



# The Influence of Abusive Supervision on Subordinates' Performance, Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Knowledge Hiding

## The Mediating Role of Organizational Justice

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### Abstract

The main purpose of the paper is to examine the effects of abusive supervision on positive and negative behaviors of employees (originality and organizational citizenship behavior, counterproductive work behavior, knowledge hiding behaviors, and job burnout). This study is applied research and survey-analytical based on covariance matrix analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM). We tested hypotheses on data collected from 478 employees through seven surveys over a 3-month period in National Iranian Gas Company and its subsidiary companies. The main results show that abusive supervision positively affects on counterproductive work behavior, knowledge hiding behaviors, and job burnout; and negatively affects on originality and organizational citizenship behavior. This study demonstrates the mediating role of organizational justice in the effects of abusive supervision on variables, and thus deepens the understanding of the mediating effect. Findings show that organizational justice has a mediating role in the relationship between abusive supervision and negative behaviors of subordinates, and reduce the positive effect of abusive supervision on counterproductive work behaviors, burnout and knowledge hiding behaviors. The results of control variables (gender and subordinate position) show that the effect of abusive supervision on OCB, in men, is more negative than women. Also perception of organizational justice in staff employees is more than line Employees. Also in staff, the mediating role of organizational justice on the effect of abusive supervision on the originality and CWB behaviors, is more than the line Employees.

**Keywords:** *Abusive Supervision; Organizational Justice; Organizational Citizenship Behavior; Knowledge Hiding Behavior; Counterproductive Work Behavior.*

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## The Influence of Abusive Supervision on Subordinates' Performance, Organizational Citizenship behavior and Knowledge Hiding The Mediating Role of Organizational Justice

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### Abstract

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## Introduction

The vast majority of research on traditional leadership focuses on effective and positive leadership behavior, especially the ways in which positive encouragement and substantive incentives stimulate subordinates and improve behavior and performance. However, scholars have begun to pay attention to the impact of negative leadership behavior on employees and the organization (e.g. Ashforth, 1987, 1994, 1997; Bies, 1999; Duffy et al., 2002; Tepper, 2000). According to Tepper (2007), negative leadership concepts include petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1987, 1994, 1997), workplace victimization (Aquino, 2000), workplace bullying (Hoel and Cooper, 2001), supervisor aggression (Schat et al., 2006), supervisor undermining (Duffy et al., 2002), negative mentoring experiences (Eby et al., 2000), generalized hierarchical abuse (Vredenburgh and Brender, 1998) and abusive supervision. Abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000, 2007; Tepper et al., 2001) is a central area of negative leadership research. The idea of “bad bosses” has not only captured the attention of the popular media in recent years (Middleton, 2011) but has also garnered substantial research attention in the organizational behavior/ management literature.

Recent contributions to the leadership literature suggest that some supervisors perform behaviors that can be characterized as tyrannical (Ashforth, 1994), bullying (Hoel, Rayner, & Cooper, 1999), undermining (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002), or abusive (Keashly, Trott, & MacLean, 1994). The term we will use, abusive supervision, refers to “subordinates’ perceptions of the extent to which their supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact” (Tepper, 2000, p. 178). Abusive supervision, a form of nonphysical aggression, is a reality of today's organization. Abusive supervision has been shown to impact aspects of the work domain, such as reduced job satisfaction (Tepper, 2000, 2007) and increased workplace deviance (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone, & Duffy, 2008; Thau, Bennett, Mitchell, & Marrs, 2009).

Although abusive supervision is a low base-rate phenomenon, its effects are noteworthy. A small but growing body of empirical research suggests that abused subordinates report greater job and life dissatisfaction, intentions to quit their jobs, role conflict, and psychological distress, compared with their non-abused counterparts (Ashforth, 1997; Duffy et al.,

2002; Keashly et al., 1994), and that subordinates' perceptions of unfairness explain their responses to abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000). Hence, abusive supervision represents a source of injustice that has serious implications for organizations and employees (Bies & Tripp, 1998). The extant research on abusive supervision demonstrates that these behaviors have an unquestionably negative impact on various work outcomes such as increased levels of stress-related problems (Duffy et al., 2002; Tepper, 2000); increased levels of turnover intention, actual turnover, and workplace deviance (Tepper, 2000; Zellars et al., 2002); and lower levels of job satisfaction and commitment (Duffy et al., 2002; Tepper, 2000). Studies have also shown that abusive supervision is negatively related to discretionary behaviors (Xu, Huang, Lam, & Miao, 2012; Zellars et al., 2002).

Given the increasing of abusive workplace behaviors and their potentially detrimental effects on organizational and individual outcomes, it is worthwhile examining the link between abusive supervision and Variables affecting organizational performance. Variables such as hiding knowledge, organizational citizenship behavior, and originality, counterproductive work behavior and job burnout, which has not yet been examined in detail.

In general, it can be said that the productivity and development of any organization depends to some extent on the correct use of human resources. Employees who can respond to the challenges of the environment and are not afraid of sharing their knowledge and Originality (Zarei Matin et al., 1390).

Considering the importance of the National Iranian Gas Company in the production of natural gas and the country's economy and based on previous research (e.g., Rezaeizadeh, 2016) which examined the understanding of organizational justice and its dimensions among the employees of the National Iranian Gas Company, and according to the results, that show the unfavorable situation of organizational justice among the employees, we decided to examine more precisely the organizational justice in this organization and its role on the positive and negative behaviors of employees.

Existing research has investigated the effect of abusive supervision on only two or three variables. We have studied the subject literature and

examined the importance of variables and the importance effect of abusive supervision on them, and then selected five important variables and simultaneously have added to the model under study.

## Literature Review

Abusive supervision, defined as “subordinates’ perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact” (Tepper, 2000: 178), has received growing research attention over recent years. Numerous studies showed that abusive supervision strongly influences employee behaviors (Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2017; Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013; Tepper, 2007; Zhang & Liao, 2016). Empirical studies and metaanalyses found converging evidence of its detrimental effects on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (e.g., Aryee, Sun, Chen, & Debrah, 2008; Mackey et al., 2017; Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone, & Duffy, 2008; Zhang et al., 2019) and job burnout (Yagil, 2006; Harvey et al., 2007; Tepper, 2007; Breaux et al., 2008; Wu and Hu, 2009; Khan et al., 2010).

Other studies on abusive supervision have summarized below:

**Table 1. Previous investigations and their results**

Authors' Names	Article Title	Year	Publication	Summary Of Conclusion
Yang& Huang	An uncertainty management theory on the effects of abusive supervision	2019	Journal of Management Decision	abusive supervision positively affects counterproductive work behavior
Zhang& Bednall	Why abusive supervision impacts employee OCB and CWB	2019	Journal of Management	organizational justice and work stress mediated the influence of abusive Supervision on OCB and CWB
Khalid et al	When and how abusive supervision leads to knowledge hiding behaviors	2018	Leadership & Organization Development Journal	the abusive supervision is positively associated with a knowledge hiding behaviors
Yang et al	Job Burnout of Construction Project Managers	2018	Journal of Construction Engineering and Management	procedural and interactional justice buffered the impact of job stress on job burnout

(Continue) Table 1. Previous investigations and their results

Kim et al	Abusive supervision and knowledge sharing	2018	Personnel Review	negative relationship between abusive supervision and employees' knowledge sharing
Lee et al	A moderated mediation model of the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge sharing	2018	The Leadership Quarterly	organizational justice mediates the positive relationship between abusive supervision and employees' emotional exhaustion
Gu et al	Abusive supervision and employee creativity in china	2016	Leadership & Organization Development Journal	abusive supervision is negatively related to employee creativity
Gregory et al	Abusive supervision and citizenship behaviors	2013	Journal of Managerial Psychology	negative relationship between abusive supervision and OCBs
Liu and Wang	Abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behaviour	2013	The International Journal of Human Resource Management	abusive supervision was negatively related to organizational citizenship behaviors
Wang et al	Abusive supervision and workplace deviance	2012	Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources	interactional justice mediates the link between abusive supervision and workplace deviance
Rafferty and Restubog	The influence of abusive supervisors on followers' organizational citizenship behaviours	2011	British Journal of Management	interpersonal justice mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and prosocial silence
Mitchell & Ambrose	Abusive supervision and workplace deviance and the moderating effects of negative reciprocity beliefs	2007	Journal of Applied Psychology	abusive supervision is positively related to all types of employee deviance
Moliner et al	Linking organizational justice to burnout	2005	Psychological Reports	abusive supervision is positively related to all types of employee deviance

Sadafi Mousavi, & Jafari	Investigating the Effect of Abusive Surveillance on Distributed Justice and Job Satisfaction	1397	The 5th National Conference on Applied Research in Management & Accounting	The distribution of justice in the relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction plays the role of mediating variable.
Zare et al	Impact supervisors' perceptions of interactional justice on abusive supervision	1395	Iranian Journal of Public Administration Mission	interactional justice has a negative and significant impact on abusive supervision
Safari & Radnia	The Relationship between Perceived Organizational Justice and Organizational Behavior	1392	International Conference on Civil Engineering, Architecture & Sustainable Urban development	showed that there is a meaningful relationship between Perceived Organizational Justice and Organizational Behavior
Sarboland & Eskandarzadeh	the Effect of Organizational Justice on Organizational Citizenship Behavior	1392	The first National Conference on Business Management.	showed that organizational justice affects organizational citizenship behavior

Yang, Lin, Fang, S. & Huang (2019) showed that abusive supervision positively affects counterproductive work behavior and future orientation positively moderates both the relationship between abusive supervision and originality behavior and the relationship between abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

Zhang., Liu, Xu, Yang, & Bednall, (2019) showed that both organizational justice and work stress mediated the influence of abusive Supervision on OCB and CWB. Finally, showed that the effect of abusive supervision on CWB was stronger in masculine cultures than in feminine cultures.

Khalid, Bashir, Khan, & Abbas, (2018) Showed that the abusive supervision is positively associated with a knowledge hiding behaviors. This relationship is mediated by perceptions of interpersonal justice, but the IWE moderated this relationship such that in the presence of high levels of IWE, the impact of abusive supervision on knowledge hiding behaviors is weak.



Mackey, McAllister, Maher, & Wang, (2018) demonstrated that there are a strong relationships between destructive leadership and followers' workplace behaviors (i.e., job performance, OCBs, and workplace deviance).

Yang, Li, Song, Li, & Zhu, Y (2018) showed that different organizational justice dimensions have different roles on job burnout. Through mediating paths, justice had the most significant impact on the cynicism and low professional efficacy, while procedural and interactional injustice resulted in their exhaustion. In addition, procedural and interactional justice buffered the impact of job stress on job burnout.

Kim, Son, & Yun, (2018) investigated Abusive supervision and knowledge sharing and the moderating role of organizational tenure. The authors found evidence that there was a negative relationship between abusive supervision and employees' knowledge sharing behavior.

Lee, Kim, & Yun, (2018) suggests that organizational justice mediates the positive relationship between abusive supervision and employees' emotional exhaustion and attenuates the negative indirect effect of abusive supervision on employees' knowledge-sharing behaviors.

Kim, Lee, & Yun (2016) studied abusive supervision, knowledge sharing, and individual factors. The results showed that abused employees who experience depleted resources are likely to reduce their level of knowledge sharing, in accordance with COR theory.

Gu, Song, & Wu (2016) indicate that abusive supervision is negatively related to employee creativity and this relationship is fully mediated by departmental identification.

Gregory, Osmonbekov, Gregory, Albritton, & Carr (2013) indicate that the negative relationship between abusive supervision and OCBs is more pronounced when employees have been supervised by a particular manager for a longer period of time.

Hoobler, J& Hu (2013) tested a model of workplace interactional injustice, abusive supervision, and subordinate outcomes (work-family conflict and job performance) using affect to explain behavior. They found that supervisors' interactional justice perceptions were negatively associated with supervisors' negative affect, which was positively related to supervisors engaging in abusive supervision. Abusive supervision, in turn, was positively associated with subordinates' negative affect, which was

associated with greater family member perceptions of work–family conflict.

Liu and Wang (2013) found that abusive supervision was negatively related to organizational citizenship behaviors toward individuals but not to organizational citizenship behaviors toward the organization.

Wang, Mao, Wu, & Liu (2012) extends the existing research of abusive supervision by investigating the mediating role of the perception of interactional justice in the link between abusive supervision and workplace deviance. Findings provide that the perception of interactional justice mediates the link between abusive supervision and workplace deviance.

Xu et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behaviors involving the organization and individuals. However, several studies have not found a negative relationship between abusive supervision and OCBs (Gregory, Osmonbekov, Gregory, Albritton, & Carr, 2013; Liu & Wang, 2013; Rafferty & Restubog, 2011).

Rafferty and Restubog (2011) found that interpersonal justice mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and pro-social silence, a construct similar to knowledge hiding.

Jones (2009) showed that individuals tend to have counterproductive work behaviors against abusive supervision.

Mitchell & Ambrose. (2007) showed abusive supervision influences employees' willingness to engage in negative behavior as well. Specifically, abusive supervision is positively related to all types of employee deviance. Moreover, the relationship between abusive supervision and supervisor-directed deviance is stronger for employees with stronger negative reciprocity beliefs.

Moliner, Martínez-Tur, Peiró, & Ramos (2005) indicated the predominance of procedural justice over distributive and interpersonal with regard to the direct relationships between organizational justice and burnout. Also showed that links from interactional justice with exhaustion and cynicism were greater for women than for men.

Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy (2002) explored the relationship between subordinates' perceptions of abusive supervision and supervisors' evaluations of subordinates' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The relationship between abusive supervision and subordinates' OCB was stronger among subordinates who defined OCB as extra-role behavior.

Sadafi Mousavi, & Jafari (1397) showed that the transparency of the role and adequacy of job resources in the relationship between abusive supervision and justice has a moderating role and as much as these two variables have a greater presence in the organization, the effect of supervisors' undesirable behaviors on employees' perceived justice is reduced. The results also showed that the distribution of justice in the relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction plays the role of mediating variable.

Zare, Zarei., Jamali, & Roustai (1395) showed that supervisors' perceptions of interactional justice has a negative and significant impact on abusive supervision and authoritarian leadership style as independent variable has Positive and significant impact on abusive supervision. It was also found authoritarian leadership style as a moderator variable, has a positive and significant impact but weak in relationship between supervisors' perceptions of interactional justice and abusive supervision.

Safari, and Radnia (1392) showed that there is a meaningful relationship between perceived distribution of justice, the perception of procedural justice, the perception of interactive justice, as well as perceived organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior.

Sarboland & Eskandarzadeh (1392) showed that organizational justice affects organizational citizenship behavior of Sepah Bank employees.

From the existing research of abusive supervision, the positive behaviors and the negative behaviors that affect the internal members of the work and are affected by abusive supervision, So far, are all discussed separately, also available studies only examined one or two variables. Given that human behavior is complex and different under different circumstances, it is therefore necessary to examine a set of positive & negative variables in the research simultaneously. In this research we have tried to cover this research gap. We have examined the effect of abusive supervision on a set of variables such as knowledge hiding, job burnout, Counterproductive work behavior, creativity, and organizational citizenship behavior. Also, since employee performance is directly and positively correlated with perceived organizational Justice (Aryee et al., 2007; Keashly, 1997; Tepper, 2000),) then we use organizational Justice as a mediator variable. It is hoped that this study will provide a more in-depth understanding of the role of abusive supervision in hampering organizations efficiency and success.

Thus, abusive supervision is the focus of the present study. The central approach of this study is to use justice perspective to analyze the main effect.

## **Theoretical background and hypotheses development**

### **Abusive supervision and counterproductive work behavior**

Counterproductive work behavior is also known as disruptive behavior, which is defined as the intent to harm the organization and members of the organization through spontaneous, inappropriate behavior (Spector and Fox, 2002). In similar studies of counterproductive work behavior, the research topics include antisocial behavior (Giacalone and Greenberg, 1997), organizational vice (Moberg, 1997), workplace aggression (Baron and Neuman, 1996), organizational retaliation (Skarlicki and Folger, 1997), organizational misbehavior (Vardi and Wiener, 1996; Vardi and Weitz, 2004), workplace aggression (Baron and Neuman, 1996), organization-motivated aggression (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 1996) and non-compliant behavior (Puffer, 1987). Research indicates that abusive supervision and supervisor's violation of goals (Inness et al., 2005), subordinates' anger (Schat et al., 2006), counterproductive work behavior of subordinates (Duffy et al., 2002) and subordinates abnormal behavior (Mitchell and Ambrose, 2007) are positively related to decrease work production. Domagalski and Steelman's (2005) research indicates that subordinates at work suffer from violence and unjust treatment, which can induce an angry emotional reaction, further affecting the behavior of subordinates work. Interpersonal conflicts is a driving factor in deviant behavior (Robinson & Greenberg, 1998). Workplace experiences such as frustration, injustices, and threats to self are primary antecedents to employee deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2003). Ashforth (1997) suggested that abusive supervision promotes feelings of frustration, helplessness, and alienation. Tepper (2000) found that abusive supervision negatively influences perceptions of justice. Thus, abusive supervision is a likely antecedent of employee deviance.

Based on research (Sulea et al., 2012) the CWB mainly comes from interpersonal conflicts in the workplace, where job involvement plays a partial intermediary role in interpersonal conflicts and the CWB. If in interactions between supervisors and subordinates, supervisors continue to show improper behavior, in the long run it will lead to psychological problems, such as job nervousness and emotional debilitation (Harvey et al., 2007; Breaux et al., 2008; Khan et al., 2010), which all lead to subordinates' feelings of frustration and helplessness. When faced with abusive supervision, subordinates will perceive it as unfair (Tepper, 2000, 2007). The fairness perspective must be taken into consideration when evaluating workplace satisfaction. When employees faced with unfair individual messages,

will react negatively (Adams, 1963). Individuals will attempt to determine, through a fair exchange process, to reduce social unfairness, face an uncertain environment and treated unfairly, will be timely controlled on the environment, have negative attitudes and behaviors on the organization, and have a positive impact on counterproductive work behavior. Subordinates attack behavior is purposeful and goal oriented (Tedeschi and Felson, 1994). When the source of the attack is the supervisor, subordinates might respond by directly counter-attacking the offending supervisors; however, when subordinates do not retaliate against the source, they may choose a more available or less threatening target to attacks (Inness et al., 2005). Subordinates in a stressful environment and unfair organization will develop negative emotions such as anger and then make decisions that are counterproductive to work behavior. Therefore, we propose the following assumption:

H1a. Abusive supervision is positively related to subordinates' counterproductive work behavior.

### **Mediating effect of organizational justice**

Drawing upon COR<sup>1</sup> theory, this study examined the impact of abusive supervision on variables. It also investigated the mediating effect of distributive justice on the relationship between abusive supervision and the variables. In recent years, organizational justice has emerged as an important factor in understanding subordinates' experiences in stressful situations such as abusive supervision. Substantial empirical evidence demonstrates that employees' perceptions of justice can affect their reactions to stress within an organization (Cole et al., 2010; Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000). Thus, this study proposes that organizational justice alleviates the negative psychological and behavioral outcomes of abusive supervision.

The term organizational justice was first coined by Greenberg (1987) and includes three aspects: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Colquitt et al. 2001). Distributive justice is primarily concerned with the perceived fairness of the distribution of tangible or intangible resources and outcomes of organizational processes and decisions (Greenberg 1990). Procedural justice can be defined as the perceived

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1. Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory is a stress theory that describes the motivation that drives humans to both maintain their current resources and to pursue new resources.

fairness of the formal processes and policies through which decisional outcomes are allocated and end products are achieved (Thibaut and Walker 1975). Bies and Shapiro (1987) suggested that people tended to focus on the interpersonal treatment and, more specifically, on the mistreatment that they experienced. Thus, interactional justice is concerned with the fairness in one's interactions with and the information received from an organization's representatives (Bies and Shapiro 1987).

### **Organizational Justice Perceptions and Counterproductive Work Behavior**

Fair conduct of the supervisor is positively associated with a wide range of beneficial employee outcomes such as greater productivity, a stronger commitment to organizational goals, and lower turnover intentions (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). employees who believe their supervisors are fair are more likely to have less cynicism, and are more committed to organizational goals (Bradford & Quinton, 2014; Bradford, Quinton, Myhill, & Porter, 2014), have more favorable attitudes toward the public (Myhill & Bradford, 2013) and are more likely to support the use of procedurally-fair treatment of citizens (Myhill & Bradford, 2013; Tankebe, 2014b; Trinkner, Tyler, & Goff, 2016). Organizationally-fair treatment also appears to translate into better relationships with the public. On the other hand, the experience of organizational injustice appears to cultivate anger and leads to production deviance and self-protective behaviors (Reynolds, Fitzgerald, & Hicks, 2017).

Organizational justice also appears to protect against counterproductive work behaviors (Bechtoldt, Welk, Zapf, & Hartig, 2007; Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001). A number of studies show that individuals who perceive greater unfairness tend to engage in more CWB (e.g., Aquino, Galperin, & Bennett, 2004). Prior research has demonstrated that Abusive supervision is positively associated with organization-, interpersonal-, and leader-directed deviance (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). Perceived injustice of any type may relate to CWB because employees who feel unfairly treated may reduce their cooperative behaviors to avoid exploitation (Lind, 2001). And in general CWB is a manifestation of behavioral strain (Kahn et al., 1964; Spector, Dwyer, & Jex, 1998). Therefore, in this study we consider the following hypothesis:

H1b. organizational Justice has a mediator role in the relationship between abusive supervision and counterproductive work behavior

### **Abusive supervision and originality**

Originality explains the ability and traits of a creative person (Guilford, 1950). Originality contains personal factors and situational factors, and is affected by social environment interactions. Originality contains three ingredients: field relevant skills, creativity relevant skills and motivation (Amabile, 1988; Amabile et al., 1996). Individual creativity is the product of the interaction of these three ingredients. In summary, originality is a multi-structure, including the process of individuals to generate new ideas, personal traits, willingness to engage in innovation and environmental feedback on individual efforts (Mumford and Gustafson, 1988). When supervisors question subordinate creativity and degree of contribution, subordinates realize supervisors as fair (Lian et al., 2012) and dedicated to their job (Aryee et al., 2007).

Abusive behaviors of the supervisor will produce comparisons discrepancies, which can cause psychological disappointment and helplessness, and hinder the will and motivation behind originality (Scott and Bruce, 1994), causing workers to decide to reduce output and regulate the originality behavior. Therefore, we propose the following assumption:

H2a. Abusive supervision is negatively related to subordinates' originality.

### **Organizational justice perceptions and originality**

Innovative employees often challenge colleagues and established routines (Janssen, 2004), and arguably, they need some psychological support, safety and justice before they engage in creativity and innovation. Along similar lines of research, Khazanchi and Mitchell (2011) found that the effects of interactional justice from the organization and the supervisor on employee creativity were mediated by trust and social exchange processes. Janssen (2004) found positive effects of innovative behavior on burnout and anxiety when procedural and distributive forms of justice were low. Khaola, P., & Coldwell, D. (2019) found that organizational justice relates to originality through affective commitment, and Agarwal's (2014) study found that psychological contract, procedural justice and interactional justice link to originality indirectly through trust and work engagement in series. Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017) recently posited that intrinsic motivation which undergirds originality flourishes in contexts characterized by security and justice. Overall, as asserted with regard to leadership, the existing literature (albeit limited) suggests complex relationships between organizational justice and originality. So, we propose the following assumption:

H2b. organizational Justice has a mediator role in the relationship between abusive supervision and originality.

### **Abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behavior**

Organ (1988) coined the term “organizational citizenship behavior.” OCB refers to discretionary actions, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization” (Smith et al., 1983; Organ, 1988). Examples of OCBs include helping coworkers with work-related problems, not complaining about trivial problems, behaving courteously to coworkers, and speaking approvingly about the organization to outsiders. A key component of the OCB definition is that the omission of OCBs is not punishable. Consequently, withholding OCBs should be a safe means by which abused subordinates can respond to abusive supervision.

Reactance theory suggests that frustrated individuals engage in behaviors designed to restore their sense of control (e.g., Brehm & Brehm, 1981). One potential way to restore perceptions of control is to exercise autonomy or discretion in one’s behavior (Wright & Brehm, 1982). Organ believed that employees’ attitudes are more likely to be expressed in extra-role behaviors—actions over which employees have greater discretion. In empirical studies that found employees who were more satisfied with their jobs performed OCBs with greater frequency (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983). Thus, one way abused subordinates can restore this sense of autonomy and freedom is by intentionally withholding actions the organization values. In the interaction between supervisors and subordinates, if the supervisor continues to show improper behavior, subordinates will perceive the work environment unfair (Tepper, 2000, 2007); so, it will lead to psychological problems from employees, such as job stress, which may finally become emotionally disabling (Khan et al., 2010; Breux et al., 2008; Harvey et al., 2007), and lead to subordinates’ feelings of disappointment and helplessness. Therefore, we propose the following assumption:

H3a. Abusive supervision is negatively related to subordinates’ OCB.

### **Organizational justice perceptions and organizational citizenship behaviors**

Early research on justice addressed the fairness of distribution of outcomes (e.g., pay raise). Research on distributive justice has established that the fairness of outcomes (Adams 1965) significantly affects people’s attitudes. In a comprehensive meta-analysis, Colquitt et al. (2001) reported justice perceptions to be related to citizenship behaviors. In an era of dynamic and challenging competitive environment, citizenship behaviors are crucial for organizational effectiveness (Podsakof et al. 2000). OCB also



facilitates organizations' functioning and goal accomplishment (Lim and Loosemore 2017; Podsakof et al. 2000, 2009). When employees' outcomes are based on their contributions, perceptions of distributive justice (Adams 1965) are enhanced triggering feelings of reciprocity (Gouldner 1960), and feelings of reciprocity could manifest itself in the form of citizenship behaviors. Use of fair procedures to allocate outcomes guarantees that outcomes will be fair in the long run limiting the need to be continuously vigilant (Leventhal 1980). When employees perceive procedural & distributive fairness, they are likely to reciprocate by engaging in citizenship behaviors. Likewise, when employees are communicated to in a candid fashion and are treated with respect and courtesy (interactional justice), they are likely to feel an obligation to reciprocate (Gouldner 1960). This reciprocation can take many forms, one of which is citizenship behavior, as a way of giving back to the organization. Although previous research has revealed a link between organizational justice and OCB, results have been mixed. For instance, Konovsky and Pugh (1994) found that procedural justice is positively related to employees' OCB, likewise, a positive correlation between distributive justice and employees' OCB was found by Farh et al. (1997). On the other hand, Moorman and colleagues (Moorman 1999; Niehof and Moorman 1993) found a negative correlation between organizational justice and OCB. Additionally, Mohammad et al. (2016a) found a positive association between organizational justice and OCB. In contrast, Schappe (1998) found no association between procedural justice and OCB.

Importantly, organizational justice is a key predictor of overall employee job satisfaction (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1992). This is a desirable situation for managers because satisfied employees are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors (Barnes, Ghumman, & Scott, 2013; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Therefore, we propose the following assumption:

H3b. Organizational Justice has a mediator role in the relationship between abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behavior.

### **Abusive supervision and burnout**

Burnout has been identified as a common reaction to exposure to extreme levels of job stress (Lee and Ashforth, 1993 and Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). The most

widely accepted definition of burnout conceptualizes the phenomenon as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, cynicism and a sense of diminished personal efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). Many job and occupational characteristics have been linked to burnout in empirical studies. For example, workload, time pressure and role conflict are consistently related to burnout. Burnout is associated with undesirable outcomes for both organizations and individuals. At an individual level, burnout has been associated with the experience of psychological distress, anxiety, depression, reduced self-esteem and substance abuse (Maslach et al., 2001). Burnout has been consistently associated with absenteeism, turnover, reduced productivity and lower levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1998; Maslach et al., 2001).

There is growing evidence that abusive supervision leads to harmful outcomes for the subordinate, including anxiety (Tepper, 2000) and depression (Tepper, 2000). Among those consequences is also burnout (Aryee et al., 2008; Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter, & Kacmar, 2007; Tepper, 2000; Wu & Hu, 2009). According to Maslach and Jackson, job burnout is a syndrome composed of emotional exhaustion or depletion of emotional resources, depersonalization or experienced distance from others and lack of personal achievement that will arise as a result of chronic job stresses (Amiri et al., 2011). Exhaustion is commonly identified as the core component of burnout. One of the main causes of job burnout is "strain that results from workplace stressors" .almost all experts in some way relate occupational burnout to job stress (Cropanzano, Rupp, and Byrne, 2003). Harris et al. (2007) suggested that a supervisor's abusive behaviors are likely to increase a subordinate's perception of resource loss or, more importantly, to produce actual resource loss. Thus, as the COR theory suggests, individuals who face abusive supervision are more likely to suffer emotional exhaustion due to resource loss (Aryee et al., 2007; Yagil, 2006). Thus, we expect that the abusive supervision will lead to subordinate burnout:

H4a. Abusive supervision is positively related to subordinates' burnout.

### **Organizational justice perceptions and burnout**

In models relating organizational justice to employee health, organizational injustice can be a stressor (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Benson, 2005). Individuals encounter stressors and evaluate how fair they were, and those fairness judgments cause negative mental or physical health effects.

Since organizational justice addresses the perceived fairness of physical or nonphysical outcomes in comparison with individual inputs, and interactional justice is closely related to supervisor-related outcomes, it may have strong implications in the organizational context (Robbins et al. 2012).

Hence, introducing the concept of organizational justice in this research can help reveal the effects of organizational management factors on job burnout and clarify specific and effective management paths to prevent job burnout. Indeed, previous studies confirmed that many manifestations of burnout and occupational strain are the results of daily injustices (Maslach et al. 2001; Elovainio et al. 2002).

H4b. Organizational Justice has a mediator role in the relationship between abusive supervision and burnout.

#### **Abusive supervision and knowledge hiding behaviors**

Knowledge hiding may be defined as a designed decision to prevent knowledge and information that is requested by others (Connelly et al., 2012). In such behaviors, employees purposely hide information from their coworkers when they request it. Knowledge hiding behaviors may be slight in nature, for example, neglecting a small request, or major, such as hiding critical or strategic information (Serenko and Bontis, 2016). Though rationalized knowledge hiding may sometimes have a target, such as keeping secrets or hiding confidential information (Connelly et al., 2012), it is unlikely that employees engage in rationalized knowledge hiding behaviors in response to abusive supervision. Knowledge hiding is not necessarily intended to directly hurt other organizational members; usually it is a passive reaction to a given situation such as abusive supervision (Dollard et al., 1939). When employees perceive that they are not treated well by their supervisor, they may seek revenge by withholding knowledge from safe and easy targets (Mitchell and Ambrose, 2007; Skarlicki and Folger, 1997). The inefficient behaviors of supervisors which contribute to knowledge hiding behaviors have not yet been explored. This seems a serious elimination, since supervisors are organizational representatives and major decision makers; consequently, their actions could be an important factor in influencing subordinates' discretionary behaviors, such as knowledge hiding (Srivastava et al., 2006). Employees do not direct their reaction toward supervisors because of the degree of authority and control they exercise over rewards and promotions (Wang and Noe, 2010). We hypothesize as follows:

**H5a. Abusive supervision is positively related to knowledge hiding behaviors.**

### **Organizational justice perceptions and knowledge hiding behaviors**

Organizational justice is an important situational cue for employees in organization because they make fairness judgments in their daily work. High organizational justice indicates to employees that the supervisor greatly appreciates their effort and dedication (Tett & Burnett, 2003). When employees perceive that they are being treated rudely and disrespectfully by their supervisor they will indulge in knowledge hiding as a retaliatory or aggressive reaction (Dupré et al., 2006; Sitkin and Stickel, 1996). Similarly, a decline in justice will be associated with employees' knowledge withholding behaviors (Dyne et al., 2003). This relationship can be explained on the basis of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that employees are involved in a give and take process in organizations. Employees have a tendency to withhold discretionary positive behaviors (i.e. knowledge exchange) when their organization or supervisor does not treat them fairly.

Therefore, we expected a situation with high organizational justice to cause conscientious employees to engage in less knowledge withholding, because high organizational justice is relevant to the characteristics of conscientiousness, such as being hardworking, responsible, and achievement striving. In contrast, we expected low organizational justice to act as a constraint for the behavioral expression of conscientiousness, because an unjust situation indicates that hard work and contribution may not necessarily determine organizational rewards. Therefore, we proposed the following hypothesis:

H5b. Organizational Justice has a mediator role in the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding behaviors.

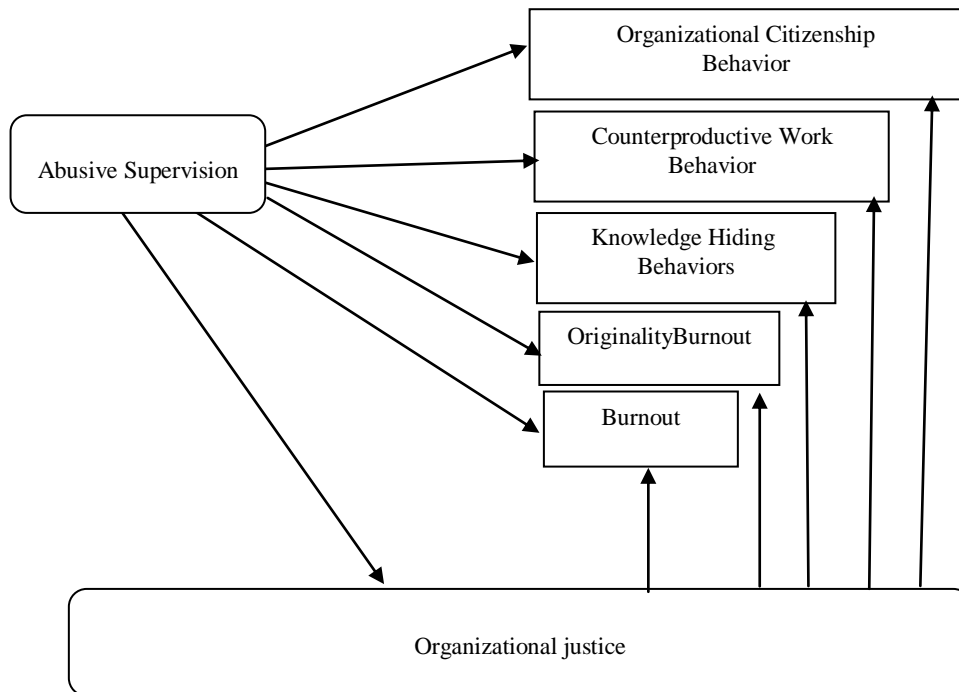
### **Control Variables**

Past research suggests that employees' demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, tenure in the organization, influence their reactions to abusive supervision (Bauer & Green, 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). And, so, we controlled for employee age, gender, and organizational tenure.

## **Method**

### **Participants and procedure**

The purpose of this study is practical, and since this study explains the existing context and the relationship between the variables studied, so, the research is a survey-analytic type based on covariance matrix analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM).



**Figure 1. Conceptual Model**

In the current study, Data was collected through questionnaires and convenient sampling technique was used. In some questions, we have used the structured interview technique to identify the deep causes of behavior and beliefs and to validate the questionnaire. The population of this study was the employees of National Iranian Gas Company and its subsidiary companies. The sample size was 478 for this study. We also collected respondents' demographics, such as gender, education, organizational structure (position), and work experience. Determination of the sample size can be determined from 5 to 15 observations per measured metric (Henseler et al., 2009). Therefore, considering that the number of questionnaires used in the present study is 44, at least  $(44 * 5)$  of the 220 samples are required. A total of 500 surveys were initially distributed, of which 478 were completed and used in subsequent analyses.

**Table 2. demographic data**

Variables Name		Numbers	Frequency
gender	Male	311	65%
	Female	167	35%
work experience	1-5 year	15	3.1%
	50-10 year	33	6.9%
	10-15 year	98	20.5%
	15-20 year	146	30.5%
	above 20 years	186	38.9%
Education level	bachelor's degree	207	43.3%
	master's degree	163	34.1%
	Ph.D.	108	22.6%
place of work	operational sector (line)	163	34%
	Central sector (staff).	315	66%

## Measures

Unless otherwise specified, all items except demographic variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

### Abusive supervision

Abusive supervision was measured by a total of 12 items based on an abbreviated scale developed by Tepper (2000). ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ). A sample item is "My supervisor tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid" and "my supervisor doesn't give me credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort. Responses scales ranged from never (1) to very often (5).

### Organizational justice

We used Colquitt's (2001) distributive and interactional justice subscales to measure Organizational justice. Four-item scale of distributive justice and four-item scale of interpersonal justice for employees' assessment of organizational justice. These included "is employee outcome appropriate for the work they have completed?" (For distributive justice) and "has the supervisor treated you with respect?" (For interpersonal justice). ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ). Response scales being "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly agree" (5).

### **Originality**

Originality was measured with five items from the Tierney et al. (1999) originality scale. Sample items are: “creating original solutions for problems” and “Solve issues that are difficult for others. ( $\alpha = 0.85$ ). Responses scales ranged from never (1) to very often (5).

### **Counterproductive work behavior**

Counterproductive work behavior was measured by a total of 10 items based on an abbreviated scale developed by Skarlicki and Folger (1997). ( $\alpha = 0.94$ ). Sample items are “Tried to look busy while wasting time”, and “Taken an additional or longer break than is acceptable at your workplace”. Responses scales ranged from never (1) to very often (5).

### **Knowledge hiding behaviors**

Knowledge hiding behaviors was measured by a total of 8 items based on an abbreviated scale developed by Labafi (2017). ( $\alpha = 0.93$ ). Sample items are “Employees hide their knowledge in order to have competitive advantage,” and “colleagues usually have requests causes to take my time”. Response scales being “strongly disagree” (1) and “strongly agree” (5).

### **Organizational citizenship behavior**

Organizational citizenship behavior was measured with six items from the Lee & Allen (2002). OCB scale. We used the altruism subscale to measure OCBI ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ). A sample item is “This employee helps the newcomers even without my asking.” Response scales being “strongly disagree” (1) and “strongly agree” (5).

### **Burnout**

Burnout was measured by a total of six items based on an abbreviated scale developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ). Sample items are “I’ve become more callous toward people since taking this job” and “I feel emotionally drained from my work”. Response scales being “strongly disagree” (1) and “strongly agree” (5).

### **Control variables**

We controlled for gender, and position of subordinates in the moderated

regression because these characteristics have been found to influence victims subjected to bullying and aggressive actions such as abusive supervision (Aquino & Bradfield, 2000). Moreover, these control variables have been statistically controlled for in several studies on abusive supervision (e.g., Aryee Et Al., 2007; Lee, Yun, & Srivastava, 2013). Gender was coded as 1 for male and 2 for female; and organizational structure is considered as "position of subordinates", which was coded 1 for Central employees (staff) and 2 for operational employees (line).

### **Analytical strategy**

We conducted confirmatory factor analyses with maximum likelihood estimation to examine the distinctness of the variables. The measurement model comprised of 7 factors: In this model, the abusive supervision variable considered as an obvious variable and the Perceived organizational justice as the mediator variable and other variables (knowledge hiding, organizational citizenship behavior, Originality, job burnout and counterproductive work behavior) were considered as the latent variables.

Our analysis fell into two main stages. First, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure the validity of our measurement scales. We used a combination of the  $\chi^2$  test statistic with corresponding degrees of freedom and statistical significance ( $\chi^2/df$ ,  $p$ ), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the comparative fit index (CFI) to assess the fit of our CFA models (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Next, we used structural equation modeling (SEM) and bootstrapping to test. As several methodologists (Hayes & Preacher, 2010; Preacher & Hayes, 2004) have recently recommended a bootstrap approach to obtain confidence intervals (CIs), we also tested the mediation hypothesis using a bootstrapping test and the Sobel test.

## **Results**

### **Normal status of the main variables**

In order to verify the validity of the measurement instrument through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), it is first necessary to verify the normality of the data collected by each item; we used two indices of skewness and kurtosis to detect this test. As shown in Table 3, all variables are within  $2\pm$ , indicating that the distribution of the main variables does not deviate significantly from the normal distribution and that the distribution of the research variables can be estimated as normal.



**Table 3. Skewness and kurtosis values of the research variables**

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
Abusive supervision	.877	.699
Organizational justice	-.934	.185
Knowledge hiding behavior	.030	-1.078
Burnout	.371	-.054
CWB	.696	-.266
Originality	-.528	-1.068
OCB	-.258	-1.017

### Convergent and discriminant validity

After removing the items with low-factor loadings, we achieved an adequate fit of our measurement model. As Table 4 shows, the seven-factor measurement model (i.e. abusive supervision, Organizational citizenship behavior, Organizational justice, Originality, knowledge hiding behaviors, counterproductive work behavior and burnout job) fit the data better [ $\chi^2 = (478)1838$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , Comparative Fix Index (CFI) = 0.921, Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.913, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.049, than other alternative models (Hu and Bentley 1999).

### Correlation analysis

The means, standard deviations, and inter correlations of all the variables are presented in Table 5. The correlations of most of the variables were in the expected direction. Furthermore, all the measures showed a high level of internal reliability. The abusive supervision showed a positive relationship with subordinates' counterproductive work behavior ( $\beta = 0.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); burnout ( $\beta = 0.33$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and knowledge hiding behavior ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).the abusive supervision correlated negatively with originality ( $\beta = -0.65$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); perceived organizational justice ( $\beta = -0.42$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and OCB ( $\beta = -0.15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 4. The result of confirmatory factor analysis**

Model	$\chi^2$	df	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
Hypothesized model (seven-factor) <sup>a</sup>	1838	856	.921	.922	.049
Model 1 (six factor) <sup>b</sup>	10881	2682	.681	.683	.057
Model 2 (five factor) <sup>c</sup>	12648	2688	.612	.615	.062
Model 3 (four factor) <sup>d</sup>	13646	2694	.574	.576	.065
Model 4 (three factor) <sup>e</sup>	15353	2703	.508	.510	.070
Model 5 (two factor) <sup>f</sup>	17246	2757	.392	.395	.079
Model 6 (one factor) <sup>g</sup>	19943	2757	.281	.285	.086

**Note.** CFI = Comparative Fit Index; IFI= Incremental fit index, RMSEA = root-mean-square Error of Approximation a seven-factors: represented seven independent factors.

b six-factors: Abusive supervision; knowledge hiding behaviors and counterproductive work behavior combined; Organizational citizenship behavior; Originality; Organizational justice; burnout.

c five-factors: Abusive supervision; knowledge hiding behaviors and counterproductive work behavior combined; Organizational citizenship behavior and Originality combined; Organizational justice; burnout.

d four-factors: Abusive supervision; knowledge hiding behaviors, counterproductive work behavior and burnout combined; Organizational citizenship behavior and Originality combined; Organizational justice.

e three-factors: Abusive supervision; knowledge hiding behaviors, counterproductive work behavior and burnout combined; Organizational citizenship behavior, Organizational justice and Originality combined.

f Two-factors: Abusive supervision; knowledge hiding behaviors, counterproductive work behavior, burnout combined, Organizational citizenship behavior, Organizational justice and Originality combined.

g One-factors: Abusive supervision, knowledge hiding behaviors, counterproductive work behavior, burnout combined, Organizational citizenship behavior, Organizational justice and Originality combined.

**Table 5. Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities among study variables**

	M	SD	OS	Gender	AS	OJ	KHB	BJ	OCB	CWB	O
OS <sup>a</sup>	1.66	.47	1								
Gender <sup>b</sup>	1.35	.48	-.096 <sup>*</sup>	1							
AS	24.65	5.63	-.190 <sup>**</sup>	.130 <sup>**</sup>	1						
OJ	26.05	4.58	.231 <sup>**</sup>	-.084	-.418 <sup>**</sup>	1					
KHB	26.18	6.20	.033	-.002	.172 <sup>**</sup>	-.021	1				
BJ	18.55	4.48	-.122 <sup>**</sup>	.026	.325 <sup>**</sup>	-.345 <sup>**</sup>	.144 <sup>**</sup>	1			
OCB	19.26	3.56	.068	-.104 <sup>*</sup>	-.145 <sup>**</sup>	.026	.053	-.018	1		
CWB	34.24	8.33	-.129 <sup>**</sup>	.167 <sup>**</sup>	.181 <sup>**</sup>	-.162 <sup>**</sup>	-.063	.136 <sup>*</sup>	-.074	1	
Originality	21.86	2.72	.247 <sup>**</sup>	-.148 <sup>**</sup>	-.651 <sup>**</sup>	.337 <sup>**</sup>	-.209 <sup>**</sup>	-.253 <sup>**</sup>	.133 <sup>**</sup>	-.107 <sup>**</sup>	1

N=478. \*P< 0.05; \*\*P< 0.01. <sup>a</sup> Organizational Structure was coded as 1= staff and 2= line ; <sup>b</sup> gender was coded as 1 = male and 2 = female.

### Hypothesis testing

To test our hypothesis regarding the mediating role of organizational justice, we adopted the approach suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). This mediation test has several important features. First, the independent variable should be significantly related to the dependent variable. Second, the independent variable should have a significant relationship with the mediator. Finally, the mediator should be significantly related to the dependent variables with the independent variables included in the equation. If the first three conditions hold, at least partial mediation is present. If the independent variables have non-significant beta weights in the third step, complete mediation is present.

First, we examined main effects models that highlighted the direct linkage between abusive supervision and the latent variables (knowledge hiding, organizational citizenship behavior, originality, job burnout and counterproductive work behavior). As shown in Table 7, the results of the test for Hypotheses H1a, H2a, H3a, H4a and H5a satisfied the first condition of mediation. Next, the result of the test for the significant relationship between abusive supervision and organizational justice satisfied the second condition of mediation ( $\beta = -0.74$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). To test the third condition of mediation, we regressed the dependent variables on the mediating variable, controlling for abusive supervision. As reported in Table 7, organizational justice on knowledge hiding ( $\beta = -0.16$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), burnout ( $\beta = -0.22$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and counterproductive work behavior ( $\beta = -0.10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), were significant, and as reported in Table 7, reducing the coefficient of the effect of abusive supervision on knowledge hiding ( $\beta = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), burnout ( $\beta = 0.46$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and counterproductive work behavior variables ( $\beta = 0.19$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the result of the mediation analysis suggests that the effect of abusive supervision on knowledge hiding, burnout and counterproductive work behavior is partial mediated by organizational justice.

**Table 6. total effect and significance using normal distribution without mediation**

	KHB	B	O	CWB	OCB
Step 1. Total effect					
Abusive supervision	.67***	.62***	-.82***	.26***	-.26**

**Table 7. Direct effect and significance using normal distribution**

	IJ	KHB	B	O	CWB	OCB
Step 3. Control variables:						
Gender	.05	-.23	-.17	-.08	.51***	-.27
Organizational structure	.78***	.25	-.09	.31***	-.12	.13
Step 3. Main effect:						
Abusive supervision	-.74***	.58***	.46**	-.80***	.19*	-.28**
Organizational justice	-.16*	-.22***	.03	-.10*	-.03	

**Table 8. Indirect effect and significance using normal distribution**

	KHB	B	O	CWB	OCB
Step 3: Indirect effect:					
Abusive supervision	.10	.16***	-.02	.07*	.02

\*  $p < 0.05$ . \*\*  $p < 0.01$ . \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed).

In order to further examine the mediation hypothesis, we tested the significance of the indirect effects using the Sobel test and bootstrapping. The formal two-tailed significance test (assuming a normal distribution) as reported in Table 9, demonstrated that the indirect effect was significant.

**Table 9. The Result of sobel test**

	P- VALUE	SE	Z
As -> IJ -> KHB	0.033	0.055	2.13
As -> IJ -> Burnout	0.000	0.042	3.75
As -> IJ -> CWB	0.046	0.033	1.99
As -> IJ -> Originality	0.425	0.022	-0.80
As -> IJ -> OCB	0.611	0.043	0.51

The bootstrapping results confirmed the Sobel test. Specifically, we estimated 95% bias-corrected CIs for indirect effects by bootstrapping 10,000 samples. CIs are statistically significant if the range between the low and high CIs do not include zero (Hayes, 2017). In this study, as reported in Table 10, for knowledge hiding behavior variable the CI is from 0.229 to

0.005, for burnout variable the CI is from 0.81 to 0.267 and for counterproductive work behavior variable the CI is from 0.001 to 0.144 excluding zero in the CI, which suggests that the indirect effect is statistically significant in our model. Thus, Hypothesis 1b, 4b and 5b were supported.

**Table 10. Bootstrap results for indirect effect**

	Effect	Boot lower limit 95% CI	Boot upper limit 95% CI
As -> KHB	0.10	0.229	0.005
As -> Burnout	0.16	0.81	0.267
As -> CWB	0.07	0.001	0.144
As -> Originality	-0.02	-0.064	0.026
As -> OCB	0.02	-0.067	0.119

Note. N = 478. Bootstrap sample size = 10,000. CI = confidence interval

**Table 11. Overall results of Bootstrapping**

	Total effect	Indirect effect	Direct effect	Result
As -> KHB	0.47 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.10 <sup>(.044)</sup>	0.58 <sup>(.003)</sup>	partial mediation
As -> Burnout	0.65 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.16 <sup>(.001)</sup>	0.46 <sup>(.002)</sup>	partial mediation
As -> CWB	0.26 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.07 <sup>(.042)</sup>	0.19 <sup>(.009)</sup>	partial mediation
As -> Originality	-0.82 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.02 <sup>(.438)</sup>	-0.8 <sup>(.002)</sup>	direct effect
As -> OCB	-0.26 <sup>(.003)</sup>	0.02 <sup>(.604)</sup>	-0.28 <sup>(.007)</sup>	direct effect

Note. N = 478. Bootstrap sample size = 10,000. \*\*\* P < 0.001 (two-tailed)

As shown in Table 11, the results of the bootstrapping indicate that the mediating variable of our research (organizational justice) mediates at a partial level on KHB, CWB, and Burnout variables. Therefore, the hypotheses H1b, H4b and H5b of our research that examine the mediating effect of organizational justice on variables are also supported. According to the results of Table 11, the mediating effect of organizational justice in relation to the variables of authenticity and OCB has not been confirmed; and we only have a direct relationship between the abusive supervision and above variables; therefore, the hypotheses H2b, and H3b of our research aren't supported.

### **Control variables**

We also examined control variables (for example, gender and organizational structure) in our study. As shown in Table 12, in men, the effect of the abusive supervision on all variables, was significant; but not significant on CWB and OCB variables in females. Given the amount of z-score, this difference is only significant in the relationship between abusive supervision with OCB (Z-score= 3.122,  $p < 0.01$ ), and in other cases the difference between men and women is not significant. In men, the effect of abusive supervision on organizational citizenship behavior is more negative than women ( $\beta = -0.467$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

According to the organizational structure controller, the effect of abusive supervision on perception of organizational justice in staff is more than operational workforce (line), And according to the z-score, this difference is significant (Z-score= 2.493,  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as the effect of perceived justice on CWB (z-score= 2.968,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Originality (z-score= -1.802,  $p < 0.10$ ) in staff is more than operational workforce. In staff, the impact of abusive supervision on staff perceptions of justice to operational workforce is very high and negative ( $\beta = -0.908$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

## **Discussion**

### **Discussion and conclusions**

Previous research demonstrates abusive supervision negatively affects employees' willingness to engage in positive behavior (Tepper et al., 2004; Zellars et al., 2002). In this study, we examined the effect of abusive supervision on both positive and negative behaviors of subordinates. The results shows abusive supervision influences employees' willingness to engage in both positive and negative behaviors as well.

We examined the role of abusive supervision in explaining knowledge hiding behaviors, organizational citizenship behavior, Originality, job burnout and counterproductive work behavior. Specifically, we investigated how abusive supervision is related to these variables, and why some subordinates would engage in more knowledge hiding behaviors than others in response to abusive supervision, or why some of them do counterproductive work behaviors or some subordinates get job burnout and why abusive supervision have a negative effect on some subordinates Originality or their organizational citizenship behaviors.

**Table 12. Results of the control variables**

	Men Estimate (P)	Femele Estimate (P)	z-score
As -> IJ	-0.702 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.781 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.463
As -> CWB	0.213 <sup>(.007)</sup>	-0.010 <sup>(.945)</sup>	-1.353
As -> KHB	0.598 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.563 <sup>(.008)</sup>	-1.135
As -> Originality	-0.814 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.784 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.199
As -> Burnout	0.523 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.480 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.234
As -> OCB	-0.467 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.189 <sup>(.271)</sup>	3.122 <sup>***</sup>
IJ -> Burnout	-0.187 <sup>(.008)</sup>	-0.236 <sup>(.001)</sup>	-0.485
IJ -> KHB	-0.205 <sup>(.027)</sup>	0.002 <sup>(.984)</sup>	-1.354
IJ -> CWB	-0.054 <sup>(.252)</sup>	-0.177 <sup>(.035)</sup>	-1.269
IJ-> OCB	-0.081 <sup>(.257)</sup>	0.071 <sup>(.465)</sup>	1.260
IJ -> Originality	0.015 <sup>(.664)</sup>	0.002 <sup>(.974)</sup>	-0.215
	Staff Estimate (P)	Line Estimate (P)	z-score
As -> IJ	-0.908 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.482 <sup>(***)</sup>	2.493 <sup>***</sup>
As -> CWB	0.257 <sup>(.101)</sup>	0.096 <sup>(.183)</sup>	-0.932
As -> KHB	0.463 <sup>(.024)</sup>	0.648 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.726
As -> Originality	-0.824 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.669 <sup>(***)</sup>	1.037
As -> Burnout	0.392 <sup>(.006)</sup>	0.455 <sup>(***)</sup>	0.355
As -> OCB	-0.218 <sup>(.200)</sup>	-0.274 <sup>(.021)</sup>	-0.272
IJ -> Burnout	-0.306 <sup>(***)</sup>	-0.156 <sup>(.013)</sup>	1.436
IJ -> KHB	0.067 <sup>(.544)</sup>	-0.127 <sup>(.212)</sup>	0.400
IJ -> CWB	-0.254 <sup>(.003)</sup>	0.040 <sup>(.420)</sup>	2.968 <sup>***</sup>
IJ-> OCB	-0.017 <sup>(.856)</sup>	-0.042 <sup>(.605)</sup>	-0.206
IJ -> Originality	0.100 <sup>(.086)</sup>	-0.020 <sup>(.535)</sup>	-1.802 <sup>*</sup>

Notes: \*\*\* p-value < 0.01; \*\* p-value < 0.05; \* p-value < 0.10

Our results suggest that abusive supervision is positively related to employees' knowledge hiding behaviors, job burnout and counterproductive work behaviors. Thus, hypotheses 1a, 4a and 5a are supported. The positive

relationship shows that abusive leadership behaviors toward subordinates encourages subordinates to take Retaliatory behaviors, such as knowledge hiding and counterproductive work behaviors. These behaviors are not restricted to a specific work group or sample; rather, wherever employees experience abusive attitudes, belittling language or disrespectful treatment, they will respond in the form of some retaliation or negativity. Counterproductive work behavior is a type of these behaviors which does not go toward the goals of an organization and can negative effect on work productivity and negatively affect an individual employee, a group of employees, or even an entire company.

In general Leader can use three strategies to force subordinates to show submissive behavior. These include alienative, calculative, or moral involvement. alienative involvement, meaning subordinates obey the leader because of fear of punishment or mistreatment; calculative involvement, meaning subordinates to obey the leader to avoid disadvantages; and moral involvement, meaning subordinates obey the leader because of internalization or identity(Etzoni ,1961). The results of this study show that abusive supervision has a negative impact on organizational citizenship behavior and creativity of subordinates. In this study, supervisor through alienative involvement compels subordinates to show submissive behavior, so subordinates cannot produce work-related skills, motivation, creativity and OCB.

Tepper, Duffy, and Shaw (2001) suggested that subordinates might choose indirect means of reciprocating a supervisor's abusive behavior, since direct expressions of hostility might generate a punitive response by the supervisor. For example Employees perceive their knowledge base to be valuable and the feeling of being mistreated or not given due respect will incline them toward knowledge hiding behaviors (Kim et al., 2016). Individual knowledge sharing is critical for organizational effectiveness and the sustainability of competitive advantages (Wang & Noe, 2010), and Leaders with their behavior play a significant role in increasing or decreasing individuals' valued resources and their levels of knowledge-sharing effort. One common harmful impact of the many negative psychological outcomes of abusive supervision, is job burnout (Aryee et al., 2008), the feeling of being emotionally depleted and exhausted because of work-related issues (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).



The results of this study show that abusive supervision has a positive effect on job burnout. Based on the COR theory and the results of this study, which is consistent with the results of Wu & Hu, 2009 , Aryee et al., 2008; Yagil, 2006 and Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004, Leaders with abusive and degrading behaviors cause emotional exhaustion and burnout of subordinates. Occupational burnout imposes heavy consequences and costs on organizations and employees such as frequent switching jobs and work place (increase in transfers), frequent absences and holidays, a drop in the quantity and quality of work, impact on mental health, the low quality of service provided to clients, creating personal conflicts, and the disruption of job functions, etc. (Scott, 2001).

In addition to the main effect of abusive supervision on employee behaviors, we also expected organizational justice would play a Role in the relationship. As predicted Hypotheses 1b, 4b and 5b the results show that organizational justice reduce the Positive effect of abusive supervision on counterproductive work behaviors, burnout and knowledge hiding behaviors.

The perception of injustice results in forms of deviant, retaliatory or aggressive reactions aimed to regain the lost control. (Lind and Van den Bos, 2002)Therefore, when organizational injustice is felt by abused employees they tend to engage deviance behavior such as counterproductive work and secretive knowledge behaviors as a revenge. In the case of abusive supervision and aggressive behavior, subordinates blame their supervisors for the aggressive and undesirable treatment that they receive. Thus, employees to counter abusive supervision, by at least withholding what is in their control or domain, namely, their knowledge, which they tend to hide from others. As abusive supervision and Disrespect increases, employees suffer emotional exhaustion and Burnout, as well as Abusive behaviors increase the tendency of subordinates to do devious things. Specifically, abusive supervision is positively related to all types of employee deviance. Perceptions of injustice can be conceptualized as a form of perceived job stress. Situations seen by people as unfair are stressors that may lead to negative emotions and presumably to subsequent strains beyond CWB. For example, justice has been shown to relate significantly with job (dis-)satisfaction (e.g., Moorman, 1991).

### **Theoretical and practical contribution**

Contribution of this research at the First, is the integration of positive and negative behavioral factors of employees as variables under the influence of abusive supervision; second, our study is the second study to investigate the effect of abusive supervision on employee originality (The first study was conducted by Yang et al in 2019); Third, in this study the organizational justice variable has used as the mediator variable. In doing so, we integrated theory and research from these domains with the abusive supervision literature to predict mediation patterns among these variables. Fourth, the investigation of the mediating effect of organizational justice on the relationship between abusive supervision and employee originality has not been studied in past research, and we have examined this issue for the first time.

This study not only supplements the existing research but also generates new insights that organizations can employ to alleviate the harmful impacts of abusive supervision. Our theoretical contribution consists in demonstrating that abusive supervision is negatively related to originality and organizational citizenship behaviors. It also shows that there is a positive relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding behaviors, burnout, and counterproductive work behaviors; In addition, this study supports past research (e.g., Tepper, 2000, 2007; ; Khan et al., 2010; Aryee et al., 2008; Srivastava et al., 2006; Gu, et al., 2016). Finally, using a mediation framework, this study demonstrates that the mediating effect of organizational justice on relationship between abusive supervision and employee's counterproductive work behaviors, burnout, and their knowledge hiding behaviors is significant. This results supports past research (e.g., Zhang et al., 2019, Wang et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2018; Maslach et al. 2001; Elovainio et al. 2002).

The findings of the study shows that the mediating effect of organizational justice on the relationship between abusive supervision with originality and organizational citizenship behavior is not supported, and abusive supervision has only a direct relationship with positive behaviors of subordinates. As the results shows, the negative effect of abusive supervision on organizational citizenship behavior and subordinate originality is very high, that even creating a fair organizational climate cannot diminish this effect.

### **Managerial implications**

This study and our findings have several important implications for organizations and their leaders. First, Supervisor behavior could be an effective and important factor in employees' discretionary behaviors such as knowledge sharing, and organizational citizenship behaviors, counterproductive work behaviors, and their creativity. These behaviors may be controlled by reducing abusive supervision in organizations. Given the negative impact of abusive supervision, special attention need to be given to organization supervisor's characteristics during the selection process, otherwise organizations should invest more time and effort in preventing abusive supervision in the workplace. Human Resource staff and managers need to be made aware of the negative effects of abusive supervision on abused subordinates' behaviors in organizations. Organizations could developing and providing Managers training programs to make managers aware of abusive supervision styles and, if needed, to change their supervision styles, and also by teaching interpersonal relationship skills to supervisors could help prevent abusive supervision. Furthermore, it is necessary to find a way to reduce the harmful effects of abusive supervision. organizations generally cannot fully-eliminate abuse because supervision abuse is sometimes due to strategic reasons (Khan et al., 2018). However, the impact of abuse on employees' behaviors may be minimized. As our research shows, organizations should pay more attention to enhancing organizational justice to reduce the negative effects of abusive supervision. Enhancing organizational justice by providing more organizational support and resources to employees. The justice distribution of organizational rewards, impartial policies and justice interpersonal dealings can promote the process of knowledge sharing (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2005), can Increase OCB's behaviors (Mohammad et al, 2016a), and can reduce the CWB's behaviors (Bechtoldt et al, 2007). So organizations could focus on monetary and nonmonetary rewards to promote positive behaviors and reduce negative behaviors among employees. Organizations should establish a good originality incentive system, and emphasis may be placed on changing working conditions such as job enrichment, job rotation, job expansion and flexible working hours and incentive systems such as variable pay and benefits programs. A good motivation system will help employees focus on upgrading their individual

skills, which will enable employees to continue working effectively and increase motivation by decreasing the impact brought about by abusive supervision.

### **Limitations and directions for future research**

The data used in this study were obtained from a single organization (government-affiliated institute) with administrative jobs in a relatively single cultural context. To improve the usefulness of the results, it is suggested that the sample size be increased in order to improve external validity. It is also suggested to do this research in a set of organizations with different cultures and then examine the impact of culture on outcomes.

In this study we used questionnaires and interviews to collect data. There are doubts about whether the questionnaire cannot adequately cover such a complex topic. It is suggested that in future studies we strengthen and control the process of issuing questionnaires; Given the Lots number of questions, is recommended to collect the data at reasonable intervals in two separate sections for negative and positive behaviors. The design of the study limits our ability to infer cause–effect relationships, it is suggested that future research use a longitudinal design to establish the causality of the relationships examined in this study.

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