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DISCRETE EMOTIONS LINKING ABUSIVE SUPERVISION TO EMPLOYEE INTENTION AND BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Drawing on appraisal theories of discrete emotions (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003), we propose and test a model in which abusive supervision directed toward oneself and toward work unit peers (coworker abusive supervision) are interactively related to generalized feelings of shame, anger, and fear. These discrete emotions, in turn, tend to precipitate distinct behavioral responses that do not directly target the supervisor. We tested our hypotheses with a three-wave time-lagged survey of 285 full-time workers from 55 work units. Consistent with our theorizing, supervisory abuse was associated with stronger feelings of shame while at work when the abusive supervision reported by one's coworkers was lower (vs. higher), while abuse had a stronger association with anger when coworkers also perceived relatively high levels of abuse. The distinct action tendencies associated with shame and anger are related to employees engaging in less voice behavior and more interpersonal deviance, respectively, and fear is related to higher turnover intentions. We discuss the study's implications for theory development concerning abusive supervision.

Keywords: Abusive supervision, discrete emotions, interpersonal deviance, voice behavior, turnover intention, cognitive appraisal theories

Discrete Emotions Linking Abusive Supervision to Employee Intention and Behavior

A large volume of studies has established that abusive supervision, defined by Tepper (2000) as “subordinates’ perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact” (p. 178), promotes a range of adverse individual outcomes (see reviews by Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2017; Tepper, 2007; Zhang & Liao, 2015). Scholarly efforts have turned toward understanding the psychological processes that underlie these connections. To date, studies have focused chiefly on putative mediators that are either closely related to assessments of abuse (e.g., perceived injustice; Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007; Tepper, 2000; Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002), or which represent global outcomes that tend to evolve over time, such as the quality of social exchange relationships (Peng, Schaubroeck, & Li, 2014; Xu, Huang, Lam, & Miao, 2012). As noted by Oh and Farh (2017), such mediating constructs may be useful for explaining why victims of abusive supervision engage in a specific behavior (e.g., deviance) to a greater or lesser extent, but they do not indicate why some victims may exhibit certain responses (e.g., turnover) and not others (e.g., deviance). They and other researchers (e.g., Chan & McAllister, 2014) have proposed that discrete emotional states, such as fear and anger, may help explain distinct action tendencies associated with experiencing abusive supervision.

Whereas extant abusive supervision research has considered the mediating role of target employees' affective states, the focus of such research has been limited to anger or hostility that is directed toward the supervisor and viewed as retaliatory (Lian, Ferris, Keeping, Brown, Liang, & Morrison, 2014; Mayer, Thau, Workman, Van Dijke, & De Cremer, 2012; see an exception by Simon, Hurst, Kelley, & Judge, 2015). Most victims may be angry toward their supervisors during or shortly after the abuse episodes, yet the appraisal-tendency proposal (Lerner & Keltner,

2000; 2001) suggests that such focused anger can evolve into an antagonistic tendency toward other individuals or events in the organization. We argue that this tendency for abuse victims to experience generalized and target nonspecific emotions over time may help to explain behavioral responses to the abuse that do not directly target the leader. Abusive supervision victims may also frequently experience other emotions besides anger, such as fear and shame (Chan & McAllister, 2014; Oh & Farh, 2017; Simon et al., 2015). Our model builds on recent work that has tested the mediating role of supervisor-directed discrete emotions (Simon et al., 2015) and highlights how target non-specific generalized emotions may represent an alternative mechanism that links abusive supervision to follower outcomes.

Important contextual moderators may potentially explain variability in abusive supervision victims' experiencing discrete emotional states. Drawing on appraisal theories of emotions (Frijda, 1986; Lazarus, 1991; Roseman, 1984; see a review by Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003), we argue that emotions precipitated by abusive supervision are contingent on the extent to which coworkers are abused by the same supervisor (i.e., *coworker abusive supervision*). The levels of abusive supervision experienced by one's coworkers in the same unit may create a social context that differentiates how individuals appraise their abuse by the leader, resulting in different emotions. For example, when recognizing that coworkers receive little or no abuse by the same leader, a victim may feel ashamed because he or she infers that some undesirable attribute of himself or herself precipitated the supervisory abuse. Conversely, when the leader also frequently abuses others in the unit, victims may attribute their abuse to the leader's abusive behavioral pattern and also perceive little control over their future mistreatment by him or her. This may lead them to experience fear.

To summarize, our model suggests that different patterns of abusive supervision experienced by oneself and, separately, one's coworkers, evoke distinct emotions that are proximal determinants of intentions and behavior (see Figure 1). Our study contributes to the abusive supervision literature in three main ways. First, we demonstrate the novel mediating role of discrete emotions in linking abusive supervision to employee outcomes. Previous studies testing mediation have focused primarily on cognitive states that reflect victims' motivation to restore justice (e.g., Aryee et al., 2007; Zellars et al., 2002; Tepper, 2000). We argue that victims of frequent supervisory abuse may over time experience generalized emotional states that are each associated with particular action tendencies (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Roseman, 2013). These generalized emotions may account for the detrimental consequences of abusive supervision over and beyond those of injustice perceptions. Examining the mediating role of the emotional states generally experienced at work thus advances a new theoretical lens for understanding how abusive supervision provokes a range of follower intentions and behaviors that are not a direct response toward the supervisor.

Second, testing anger, fear, and shame simultaneously in our model enables us to disentangle the mediating effect of each emotional state and to alleviate the potential for reporting specious mediators. Specious mediators, which are “mediators that appear to channel an effect but do not in fact do so” (Fischer, Dietz, & Antonakis, 2017, p. 1728), can be a serious problem for organizational studies that test a single mediator while ignoring other correlated mechanisms (Leavitt, Mitchell, & Peterson, 2010; Pillutla & Thau, 2013). As noted above, research tying abusive supervision to emotion has primarily focused on anger (or hostility). A study that examined anger as a sole mediator between abusive supervision and turnover intention, for example, might conclude there is a significant mediating effect, whereas the observed effect

could be due to employees' experience of fear, an unmeasured emotional state that is highly correlated with anger. By examining other plausible emotional responses toward abusive supervision (i.e., fear and shame) in addition to anger, while also controlling for perceptions of interpersonal justice, our study avoids overestimating the mediating effect of anger. Our study design also identifies distinct emotional states that connect abusive supervision to different follower outcomes.

Finally, our model highlights the role of unit coworkers' experiences of abusive supervision as a social cue that helps individuals interpret their personal abuse by the leader in ways that result in different emotional experiences. Building on the limited work that has examined the moderating role of coworker abusive supervision (Hannah et al., 2013; Jiang, Gu, & Tang, 2017; Peng et al., 2014) and supervisor social undermining behavior (Duffy, Ganster, Shaw, Johnson, & Pagon, 2006), we formulate how own and coworker abusive supervision jointly influence anger, fear, and shame. Within our model, the experience of coworkers creates circumstances that differentiate individuals' emotional experiences following abusive supervision. The level of coworker abusive supervision, for example, determines whether an abuse victim may experience shame and so be less likely to engage in voice behavior. Because abusive supervision typically occurs within the context of work groups, it is vital for research to model coworkers' experience of abuse to understand how abusive supervision influences victims' emotional and behavioral outcomes. We tested our hypotheses in a time-lagged moderated mediation model as represented in Figure 1.

Cognitive Appraisal Theories of Emotions

Appraisal theories of emotions aim to describe and explain different emotions (e.g., Frijda, 1986; Lazarus, 1991; Roseman, 1984; Roseman, Antoniou, & Jose, 1996; C. Smith & Ellsworth,

1985; see reviews by Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Lerner & Keltner, 2000). The central proposition of the appraisal theories is that emotions are differentiated by cognitive appraisals, which are individuals' interpretations of an event or situation. Ellsworth and Scherer (2003) concluded that there are four major dimensions represented in the appraisal theories of emotions. These include *basic stimulus characteristics*, such as novelty and pleasantness of the focal event; *motivational bases*, meaning the relevance and conduciveness of the event to one's need satisfaction and goal attainment; *power and coping*, which denotes perceived controllability of the situation and one's ability to resolve or adapt to the situation; and *social dimensions*, which include justice norms and implications for social identity. Patterns of appraisals along these major dimensions have been found to produce distinct emotional states (Lazarus, 1991; Roseman, 2013; C. Smith & Ellsworth, 1985).

We apply Ellsworth and Scherer's (2003) framework to understand individuals' emotional reactions to abusive supervision. Victims often perceive their abuse by the leader as an unpleasant experience that thwarts their personal goals, such as job security and personal growth in the organization (Tepper, 2007). Perceived interference with one's personal aims (i.e., appraisal of motivational bases) tends to trigger anger (Berkowitz & Harmon-Jones, 2004; Harmon-Jones & Allen, 1998). In addition, victims may appraise their abuse as having negative implications for their self-worth and social identity (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Schaubroeck, Peng, & Hannah, 2016). Such negative self-evaluations promote feelings of shame (Brown & Weiner, 1984; Gilbert, 1998; Gruenewald, Kemeny, Aziz, & Fahey, 2004; Scheff, 1988; R. Smith, 2000). Furthermore, victims of abusive supervision often do not perceive they can effectively cope with this unpleasant situation (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Tepper et al., 2009), leading them to experience fear.

Drawing on the major appraisal dimensions outlined by Ellsworth and Scherer (2003), we expect anger, fear, and shame to be discrete emotions that are often experienced following abusive supervision. Abusive supervision represents a sustained pattern of leader behaviors (Tepper, 2000) that is very aversive. As such, victims not only tend to re-experience those emotions but also to keep these aversive feelings in episodic memory longer than most other work experiences (Ochsner, 2000). Abusive supervision also engenders an interpretive bias wherein ambiguous stimuli evoke the feelings of threat victims experienced during abuse incidents (Chan & McAllister, 2014). For example, anger arising from an abuse event may lead the victim to interact with other coworkers in ways that precipitate feelings of anger (Côté, 2005; Lerner, Goldberg, & Tetlock, 1998). Thus, although these emotions arise from the abuse episode when it occurs, they evolve over time to generalized emotional states that are not clearly related to the initial incidents (Lerner & Keltner, 2000; 2001). Such generalized emotions that are not directed toward the leader may explain the influence of abusive supervision on employee outcomes that are separate from those explained by victims' target-specific emotional responses (e.g., Mayer et al., 2014; Simon et al., 2015). In the next section, we develop theory concerning how coworker abusive supervision (i.e., the average level of abusive supervision among other coworkers reporting to the same leader) may aid individuals' appraisals in ways that strengthen or weaken their tendencies to experience shame, anger, and fear, respectively.

Abusive Supervision and Discrete Emotions

Vicarious abusive supervision. Recent studies have examined how coworkers' experiences of abuse influence employees' intermediate psychological states and behavioral responses to their own abuse by the leader (Hannah et al., 2013; Jiang et al., 2017; Peng et al., 2014). Based on a study of soldiers deployed in Iraq, Hannah and colleagues (2013) reported that

abusive supervision was negatively related to ethical intentions and behavior through moral courage and values internalization, yet this relationship was observed only when the unit mean level of abusive supervision was relatively low. In line with the findings of Hannah and colleagues, Peng et al. (2014) found that abusive supervision had a more negative influence on performance outcomes through the quality of exchange relationships they perceived with their peers and, separately, the supervisor, when coworkers' abusive supervision was relatively low. Similarly, Jiang et al. (2017) reported that abusive supervision was negatively related to creative self-efficacy only when coworker abusive supervision was relatively low. These studies together suggest that when employees observe their peers being abused by their supervisor, or who learn about their abuse in other ways, they may use this information to make sense of their own mistreatment by the leader. Coworker abusive supervision may offer information that contributes to victims' appraisals of their mistreatment, such as by suggesting the cause of the abuse or how it might be resolved. Thus, as we elaborate below, coworkers' experiences of abusive supervision may interact with own abuse in predicting shame, anger, and fear.

Abusive supervision and shame. Mistreatment by leaders has negative implications for self-image (Tyler & Blader, 2000). Concerns about an unfavorable self-view resulting from experiences of abusive supervision are likely to be stronger when one's coworkers are rarely abused. When coworkers receive little or no abuse by the leader, victims are more likely to make self-directed attributions about the cause of their mistreatment. This is because being frequently mistreated when one's peers are not mistreated provides high distinctiveness information, which encourages self-focused attributions of responsibility (Kelley, 1967; Kelley & Michela, 1980). Specifically, when coworker abusive supervision is low, the victim of frequent abuse may believe his or her own negative attributes (e.g., lacking competence, being less likable) provided

a basis for the abuse. Self-directed attributions for aversive situations lead to feelings of shame (Brown & Weiner, 1984; Lazarus, 1991; R. Smith, 2000; R. Smith, Webster, Parrot, & Eyre, 2002). Shame normally includes feelings of embarrassment, disgrace, and humiliation (Tangney, 1991).

Social comparison theory (Arrowood, 1978; Festinger, 1954; Suls & Wheeler, 2012) offers an additional explanation for why lower levels of coworker abusive supervision aggravate one's experience of shame following abusive supervision. According to this theory, individuals continually gather information from others when evaluating their own attributes (e.g., competencies), opinions, and outcomes (e.g., pay). Because a high-quality relationship with the supervisor is generally perceived as desirable by most subordinates (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007; Sparrowe & Liden, 1997), employees may compare their own experiences with the leader to that of coworkers (Duffy et al., 2006; Vidyarthi, Liden, Anand, Erdogan, & Ghosh, 2010). When one's unit coworkers are rarely abused, a victim of abusive supervision is likely to engage in unfavorable social comparisons about their treatment by the leader (Jiang et al., 2017). Such social comparisons diminish a favorable view of the self and evoke feelings of shame (Collins, 1996; Gilbert, 1998; Lockwood & Kunda, 1997; R. Smith et al., 2002).

Conversely, when peers reporting to the same leader have also been victims of abusive supervision, individuals are less likely to engage in self-directed attributions and unfavorable social comparisons that elicit shame. Because these social comparisons are inherent in how one views oneself in relation to others in the unit, they are ongoing and may be expected to persist for substantial periods following one's experiences of abusive supervision. Employees who feel ashamed may also become more sensitive to their surroundings and readily interpret coworkers' comments and non-verbal expressions as subtle mockery of their mistreatment and/or inferior

personal attributes. Thus, we hypothesize that abusive supervision is more strongly associated with general feelings of shame while at work when coworker abusive supervision is low.

Hypothesis 1. Abusive supervision has a stronger positive relationship with shame when coworker abusive supervision is low, compared to when it is high.

Abusive supervision and anger. A prevailing high level of supervisory abuse in the unit represents a consistent pattern that makes it less likely victims will perceive that their treatment was precipitated by their own unique attributes and behavior. When abusive supervision is also directed toward other members of the group, victims are more likely to focus on the perpetrator (i.e., the leader) in making sense of why, in general, they experienced sustained mistreatment (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Kelley & Michela, 1980). Thus, the leader is more likely to be seen as solely responsible for the victims' abuse. When individuals attribute their abusive treatment to factors associated with the leader, they perceive a violation of their justice expectations and believe their mistreatment is particularly undeserved (Folger & Cropanzano, 2001; Lazarus, 1991). Nearly all victims of abusive supervision experience anger during or immediately after experiencing the abuse, as it can be humiliating and upsets one's expectations as to how one should be treated (Aryee et al., 2007; Tepper, 2000). Yet, to the extent victims do not believe they are responsible for the abuse, their anger is more intense and less likely to be transient (Bowling & Michel, 2011; Carver & Harmon-Jones, 2009; Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Weiner, Russell, & Lerman, 1979).

As we noted above, anger predisposes people to perceive, interpret, and act on events from a more hostile perspective (Keltner, Ellsworth, & Edwards, 1993; Lerner et al., 1998; Zajonc, 1984). As a result, victims of abusive supervision may exhibit an interpretive bias wherein they are predisposed to re-experience angry feelings following lesser provocations that may bear no

relation to the supervisor or his or her abusive behavior (Chan & McAllister, 2014; Lerner & Keltner, 2000; 2001). The appraisals that intensify anger, however, are less likely when a victim focuses attention on his or her own inferior qualities as causes for supervisory abuse, such as when peers do not share the individual's experience of abusive supervision. Thus, we predict that victims of abusive supervision are more likely to experience generalized anger when their coworkers also experience abusive supervision to a substantial degree.

Hypothesis 2. Abusive supervision has a stronger positive relationship with anger when coworker abusive supervision is high, compared to when it is low.

Abusive supervision and fear. When victims do not perceive themselves as responsible for their mistreatment, such as when the leader indiscriminately abuses unit members, they may believe they have limited personal control over their future treatment. This is because the status asymmetry between leaders and followers gives victims little recourse to alter the supervisor's abusive behavior (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Tepper et al., 2009), and the supervisor has demonstrated a behavioral pattern that is unlikely to change without concerted input from others. Thus, when coworker abusive supervision is high (vs. low), victims may maintain relatively high levels of fear while at work because they anticipate their abuse will recur in the future and they lack the resources to cope effectively with it (Frijda, Kuipers, & Ter Schure, 1989; Oh & Farh, 2017; C. Smith & Ellsworth, 1985; Weiner et al., 1979).

In contrast, when coworkers are rarely abused by the supervisor, abuse victims may tend to perceive themselves as instigating their experiences of abuse. When victims perceive they have precipitated the abuse in some way, they will seek to modify their behaviors, such as by performing more competently or developing a better rapport with the supervisor. Such self-focused appraisals provide a sense that they can potentially exert control in a way that reduces

the abuse in the future (Tepper et al., 2009). This contrasts with the lack of control that is characteristic of fear (C. Smith & Ellsworth, 1985). The reasoning above leads us to predict that a higher level of coworker abusive supervision is associated with a stronger influence of abusive supervision on fear.

Hypothesis 3. Abusive supervision has a stronger positive relationship with fear when coworker abusive supervision is high, compared to when it is low.

Discrete Emotions and Employee Outcomes

We have thus far developed hypotheses concerning how abusive supervision directed toward oneself and one's coworkers interactively precipitate discrete emotions while at work. In this section, we argue that more frequent experienced feelings of shame, anger, and fear are associated with voice behavior, interpersonal deviance directed toward coworkers, and turnover intention. In conjunction with our hypotheses that link abusive supervision to emotions, we further hypothesize a moderated mediation model (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007) in which abusive supervision, contingent on the levels of coworker abusive supervision, is indirectly associated with these employee outcomes via the theorized emotional states.

Shame and turnover intention and voice behavior. Shame is a basic human emotion that reflects feelings of low self-worth that derive from devaluation of the social self (Darwin, 1872/1965; Gilbert, 1998; Tangney, 1991; Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007). Individuals experiencing shame seek to hide and withdraw from social interactions from which they anticipate disapproval by others (Frijda et al., 1989; Lindsay-Hartz, 1984; Roseman, Wiest, & Swartz, 1994; Tangney, Miller, Flicker, & Barlow, 1996). Individuals who are frequently ashamed while at work may therefore be motivated to escape from these unpleasant feelings by

quitting the organization. This reasoning leads us to expect a positive relationship between shame and turnover intention.

The withdrawal tendency of shame also directly conflicts with proactive behaviors such as speaking up even when others may disagree with one's views (Morrison, 2011). Speaking up about work-related matters is represented by the construct of voice, which is defined as “the discretionary verbal communication of ideas, suggestions, or opinions with the intent to improve organizational or unit functioning” (Morrison, Wheeler-Smith, & Kamdar, 2011, p. 183). Feelings of shame may reduce an individual's belief that others will take his or her voice behaviors seriously. Lower efficacy in speaking up therefore prevents ashamed individuals from voicing opinions and ideas that challenge the status quo (Janssen & Gao, 2015).

In conjunction with our prediction that the positive relationship between abusive supervision and shame is stronger when coworker abusive supervision is lower (Hypothesis 1), we expect that the indirect effects of abusive supervision on turnover intention and, separately, voice behavior, through shame are stronger when coworker abusive supervision is lower.

Hypothesis 4. Abusive supervision has a stronger a) positive indirect effect on turnover intention and b) negative indirect effect on voice behavior through shame, when coworker abusive supervision is low as compared to when it is high.

Anger and interpersonal deviance. The action tendency associated with anger is to “fight” or to engage in antagonistic behaviors against a person or persons one believes is responsible for the anger (Barclay, Skarlicki, & Pugh, 2005; Frijda et al., 1989; Keltner et al., 1993; Roseman et al., 1994). As we noted earlier, whereas abuse victims may initially direct their hostile feelings toward the supervisor, these feelings may over time generalize to antagonistic feelings toward other members of the organization. Such generalized feelings of anger, which we examine in this

study, precipitate deviant behaviors directed against coworkers. Individuals may, for example, engage in acts of interpersonal deviance, such as behaving rudely toward their coworkers.

Interpersonal deviance represents behavior that violates interpersonal norms and causes harm to other individuals (Robinson & R. Bennett, 1995). Even though victims may still hold hostile feelings toward their abusive supervisor, they normally are less inclined to act against him or her (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Tepper et al., 2009) because the supervisor controls the resources they value. As a result, to express anger they may engage in deviant behaviors directed toward their coworkers (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007) or toward domestic partners (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Restubog, Scott, & Zagenczyk, 2011).

Individuals who are in an angry mood often display verbal (e.g., loud and impatient tones) or non-verbal signals (e.g., frown in facial expression) that would elicit undesirable responses from their coworkers, such as seeking to withdraw from the angry person's presence (Côté, 2005). Such responses from others confirm an angry individuals' negative perceptions and interpretations, thereby further fueling his or her hostile behaviors directed toward coworkers. We argued above that abusive supervision will be more strongly related to anger when coworker abusive supervision is higher (Hypothesis 2). Considering this in conjunction with the positive relationship between anger and interpersonal deviance discussed here leads to the following moderated mediation hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5. Abusive supervision has a stronger positive indirect effect on interpersonal deviance through anger when coworker abusive supervision is high as compared to when it is low.

Fear and turnover intention and voice behavior. In contrast to fighting against others as when motivated by anger, fear predisposes people to create social distance between themselves

and what they perceive to be the cause of their fear (Frijda et al., 1989; Roseman et al., 1994). Fearful individuals do not perceive that they can effectively control and cope with the source of aversive outcomes. Therefore, they often choose to escape from the source of such aversive feelings of dread (Roseman et al., 1994; Roseman, 2013). When abusive supervision leads to fear that becomes a generalized experience in the workplace, victims may exhibit a stronger tendency to discontinue their employment in the organization. Thus, we expect a positive association between fear and employees' intention to quit the organization.

Fear is also theorized to discourage employees from speaking up (Detert & Edmondson, 2011; Kish-Gephart, Detert, Treviño, & Edmondson, 2009; Morrison, 2011). Voice behavior requires taking an interpersonal risk by pointing out the deficits in existing procedures and/or proposing novel and untested solutions (Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2012; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Because voice behaviors often challenge the status quo and others may feel threatened by this, they can place an individual at risk of a backlash that can lead to losing status and other work benefits in the organization (Burris, 2012; Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). Fearful employees, however, are more likely to avoid taking initiatives that carry some risk that they will be personally harmed (Detert & Edmondson, 2011; Kish-Gephart et al., 2009), and thus we expect fear to be negatively related to voice behavior.

In sum, our theorizing links fear to turnover intentions and reduced voice behavior. As we also predict that the positive relationship between abusive supervision and fear (Hypothesis 3) is stronger when coworker abusive supervision is higher, this leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6. Abusive supervision has a stronger a) positive indirect effect on turnover intention and b) negative indirect effect on voice behavior through fear, when coworker abusive supervision is high as compared to when it is low.

Non-hypothesized emotion-outcome relationships. We do not make predictions about the remaining four possible linkages between the discrete emotions and the outcomes (i.e., anger-voice, anger-turnover intention, fear-deviance, and shame-deviance). These four linkages cannot be derived from the primary action tendencies identified in the literature as associated with the emotions. Specifically, theory and research indicate that anger triggers hostile and retaliatory actions, but anger does not necessarily (de)motivate actions characterized by withdrawal tendencies (e.g., turnover intention). Whereas the discontent associated with anger may contribute to voice behavior in some circumstances (Hirschman, 1970), individuals who experience anger at work may also engage in less voice behavior to deliberately withhold valuable inputs that might benefit the supervisor and/or the organization. Shame and fear are both characterized by their withdrawal and avoidance tendencies. These tendencies themselves are not normally manifest in acts of interpersonal deviance. However, research has shown a positive correlation between shame and aggressive behavior (see reviews by Elison, Garoflo, & Velotti, 2014; Velotti, Elison, & Garoflo, 2014). This appears to happen when individuals who are experiencing shame cannot effectively regulate the pain associated with the shameful feelings. In this circumstance individuals are prone to making external attributions that transmute an underlying feeling of shame into anger and aggressive behavior (Harper, Austin, Cercone, & Arias, 2005; Stuewig, Tangney, Heigel, Harty, & McCloskey, 2010; Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher, & Gramzow, 1992; Thomaes, Stegge, Olthof, Bushman, & Nezlek, 2011). Thus, anger could explain why shame in some cases precipitates aggressive behaviors. When including both shame and anger as predictors of aggressive behavior, as we did in our study, we expect anger, but not shame, to be positively related to deviance.

Method

Participants and Procedures

We invited workers from a large website services company and a medium-size consultancy company in Northern China to participate in this study in 2012. We first contacted the senior management team of each organization to obtain permission to survey their employees. We were permitted to recruit participants from 74 work groups or departments (“work units” hereafter). We invited all members of these work units to participate in the study except for two units that each had over 60 members. For each of these two work units, we randomly identified 12 members for recruitment. The Human Resource (HR) departments distributed our survey link to the potential participants through their internal email systems. In that email, the HR department made it clear that the management had no access to information concerning who participated in the surveys or the survey responses of those who did participate. We also provided the contact information of the Institutional Review Board of a large public U.S. university in that email for participants who might have concerns about privacy or other issues. Unit members and the leaders of all units were informed about the research purposes and procedures. Their participation was strictly voluntary and they were guaranteed their responses would be kept confidential. No financial incentives were offered to the participants. The ethical treatment of human subjects protocol for this study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Michigan State University in June 2012 (IRB ID No. i041345).

The three surveys were administered online via a secured web-survey system, with a seven-week time separation between the two consecutive survey administrations. Among the 337 employees recruited for this study, 285 members representing 61 work units completed the Time 1 survey. Of these, 255 completed the Time 2 survey, and 233 completed the Time 3 survey. A total of 217 employees provided complete responses across the three surveys, resulting in an

overall response rate of 64%. In terms of unit size, based on supervisory reports sixty-seven percent (67%) of the units had four to eight members and the vast majority (94%) had between three and eleven members. We excluded from the analyses six groups (with 10 members in total responding) that had within-unit response rates lower than 50%. Two of these groups had only one respondent and thus we could not compute the coworker abusive supervision variable. The other four groups ranged in actual size from 5 to 7 members and had two respondents. Supplementary analyses showed that when including these four groups the results did not differ from those reported below. The final analyses included data from 245 respondents (representing 55 units) who provided valid responses for both the Time 1 and the Time 2 surveys.

Among the 245 respondents, more than half were female (57%). The average age was 29.77 years ($SD = 4.34$). Half of the respondents had a university degree (51%), a small minority of them had a master's degree or higher (2%), forty percent (40%) had a community college degree, and a high school degree or equivalency was the highest level of education for the remainder (7%). The average organizational tenure was 1.56 years ($SD = 1.90$). The average respondent had been reporting to his or her current leader for about one year.

We followed conventional procedures (Brislin, Lonner, & Thorndike, 1973) in translating the survey items from English to Chinese. A bilingual expert who was blind to the research questions translated the Chinese translations of the items back to English, after which one of the authors, for whom Chinese was her native language, adjusted the Chinese items to reconcile these minor discrepancies.

Measures

We measured abusive supervision and demographic variables in the Time 1 survey. Discrete emotions, interpersonal justice, and leader-rated voice behavior were measured at Time

2, seven weeks after the Time 1 survey, and turnover intention and peer-rated interpersonal deviance were measured at Time 3, seven weeks after Time 2.

Abusive supervision. We used a five-item shortened scale (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007) to measure *abusive supervision* at Time 1. Sample items are “My supervisor tells me my thoughts and feelings are stupid,” and “My supervisor makes negative comments about me to others.” At Time 1, participants rated their work unit leader on this scale from 1 = *never* to 5 = *almost always*. The alpha reliability for this scale was .87. The intra-class correlation ($ICC_{(1)}$) is .22 ($ICC_{(2)} = .56$), which means 78 percent of the variation in abusive supervision resides within groups. *Coworker abusive supervision* is the mean level of abusive supervision among each individual’s unit peers, excluding the focal individual’s self-report. As with abusive supervision and in line with Peng and colleagues (2014), coworker abusive supervision was conceptualized and measured as an individual level construct.

Discrete emotions. We used subscales from the Differential Emotions Scale (Izard, 1977) to measure emotions at Time 2. Respondents reported the extent to which they had experienced each of the specific emotions *during the past month at work*. These items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = *very little or not at all* to 5 = *extremely*. The measure of *shame* consists of four items (ashamed, bashful, sheepish, and shy), as does the *fear* scale (scared, fearful, afraid, and frightened) and the *anger* scale (angry, enraged, mad, and hostile). The alpha reliabilities of these measures were .89 (shame), .91 (fear), and .91 (anger).

Turnover intention. Using a 3-item instrument developed by Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh (1979), participants reported at Time 3 the extent to which they intended to leave the organization. These items include, “I often think of leaving the organization”; “It is very possible that I will look for a new job next year”; and “If I could choose again, I would choose to work

for the current organization” (reverse coded). Participants rated these items on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *extremely*. This alpha reliability of this scale was .75.

Voice behavior. Unit leaders rated participants on their voice behavior at Time 2. The unit managers were asked to rate their direct reports’ behaviors *during the past month* on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *almost always*. We measured *voice behavior* using three items from the instrument developed by Van Dyne and LePine (1998). These items were [This person ...] “speaks up with ideas for new projects or changes in procedures”; “develops and makes recommendations for work-related issues”; and “keeps me well informed about issues that might be useful to the workplace.” This scale had an alpha reliability of .94.

Interpersonal deviance. At Time 3, each participant was rated by multiple peers in the same work unit on the frequency that he or she engaged in deviant behavior directed toward coworkers. We used five items from the interpersonal deviance measure developed by Bennett and Robinson (2000). Sample items for coworker-directed deviant behavior are “acted rudely toward one or more coworkers” and “said something hurtful to one or more coworkers at work.” Two items were excluded from the original measure because they do not fit the study context well (i.e., “made an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work” and “played a mean prank on someone at work”). This five-item measure had an alpha reliability of .97. The average inter-rater agreement ($r_{wg(j)}$) based on the uniform null distribution for this peer-rated deviance measure was .96 (median $r_{wg(j)} = 1.00$). Because the ratings of peers’ deviant behavior were skewed toward the lower end, we also calculated the inter-rater agreement based on the heavy skew null distribution (LeBreton & Senter, 2008), and the statistics remained high (mean $r_{wg(j)} = .95$, median $r_{wg(j)} = 1.00$). In addition, the inter-class correlation (ICC) was significant ($ICC_{(1)} = .11$, $ICC_{(2)} = .33$, $F_{(241, 712)} = 1.50$, $p < .001$). Based on the high mean $r_{wg(j)}$ value and significant

ICC indices, we aggregated the peer ratings of interpersonal deviance measure for each participant.

Control variables. At Time 2, participants completed a 4-item measure of *interpersonal justice* developed by Bies and Moag (1986). The items used a 7-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *extremely*. Two sample items were “My supervisor treats me in a polite manner” and “My supervisor treats me with dignity” ($\alpha = .88$). We controlled for interpersonal justice as a mediator parallel to the discrete emotions in testing our hypotheses in order to assess the unique mediating effect of discrete emotions over and beyond that of interpersonal justice.

We also measured at Time 1 individuals’ perceptions of the extent to which their coworkers were abused by the same leader (i.e., *perceived coworker abusive supervision*) for use in a supplementary analysis testing the first three hypotheses that link abusive supervision variables to discrete emotions. We did this by changing the target from oneself to “my coworkers” in the five items that measured abusive supervision. This perceptual measure had an alpha reliability of .92. In addition, participants reported at Time 1 on a 10-item trait measure of *negative affect* developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) ($\alpha = .91$). They indicated how they have generally felt in their daily life in terms of these emotional states (e.g., “hostile”, “distressed”, and “ashamed.”) using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = very slightly or not at all to 5 = extremely. In a supplementary confirmatory factor analysis reported below, we compared trait negative affect with the three discrete emotions.

Finally, we measured employee gender, age, education level, and time with the leader at Time 1. Except for age, none of these variables was related to the three discrete emotions or the outcomes. Although age was negatively related to all three emotion variables, controlling for age

did not affect the analysis results. Following the recommendation of Carlson and Wu (2012), we reported results without controlling any demographic variables.

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Table 1 presents the zero-order correlations and descriptive statistics for the studied variables. Using Mplus 7 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2015), we conducted a set of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) on all constructs in our theoretical model as well as interpersonal justice. Given the nested structure of our data (i.e., individuals within work groups), we conducted a two-level CFA analysis. To be consistent with our centering decision for hypothesis testing (more explanations provided in the next section), we defined all items as within-level variables and entered them as raw scores, rather than using the program's default group-mean center method. We specified parameters for the within-level model only and kept the between-level empty. The measurement model demonstrated adequate fit to the data ($\chi^2_{(436)} = 757.43$, CFI = .94, TLI = .93; SRMR = .048; RMSEA = .055). The hypothesized measurement model exhibited a better fit than all alternative models in which we constrained the correlation between any two latent constructs to unity. These results suggest that our focal constructs are empirically distinct.

To examine whether the three discrete emotions are distinct from overall negative affect, we conducted a supplementary CFA in which we distinguished the measures of discrete emotions as factors distinct from the trait measure of negative affect. As with the CFA testing the measurement model reported above, we defined all items as within-level variables and entered them as raw scores. This model estimates all parameters at the within-level, with no parameters specified at the between-level. The model fit statistics were slightly below the conventional

standards for good fit ($\chi^2_{(203)} = 619.91$, CFI = .86, TLI = .84; SRMR = .068; RMSEA = .092).

Nevertheless, the three discrete emotions had only moderate latent factor correlations with negative affect (.39 with shame, .49 with anger, and .57 with fear). The relatively poor fit was due to three unspecified residual covariances among items of trait negative affect (i.e., jittery with nervous; distressed with upset; ashamed with guilty), suggesting emotions that are more similar to each other tend to share additional variance beyond the overall negative affect component. After estimating the three item covariances within the negative affect measure, the CFA model showed adequate fit ($\chi^2_{(200)} = 459.46$, CFI = .91, TLI = .90; SRMR = .062; RMSEA = .073). The latent factor correlations between trait negative affect and the three discrete emotions remained the same, ranging from .39 (shame) to .57 (fear).

Before testing the hypotheses, we examined the levels of within- and between-group variance for the mediating and dependent variables in the theoretical model (see Figure 1) by computing intra-class correlation (ICC) indexes. Results indicated that there was trivial variation due to group membership for discrete emotions, with $ICC_{(1)}$ values ranging from .003 (shame) to .05 (anger). There was a small portion of between-group variance (in relation to total variance) for turnover intention ($ICC_{(1)} = .10$; $ICC_{(2)} = .33$), and a substantially higher amount of between-group variance for leader ratings of voice behavior ($ICC_{(1)} = .44$; $ICC_{(2)} = .78$) and for peer-rated interpersonal deviance ($ICC_{(1)} = .18$; $ICC_{(2)} = .49$). The ICC results indicate significant non-independence in participant ratings of the outcome measures provided by multiple members of the same work groups (interpersonal deviance) and by the group leaders (voice behavior).

Hypotheses Testing Results

To account for the non-independence in the individual reports, we specified a two-level model in Mplus. Similar to the CFA analysis reported above, we specified all relationships at the

within-level. Specifically, we examined a fixed-slope model¹ that links abusive supervision, coworker abusive supervision, and their interaction term to the three discrete emotions (i.e., shame, anger, and fear), which are in turn linked to the three outcome variables (see Figure 1). In addition, we estimated the covariances among variables of the same conceptual category (i.e., predictor, mediator, and outcomes). Following the convention for testing indirect effects (see reviews by MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002; Wood, Goodman, Beckmann, & Cook, 2008), we also estimated the direct effects of the predictors (i.e., the two abusive supervision variables and its interaction term) on the three outcomes. Thus, we specified a saturated model that has a perfect fit and zero degree of freedom. Parameter estimates from this model are reported in Table 2.

In our analyses, we centered the predictors (i.e., abusive supervision and coworker abusive supervision) by their grand means and created the interaction term using the mean-centered scores. Although group-mean centering is often the preferred choice because it produces an estimate of the within-level effect that is not conflated with the between-level effect (Enders & Tofghi, 2007), grand-mean centering is more theoretically appropriate for our study. We theorize that the experience of abusive supervision, owing to its aversive nature, precipitates a sense-making process that ultimately contributes to victims' emotional experience at work. Within this sense-making process, abuse victims search for cues in their environment, such as the extent to which one's coworkers are similarly mistreated by the leader, to apprehend the cause of their abuse and to gauge future implications. The absolute level of personal abuse is therefore the starting point of this theorized process, and the level of one's coworkers' experience of

¹ When specifying the paths as random slopes, most did not exhibit significant variance across work groups. The results testing the interaction effects are also unchanged using the random-slope model.

mistreatment (i.e., coworker abusive supervision) is the reference point against which one compares one's own mistreatment. Because abusive supervision and coworker abusive supervision have the same grand sample mean, centering these two variables to the grand-mean ensures that the comparison is based on the absolute levels of abuse. Group-mean centering abusive supervision and assessing the interaction of this variable with coworker abusive supervision would create an overlap in the sense-making process that is assessed through both the main effect of the group-mean centered abusive supervision variable and the interaction effect of this variable with coworker abusive supervision. Specifically, when abusive supervision and coworker abusive supervision are both centered to the group mean, they have a correlation of negative one ($r = -1.0$). The coworker abusive supervision variable also in this case has near-zero scores for all members, precluding a test their interaction effect. Because of the conceptual redundancy and the methodological concern, group-mean centering approach is less suitable for testing the proposed interactions in our study.

The first set of hypotheses concerns the interactive effect of own and coworker abusive supervision on discrete emotions (Hypotheses 1-3). The interaction was significant in predicting shame ($a = -.19, p = .047$) and fear ($a = .21, p = .041$), and it explained an additional two percent of the variance in each emotion. However, the interaction was not significant in predicting anger ($a = .06, p = .553$). The plots for the two significant interactions are shown in Figures 2 and 3. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, abusive supervision was more strongly related to shame when coworker abusive supervision was lower (-1 SD; $a_L = .42, p = .005$), than when coworker abusive supervision was higher ($+1$ SD; $a_H = .26, p = .003$). Supporting Hypothesis 3, abusive supervision was positively related to fear when coworker abusive supervision was higher (a_H

$= .40, p < .001$), but this relationship was not significant when coworker abusive supervision was lower ($a_L = .22, p = .088$). The results thus support Hypotheses 1 and 3, but not Hypothesis 2.

We tested the moderated mediation effects (Hypotheses 4-6) by computing the conditional indirect effects using the product approach (MacKinnon et al., 2002; Preacher et al., 2007). Specifically, an indirect effect was the product of the a path connecting abusive supervision to an emotional state and the b path that links the emotional state to its hypothesized outcome(s). The estimates for the a and b paths from the Mplus model are presented in Table 2. To compute an indirect effect at a high or low level of coworker abusive supervision (i.e., a conditional indirect effect), we computed the conditional a_H (or a_L) path for higher (and lower) coworker abusive supervision in Mplus with the Model Constraints command. The conditional a_H (or a_L) path was then multiplied by the b path to generate the conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on the outcome through each emotion variable (i.e., a_Hb or a_Lb).

To test the statistical significance of the conditional indirect effect (i.e., a_Hb or a_Lb), we used the Monte Carlo resampling method to compute the 95% confidence intervals ("CI" hereafter, Preacher, Zyphur, & Zhang, 2010; Preacher & Selig, 2012). We entered the parameter estimates of the a_H (or a_L) path and b path (i.e., coefficients, variances, and the covariance) from the aforementioned Mplus results into a web-based program suited to estimating indirect effects in multilevel models (Selig & Preacher, 2008). This program generates the 95% CIs for the conditional indirect effect at the higher (or lower) level of coworker abusive supervision. The Monte Carlo method is recommended for analyzing clustered data because bootstrapping is not possible (Preacher & Selig, 2012).

Table 3 summarizes the results from testing the conditional indirect effects at higher and lower levels of the moderator (i.e., coworker AS). Because shame was not significantly related to

turnover intention ($b = .004$, ns ; see Table 2), the indirect effect of abusive supervision on turnover intention through shame was not significant either when coworker abusive supervision was lower ($ab = .002$, $CI = -.11, .10$) or when it was higher ($ab = .001$, $CI = -.07, .06$). These results do not support Hypothesis 4a. Supporting Hypothesis 4b, abusive supervision had a stronger indirect effect (via shame) on leader-rated voice behavior when coworker abusive supervision was lower ($ab = -.11$, $CI = -.26, -.01$), compared to when coworker abusive supervision was higher ($ab = -.07$, $CI = -.14, -.01$). For a formal test of the hypothesized moderated mediation effects, we followed the procedures outlined by Hayes (2015) to compute the index of moderated mediation (ω) and to obtain its 95% confidence interval using the Monte Carlo resampling method. The index of moderated mediation was significant when shame is linked to voice behavior ($\omega = .05$, $CI = .0003, .16$), but it was not significant predicting turnover intention ($\omega = .002$, $CI = -.05, .04$).

Because the abusive supervision interaction term was not significant in predicting anger as noted above, Hypothesis 5, which concerns the moderated mediation effect through anger, is not supported. Nevertheless, abusive supervision was positively related to interpersonal deviance through anger at both the higher and the lower levels of coworker abusive supervision (Table 3). Supporting Hypothesis 6a, there was a stronger indirect effect (via fear) on turnover intention when coworker abusive supervision is higher ($ab = .15$, 95% $CI = .07, .25$) than when it is lower ($ab = .08$, 95% $CI = -.01, .20$), with the index of the moderated mediation excluding zero ($\omega = .08$, $CI = .002, .17$). Hypothesis 6b was not supported, however, because fear was not associated with voice behavior ($b = -.11$, $p = .304$; Table 2). Accordingly, the indirect effect of abusive supervision on voice through fear was not significant at either the higher or the lower

levels of coworker abusive supervision. In addition, the index of moderated mediation was not significant ($\omega = -.02$, $CI = -.09, .03$).

Supplementary Analyses

Our study focuses on how coworkers' experiences affect victims' interpretations of their own abuse by the leader, and thus our theorizing implies that victims are to some degree aware of their coworkers' levels of mistreatment by the leader. Awareness of coworkers' experience explains the moderating effect of coworker abusive supervision within our framework. We tested this assumption in a supplementary analysis. As shown in Table 1, perceived coworker abusive supervision had a positive correlation with coworker abusive supervision ($r = .35$, $p < .001$), suggesting that individuals' perceptions of coworker abuse were in part based on the experience of their coworkers. As reported in Table 4 (Model 1), we found that perceived coworker abusive supervision interacted with abusive supervision predicting shame ($a = -.15$, $p = .008$) and fear ($a = .16$, $p = .004$). The interaction predicting anger, however, was not statistically significant ($a = .08$, $p = .073$). Each of the interaction terms explained three percent of the variance in the focal emotion. The patterns of the two significant interactions, shown in Figure 3, matched with the interactions using coworker abusive supervision as indexed by the average of multiple peer ratings. In addition, when simultaneously testing the moderating effects of both coworker abusive supervision and perceived coworker abusive supervision, only the latter remained significant (Model 2 of Table 4). Therefore, perceptions of coworkers' mistreatment by the leader appear to account for the moderating effect of coworker abusive supervision.

Abusive supervision and perceived coworker abusive supervision, however, had a high correlation ($r = .71$). This is comparable to the correlations reported by Shao et al. (2018; $r = .65$ (Study 1); $r = .81$ (Study 3)). Common method bias and self-based consensus bias (i.e., the

tendency to overgeneralize one's own experience to others (Kuiper & MacDonald, 1983)) may have contributed to this high correlation. The high likelihood of such biases in measuring perceived coworker abusive supervision measure supports our use of the average of other unit peers' self-reports of abusive supervision in testing the hypotheses.

In addition, we conducted supplementary analysis in which we centered abusive supervision to the group mean but centered coworker abusive supervision to the grand mean. As presented in the Online Appendix, using group-mean centered abusive supervision produced interaction results somewhat different from those we reported earlier, although the main effects of abusive supervision on emotions were unchanged. Compared to the results based on grand-mean centering, the interaction between abusive supervision and coworker abusive supervision in predicting shame was no longer significant. Yet, the interaction effect was stronger for fear and anger. The same pattern of differences is observed when testing the interaction involving perceived coworker abusive supervision. Our theory refers to the absolute level of abuse and how it provokes a sense making process in which victims make different interpretations depending on the level of one's coworkers' experience of leader abuse. Thus, we believe grand-mean centering is more suitable for testing our hypotheses than group-mean centering.

Discussion

This study tested a model of the interactive influences of abusive supervision directed toward oneself and toward one's work unit coworkers on the frequency of discrete emotions experienced at work, including shame, anger, and fear, and how the tendency to experience these emotions are related to different behaviors and turnover intention. We found that own and coworker abusive supervision interacted in distinct ways in predicting shame and fear. When the three discrete emotions were examined simultaneously as predictors of employee outcomes,

shame was negatively associated with leader-rated voice behavior, and anger was positively associated with coworker-directed deviant behavior. In addition, fear had a strong positive time-lagged association with intention to quit the organization.

Our findings highlight coworkers' experience of abusive supervision as a social cue that shapes the emotional experiences of abuse victims while at work. We predicted and found that abusive supervision is more strongly related to general feelings of shame when coworker abusive supervision is relatively low (vs. high). When unit coworkers generally are not abused by the leader, victims may be prone to making self-directed attributions about the cause of their abuse in ways that inspire shame. In contrast, being a victim in a unit comprised of other victims promotes fearfulness at work. Based on our theoretical framework, the victim views characteristics of the leader as causing the abuse, thus perceiving little control over future abuse. The hypothesized interaction effect on anger was, however, not significant. We reason in hindsight that abusive supervision violates the moral principle of treating people with respect and dignity (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2005; Folger, 2012). Whereas victims may often believe that their own behavior precipitates their abuse in some way, they may still tend to recognize that the supervisor does not have to behave abusively. Thus, the fact that abusive supervision violates an important moral principle may consistently link abusive supervision to feelings of anger, regardless of the level of coworker abusive supervision.

Our study builds on an emerging research stream that has examined the influence of coworker abusive supervision on employee outcomes. Studies that have examined an interaction between own and coworker abusive supervision (Jiang et al., 2017; Peng et al., 2014) find that abusive supervision has a more detrimental effect on employee outcomes when coworkers are rarely abused by the same leader. This pattern of findings is in line with studies that have tested

the moderating role of work unit mean level of abusive supervision (Farh & Chen, 2014; Hannah et al., 2013). Our findings, however, also suggest that the moderating role of coworker abusive supervision gives scope to distinct types of appraisals and responses. The interaction between own and coworker abusive supervision, for example, may take opposite forms when self-directed thoughts and responses are the outcomes of interest as compared with predicting other-directed thoughts and responses. Attribution theory may prove useful to understanding the role of coworker abusive supervision in conditioning processes associated with the personal experience of abuse.

Discrete emotions provide a unique lens to understand how and why abusive supervision precipitates a range of undesirable behaviors. Previously established mediating variables, including injustice perception and LMX (see a review by Kermond and Schaubroeck, 2015), are useful to understand the generally negative consequence of abusive supervision. However, they do not adequately explain individuals' differential reactions to leader abuse. Discrete emotions are characterized by distinct behavioral tendencies. For example, the defining behavioral tendencies for fear, anger, and shame are to escape from the source of the danger, to engage in aggressive and retaliatory acts, and to withdrawal from the social situation, respectively (Lazarus, 1991; Roseman, 2013). Accordingly, fear motivates intention to quit the organization, anger drives interpersonal deviance, and shame discourages voice behavior. By assessing interpersonal justice in a separate mediational path in our analysis, our findings show that emotions represent unique processes through which abusive supervision influences behavior.

Abusive supervision studies that examine mediators such as social exchange relationships and injustice perceptions have invoked the role of emotions in their conceptualization, and some studies have assessed the emotional underpinnings of relationships between injustice perceptions

and behaviors (Lian et al., 2014; Mayer et al., 2012). However, these studies focus on emotions that are directed toward the perpetrator of abuse, as with hostility toward the supervisor precipitating retaliatory deviant behavior. Victims of supervisory abuse are likely to feel anger toward the perpetrator both during and after abusive interactions because such treatment is unjust, yet our model and evidence suggest a greater scope both for the emotions affected by abuse and potential outcomes that derive from these emotions. We found that it is critical not only to consider anger but also the emotions of fear and shame, while also attending to how more generalized, target non-specific representations of these three emotions may promote outcomes that were previously not considered in the literature. The emotions that arise during and immediately after specific abuse episodes may over time become more generalized as victims ruminate over their abuse experiences and develop an interpretive bias whereby ambiguous cues are more likely to promote the same feelings of anger, shame, and/or fear irrespective of whether the perpetrator of abuse is present. This interpretive bias can also lead employees to enact situations that are hostile or prone to generate fear or shame (Chan & McAllister, 2014). For example, anger arising from an abuse event may lead victims to interact with other coworkers in ways that aggravate their angry feelings (Côté, 2005; Lerner et al., 1998). Similarly, an employee who was initially ashamed of being derided by her supervisor may subsequently become particularly sensitive to comments about her work made by coworkers. Peers' light-hearted comments and ambiguous non-verbal signals may be more often interpreted as indications of diminished respect among peers.

Practical Implications

Our study highlights the powerful influence front-line supervisors have in determining employees' overall emotional states in ways that motivate undesirable behaviors and intentions

in the workplace. Given the negative consequence of abusive supervision, as observed in this and many other published studies (Mackey et al., 2017), we recommend organizations implement formal policies and procedures that can reduce or eliminate leader abuse. Because employees often hesitate to report the abusive incidents to higher level management owing to fear of retaliation, organizations need to solicit such complaints from front-line employees proactively and regularly through anonymous company surveys. Alternatively, 360-degree review system for the managers may serve the same purpose. In addition, organizations may reduce abusive supervision by training their leaders in supportive supervision characterized by benevolence, sincerity, fairness, and mindfulness (Gonzalez-Morales, Kernan, Becker, & Eisenberger, 2018). Gonzalez-Morales et al.'s study found that managers who attended four 2-hour training sessions on supportive supervision were rated by their subordinates nine months later as exhibiting significantly lower levels of abusive supervision. Moreover, organizations can train leaders to respond to eliciting situations (e.g., follower performance mistakes or deviant behavior) more constructively, such as by rectifying the problem and on helping the employees to learn from their mistakes. Providing supervisors with a more constructive response repertoire for problem employees may help them avoid impulsively engaging in abusive supervision. Finally, to ensure the effectiveness of these measures, organizations could establish zero tolerance policies against abusive behavior (Restubog et al., 2011). Abusive leaders who do not show improvement after training and coaching may be asked to leave the organization or take on positions that do not include supervisory responsibilities.

Our study can also have implications for individual employees who may be exposed to leader mistreatment. One novel insight from our study findings is that the immediate negative emotions following an abusive supervision incident are likely to turn into target non-specific

generalized emotional states at work. Many abusive supervision victims may have difficulties in regulating their negative emotional experiences resulting from leader mistreatment. Failing to regulate these emotions may make abuse victims more prone to experience work interactions and situations in ways that sustain these negative emotions, which can enact undesirable and counterproductive social interactions at work. It is thus important for employees to become educated about the importance of regulating their emotions during stressful situations. Abusive supervision victims could be encouraged to discuss their mistreatment experience with colleagues and/or HR personnel whom they trust. Abuse victims may also be advised to engage in activities (e.g., physical exercises, hanging out with friends, performing personal hobbies) that would produce positive affective states that can help them bounce back from their negative emotional states (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004).

Limitations and Future Research

Our study has several limitations. First, based on our design we cannot confidently infer causality. Nevertheless, the study improves on most previous abusive supervision research in these respects in that the measurement of abusive supervision and the putative mediating emotional states were separated by a period of nearly two months. In addition, the outcome variables were measured seven weeks after the putative mediating emotional states, and independent sources (the supervisor or multiple peers) were used to assess voice behavior and deviant behavior. Furthermore, we theorized that different patterns of abusive supervision experienced by oneself and one's unit peers trigger distinct cognitive appraisals, resulting in discrete emotions. The interactive relationships are not readily interpretable in terms of reversed or ambiguous causality. Nevertheless, the logic for these inferences is abductive, as we did not assess the underlying appraisals (e.g., self-directed vs. leader-directed attributions). Therefore,

we cannot rule out alternative processes that may have contributed to our findings. Future research may directly test these postulated cognitive appraisals of abusive supervision.

We had not anticipated the positive relationship we observed between anger and voice behavior. We reason that the initial anger directed toward the supervisor may lead victims of abusive supervision to perceive other aspects of their work environment as irritating. These individuals may therefore tend to perceive that various areas in the workplace need to be improved (e.g., scheduling, task assignment). Furthermore, anger is characterized by a tendency to initiate actions to fight against the irritating situation (Frijda et al., 1989; Roseman et al., 1994), and angry employees may be motivated to speak up about what they perceived as problems. Controlling for shame and fear may enhance the detection of anger-voice relationships, as they often accompany the experience of anger but may discourage individuals from taking a risky action such as speaking up. Future research may seek to understand the motives that precipitate the voice behavior of the employees who experience a relatively high level of anger at work. Perhaps angry victims often engage in voice behavior to express their discontent and to vent their frustration (Burris, 2012; Hirschman, 1970), rather than to desire to contribute positively to the organization.

Although our study focuses on the mediating roles of anger, fear, and shame, the interaction of own and abusive supervision may influence other emotional states. For example, some individuals who perceive they are alone as victims of abusive supervision might tend to experience guilt for their behaviors or believe their own undesirable attributes elicited their mistreatment. Guilt would tend to elicit compensating behaviors such as gift-giving in the form of helping work behaviors (Ilies, Peng, Savani, & Dimotakis, 2013). In addition, Oh and Farh (2017) theorized that anger and fear are the basic emotions employees experience following

episodes of leader abuse, yet they suggested that repeated failures to cope with abusive supervision will often create feelings of sadness. Sadness, guilt, and other emotions warrant attention in future studies of abusive supervision.

Because Chinese culture places greater emphasis on conformity to group values and authority and relies on shame as an important self-conscious emotion to regulate individual behaviors to meet societal moral standards (Fung & Chen, 2001; Li, Wang, & Fischer, 2004), it is possible that abuse victims in Chinese organizations more readily experience shame than those from a Western cultural context. Notably, however, within our study sample of Chinese employees, general anger was experienced to a greater extent than shame (paired sample t -test = 1.91, $p = .057$). In addition, research has shown that patterns of emotional response to adverse events are not subject to broad cultural differences (Levine et al., 2011; Wallbott & Scherer, 1988). More specifically, Mikula, Scherer, and Athenstaedt (1998) summarized a wide body of research in noting that there is "lack of cultural moderation of appraisals of and reactions to emotion-eliciting events regarded as unjust or unfair" (p. 781). Even if there are conceivable cultural differences in the mean levels of emotions experienced by the abusive supervision victims, this would not clearly affect the test of our hypotheses, as they focused on the interaction of own and coworker abusive supervision. As for any study, however, it will be valuable if other researchers seek to replicate our model findings using samples composed of workers from other cultural backgrounds and from a variety of occupational settings.

Conclusion

This study extends research pertaining to two themes within the abusive supervision literature; namely, the work on vicarious leader mistreatment and research concerning abusive supervision effects on emotions. The findings demonstrate that coworker abusive supervision can

have a broader impact by influencing the types of emotions that abuse victims are prone to experience at work, with implications for their desirable behaviors (voice), undesirable behaviors (deviant behavior), and turnover intentions. It also highlights a wider range of emotions and the susceptibility of these emotions to become more chronically elevated at work following sustained experiences of abusive supervision.

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Figure 1. Research model

Note. A saturated path model was specified to test the hypotheses. Only hypothesized relationships are presented in the diagram. Interpersonal justice was tested as a mediator parallel to the discrete emotions.

Figure 2. Interaction of own and coworker AS predicting shame (2a) and fear (2b).

AS = abusive supervision; Coworker AS is the mean of each individual's unit peers' reports of abusive supervision.

Figure 3. Interaction of own and perceived coworker AS predicting shame (3a) and fear (3b).

AS = abusive supervision; Perceived Coworker AS is an individual's self-report of the extent to which other unit peers are abused by the leader.

Table 1*Means, Standard Deviation, and Correlations among the Study Variables*

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Age	29.77	4.34	<u>NA</u>										
2. AS (T1)	1.29	0.69	-.05	<u>.87</u>									
3. Coworker AS (T1)	1.30	0.44	-.09	.36**	<u>NA</u>								
4. Perceived coworker AS (T1)	1.37	0.64	-.03	.71**	.35**	<u>.86</u>							
5. Fear (T2)	1.57	0.78	-.14*	.38**	.18**	.37**	<u>.91</u>						
6. Shame (T2)	1.41	0.64	-.21**	.24**	.02	.13*	.62**	<u>.89</u>					
7. Anger (T2)	1.48	0.72	-.12	.39**	.17**	.32**	.75**	.61**	<u>.91</u>				
8. Interpersonal justice (T2)	6.08	1.04	.07	-.46**	-.24**	-.43**	-.44**	-.34**	-.42**	<u>.88</u>			
9. Voice behavior (Leader-rated, T2)	3.67	0.82	.03	-.08	-.03	-.12	-.10	-.13	.01	.13	<u>.94</u>		
10. Turnover intention (T3)	2.30	0.83	.07	.28**	.14*	.30**	.40**	.24**	.34**	-.16*	.02	<u>.75</u>	
11. Interpersonal deviance (Peer-rated, T3)	1.12	0.28	-.06	.01	.03	.02	.07	.02	.14*	.03	-.09	.07	<u>.97</u>

Note. AS = abusive supervision

Coworker AS is the mean of each individual's unit peers' self-reports of abusive supervision.

The sample size is 245 (listwise) for correlations among the self-reported variables across Time 1 and Time 2. Sample sizes for correlations concerning the three outcome variables vary: N=214 for T2 leader rated voice behavior, N=210 for T3 turnover intention, and N=242 for T3 peer-rated interpersonal deviance.

Values on the diagonal are alpha reliability estimates.

* $p < .05$, and ** $p < .01$

Table 2*Mplus Results Testing the Hypothesized Model*

Predictors	Mediators and Outcomes													
	Interpersonal justice		Shame		Voice behavior (leader-rated)		Fear		Turnover intention		Anger		Deviance (peer-rated)	
	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.
Intercept	6.08**	0.06	1.43**	0.04	3.30**	0.34	1.54**	0.05	1.07**	0.37	1.48**	0.05	0.90**	0.10
AS	-0.63**	0.13	0.34**	0.12	0.05	0.09	0.31**	0.10	0.26*	0.13	0.37**	0.10	0.00	0.03
Coworker AS	-0.17	0.13	-0.03	0.09	0.08	0.22	0.00	0.14	0.10	0.15	0.02	0.13	0.03	0.06
AS × Coworker AS	-0.06	0.12	-0.19*	0.09	-0.22*	0.10	0.21*	0.10	-0.14	0.11	0.06	0.10	-0.03	0.03
Interpersonal justice					0.08	0.05			0.09	0.05			0.02	0.02
Shame					-0.26**	0.10			0.00	0.12			-0.04	0.04
Fear					-0.11	0.11			0.38**	0.08			0.00	0.02
Anger					0.32**	0.11			0.08	0.15			0.09**	0.03
R-square	0.22**		0.09		0.07**		0.16**		0.21**		0.15**		0.04	

Note. The sample size is 245 individuals from 55 work units.

AS = abusive supervision

* $p < .05$, and ** $p < .01$.

Table 3.*Conditional Indirect Effects of Abusive Supervision on Employee Outcomes through Discrete Emotions*

DV	Hypothesis	Mediator	Coworker AS	^a Indirect effect	^b 95% CI	
Voice behavior	H4b	Shame	Low	-.11	(-.26	-.01)
	H4b	Shame	High	-.07	(-.14	-.01)
	Not hypothesized	Anger	Low	.11	(.02	.23)
	Not hypothesized	Anger	High	.13	(.04	.24)
	H6b	Fear	Low	-.02	(-.09	.03)
	H6b	Fear	High	-.04	(-.13	.04)
Turnover intention	H4a	Shame	Low	.002	(-.11	.10)
	H4a	Shame	High	.001	(-.07	.06)
	Not hypothesized	Anger	Low	.03	(-.08	.15)
	Not hypothesized	Anger	High	.03	(-.09	.15)
	H6a	Fear	Low	.08	(-.01	.20)
	H6a	Fear	High	.15	(.07	.25)
Interpersonal deviance	Not hypothesized	Shame	Low	-.02	(-.05	.01)
	Not hypothesized	Shame	High	-.01	(-.03	.01)
	H5	Anger	Low	.03	(.01	.06)
	H5	Anger	High	.04	(.01	.06)
	Not hypothesized	Fear	Low	-.001	(-.01	.01)
	Not hypothesized	Fear	High	-.001	(-.01	.02)

Note. Coworker AS refers to coworker abusive supervision, which is the moderator in the model.

^a The indirect effects were computed based on the product term of the corresponding *a* (i.e., AS → emotion) and *b* (i.e., emotion → outcome) paths at the higher (+1 SD) and lower (-1 SD) values of coworker AS.

^b 95% CI refers to 95% confidence intervals generated using the Monte Carlo simulation method (Selig & Preacher, 2008).

Table 4*Mplus Results Testing the Moderating Role of Perceived Coworker Abusive Supervision*

Predictors	Mediators and Outcomes											
	Shame				Fear				Anger			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.	Coeff	s.e.
Intercept	1.45**	0.05	1.45**	0.05	1.52**	0.06	1.52**	0.06	1.46**	0.05	1.46**	0.05
AS	0.43**	0.13	0.43**	0.12	0.09	0.13	0.09	0.13	0.25*	0.12	0.24*	0.12
Perceived Coworker AS	0.02	0.11	0.02	0.11	0.15	0.12	0.15	0.12	0.05	0.12	0.05	0.12
AS × Perceived Coworker AS	-0.15**	0.06	-0.12 ^a	0.06	0.16**	0.05	0.17*	0.08	0.08	0.05	0.13*	0.06
Coworker AS			-0.05	0.09			0.01	0.14			0.03	0.13
AS × Coworker AS			-0.05	0.12			-0.02	0.13			-0.10	0.13
R-square	0.09*		0.10		0.19**		0.19**		0.16**		0.17**	

Note. AS = abusive supervision

The sample size is 245 individuals from 55 work units. Coworker AS is the mean of each individual's unit peers' reports of abusive supervision, whereas Perceived Coworker AS is an individual's self-report of the extent to which other unit peers are abused by the leader.

When predicting interpersonal justice, the interaction between AS and Perceived coworker AS was not significant, either when tested alone ($b = -.05, p = .545$) or when testing together with AS × Coworker AS ($b = -.07, p = .495$).

* $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$. ^a $p = .056$.