees might affect team interactions, and individual behaviors related to abusive supervision and conflict. China is high on collectivism (Moorman & Blakely, 1995), so employees in Chinese organizations may behave differently in team contexts than employees from other more individualistic cultures, such as the USA. I thereby encourage future cross-cultural research to examine the impact of cultural values on team member responses to abusive supervision.

Finally, I chose relationship conflict and task conflict since they have been widely studied in previous literature. There are still the other two types of

conflict—process conflict (Jehn & Mannix, 2001) and status conflict (Bendersky, & Hays, 2012) that awaits future investigation. More research could explore if abusive supervision also sparks process conflict and status conflict and, if so, what underlying mechanisms might enable these two types of conflict to occur.

CONCLUSION

My findings contribute to the abusive supervision literature and to the team conflict literature. I introduce team conflict as a key mechanism which may explain how abusive supervision in teams negatively impacts individual creativity. Furthermore, I identified state NA and state mindfulness as two important underlying processes that explain the emergence of team conflict under conditions of abusive supervision. Specially, I found that abusive supervision aggravated state NA in employees, which in turn led to more task conflict; abusive supervision also reduced employee state mindfulness, which consequentially resulted in more relationship conflict and task conflict. My findings thereby advance our understanding of why and how abusive supervision deteriorates individual creativity, regardless of who was the target of the abusive supervision in the team. I call for more scholarly investigations designed to further open the black box of abusive supervision in team contexts, and to offer more insights into possible ways to mitigate the damaging effects of abusive supervision in work teams.

CHAPTER 3: ESSAY 2 ABUSIVE SUPERVISION AS "TOUGH LOVE"? THE EFFECT OF ABUSIVE SUPERVISION ON EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Research and theory highlight the necessity of leaders acting in ways that encourage, inspire, and facilitate followers to develop desirable behaviors such as performance and organizational citizenship behaviors (e.g., Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003; Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, & Chen, 2005). However, abusive supervision is in sharp contrast to these positive expectations. Research on this negative style of leadership has been found to lead to a number of unfavorable outcomes, such as decreased performance and creativity, increased turnover, and more organizational deviance (Lian, Brown, Ferris, Liang, Keeping, & Morrison, 2014; Lian, Ferris, & Brown, 2012a, 2012b; Lee, Yun, & Srivastava, 2013; Peng, Schaubroeck, & Li, 2014; Tepper, 2000; Tepper, Duffy, Henle, & Lambert, 2006).

As a result, researchers are devoted to finding solutions to lessen these undesirable consequences (e.g., Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007; Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Liu, Liao, & Loi, 2012; Mawritz, Mayer, Hoobler, Wayne, & Marinova, 2012). For instance, Liu et al. (2012) found that when followers attribute the abuse to the leader's desire to enhance their performance, their creativity is less likely to suffer as a result. This is the first study that connects abusive supervision with followers' attributions of their leader's intentions.

However, previous studies such as Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002; 2004) have underlined that attributions and emotions are entwined. Researchers might not be able to tell a whole story by investigating one (e.g., attributions) while ignoring

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the other (e.g., emotions). As such, more recently, Oh and Farh (2017) proposed an emotional process theory to interpret followers' distinct reactions to abusive supervision. This theory addresses that if followers attribute these abusive behaviors to be intentional from their leader, they are more likely to experience negative emotions, such as anger, fear, and sadness, which in turn lead to followers' unfavorable behavioral responses.

Although state negative affect (state NA) and attributions have offered us with novel explanations on the functions of abusive supervision, we are still cognizant that little is known about (1) what effects followers' state positive affect (state PA) might play in the course of abusive supervision? Further, as previously mentioned, emotions and attributions are intertwined; we also need to explore (2) how might followers' attributional process add to the above process? Filling in these research gaps are of great importance, not only to respond to Oh and Farh (2017)'s and Michel et al. (2016)'s calls for more state affect research in the abusive supervision literature, but also to provide a novel perspective to effectively deal with workplace mistreatment.

As such, this paper introduces state PA as a potential antidote to the leader's abuse and incorporates followers' attributions of their leader's intentions as a related process that in turn influences followers' behaviors. Tracing back to previous studies on state PA and attributions, Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002) first proposed the associations between leaders' and followers' state PA and followers' attributions of their leaders' intentions. More specifically, when either leaders or followers have high state PA, followers are more likely to attribute their

leaders' behaviors to positive intentions. Although one study, Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2004), exhibits empirical evidence in support of these propositions, this study is not related to abusive supervision. This paper thereby extends this line of research to the circumstance of abusive supervision by inspecting how the state affect of followers and leaders alters followers' attributions of abusive supervision.

Recently, Cropanzano, Dasborough, and Weiss (2017) have proposed leader-member affect synchrony (LMAS) theory; by looking to the state PA of leaders and followers simultaneously, this theory posits that when the state PA of leaders and followers are synchronized, higher quality interpersonal relationships develop. However, to date, there have not been empirical studies to test these propositions. As such, integrating attribution theory with LMAS theory, my model aims to provide theoretical arguments to untangle the entwinement between state PA of both followers and leaders, and followers' attributions of abusive supervision.

In terms of specific leaders' intentions perceived by followers, Liu et al. (2012) first introduced performance promotion motives, where followers attribute the abuse to the leader's desire to enhance their performance. They have found that when followers believe that their leaders are using abusive behaviors to push them to achieve high performance (i.e., "tough love") (Kelman & Hong, 2016), the mistreatment becomes more acceptable and less damaging to their creativity. Notably, Liu et al. (2012) treated PPM as a specific contingency; when this contingency exists, abusive supervision is less likely to interfere with followers' creativity. Building on this research finding, I explore another research question:

(3) what might help followers view abusive supervision as "tough love", minimizing its impairment of individual behaviors?

To answer this question, I refer to attribution theory. Attribution theory describes people's innate interest in the causes behind specific behaviors (Heider, 1958). One type of attribution, attribution of intentionality, involves interpreting others' intentions for engaging in behaviors (e.g., Howat & London, 1980; Thomas & Pondy, 1977). Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002) suggested that followers' attributions of leaders' intentions is a process of cognitive analysis, evaluation, and judgment. Leaders' and followers' emotions and interactions help shape this process, which in turn influences followers' attitudes and behaviors (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002). These arguments point to the fact that PPM are attributed during a process, from which followers form an evaluation of their leaders, and alter their reactions to their leaders accordingly.

Furthermore, considering PPM as an outcome of attributional processes opens another avenue to look at factors that might impact the influence of abusive supervision on such attributions. Various attempts have been made by scholars to mitigate the negative effect of abusive behaviors; for instance, some have examined leader individual difference moderators (e.g., personality and attribution styles) or those of followers (e.g., positive affect and reciprocity beliefs) (for reviews, see Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013; Mackey et al., 2015). Only a small number of studies have looked at both followers' and leaders' individual differences simultaneously (see Tepper, Duffy, & Shaw, 2001; Lian et al., 2014). This lack of attention is unfortunate in that both leaders and followers

play a significant role in affecting followers' attitudes and behaviors; it is hard to distinguish one's influence while ignoring the other. As such, this paper also takes a more comprehensive view by taking into account the state PA of both leaders and followers in explaining followers' creativity levels due to abusive supervision.

I choose individual creativity as an outcome because creativity is gaining increasing importance to organizations, especially in competitive and dynamic markets. Negative styles of leadership, as opposed to positive styles (e.g., transformational leadership; Shin & Zhou, 2003), catch even more attention in followers (Dasborough, 2006), thus allowing more influences from abusive leaders to occur to followers. Therefore, we cannot underestimate the deteriorating effects that abusive supervision might have on creativity, which also makes investigations of potential solutions more urgent and necessary. Also, a recent meta-analysis indicates that evidence on the link between abusive supervision and creativity is still scarce (Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2015). This study thereby aims to advance this line of research by unravelling the influence of abusive supervision on individual creativity from an attribution of intentionality perspective. Through utilizing 616 respondents from 61 teams, I empirically examined how the state PA of both leaders and followers impacts follower's creativity in response to abusive supervision.

My study adopts a multilevel approach by including abusive supervision and leaders' state PA at the team level, and incorporating followers' state PA, PPM, and creativity at the individual level. Leadership is by nature a multilevel phenomenon (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008). Abusive supervision is a team-

level contextual stimulus that triggers followers' reactions (Bamberger &

Bacharach, 2006; Detert, Treviño, Burris, & Andiappan, 2007; Mawritz et al.,

2012; Ogunfowora, 2013), because even though a focal employee might not

directly suffer from abusive treatment, s/he can still observe mistreatment as it

occurs to their coworkers and form attributions about such mistreatment. Further,

while followers observe the occurrence of abusive supervision in teams, they also

observe the state PA displayed by their leader. Thus, leaders' state PA also exerts

an influence on followers' interpretation of abusive supervision at the team level.

On the other hand, attribution formation is an individual process that is influenced

by individual differences (e.g., followers' own state PA) and the external

environment (e.g., team abusive supervision and leaders' state PA) (Martinko &

Gardner, 1987). As such, I incorporate followers' state PA and PPM at the

individual level, and examine their roles in affecting individual creativity.

The current research tests a three-way moderated mediation model of the

relationships between team abusive supervision, followers' state PA, leaders' state

PA, and followers' creativity (see Figure 3.1), and makes four unique

contributions. First, I look at leader-member positive affect synchrony at one point

in time, and offer a theoretical rationale for, and provide the first empirical test of,

whether leader-member positive affect synchrony exerts an impact on the

relationship between team abusive supervision and individual creativity. An

examination of this effect not only adds to LMAS theory by extending its

application to the context of abusive supervision, but also extends our current
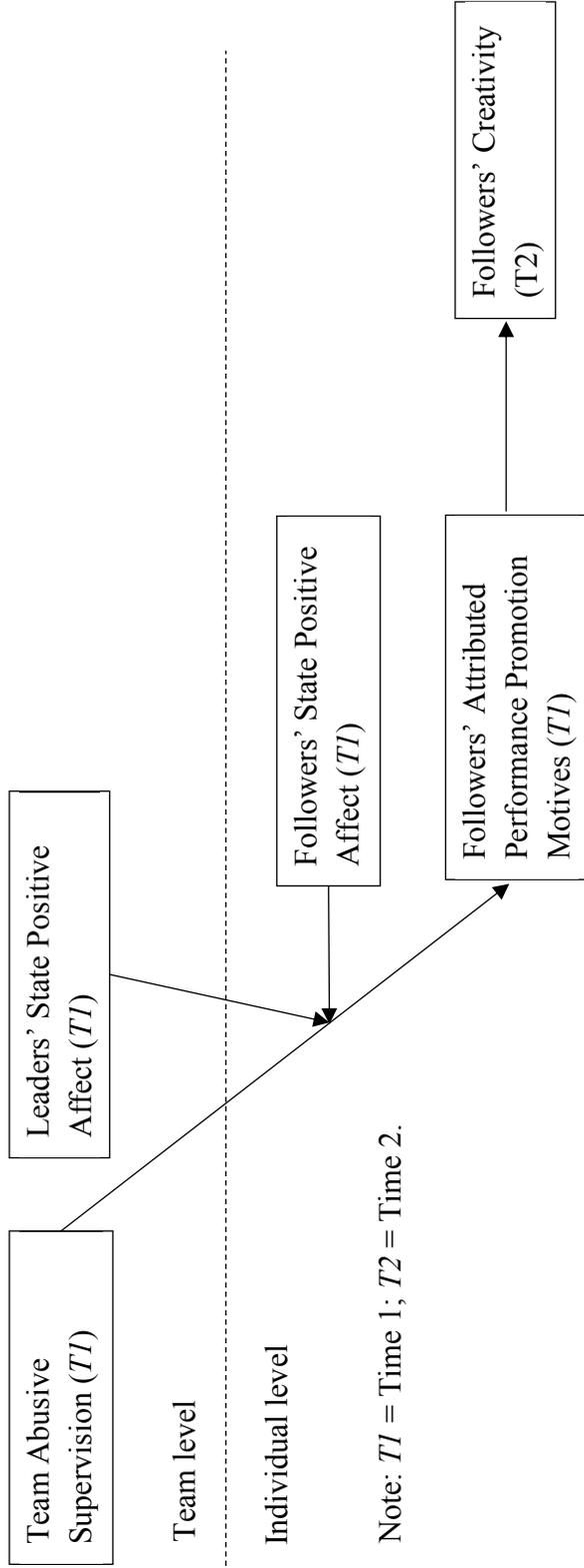
knowledge regarding the combined effect of individual differences (i.e., state PA) of both leaders and followers in affecting followers' creativity.

Second, I introduce attributed PPM as a mechanism that connects the three-way interaction of abusive supervision and leader-member positive affect synchrony on followers' creativity. This mediating effect contributes to the attribution literature by supporting the viewpoints of scholars including Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002), Howat and London (1980), and Thomas and Pondy (1977), that consider attribution of intentions as a process.

Furthermore, I scrutinize the factors that influence followers' attributions of abusive treatment to PPM. This investigation of the antecedents and boundary conditions for the formation of specific motives is crucial, in that many scholars (e.g., Liu et al., 2012; Tepper, 2007) have recommended looking into followers' attributions of the abusive leaders' intent. However, few studies have been conducted in this vein (with exceptions, see Liu et al., 2012; Oh & Farh, 2017).

Finally, through looking into the role that state PA plays during this process, I contribute to the workplace affect literature. I explore the possible beneficial impact of state PA of both followers and leaders on employees dealing with abusive leaders. In doing so, I address the call from scholars (e.g., Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter, & Kacmar, 2007; Tepper et al., 2006) for more research on affect within the context of abusive supervision.

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FIGURE 3.1. Theoretical Model

Team Abusive Supervision (*T1*)

Leaders' State Positive Affect (*T1*)

Team level

Individual level

Followers' State Positive Affect (*T1*)

Followers' Attributed Performance Promotion Motives (*T1*)

Followers' Creativity (T2)

Note: *T1* = Time 1; *T2* = Time 2.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Attribution Theory

There are a variety of causal dimensions that have been studied in the context of organizational behavior. Examples of these dimensions are: locus of causality, stability, controllability, and intentionality (Dasborough & Harvey, 2016; Martinko, Harvey, & Dasborough, 2011; Heider, 1958; Martinko, Harvey, & Douglas, 2007). Each of these attributional dimensions offers insight into the perceived causes of workplace behaviors. Among these dimensions that have been studied, attribution of intentions is an important yet largely unexplored attributional dimension that is relevant for leader-member relationships (Dasborough, & Ashkanasy, 2002).

When observing various kinds of behaviors, people have a natural tendency to presume that these behaviors are not random, but are instead guided by "plans" and "motives" (Leary, 1957; Lin, Huang, Chen, & Huang, 2017; Miller, Galanter, & Pribram, 1960). When we observe the behavior of other people, we wish to find the intention behind them. For example, are people acting with sincere or manipulative intentions (e.g., Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2004; Lin et al., 2017)? Moreover, as noted by Festinger (1957) and Peeters and Czapinski (1990), negative events are more likely to stimulate people's attribution processes due to the events being potential threats to individuals, as compared to positive events. Therefore, attributions of intent are more likely to be triggered in situations of abusive supervision, compared to positive leadership styles (e.g. Liu et al., 2012).

Leader-Member Affect Synchrony (LMAS) Theory

Leader-member affect synchrony (LMAS) theory predicts that when leaders and members experience similar affective responses, they are affectively synchronized, and high quality relationships develop (Cropanzano et al., 2017). This is especially the case in terms of state PA. Applying LMAS theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017), I consider a snapshot of leaders' and followers' state PA at one time, and argue that positive affect synchrony promotes followers' positive perceptions of their leaders' behaviors. As such, in the presence of positive affect synchrony, followers are more likely to interpret abusive supervision as deriving from positive leader motives.

It is noteworthy that I do not investigate state negative affect (state NA), mainly because LMAS theory specifies that the influence of leader-member state NA synchrony is complicated and depends upon on the specific objects that the negative affect concerns. For instance, when the object is either the follower or the leader, leader-member state NA synchrony could result in a low quality interpersonal relationship; however, when the objects are outside of the dyads, this state NA synchrony propels high quality interpersonal relationship to develop. Additionally, compared with state PA, state NA exerts a weaker effect on motivating followers to interpret negative events (i.e., abusive supervision) more positively (Schwarz & Clore, 2003). Therefore, I focus on state PA rather than state NA.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Relations between Abusive Supervision, Individual Attributed PPM and

Creativity: The Moderating Effect of Followers' State Positive Affect

It is important to note that abusive supervision is dependent on subordinates'

perceptions (Martinko, Sikora, & Harvey, 2012). When suffering similar levels of

mistreatment, followers with unique individual differences and personal

relationships with their leader could have different attributional processes, which

significantly affect their levels of perceived abusive supervision (Martinko et al.,

2012). As such, the attribution process is critical in shaping followers'

understanding of abusive supervision.

One reason that followers are hurt by abusive supervision is that attributions of

the intentions behind abusive behaviors tend to be malicious, as abusive treatment

violates standards regarding appropriate interpersonal treatment (Oh & Farh,

2017). If positive attributions for abusive behaviors were identified, followers

could effectively reduce the harm caused by abusive leaders (Oh & Farh, 2017).

PPM, referring to abusive leaders' intent to motivate followers to work for job

accomplishment and high compensation, are one such type of positive attribution

(Liu et al., 2012). Further, Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002) propose that

followers' state affect could influence followers' discernment of their leaders'

intent. Therefore, following this suggestion and building on Liu et al. (2012), this

paper explores one contingency (i.e., state PA) that promotes followers'

attributions of PPM for abusive supervision.

Typically, in a positive affective state, individuals experience a range of positive

feelings (Watson & Clark, 1984). Positive affect could strengthen an individual's

PPM attribution for abusive behavior and his or her creativity for the following

reasons. First, studies have demonstrated that followers' individual differences

might be as important as leaders' behaviors in shaping followers' perceptions of

abusive supervision (Martinko et al., 2012). More specifically, individuals with

high state PA tend to hold a more optimistic view regarding abusive supervision

(Harvey et al., 2007). The underlying reason is that state PA generally propels

followers to focus on emotion-consistent information (Schwarz & Clore, 2003),

such as a delightful experience and an encouraging conversation that reflects

favorably on their leaders. This information is more likely to lead followers to

interpret abusive supervision positively, for instance, assuming that leaders are

showing "tough love" in hopes of boosting followers' performance. In support of

this, Kelman and Hong (2016) have proposed "tough love" as a mixture of

"toughness" that applies pressure to employees, and "love" that justifies the

"toughness" as driven by love; thus, perceptions of "tough love" help nurture an

environment in which employees are more willing to accept supervisor abuse.

Second, employees with high state PA are also more proactive in seeking

influence over abusive supervision than those employees with low state PA

(Harvey et al., 2007). For instance, these employees are more adept at utilizing

influence tactics such as ingratiation to help them deal with an abusive leader. For

them, positive affect can be considered a coping resource that they can draw from

to offset the resource loss due to abusive supervision and provide them with

positive energy to achieve workplace goals (Harvey et al., 2007). Following this line of logic, I further argue that the creativity of followers with high state PA is less likely to be impaired under an abusive leader.

In addition, research has shown that affective states might carry some task specific influences (Damen, Van Knippenberg, & Van Knippenberg, 2008). For instance, people with state PA perform better on creative tasks than employees with state NA; but this advantage of positive affect disappears when it comes to repetitive tasks (Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005). The underlying cause is that people in a positive state are especially capable of connecting apparently disparate materials together to come up with helpful, reasonable, and novel solutions to work-related issues (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987). Taken together, I argue that positive affect not only alters followers' perceptions in an optimistic manner, but it also assists in coming up with creative ideas. Here I propose:

Hypothesis 1. Followers' state PA moderates the relationships between team abusive supervision and follower attributed PPM (1a) and creativity (1b): these relationships are less negative when followers' state PA is high rather than low.

Relations between Abusive Supervision, Individual Attributed PPM, and Individual Creativity: The Joint Moderating Effects of Followers' and Leaders' State Positive Affect

Evidence suggests that people use both their own affect and others' affective displays as informational sources for cognitive information processing (Damasio, 1994; Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002; Forgas & George, 2001). In the case of

leadership, Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002) emphasized the influence of followers' state affect and leaders' state affect in shaping follower attributions of leader intent. Hence, faced with abusive leaders, followers are generally inclined to understand the undesirable behaviors by using their leaders' affective information as well. As noted by LMAS theory, when leaders and followers are experiencing the same pattern of state PA over time, high quality interpersonal relationships are more likely to occur. The underlying reason is that shared state PA pattern of leaders and followers reflects their similar attitudes at work and also indicates that they might form compatible emotional reactions to external stimuli. Over the long run, each part (e.g., leaders) might perceive that the other part's (e.g., followers) behaviors are more understandable and predictable.

In support of LMAS theory, studies have also demonstrated a beneficial role of affective synchrony between leaders and followers. For instance, Johnson (2008) demonstrate that leaders' state PA is positively related to followers' state PA via mood contagion; followers with high state PA are more likely to have high ratings of charismatic leadership and demonstrate more organizational citizenship behaviors. Further, expressions of state PA by both leaders and followers foster followers' perceptions of high leader effectiveness and more attraction to their leader (Bono & Ilies, 2006). In addition, shared affect between leaders and followers also boost positive interpersonal interactions (Kelly & Barsade, 2001) and fortify mutual influence between leaders and followers (Desteno, Petty, Wegener, & Rucker, 2000). For instance, Damen et al. (2008) discovered that

when sharing state affect, leaders are inclined to take into account their followers' suggestions, thus making followers' words more persuasive to them.

Building on these findings, I predict that state PA synchrony between leaders and followers could further facilitate followers having positive interpretations of abusive supervision. As previously mentioned, followers with high state PA tend to infer the intent of their leader in an optimistic way, and have more coping resources available for thinking of novel ideas to solve work-related issues. LMAS further reinforces these tendencies, as studies have demonstrated that messages displayed by the leader are more influential when the state affect of followers matches that of their leader (Cropanzano et al., 2017; DeSteno, Petty, Rucker, Wegener, & Braverman, 2004).

According to LMAS theory as previously mentioned, this state PA synchrony facilitates mutual understanding and behavioral predictions between leaders and followers. In addition, followers' state PA, when combined with this state PA synchrony could also act as informational input for followers' attributions of the intent underlying abusive treatment. In this case, positive attributions could justify leaders' abusive behaviors, if the abuse is seen as driven by their leaders' high expectations for performance improvement. Such interpretations could also stimulate fulfillment of their leaders' intentions by working proactively to solve problems at work. As previously mentioned, when people's affect is synchronized, the focal individual is more willing to accept influence from his or her dyadic partner (e.g., Quinn & Dutton, 2005).

LMAS theory also indicates that followers who have low affect synchrony with their leader, however, might not develop high quality relationships with their leader. Thus, their attributions concerning abusive supervision are less likely to be colored by positive feelings toward their leaders. The underlying reason is that different levels of state PA might be related to dissimilar mindsets and preferences, resulting in more communication barriers and less effective cooperation and interactions between leaders and followers (Cropanzano et al., 2017). To conclude, low state PA synchrony between leaders and followers are less likely to yield favorable attributions of the leaders' intent, such as PPM.

Integrating attribution theory and LMAS theory, I propose that the worst circumstance would be when followers of an abusive leader have low state PA and their leader has high state PA. Under this situation, followers with low state PA are not likely to form favorable interpretations of abusive behaviors. Neither would they experience support from affect synchrony to reinforce the positive effects of state PA on follower attributed PPM and creativity. Thus, abusive supervision is least likely to be attributed to leaders' PPM, and might be associated with the lowest level of individual creativity. As such, I propose:

Hypothesis 2. Abusive supervision, leaders' state PA, and followers' state PA will

interact to affect follower attributed PPM (2a) and creativity (2b) in such a way

that when leaders' state PA is high and followers' state PA is high,

abusive supervision has the weakest negative relationships with follower

attributed PPM (2a) and creativity (2b);

when leaders' state PA is high and followers' state PA is low, abusive

supervision has the highest negative relationships with follower attributed

PPM (2a) and creativity (2b).

Attributed PPM as a Mechanism

To offer a thorough explanation for how these interactional effects (i.e., Hypothesis 2) emerge, it is necessary to probe the underlying process. As such, I propose PPM as a psychological mechanism that transmits the effects of the three-way interaction of team abusive supervision, followers' state PA, and leaders' state PA to creativity. Supporting this theoretical reasoning, prior research has proposed that positive attributions of others' motives encourage a focal individual to move forward to fulfill the expectations of significant others, and thus facilitate positive employee behaviors (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002; Ferris, Bhawuk, Fedor, & Judge,1995).

I further argue that attributions of positive motives of the leader could uplift followers' creativity as well. First, attributed positive intentions of leaders' behaviors could build up followers' positive attitudes toward their leaders. Previous studies have found that if helping behaviors are driven by altruistic motives, peers are more likely to accept these behaviors and consider these behaviors as highly valued and well respected (e.g., Tillman, Lawrence, & Daspit, 2014). Likewise, attributed PPM could help followers to accept abusive supervision in a positive manner (Liu et al., 2012). Thus, in a positive affective state, followers' creativity is less likely to be impaired.

Harvey and Dasborough (2006) elaborated that attributions of intentionality could act as an antecedent of employee behavioral responses. More specifically, I consider that attributing positive intentionality of a leader to PPM might also directly promote followers' creative behaviors. As indicated by research on "tough love", exhibiting PPM not only justifies the abusive behaviors of their leaders, but also elicits more participation in fulfilling the motives of their leaders (Kelman & Hong, 2016). From this perspective, meeting their leader's expectations of high performance could serve as another motivation for individuals. As such, I expect that benefiting from this positive attribution, followers could proactively engage in work and develop novel ideas and effective tactics to solve work-related problems. Thus, I predict:

> *Hypothesis 3. The relationship between the three-way interaction of team abusive*
> *supervision, followers' state PA, leaders' state PA, and individual creativity is*
> *mediated by follower attributed PPM.*

RESEARCH METHOD

Sample

To test my hypotheses, I collected multilevel, multiphase, and multisource data in a large private company in China. The company operates regional malls and electronic product centers. Teams are the basic work unit, with each team led by one formal leader. Facing a dynamic market, the company has focused on gaining competitive advantage through providing novel customer services and products. To realize this objective, the organization has included creativity as part of their

employees' performance evaluation. Thus, this organization provides an ideal context for my study.

After receiving approval from the manager, I collected data right after their weekly meetings. Two types of surveys were administered: team member surveys and team leader surveys. All participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. I also emphasized that their answers would be confidential. I assigned a code to each participant, provided sealed envelopes for participants to return their surveys, and promised that only my research team members were able to access their specific answers.

I organized the data collection at two points in time, with a time interval of two weeks because studies have demonstrated that the influence of state PA might last for a relatively short period (e.g., Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005; Brief & Weiss, 2002; Oh & Farh, 2017). At time 1, employees answered questions regarding their demographic characteristics, abusive supervision, state PA, and PPM; leaders were instructed to report their state PA. Two weeks later, followers completed surveys assessing their state PA, and team leaders were asked to evaluate their subordinates' creativity. Overall, I sent out surveys to 951 employees and 92 leaders at both times. At time 1, I collected surveys from 933 employees and 65 leaders; at time 2, I obtained surveys from 934 employees and 72 leaders. After combining leaders' data and followers' data, and deleting invalid cases, the final sample constituted 616 employees from 61 teams with a response rate of 64.88% at the individual level and that of 66.30% at the team level. On average, teams had 11.25 members (S.D. = 5.21); among employees, 55.40% of them were

female. The average age of employees was 32.01 years (S.D. = 8.28). Team leaders had an average age of 34.89 years (S.D. = 6.77); women constituted 42.59% of the sample.

Measures

I measured all items using a 7-point Likert-type scale (e.g., 1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree), except state PA and state NA, which utilized a 5-point Likert-type scale (e.g., 1= not at all, 5= extremely). All measures have demonstrated high alpha reliability and construct validity in previous studies, and have been widely employed among management scholars (e.g., abusive supervision Tepper, 2000; Lian et al., 2012a, 2012b; creativity Černe et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2012). All items were written in Chinese. To ensure the accuracy of my written items, I followed the translation and back-translation procedures as recommended by Brislin (1980).

Abusive supervision. I used Tepper's (2000) 15-item scale to assess abusive supervision at time 1. All employees were instructed to evaluate to what extent their leaders exhibited abusive behaviors. Sample items were "My leader ridicules me" and "My leader puts me down in front of others". Abusive supervision demonstrated an alpha reliability of .94.

State positive affect (PA). I used the 10-item PANAS scale by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) to assess state PA at time 1. Similar to previous research using some of the 10 items to assess positive affect (e.g., Rego, Sousa, Marques, & Cunha, 2014 used only 3 items), I selected seven of these items to represent positive affect in both followers' survey and leaders' survey. More specifically,

leaders and followers were instructed to recall "during the past two weeks, to what extent (from 1 to 5) they felt: interested, attentive, excited, inspired, proud, strong, and active." The confirmatory factor loadings of the other three items ("alert", "enthusiastic", and "determined") were smaller than .40 in both leaders' and followers' data, and thus were deleted (Kline, 2011). The 7-item alpha reliability of positive affect of followers was .79, and that of leaders was also .79.

Performance promotion motives (PPM). I used the 5-item scale developed by Liu, Liao, and Loi (2012) to rate follower attributed PPM at time 1. The instructions read as follows: "Abusive supervision means the sustained display of hostile, verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact. To what extent, do you agree that the following may be the reason for or cause of your supervisor's behaviors toward you, which could be considered abusive?" Sample items were "Desire to elicit high performance from me", "Desire to send me messages that mistakes will not be tolerated". This measure demonstrated a reliability of .82.

Creativity. I measured creativity using a 13-item scale developed by Zhou and George (2001) at time 2. All leaders were requested to evaluate to what degree each of their employees exhibited certain creative behaviors. Sample items are: "This employee suggests new ways to achieve goals or objectives" and "This employee often has new and innovative ideas". The alpha reliability of creativity was 0.96.

Control variables. Studies have shown that individuals might have mixed feelings in which they simultaneously experience positive affect and negative

affect (e.g., Rafaeli, Rogers, & Revelle, 2007). Thus, I controlled state negative

affect at time one of both leaders and followers to exclude the potential influence

of negative affect on followers' creativity. I employed seven items from the

PANAS scale by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). Team members were

instructed to evaluate during the past two weeks, to what extent they experienced

feeling: distressed, guilty, ashamed, irritable, nervous, jittery, and afraid. The other

three items (upset, hostile, and scared) were discarded due to low factor loadings

during the confirmatory factor analyses. The alpha reliability for negative affect of

followers was .79 and that of leaders was .83. Additionally, considering that state

affect can change, I controlled for followers' state PA at time two, because I

wanted the state PA at the same time as the abusive supervision. Using the same

measure of state PA at time one, I obtained a reliability of state PA at time two of

.82. Finally, I controlled for team size and followers' age to exclude their

influences on individual creativity.

   Data aggregation. I conceptualized abusive supervision at the team level. To

further demonstrate the appropriateness of aggregating individual abusive

supervision to the team level, I calculated both intra-class correlation coefficients

ICC(1) (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979), ICC(2) and Rwg (Bliese, 2000; James, 1982).

Abusive supervision had an ICC(1) of .09, $F(60, 516) = 2.02$, $p < .001$; the

significant F test result justified using team abusive supervision. Using moderate

skew distribution as the null distribution, the Rwg of abusive supervision was .83,

which was above the standard of .80 as indicated by Bliese (2000), thus supporting

the aggregation of individual abusive supervision. Finally, abusive supervision

exhibited an ICC(2) value of .51. Although this ICC(2) value was lower than the

traditional criterion of .70 (Bliese, 2000), some researchers (e.g., Chen & Bliese,

2002; Kozlowski & Hattrup, 1992) defend proceeding with aggregation if theory,

Rwg, and ICC(1) all buttress aggregation of the construct. As such, I aggregated

abusive supervision to the team level.

    Confirmatory factor analyses. I conducted confirmatory factor analysis with

Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MPlus 6.0) to assess the discriminant validity of

the measures evaluated by followers, including abusive supervision, followers'

state PA, and attributed PPM. The results demonstrated that the hypothesized

three-factor model fit the data well (χ^2(319) = 930.67, p< .01; CFI = .92, RMSEA

= .05), and yielded a better model fit than alternative two-factor and one-factor

models (see Table 3.1). Hence, these CFA results support the discriminant validity

of the three constructs for subsequent analyses.

Analytical Strategy

    I employed Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002)

to test my multilevel three-way moderated mediation model. Consistent with my

theoretical model, at the team level (level 2), I analyzed abusive supervision at

time one and leaders' state PA at time one, while controlling for group size and

leaders' state NA at time one. At the individual level (level 1), when creativity was

the outcome variable, I incorporated followers' state PA at time one and followers'

attributed PPM at time one and controlled for followers' state NA at time one,

followers' state PA at time two, and followers' age. When follower attributed PPM

at time one was the outcome, I employed followers' state PA at time one as an

TABLE 3.1. Confirmatory Factor Analyses Comparing Alternative Models[a]

	Model	χ^2	df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$
M0:	Hypothesized three-factor model	930.67	319	.06	.92	.91	.05	
M1:	Two-factor model by combining abusive supervision positive affect into one factor	1669.38	321	.09	.83	.81	.09	738.71***
M2:	Two-factor model by combining positive affect and PPM into one factor	1696.02	321	.09	.82	.81	.10	765.35***
M3:	Two-factor model by combining abusive supervision and PPM into one factor	1903.08	321	.09	.80	.78	.08	972.41***
M4:	One-factor model by combining all variables into one factor	2626.40	322	.11	.71	.68	.11	1695.73***

[a] n=616. * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001. Two-tailed tests.

independent variable, and followers' state NA at time one and followers' age as control variables.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations are displayed in Table 3.2. All alpha reliabilities are .79 or above, and all correlations are in the expected directions. For example, followers' attributed PPM are positively related with creativity ($r = .11$, $p < .05$). Followers' state PA at time one is negatively associated with followers' state NA at time one ($r = -.21$, $p < .01$), as expected.

Hypothesis Testing

Results from the HLM analyses are summarized in Table 3.3. Hypothesis 1 predicted that followers' state PA moderated the relationship between team abusive supervision and PPM (Hypothesis 1a) and individual creativity (Hypothesis 1b). As shown in Table 3.3, Model 2, the moderating effect was not significant ($\beta = .18$, $p > .05$) for attributed PPM. Similarly, the moderating effect test was also not significant for individual creativity (Table 3.3 Model 5 $\beta = .03$, $p > .05$). As such, Hypothesis 1a and Hypothesis 1b were not supported.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that there was a three-way interaction between team abusive supervision, followers' state PA, and leaders' state PA on follower attributed PPM. As shown in Table 3.3, Model 3, the three-way interaction effect was significant ($\beta = .61$, $p < .05$) for PPM. As depicted in Figure 3.2, when followers' state PA and leaders' state PA were both high, abusive supervision had a positive effect on attributed PPM; as shown in Table 3.4, the simple slope was significant ($\beta = 1.13$, $t = 2.31$, $p < .05$). When followers' state PA was low and

TABLE 3.2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations[a]

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Employee age	32.01	8.28										
2 Team size	13.90	5.10	.18**									
3 Abusive supervision	2.13	1.01	.10*	.11*	(.94)							
4 Follower state PA_T1	3.35	.62	-.00	-.09*	-.27**	(.79)						
5 Follower state NA_T1	1.80	.56	-.09*	-.03	.30**	-.21**	(.79)					
6 Follower attributed PPM_T1	5.42	1.09	-.01	-.11*	-.21**	.20**	-.12**	(.82)				
7 Follower state PA_T2	3.34	.61	-.07	-.05	-.16**	.48**	-.11*	.20**	(.82)			
8 Leader state PA_T1	3.51	.58	.09*	.03	-.02	-.01	-.09*	.06	.04	(.79)		
9 Leader state NA_T1	1.89	.57	.05	.11**	.01	.09*	.03	-.09*	-.04	-.03	(.82)	
10 Follower creativity_T2	4.80	1.15	.02	-.14**	-.05	.09	.08	.11*	.06	.04	-.06	(.96)

[a] $n = 616$; alpha reliabilities for the scales are in the diagonals with parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. Two-tailed tests.

TABLE 3.3. HLM Results: The Main and Interactive Effects on Attributed Performance Promotion Motives (PPM) and Individual Creativity[a]

Variables	Attributed PPM			Individual Creativity			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Intercept	5.45***	5.47***	5.47***	4.91***	4.92***	4.89***	4.88***
Level 1 control variables							
Follower age	-.00	-.00	-.00	-.01	-.01	.01	.02
Follower state NA_T1	-.20*	-.19*	-.17*	.08	.05	.23*	.22+
Follower state PA_T2				.10	.09	.24+	.15
Level 1 independent variables							
Follower state PA_T1	.34**	.34***	.34***	.10	.11	.03	.02
Level 1 mediator and interaction controls							
attributed PPM_T1							.10*
Follower state PA_T1 × attributed PPM_T1							.11+
Level 2 control variables							
Team size	-.01	-.01	-.01	.02	.02	.04+	.05+
Leader state NA_T1	.01	.02	.01	.22	.16	.24	.17
Level 2 independent variables							
Abusive supervision (AS)_T1	.04	.04	.01	.25	.19	.06	-.01
Leader state PA_T1	.14	.13	.15	.03	-.09	-.18	-.24

Interactions							
AS × Leader state PA_T1		-.04	-.03	-.15		-.59	-.57
AS × Follower state PA_T1		.18	.24+	.03		.15	.17
Leader state PA_T1 × Follower state PA_T1		.19	.14	.10		-.18	.09
AS × Leader state PA_T1 × Follower state PA_T1			.61*			1.26*	1.07+
Level 2 mediator interaction controls							
Attributed PPM_T1× Leader state PA_T1						-.01	
Attributed PPM_T1 × Leader state PA_T1 × Follower state PA_T1							.05
R^2[b]	.11	.14	.15	.10	.11	.23	.21

[a] n=61 at the team level.

[b] R^2 is calculated according to the proportional decrease resulting from predictors at level 1 and level 2 (Snijders & Bosker, 1999); according to Snijders and Bosker (1994), Model 7 could have R^2 that is .02 lower than Model 6 due to random chance.

+ p<.10; * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001. Two-tailed tests.

TABLE 3.4. Simple Slope Comparisons for Three-Way Interaction: Attributed Performance Promotion Motives (PPM) as

Dependent Variable

Pairs of comparisons	Attributed PPM	
	Slope	t
1 (High follower state PA, high leader state PA)	1.13	2.31*
2 (High follower state PA, low leader state PA)	-.50	-1.16
3 (Low follower state PA, high leader state PA)	-1.17	-2.37*
4 (Low follower state PA, low leader state PA)	.60	2.31*
Slope difference		
1 and 2		1.34
1 and 3		2.53*
1 and 4		1.09
2 and 3		1.12
2 and 4		-.70
3 and 4		-2.01

TABLE 3.5. Simple Slope Comparisons for Three-Way Interaction: Creativity as Dependent Variable

Pairs of comparisons	Creativity	
	Slope	t
1 (High follower state PA, high leader state PA)	1.34	1.43
2 (High follower state PA, low leader state PA)	-.85	-1.22
3 (Low follower state PA, high leader state PA)	-2.54	-2.16*
4 (Low follower state PA, low leader state PA)	2.29	2.12*
Slope difference		
1 and 2		.45
1 and 3		2.04*
1 and 4		-.87
2 and 3		1.68
2 and 4		-1.58
3 and 4		-2.14*

leaders' state PA was high, abusive supervision had the most negative effect on follower attributed PPM; as described in Table 3.4, simple slope was also significant (β = -1.17, t = -2.37, p < .05). These results supported Hypothesis 2a.

Hypothesis 2b predicted that followers' state PA and leaders' state PA interactively moderated the effect between team abusive supervision and employee creativity. This three-way interaction was significant, as demonstrated in Table 3.3 Model 6 (β = 1.26, p <. 05). As shown in Figure 3.3, when leaders and followers both held high state PA, abusive supervision was not negatively related to followers' creativity. As demonstrated in Table 3.5, the simple slope was not significant (β = 1.34, t = 1.43, p = .15). Although the slope of the relationship between abusive supervision and creativity was positively related to followers' creativity when state PA of leaders and followers were both low (Table 3.5 simple slope = 2.29, t = 2.12, p < .05), the slope difference was not statistically significant between this slope and the slope of the condition when followers and leaders both displayed high state PA (Table 3.5 slope difference: t = -.87, p = .39). Additionally, abusive supervision had the worst influence on individual creativity when followers' state PA was low and leaders' state PA was high; from Table 3.5, the simple slope was significantly negative (β = -2.54, t = -2.16, p < .05). These results supported Hypothesis 2b.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the effect of the previous three-way interaction on creativity was mediated by PPM. Following procedures outlined by Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt (2005), I first tested if (1) the three-way interaction between team abusive supervision, followers' state PA, and leaders' state PA is significantly

related to the mediator (i.e., PPM). As demonstrated by Hypothesis 2a, this effect was significant. I then examined if (2) after controlling for other predictors, the three-way interaction is also significantly related to the dependent variable (i.e., creativity). Hypothesis 2b already justified that this standard is met. Third, (3) after controlling for the mediator × moderator terms (i.e., PPM × followers' state PA, PPM × leaders' state PA, and PPM × followers' state PA × leaders' state PA) and other predictors, the mediator (i.e. PPM) remains significantly related to the dependent variable. This condition was supported as well ($\beta = .10$, $p < .05$ in Table 3.3 Model 7). Finally, (4) after controlling for the mediator (i.e. PPM), I found that the three-way interaction on creativity ($\beta = 1.07$, $p > .05$ in Table 3.3 Model 7) was not significant. Thus, this condition was fully supported because the three-way interaction was not significantly related to the dependent variable, individual creativity. In summary, these findings fulfilled the four criteria and supported Hypothesis 3.

DISCUSSION

This multilevel model demonstrates how team abusive supervision shapes individuals' attributions of leaders' intentions to alter individual creativity. I also show that followers' attribution of PPM could be an underlying pathway that connects abusive supervision with followers' creativity. More specifically, when leaders' state PA and followers' state PA were both high, followers were most likely to interpret abusive supervision as deriving from leaders' intent to boost their performance; whereas when followers' state PA was low and leaders' state PA was

FIGURE 3.2. Interactive Effect of Abusive Supervision, Followers' State PA, and Leaders' State PA on Attributed Performance Promotion Motives (PPM)
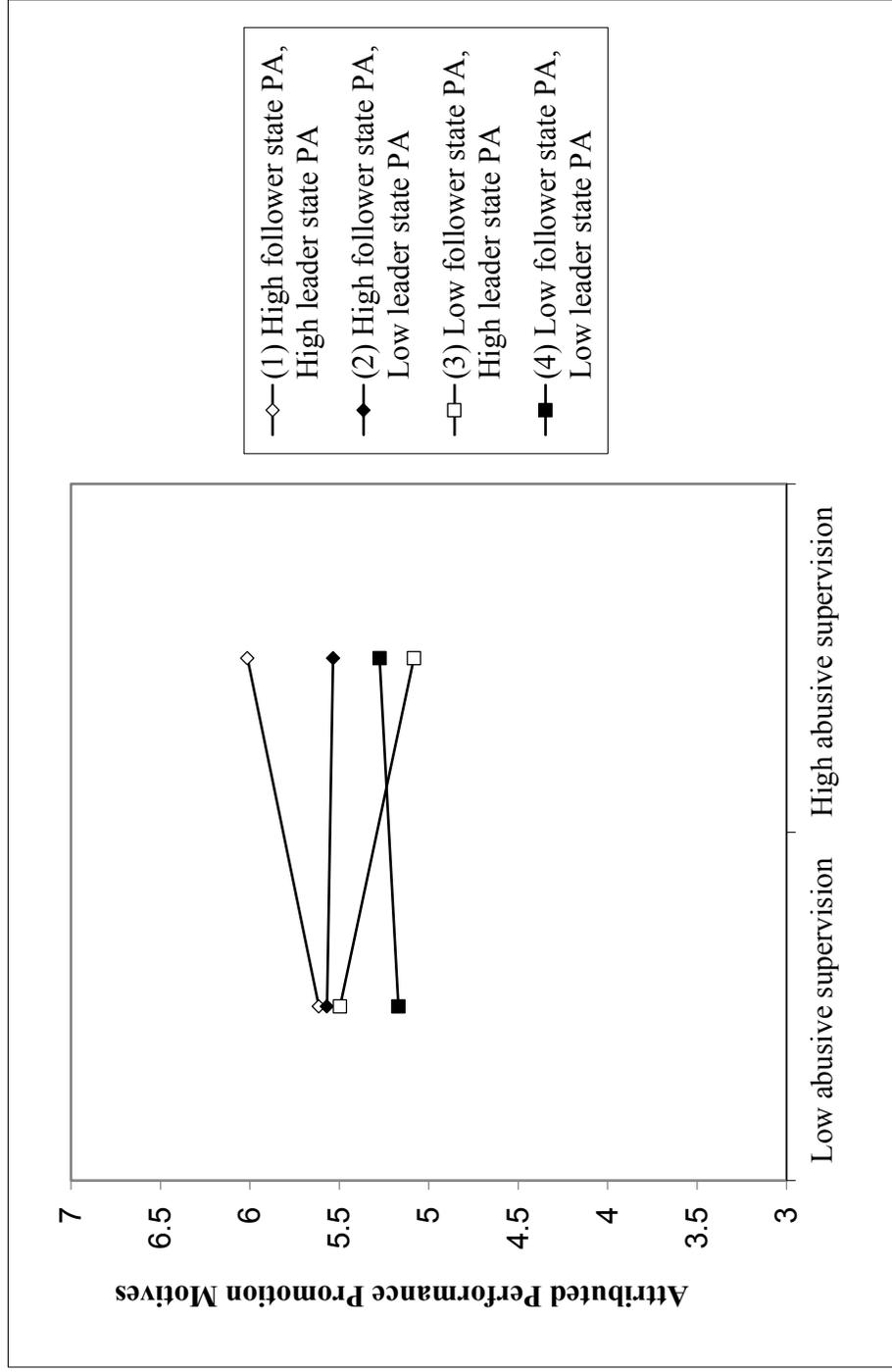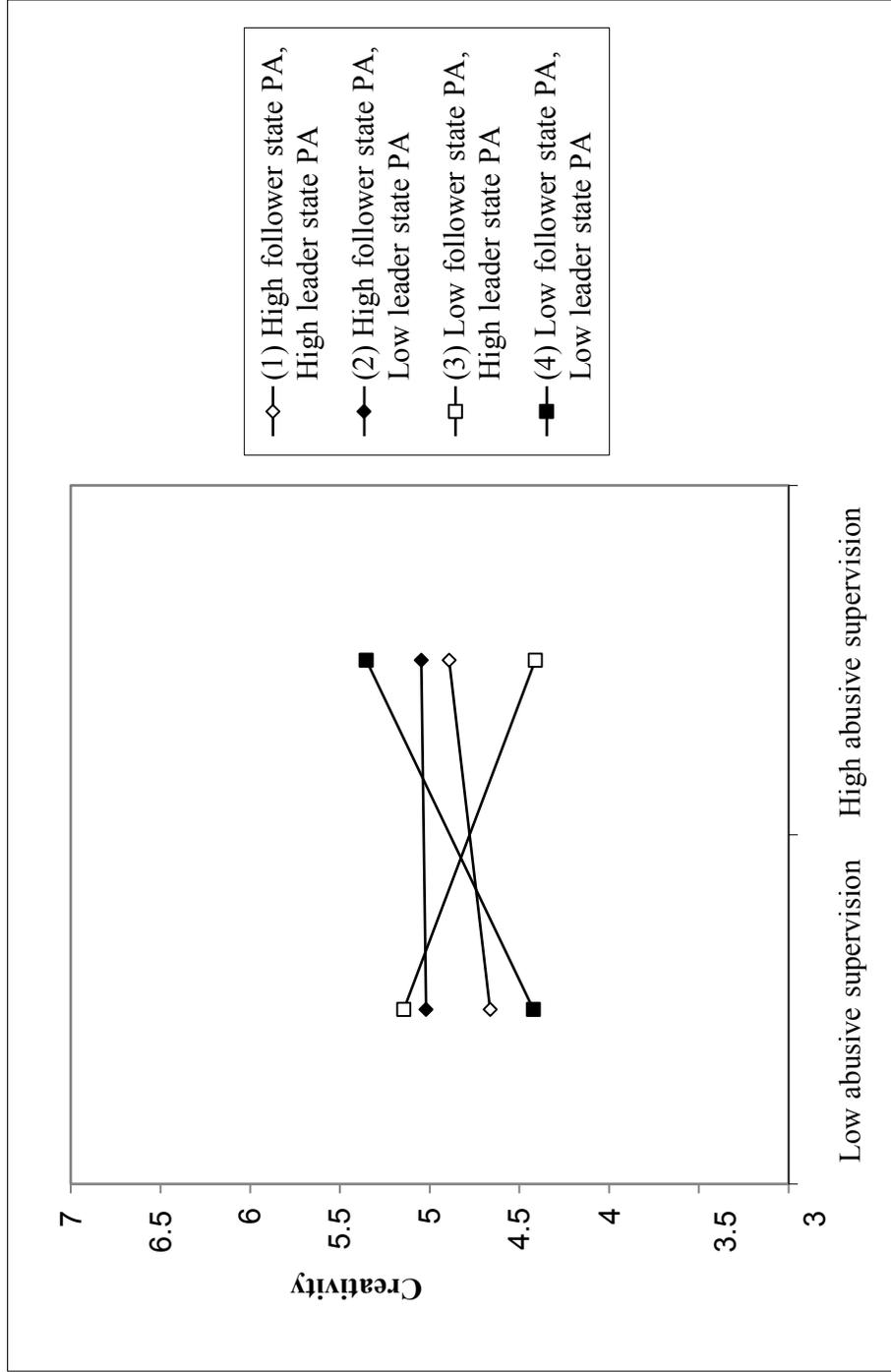
FIGURE 3.3. Interactive Effect of Abusive Supervision, Followers' State PA, and Leaders' State PA on Individual Creativity

high, such attributions were least likely to occur. Followers' positive attribution for their leaders' abusive behaviors sequentially reinforced their creativity.

In addition, hypothesis 1a and 1b regarding the moderating effects of followers' state PA on the relationships between abusive supervision, follower attributed PPM, and follower creativity were not supported. As indicated by previous literature (e.g., Oh & Farh, 2017), abusive supervision is more likely to be associated with malicious intentions from the leader. As such, the negative interpretations of abusive supervision can be so entrenched that followers' state PA alone is not sufficient to redirect followers to think of their leaders' intentions in a positive manner. This potential reason also necessitates the incorporation of leader state PA as another factor to alter the relationships between abusive supervision and follower attributed PPM and creativity. I thus contribute to the abusive supervision and affect literatures by revealing the contingency of state PA of both leaders and followers that links abusive supervision with individual creativity.

Theoretical Implications

My findings add to the abusive supervision literature by offering important and novel insights on how to attenuate the negative effect of abusive supervision on individual creativity. Building on previous research that explored factors to attenuate the damage of abusive supervision from either subordinates' perspectives or from leaders' perspectives, I examined an individual difference (i.e., state PA) from both followers and leaders. More specifically, Cropanzano et al. (2017) proposed the beneficial influence of leader-member affect synchrony (LMAS) on leader-member interactions. Taking advantage of LMAS theory, I took a snapshot

of positive affect synchrony between leaders and followers, and explored the moderating effect of leader-member affect synchrony on the influence of abusive behaviors on individual creativity. More specifically, I found that the negative influence from abusive supervision is most attenuated when leaders and followers both had high state PA; whereas followers' creativity suffers the most when followers had low state PA and leaders demonstrated high state PA. My research finding not only offers a novel perspective to deal with abusive supervision, but also provides the first empirical support of LMAS theory in the context of abusive supervision.

My research also responds to scholars' calls for investigations of attribution of intentionality within the context of leadership (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002). Using PPM as a mediator that connects the three-way interaction with individual creativity, I demonstrate that attributions of intentions can not only moderate the effect of abusive supervision on employees' creativity (Liu et al., 2012), but also can act as a bridge to connect leaders' behaviors with followers' reactions. Hence, this study adds to the abusive supervision literature by broadening the range of the underlying processes of the functioning of abusive supervision. This addition is important because the extant literature has primarily examined the processes from the perspectives of team processes and individual emotions (e.g., Priesemuth et al., 2014; Simon et al., 2015), and few studies have empirically looked at attribution as a potential mechanism (for exceptions, see Dasborough & Ashkanasy 2004; Howat & London, 1980; Thomas & Pondy, 1977).

Third, I further contribute to the affect and attribution literature by utilizing affect to interpret the emergence of PPM in an abusive context. This investigation of the antecedents and boundary conditions for the formation of specific motives is important, in that scholars have recommended unveiling the followers' attribution of abusive leader intent (e.g., Liu et al., 2012; Tepper, 2007). However, few studies have been conducted in the abusive supervision area. Responding to Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002)'s call to look into leaders' and members' affect and the attributional process, I first empirically test the moderating role of leader-member positive affect synchrony on the relationship between abusive supervision and follower attributed PPM. This finding supports LMAS theory and sheds light on its application in followers' attributions of abusive workplace behaviors.

Fourth, this study elaborates the critical role of state PA in reducing the destructive effects of abusive supervision on followers. Previous literature has demonstrated that trait positive affect (trait PA) is helpful in counteracting behavioral damage caused by abusive behaviors (e.g., Harvey et al., 2007). However, considering that trait PA is relatively stable and hard to change, its application to employees already employed within organizations is relatively limited. By shifting the focus to state PA, which as a mood is more malleable, my findings sheds light on how to improve followers' creativity in abusive work settings. This result is also consistent with the call from previous literature for more affect research in the abusive supervision area (e.g., Harvey et al., 2007; Tepper et al., 2006).

Finally, in support of attribution theory and LMAS theory, my test of the overall three-way interaction moderated mediation model shows that the extent to which PPM mediates the relationship between team abusive supervision and individual creativity depends on both leaders' state PA and followers' state PA. Past research proposes that attributions of intentionality could connect leadership with employees' responses to leader behaviors (e.g., Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002). However, existing studies are generally silent as to the conditions under which the mediating effect of attribution of motives is amplified or attenuated. Through employing a three-way moderated mediation analysis, I was able to conduct a holistic test of my theoretical model on the influence of abusive supervision on individual creativity.

Practical Implications

My research provides significant implications for practice. First, my findings elaborate that although abusive supervision harms follower creativity, this damage can be mitigated by followers' attributional processes. In essence, abusive supervision is based on followers' perceptions (Martinko et al., 2012), and thus it is how followers encode all of the behavioral information they receive from their leader that determines the influence of abusive supervision. As explained in Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002; 2004), leaders with sincere intentions should be transparent about their motives, and communicate them with followers.

Another implication of this research relates directly to followers' and leaders' state PA. I found that subordinates' state PA, combined with leaders' state PA could mold their judgements about abusive behaviors, and thus weaken the

negative effect of abusive supervision. Different from trait PA, which is relatively stable and hard to change, state PA is more malleable (Watson & Clark, 1984). Taking advantage of this, I recommend that organizations arrange activities that could facilitate followers' positive emotional experiences (Brief & Weiss, 2002). For instance, scholars have discovered that state PA can be cultivated from having work breaks, such as having a cup of coffee (Trougakos, Beal, Green, & Weiss, 2008) or other low-effort activities such as small talks with coworkers (Miner, Glomb, & Hulin, 2005).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Despite these strengths, my study also has some limitations that provide directions for future studies. First, I only considered a snapshot of leader-member affect synchrony and investigated its influence on the link between team abusive supervision and individual creativity. Although my three-way interaction model is already too complicated to add longitudinal and repetitive measures of state PA, I highly recommend that future studies look into mutual entrainment of state PA of both leaders and followers over time, to continue exploring the application of LMAS theory to the abusive supervision context.

A second limitation is with regard to my Chinese sample. Typically, the mean level of abusive supervision seems to be higher in China than in the United States (Mackey et al., 2015). As such, my research findings might be different if the data collection were in the United States. However, the abusive supervision variable exhibited enough variance to enable statistical examination of my hypotheses and the mean of abusive supervision was also comparable with that in other studies

conducted in the United States (e.g., Liu et al., 2012). Also, similar to other abusive supervision studies, I did not incorporate cultural values to my theoretical model (e.g., Aryee, Sun, Chen, & Debrah, 2008). From this perspective, I cannot posit if Chinese cultural values play a role in shaping my previously mentioned research findings. Nevertheless, I encourage scholars to examine this research in other cultural settings and investigate if cultural backgrounds exert a significant difference in the attributional processes with regard to abusive supervision; if so, what types of cultural values might distinguish these attributional processes.

Another limitation of my study is my focus on state PA. Although I controlled for state NA, I still cannot speak the extent to which state NA of leaders and followers might alter followers' creativity. As indicated by LMAS theory, the predictions regarding state NA of followers and leaders are not straightforward, but rely on the specific objects that the state NA is targeted toward. Hence, a valuable extension of this research is to incorporate specific objects that the state NA of leaders and followers concerns. For instance, when both leaders and followers express state NA toward events outside of the dyad, positive interpersonal relationships develop; whereas when they both hold state NA targeted toward each other, low quality relationships could result.

CONCLUSION

This essay examined the contingent role of leader-member affect synchrony on the effect of team abusive supervision on employee creativity. By introducing performance promotion motives as a mechanism, I also unravel the underlying process that connects the interactive influences of leaders' state PA, followers'

state PA, and team abusive supervision on employee creativity. More specifically, when followers and leaders both have high state PA, abusive supervision is most likely to be considered as being driven by performance promotion motives, which in turn fosters follower creativity. However, this attribution of performance promotion motives is least likely to occur when followers have low state PA and leaders have high state PA. My study makes valuable contributions to the abusive supervision literature by shedding light on when and how team abusive supervision exerts an impact on employee creativity. I thereby call on more scholars to explore other factors that might help to attenuate the negative influence of abusive supervision on follower creativity.

CHAPTER 4: OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation investigates the relationship between team abusive supervision and followers' creativity. This dissertation aims to untangle the underlying processes and one contingency so as to reduce the negative impacts from abusive supervision on followers' creativity. Both essays make unique contributions, as illustrated below.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The past two decades have witnessed a burgeoning of research on abusive supervision. While existing literature offers evidence on unravelling the underlying processes that connect abusive supervision to followers' behaviors, investigations on team processes as mechanisms have been inadequate. Using the theoretical lens of COR, this dissertation explains how team abusive supervision gradually drains critical resources in followers; the decreasing levels of resources in turn trigger a disturbing team process, team conflict, which finally inhibits followers' creativity.

Second, this dissertation introduces team negative affect as a representation of emotional resource availability in teams. It has long been known that leaders can evoke negative affect in their employees (see Dasborough, 2006). In the case of abusive supervisors, there has been empirical evidence demonstrating the effect of abusive supervision on employees' psychological distress (e.g. Restubog, Scott, & Zagenczyk, 2011). While these effects have been examined at the individual level, to date we know little about their impact at the team level. By demonstrating the accumulation of individual employee's negative affect to the team level, this

dissertation thereby displays a clear picture of how the negative impact of abusive supervision spreads in teams from an affective resource perspective.

Third, this dissertation incorporates state mindfulness to reflect team attentional resource availability. Recently, in the organizational behavior literature, mindfulness has been adopted as a type of resource which is useful for dealing with workplace stressors (Hülsheger et al., 2013; Liang et al., 2016). However, I have not found published studies that consider abusive supervision as a kind of stress that significantly consumes this kind of attentional resources in followers. By adopting team state mindfulness as a reflection of the team's overall store of team attentional resources, this dissertation is the first to explain how mistreatment may ignite conflict in teams from an attentional resource perspective.

Fourth, this dissertation adds to leader-member affect synchrony theory by first examining and extending this theory to the context of abusive supervision. Applying LMAS theory, I take a snapshot of positive affect synchrony between leaders and followers, and find that when leaders and follower both have high state PA, the negative influence from abusive supervision is most attenuated. As such, my research finding not only offers a novel perspective to deal with abusive supervision, but also provides the first empirical support of LMAS theory in the field of abusive supervision.

Finally, using PPM as a mediator that connects the three-way interaction with individual creativity, this study adds to the abusive supervision literature by broadening the range of the underlying pathways that point to followers' creativity. This addition is important in that the extant literature has primarily examined the

processes from the perspectives of team processes and individual emotional states, and few studies have viewed attribution of leaders' intent as a potential mechanism (for exceptions, see Dasborough & Ashkanasy 2004; Howat & London, 1980; Thomas & Pondy, 1977). My findings thus fill in this research gap by highlighting the predominant role of individual attributional processes in changing individual creativity.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This dissertation has the following managerial implications. First, as demonstrated in the empirical findings, followers have leeway in how they respond to abusive leaders. Although followers' creativity is handicapped by emotional and attentional resource constraints caused by abusive leaders, followers are still encouraged to replenish these resources through other sources, such as support from organizations, coworkers, and family (e.g., Kim & Yun, 2015; Mackey et al., 2015; Schaubroeck et al., 2016). In addition, studies have recommended numerous manners for followers to refill their exhausted energies (e.g., Good et al., 2016). Some simple tactics such as having a short lunch break is conducive for refreshing people's minds (Trougakos et al., 2008). As such, for those organizations that have abusive leaders, it is important for these organizations to offer options to help followers get recharged from resource depletion.

Second, this dissertation suggests that high state PA of both leaders and followers help followers survive in abusive work environments. A primary advantage of state PA is that it is manageable and can be enhanced through training (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Results support that emotional intelligence

training facilitates the detailed guidance of emotional regulation and maintenance of positive emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Moreover, one team member's state PA can also be contagious to other team members (Barsade, 2002). Thus, recruiting some members who generally demonstrate high state PA might uplift the state PA of the whole work teams (Barsade, 2002).

Finally, this dissertation has elaborated that once PPM are perceived by followers, the negative influence of abusive supervision on followers' creativity can be attenuated. As such, it is recommended for leaders to be transparent about their PPM if they choose abusive treatment to propel their followers to work toward high achievement.

FUTURE EXTENSIONS

This dissertation adopts the concept of team abusive supervision, considering that abusive supervision happens in teams, and each individual member might be a direct or indirect victim of this behavior. There is also other existing literature that considers abusive supervision as a team level phenomenon in which different members suffer from distinct degrees of mistreatment, that is, the concept of abusive supervision differentiation (Ogunfowora, 2013; Todorova, Qu, Dasborough, & Zhou, 2015). As such, one future direction is to look into abusive supervision differentiation and unravel how it might affect followers' creativity.

Another important extension is how high mindfulness can be utilized to help followers overcome the challenges of having an abusive leader. For instance, researchers have supported the recharging effects of mindfulness (for a review, see Good et al., 2016). However, whether mindfulness can effectively aid followers in

recovering resource loss in the face of an abusive leader is still unknown. It is also worth noting that mindful followers could be the first team members to notice that abusive supervision is taking place in teams, whereas mindless followers might luckily escape from such mistreatment while they are occupied with the past or worrying about the future. Further, the PHLMS scale (Cardaciotto, Herbert, Forman, Moitra, & Farrow, 2008) has separated one dimension of mindfulness, "awareness" from the other dimension, "acceptance". It would be interesting to explore if the awareness dimension of mindfulness could even accentuate the negative influences of abusive supervision on followers.

A third interesting extension is to conduct more in-depth investigation of the causality of my proposed models. Although I employ a two-wave study design and multisource measures to strengthen the causal inferences of my study, my dissertation still does not provide strong causal evidence. This opens another research avenue that points to adoptions of other research methods, such as experimental design, cross-lagged panel correlation, and experience sampling methodology (ESM; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987; Wheeler & Reis, 1991) for more robust support for proposed causal relationships in my studies.

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