

A Model of Injustice, Abusive Supervision, and Negative Affect

ABSTRACT

In this study we test a model of workplace interactional injustice, abusive supervision, and subordinate outcomes (work-family conflict and job performance) using affect to explain behavior. In a sample of 200 full-time workers from various industries, their supervisors, and workers' family members, for a total sample of 600 respondents, we position state negative affect as the explanatory mechanism for both how supervisors' perceptions of injustice are associated with subordinates' perceptions of abusive supervision, and also how abusive supervision, in turn, may be associated with subordinates' job performance and their family members' perceptions of work-family conflict. Organizational justice theory underpins our model.

Key Words: Negative affect; abusive supervision; interactional justice

The idea of “bad bosses” has not only captured the attention of the popular media in recent years (*Horrible Bosses*; Online.wallstreetjournal.com) but has also garnered substantial research attention in the organizational behavior/management literature. In the academic literature, many researchers have called attention to this social problem by testing the outcomes, and to a lesser extent the antecedents (Tepper, 2007), of what has been named abusive supervision, that is, subordinates’ perceptions of the extent to which their supervisor engages in the display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behavior, excluding physical harm, toward them over time (Tepper, 2000).

Researchers have recently engaged in attempts to model what have been called “trickle-down” effects of abusive supervision. These models illustrate that factors specific to the organization (e.g., Mawritz, Mayer, Hoobler, Wayne, & Marinova, 2012; Restubog, Scott, & Zagenczyk, 2011) or perceptions and characteristics of the supervisor (e.g., Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007; Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Tepper, Duffy, Henle, & Lambert, 2006) set in motion a chain of events that result in a supervisor’s abusive behavior. Though these studies have largely been cross-sectional in nature, they suggest an active process whereby events “flow downhill” to and from supervisor abuse, resulting in negative outcomes for organizations, subordinates, and even subordinates’ family members outside of the workplace (Aryee et al., 2007; Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Restubog et al., 2011). These models acknowledge that abusive supervision is not a simple act committed by isolated “bad apple” (Felps, Mitchell, & Byington, 2006) bosses in organizations, but rather a complex interplay between organizational, extraorganizational, and individual factors.

The purpose of this study is to test one such model of abusive supervision that addresses a common limitation of many models in organizational behavior research. We address calls

from Weiss (2002) and Judge and Ilies (2004) for models that explain workers' behavior not just through cognitive means, e.g., through their appraisal of job factors, but rather through *affective* ones, that is, emotions and affective states. Especially in the context of abusive supervision, where people's actions may be considered hostile and damaging to others interpersonally, we feel that negative affect (a general dimension of negative mood) may be particularly important in determining when and in explaining how negative events are associated with work and nonwork outcomes for subordinates. Using a sample of 200 full-time workers from various industries, their supervisors, and workers' family members, for a total sample of 600 respondents, we test a model that positions supervisor negative affect as the explanatory mechanism for how supervisors' perceptions of interactional injustice are associated with subordinate's perceptions of abusive supervision, and subordinate negative affect as the explanatory mechanism for how abusive supervision is associated with subordinates' performance and their family members' perceptions of work-family conflict (the degree to which work spills over to negatively impact the home and family sphere). Please see Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1 about here

1. Theoretical development and hypotheses

Prior trickle-down models of abusive supervision have done a good job of illustrating that abusive supervision does not occur in a vacuum. While we still know relatively little about why abusive supervision occurs (Tepper, 2007), what is reasonably clear is that supervisors who are perceived as abusive do not enact behaviors like telling subordinates their thoughts or feelings are stupid, lying to them, or not giving credit when it is due, as random events. More likely, in

response to organizational events or norms, and in “kick the dog” (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Restubog et al., 2011) or trickle-down fashion, supervisors take their aggression out on those whom they have power over in the organization—their subordinates. Aryee and colleagues (2007) found that when supervisors reported unfair treatment from others in the organization, their subordinates reported greater abusive supervision. Likewise, Hoobler and Brass (2006) found that when supervisors felt their employer had not lived up to what the supervisor felt he or she had been promised, that is, supervisors felt their psychological contracts had been violated, their subordinates judged them to be more abusive.

The reactivity inherent in these trickle-down models comes from the theory of organizational justice, from which Tepper’s (2000) theory of abusive supervision was derived. Organizational justice comprises a large body of work that examines and predicts organizational factors and individual attitudes and behavior surrounding appraisals of unfairness and mistreatment in organizations (Greenberg, 1987). In his seminal work on abusive supervision, Tepper (2000) suggested that interactional justice, that is, the interpersonal dimension of organizational fairness, was particularly relevant to abusive supervision. Contextually rooted in early balance theories (e.g., Festinger, 1957; Heider, 1958), the idea is that fair relationships are those that are characterized by equitable inputs and outputs, such as a balanced ratio between a subordinate’s work efforts and the reciprocal consideration and respect she receives from her supervisor. However, when a supervisor perceives injustice, that is unfair treatment in his or her work environment, this destroys the balance of the relationship. Disconcerting feelings of imbalance such as anxiety and other negative states may prompt resultant negative attitudes and behaviors (Greenberg, 1987) such as low job satisfaction and a desire to leave the organization (Tepper, 2000). While the organizational justice literature has done a good job of specifying the

types of attitudes and behaviors that result from unfairness perceptions, less attention has been given to models such as ours that examine specific moods, affect, or emotions associated with interpersonal *injustice* (Weiss, Suckow, & Cropanzano, 1999).

As two exceptions, Tepper (2006) and Restubog (2011), together with their colleagues, supported models of abusive supervision that incorporated affective mechanisms to explain behavior. In Tepper and colleagues' (2006) study, supervisors' depression, an indicator of emotional distress, was the linking mechanism between their perceptions of injustice and subordinates' reports of abusive behavior. Moreover, this mediated relationship was stronger when subordinates were higher in trait negative affectivity. In essence, they explained that the depressive symptoms evoked by supervisors' feelings of injustice prompted the need to engage in the hostile behavior of abusive supervision, and that subordinates higher in trait NA seemed to be targeted as victims. In Restubog and colleagues' (2011) work, subordinates' psychological distress was the affective linkage between their perceptions of abusive supervision and their undermining of a spouse (criticizing, insulting them) at home. Our research integrates and extends these two studies in two ways. 1) We examine how shorter term, *state* negative affect on the part of both supervisors and subordinates, is associated with supervisor injustice perceptions and subordinate abusive supervision perceptions. In so doing, we add state negative affect to the short list of antecedents to abusive supervision just beginning to accumulate in the research (Tepper, 2007). Further, we offer reasons why employees (both subordinates and supervisors) experience agitation and distress, i.e., negative affect, at work—a question of merit to practitioners because subordinates high in negative affect tend to hold negative attitudes and engage in dysfunctional behavior (Brief & Weiss, 2002), and supervisors high in negative affect can impair subordinates' moods, thoughts, and behavior (George, 2000; Sy, Cote, & Saavedra,

2005). 2) Our model incorporates linkages not only between negative affect and work behavior, but also, as in Hoobler & Brass' (2009) and Restubug and colleagues' (2011) studies, extends abusive supervision research to family members' nonwork perceptions. In this way, we examine affective associations with abusive supervision, and acknowledge their broader reach to nonwork domains.

1.1. The role of negative affect

Negative affect, a general dimension of subjective distress and aversive mood (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), has a long history of association with negative behavior and cognition in Social Psychology. Pirola-Merloa, Hartel, Mann, and Hirst (2002) state that, evolutionarily, positive affect signals that persons are satisfied, and negative affect signals that something is wrong. We focus on state negative affect, the experience of a negative, diffuse affective state (Forgas, 1995) which can be accompanied by feelings of anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness (Watson et al., 1988).

Our review of the abusive supervision literature found that, while many studies have measured and incorporated negative affect, the nature of the relation between the two, for example, whether negative affect leads to and/or stems from abusive supervision, remains unclear. We found at least seven published studies where negative affect, usually on the part of the subordinate in a supervisor-subordinate relationship, had been controlled for, that is, included in the study as a potential alternative explanation for the relationship between abusive supervision and other factors. So, to acknowledge that affectivity is a potentially confounding variable that often relates to employees' perceptions of stressors and psychological well-being in the workplace, NA has been controlled in the prediction of e.g., emotional exhaustion (Wu & Hu, 2009) and deviant behavior (Tepper, Carr, Breaux, Geider, Hu, & Hua, 2009). However, we

found fewer studies (c.f. Aquino, Grover, Bradfield, & Allen, 1999; Tepper et al., 2006) that offered theoretical reasoning for and tested hypotheses that specifically connected NA to abusive supervision. In the case of Tepper and colleagues' study (2006), they supported a model whereby "provocative victims," i.e., subordinates higher in trait NA, were more likely to incite their supervisors' abuse.

In our model, we hypothesize that interactional injustice perceptions should be associated with supervisors' state negative affect (Barsky & Kaplan, 2007), and supervisors' state negative affect should be associated with abusive supervisory behavior (Hepworth & Towler, 2004; Hershcovis et al., 2007). While Skarlicki, Folger, and Tesluk (1999) found that employees' *trait* negative affect strengthened the positive association between their perceptions of workplace injustice and retributive behaviors (of which abusive supervision can be one type - Hoobler & Brass, 2006), we suggest that state negative affect is a fruitful linking mechanism between injustice and abusive behavior. Situations that are appraised as interpersonally unfair, such as transgressions threatening to a person's sense of respect and dignity, have traditionally been found to be the situations that are most provocative in terms of angry, negative feelings (Berkowitz, 1989). Barsky and Kaplan (2007) found that negative affect resulting from perceptions of organizational injustice, including specifically interactional injustice, signaled to perceivers a threatening work environment, and fostered reactivity. A common tenet of organizational justice theory is that people respond to unfair relationships with negative emotional states, which they are then motivated to alleviate by acting to restore equity. So when an individual perceives a threat to their constant state, especially when ill treatment is perceived, that should provoke negative affective responses, which may then prompt individuals to seek some type of behavioral method of restoring their sense of justice (Greenberg & Scott, 1996;

Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Hence, according to organizational justice theory, negative affect seems to translate perceptions of injustice into restorative behavioral reactions.

Hypothesis 1. Supervisors' negative affect mediates the relationship between supervisors' interactional justice perceptions and abusive supervision.

1.2. Abusive supervision as a mediator between supervisors' and subordinates' negative affect

In a recent review of aggression in the workplace, Aquino and Thau (2009) found that victimized employees reported feeling angry, destructive, and hostile. As a type of workplace aggression, it follows that abusive supervision stands to benefit from acknowledging these types of negative emotions and states that abusive supervision may provoke. Restubog and colleagues (2011) found that subordinates' perceptions of abusive supervision were associated with their psychological distress--a combined measure of the extent to which subordinates experienced anxiety, fear, and depression over the previous month.

In earlier research, Tepper and colleagues (2006) explored ways abusive supervisors decide whom to victimize: They found that supervisors targeted subordinates who were high in NA. Their research supported that supervisors abuse subordinates high in NA (rather than low) because those subordinates present themselves as submissive victims who are anxious, distressed, annoying, and disrespectful (Aquino et al., 1999). Yet Tepper and colleagues' (2006) study was cross-sectional, and the possibility remains that abusive supervision may be a vehicle for organizational injustice perceptions by subordinates, and, in this way, precede subordinates' negative affect. Moreover, the power differential inherent to the supervisor-subordinate relationship (Erez, Misangyi, Johnson, LePine, & Halverson, 2008) would suggest that subordinates' victimization should prompt subordinates' affective states (Weiss et al., 1999). And research has demonstrated that leaders' behaviors, e.g., abusive supervision, can transfer the

effect of leaders' affect onto followers' affect (Erez et al., 2008). Aroused behaviors that typify abusive supervision such as yelling and putting a subordinate down verbally, often violate social norms and are perceived as a threat to subordinates' social standing and self-concept (Tepper, 2007), and such violations of social norms are perceived as organizationally unjust (Greenberg, 1987). As such, this behavior is likely to be quite salient to subordinates, to convey supervisors' negative affect as well as induce subordinate negative affect.

Hypothesis 2. Abusive supervision mediates the relationship between supervisors' negative affect and subordinates' negative affect.

1.3. Consequences of abusive supervision and negative affect

Researchers are commonly interested in NA not simply because it is a negative state, but instead because it is a good predictor of attitudes and behaviors. For example, NA has been shown to strengthen perceptions of stressors and strains (Brief, Burke, George, Robinson, & Webster, 1988; Burke, Brief & George, 1993; Jex & Spector, 1996; Spector, Chen, & O'Connell, 2000), work-family conflict (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Carlson, 1999; Stoeva, Chiu, & Greenhaus, 2002), and turnover intentions, reduce perceptions of organizational justice and commitment (Lam, Yik, & Schaubroeck, 2002), increase reactivity to job demands (Parkes, 1990) and job tension (Hochwarter, Perrewe, Hall, & Ferris, 2005), and increase the quality of relationships with supervisors (Hui, Law, & Chen, 1999) and work performance (for low tenure employees - Cropanzano, James, & Konovsky, 1993). Since evidence has demonstrated the consequences of abusive supervision extend to both organizations (Tepper, 2007) and workers' family lives (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Restubog et al., 2011; Tepper, 2000) we chose to test the effects, via subordinate negative affect, on one common indicator of work success—supervisors' perceptions of subordinate job performance—and one common nonwork indicator of distress—work-family

conflict (WFC; the degree to which work spills over to negatively affect home and family life, in our study as reported by subordinates' family members).

Despite the assumed relationship between the two (“bad bosses harm productivity”), few studies have empirically examined the link between abusive supervision and subordinate job performance (Tepper, 2007; as exceptions, see Harris, Kacmar, & Zivnuska, 2007 and Tepper and colleagues, 2009). Organizational justice theory would predict that abusive, unfair treatment should engender negative emotions/affective states, and in the quest to restore balance, employee performance should go down. This suggests a mediated relationship whereby negative affective reactions to abusive supervision are the mechanism through which abusive supervision is associated with work behavior, here poor performance. When subordinates receive poor interpersonal treatment, their negative affect should be associated with careless, less motivated job performance. While a handful of studies have shown potential performance *benefits* of NA (e.g., George & Zhou, 2002, 2007; Schwarz & Clore, 1996), the majority of the research has demonstrated negative affectivity to be associated with decreased job performance, both when performance is rated by a subordinate’s supervisor, and also when it is self-rated (Kaplan, Bradley, Luchman, & Haynes, 2009). Likewise, we propose that “working mad” should be associated with lower performance.

Hypothesis 3. Subordinate negative affect mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and subordinate job performance.

Abusive supervision has been implicated in nonwork, that is, home and personal life, outcomes for abused workers. In his seminal work on abusive supervision, Tepper (2000) found that workers who reported greater supervisor abuse also self-reported negative spillover from work to their family life (WFC), with perceptions of injustice mediating this relationship.

Subordinates' family members have also documented being undermined in the home, likely as a result of their spouse, parent, or significant other falling prey to an abusive boss (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Restubog et al., 2011). In his review of the abusive supervision literature, Tepper (2007) proposed that "anger reactions" may explain the effect abusive supervision has on feelings of conflict between work and family. Likewise, we predict that negative affective reactions to abusive supervision should be the mechanism through which family members' perceptions of subordinate work-family conflict manifest.

Hypothesis 4. Subordinate negative affect mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and work-family conflict.

2. Method

2.1. Participants and Procedures

We tested the proposed theoretical model using data collected from a sample of full-time employed executive MBA students in six universities located in the midwestern, southern, and eastern United States. A study utilizing a subsample from the data reported here appears elsewhere¹. Of the subordinate-rated variables included in the current study, none have been included in the other, previously published paper with the exception of abusive supervision and none of the supervisor-rated and family member-rated variables have been included in the other published paper. The MBA respondents were given extra credit points in Management and Marketing classes to encourage participation. If, for whatever reason, they were unwilling to participate, they were given other opportunities to earn the extra credit. Three hundred and forty-three MBAs were the starting point of the research design. They were given a packet of three surveys with one survey clipped to the top and two sealed envelopes contained inside. Survey 1 was completed by the focal MBA respondents and measured their perceptions of their

supervisors' abusive supervision and their own negative affect. The focal MBAs were instructed to give Survey 2 to their immediate supervisors; this survey asked the supervisors to rate their own interactional justice perceptions and negative affect, as well as the focal MBAs' work performance. Finally, focal MBAs gave Survey 3 to one live-in member of their family such as a spouse, child over 12 years of age, or other relative, and this survey measured these respondents' perceptions of the focal MBAs' work-family conflict. Both of the envelopes inside the packet contained a survey, a prepaid response return envelope, and a cover letter introducing the survey. All surveys were coded with a researcher-assigned identification number to match the focal MBAs' responses with their immediate supervisors' and their family members' respective responses upon receipt. To ensure confidentiality, MBAs, their supervisors, and family members mailed the completed surveys directly to the researchers via U.S. Mail. Out of 343 survey packets (for a total of 1,029 surveys distributed), a total of 200 triadic sets of surveys where we received complete information from the focal subordinate (MBA), their immediate supervisor, and their family member, were included in the analyses. The usable response rate for the three-way matches was 58.31% (200/343). In the subordinate sample, the percentage who were male was 62% (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*), most respondents' age (51.6%) ranged from 25-34 years (1 = *less than 6 months*, 2 = *6 months to 1 year*, 3 = *1 to 2 years*, 4 = *2 to 5 years*, and 5 = *more than 5 years*), and, on average, respondents had earned a college level degree or above (1 = *some high school*, 2 = *high school degree*, 3 = *college degree*, 4 = *graduate degree*, and 5 = *post-graduate coursework or degree*). The length of the dyadic relationship between subordinate and supervisor was measured as follows: 1 = *less than 6 months*, 2 = *6 months to 1 year*, 3 = *1 to 2 years*, 4 = *2 to 5 years*, and 5 = *more than 5 years*. The average relationship tenure was 1 to 2 years (response option 3). Subordinates represented the following industries: 54.3% service or

retailing, 21.6% manufacturing, 8.7% small business, 8.2% government, and 7.2% education. For the supervisor sample, 68% were men, their modal age ranged between 35-49 years, and their average education level was at least a college degree. For the family member sample, 36% were men, and their modal age ranged between 35-49 years. 47.6% of the family members were spouses, 15.3% were live-in partners, 13.2% were other relatives, 4.8% were children who were 12 years of age or older, and 19% indicated “other.” In terms of working status, 65.8% of family members were working full-time outside the home, 13.2% were working part-time, and 21.1% were not working at the time of the study.

We performed analyses of variance (ANOVA) to check whether the 200 focal subordinates in our sample differed in important ways from the focal subordinate surveys that were not included in our analyses because they lacked a supervisor and/or a family member survey match ($N = 10$). The ANOVA results showed no significant differences between the selected and nonselected subordinate surveys in terms of their sex ($F = .32, p > .05$), age ($F = .84, p > .05$), education ($F = .01, p > .05$), tenure with their supervisor ($F = 2.84, p > .05$), ratings of abusive supervision ($F = .12, p > .05$), and negative affect ($F = .71, p > .05$). The non-significant ANOVA results provided us with some degree of confidence that sampling bias was not a major concern. Unfortunately our method leaves us unable to compare our respondents to the group who chose not to fill out the focal subordinate survey ($N = 123$).

2.2. *Measures*

2.2.1. *Supervisors' interactional justice*

Supervisors were asked to assess fairness perceptions regarding their interpersonal treatment in the workplace using 5 items developed from Moorman (1991) and Tyler and Bies (1989). Sample items include “in my company, I am treated with respect and dignity” and

“when decisions are made, my supervisors show concern for my rights as an employee.”

Respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a 5-point scale (1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree”). We averaged across the five items to create scores for interactional justice ($\alpha = .87$).

2.2.2. Supervisors' and subordinates' negative affect (NA)

Supervisors' and subordinates' NA was measured using four negative affect items from the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988; Watson & Clark, 1994). This shortened NA scale has been used and supported by previous abusive supervision studies (e.g., Tepper et al., 2006). Specifically, supervisors and subordinates were asked to indicate the extent to which they had emotionally felt “distressed,” “upset,” “afraid,” and “jittery” during the past few months² (1 = “not at all” to 5 = “extremely”). ($\alpha = .81$ for supervisors and .74 for subordinates).

2.2.3. Abusive supervision

Subordinates (focal MBAs) assessed their perceptions of their supervisors' behavior using Tepper's (2000) 15-item abusive supervision scale on a 5-point response scale (1 = “I cannot remember him/her ever using this behavior with me,” to 5 = “He/she uses this behavior very often with me”). Example items include “my boss tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid” and “my boss doesn't give me credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort” ($\alpha = .88$).

2.2.4. Work-family conflict (WFC)

Family members rated their perceptions of the focal subordinate's WFC using six items from Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000) to measure time-based work interference with family (three items) and strain-based work interference with family (three-items). Among the participating family members, 47.6% were spouses, 15.3% were live-in partners, 13.2% were

other relatives, 4.8% were children who were 12 years of age or older, and 19% indicated “other.” The referent was changed to allow the family member to report on the focal subordinate’s behavior. Example items are “the stress of his/her job keeps him/her from doing other activities more than he/she would like” and “due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when he/she comes home he/she is too stressed to do the things he/she enjoys” (1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree”). The six-item measure has previously been validated to present an overall work-family conflict scale (Golden, Veiga, & Simsek, 2006; O’Driscoll et al., 2003) ($\alpha = .87$).

2.2.5. Performance

Supervisors rated the focal subordinates’ job performance with seven items assessing three aspects of job performance: production (quantity and quality), adaptation (anticipating problems and solving them satisfactorily; awareness of potential solutions; promptness of adjustment), and flexibility (Mott, 1972). This measure was originally derived from Mott’s (1972) work and later validated by Schriesheim and his colleagues (e.g., Schriesheim, 1980; Schriesheim, Castro, Zhou, & DeChurch, 2006; Schriesheim & Murphy, 1976; Schriesheim, Neider, & Scandura, 1998). Sample items are: “how good would you say is the quality of your employee’s performance?” (from 1 = “His/her quality is poor” to 5 = “His/her quality is excellent”) and “How efficiently does your employee work? That is, how well does he or she make use of available resource (time, materials, equipment, supplies, etc.)?” (from 1 = “He/she does not work efficiently at all” to 5 = “He/she is extremely efficient”) ($\alpha = .87$).

2.2.6. Control variables

A number of variables were chosen as control variables based on their potential theoretical impact on the relationships of interest. Sex, for subordinates and supervisors was

included in our analyses due to the fact that men and women may differ in terms of their affect (e.g., Fujita, Diener, & Sandvik, 1991); and for supervisors, men are more likely to engage in abusive supervision (Tepper et al., 2006). Family members' sex was included in consideration of past findings that suggest there are gender differences in the magnitude of WFC perceptions (e.g., Carlson et al., 2000; Green, Bull Schaefer, MacDermid, & Weiss, 2011). Age, for both subordinates and supervisors, was controlled in consideration of previous evidence that negative affect decreases with age (Charles, Reynolds, & Gatz, 2001). Education level of supervisors and subordinates was included as research has shown that with more education comes lower levels of emotional distress (Ross & Willigen, 1997). And dyadic (supervisor-subordinate) tenure was also included as a control variable because the length of time a subordinate has worked with a supervisor may lead to harsher (new relationships may make people more critical of/watchful for transgressions) or more lenient ratings (as in a "honeymoon" period) of abusive supervision (Hoobler & Brass, 2006). Age, sex (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*), education (1 = *some high school*, 2 = *high school degree*, 3 = *college degree*, 4 = *graduate degree*, and 5 = *post-graduate coursework or degree*), and dyadic tenure (1 = *less than 6 months*, 2 = *6 months to 1 year*, 3 = *1 to 2 years*, 4 = *2 to 5 years*, and 5 = *more than 5 years*) were all measured with categorical response options. To conserve statistical power, we checked the significance of correlations with criterion variables to determine whether it was meaningful to include all of our theoretically derived control variables (Becker, 2005). Details are described in the Results section.

2.3. Analysis

Structural equation modeling (SEM) with latent constructs was used to test the overall hypothesized model. LISREL 8.72 software (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2005) was used. Overall model fit was assessed by the comparative fit index (CFI) and the incremental fit index (IFI).

These fit indices were evaluated based on the commonly accepted cutoff value of .90 (Hu & Bentler, 1995; 1999). In addition, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and the standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) were assessed given traditional standards (RMSEA < .08; SRMR < .06 as reasonable fit) (Browne & Cudeck, 1992; Kline, 2005).

Furthermore, chi-square difference tests were conducted to compare which model better fit our data (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Kline, 2005). We first assessed the measurement model and then the structural model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Although the data came from three sources (i.e., subordinates, supervisors, and subordinates' family members), we had supervisors rate both their interactional justice perceptions and their NA, and subordinates assess both their perceptions of abusive supervision and their NA. Thus, we included two unmeasured common method (CM) factors in the hypothesized measurement models to examine whether the method effect is present (Cote & Buckley, 1987; Williams, Cote, & Buckley, 1989). Following Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff's (2003) procedure, we added a CM factor with all of the measures as indicators (i.e., supervisor IJ and supervisor NA in the measurement model for supervisor-rated variables; and abusive supervision and subordinate NA in the measurement model for subordinate-rated variables) and set the method factor to be uncorrelated with the other latent variables. We justified the presence of method effect by examining the potential increase in model fit after including the CM factor and the variance explained by the factor.

To assess the size of indirect effects depicted in the hypotheses, we adopted a bootstrapping strategy because this does not assume the shape of the sampling distribution and offers greater statistical power and more accurate estimation than conventional methods such as the Sobel test (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002; Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Williams & MacKinnon, 2008). Specifically, we followed Hayes, Preacher, and Myers's

(2011) approach and employed Mplus software (Muthén & Muthén, 2011) to examine the indirect effects in our hypothesized multiple-step mediator model. We justified the significance of the indirect effects by examining whether the bias corrected confidence intervals excluded zero.

3. Results

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations among the study variables. As shown, subordinate age and sex were not significantly related to abusive supervision nor to subordinates' NA. Subordinate education was significantly related to supervisor interactional justice and family members' perceptions of work-family conflict. Abusive supervision was significantly related to the tenure of the supervisor-subordinate relationship and to subordinates' NA. Supervisors' age, sex, and education, and family member sex were not significantly related to any of the main variables of interest. Based on nonsignificant correlations, we no longer included subordinates' age and sex, supervisors' age, sex, and education, and family member sex as control variables, but retained subordinate education level and supervisor-subordinate dyadic relationship tenure as control variables in the subsequent analyses (Tepper et al., 2006). By removing control variables uncorrelated with study variables we sought to reduce Type I error and maintain statistical power (Becker, 2005). Based on the zero-order correlations, subordinate education was modeled to allow its association with work-family conflict, and supervisor-subordinate tenure was likewise modeled to associate with abusive supervision in the SEM analyses.

Insert Table 1 about here

3.1. Confirmatory factor analyses and common method variance

Before testing our hypotheses, we conducted two sets of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA), one for the supervisor data, and the other for subordinate data, to assess the discriminant validity of all variables. For variables rated by supervisors (i.e., supervisor interactional justice, supervisor NA, and subordinate performance), the CFA results presented in Table 2 show that the hypothesized three-factor model (i.e., Model 1, the three variables as separate factors) reached a reasonable level of fit (CFI = .97, IFI = .97, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05). Furthermore, as shown in Table 2, the chi-square difference test illustrates that the three-factor model yielded a significantly better fit than the three two-factor models (i.e., Models 2 through 4, with any two of the three variables combined as a factor) ($\Delta\chi^2(2) = 265.97, p < .001$; $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 770.61, p < .001$; $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 856.74, p < .001$, respectively) and the single factor model (i.e., Model 5, with the three variables as one combined factor) ($\Delta\chi^2(3) = 1030.69, p < .001$). For variables rated by subordinates (i.e., abusive supervision and subordinate NA), the CFA suggested that the hypothesized two-factor model (i.e., Model 1, with the two variables as two separate factors) provided a significantly better fit than a one-factor model (the two variables as a combined factor) (CFI = .93, IFI = .93, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05, $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 151.18, p < .001$).

Furthermore, to examine whether a common method effect is present, we tested two alternative models with an unmeasured CM factor included. First, as shown in Table 2, the measurement model including the three supervisor-rated variables as three factors (i.e., supervisor interactional justice, supervisor NA, and subordinate performance) and a CM factor (Model 6) also fit the data well, however, it did not significantly improve model fit ($\Delta\chi^2(16) = 10.09, p > .05$). Furthermore, the CM factor only accounted for 6.42% percent of the total variance explained by the model, which is well below the suggested floor of 25% variance explained by the method factor as suggested by Williams and colleagues (1989). Second, the

model with the two subordinate-rated variables as two factors and one CM factor (Model 3) resulted in a significant improvement in model fit ($\Delta\chi^2(19) = 119.78, p < .001$). However, the variance extracted by the CM factor was only 5.41%, again falling below the suggested cutoff. Thus, although we acknowledge that the CM effect is present in the measurement model for the subordinate-rated variables, it seems to not be a severe problem that inhibits the testing of our hypotheses.

 Insert Table 2 about here

3.2. Hypothesis testing

Figure 2 presents the results of the full structural model. This model includes the direct path from supervisor interactional justice to supervisor NA. Also included are the paths from supervisor NA to abusive supervision, abusive supervision to subordinate NA, and subordinate NA to WFC and subordinate performance. As illustrated in Table 3, the hypothesized structural model yielded a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 1644.22, df = 850, p < .001$; CFI = .93, IFI = .93, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06). Three of the four hypothesized structural paths were statistically significant. Specifically, the mediation process described in Hypothesis 1 was supported by the negative association between supervisor interactional justice perceptions and supervisor NA ($\beta = -.14, p < .05$), and the positive association between supervisor NA and abusive supervision ($\beta = .16, p < .05$). Furthermore, our Mplus output showed that the indirect effect of supervisor interactional justice perceptions on abusive supervision through supervisor NA was significant (95% bootstrap confidence intervals of the indirect effect: [.001, .014], excluding zero). Taking this evidence together, Hypothesis 1 was supported. In addition, supervisor NA was positively associated with subordinates' abusive supervision perceptions ($\beta = .16, p < .05$), which in turn

were positively associated with subordinate NA ($\beta = .40, p < .01$). Bootstrapping results further confirmed that this indirect effect was significant (95% confidence interval: [.003, .024], excluding zero), lending support to Hypothesis 2. However, subordinate NA was not significantly related to subordinate work performance ($\beta = -.12, ns$), failing to support Hypothesis 3. But subordinate NA was positively related to family members' perceptions of WFC ($\beta = .22, p < .01$), offering support for Hypothesis 4. Furthermore, the bootstrapping results demonstrated support for the indirect effect reflected in Hypothesis 4 (95% bootstrap confidence intervals: [.001, .021], excluding zero). And looking at the model as a whole, other results offered support for the overall indirect effect of supervisor interactional justice perceptions on distal family member-rated WFC (95% bootstrap confidence intervals: [.003, .021], excluding zero), but failed to support the indirect effect of supervisor interactional justice perceptions on subordinate performance (95% bootstrap confidence intervals: [-.001, .009], including zero). As well, our two control variables demonstrated significant relationships with the study variables. Specifically, subordinate education level was positively related to work-family conflict ($\beta = .59, p < .001$), and supervisor-subordinate dyadic tenure was negatively related to abusive supervision ($\beta = -.27, p < .01$).

 Insert Figure 2 and Table 3 about here

Because our research design is cross-sectional in nature, we cannot rule out the possibility of reversed or reciprocal relationships between the study variables. And because our theorizing suggests a process model, we next compared our hypothesized model with five alternative, plausible models. First, because supervisors provided assessments of their

interactional justice perceptions and NA at the same time, it could have been that supervisors experiencing higher NA were prone to seeing things in a negative way, and regarded their interpersonal experiences as unfair (Tepper et al., 2006). Based on this logic, the first competing model reversed the direction of the relationship between supervisor interactional justice perceptions and NA. In this alternative model, we had supervisor NA relate to supervisor interactional justice perceptions, which in turn related to abusive supervision. Abusive supervision was further set to relate to subordinate NA, which related to subordinate WFC and job performance. As shown in Table 3, compared to our hypothesized model, the first alternative model (Model 2) produced poorer goodness-of-fit indices (CFI = .92, IFI = .92, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .14). With the degrees of freedom unchanged, the increase in chi-square of 60.26 revealed that this altered path made for worse model fit as compared to the hypothesized model. In addition, this path was not significant ($\beta = -.12, ns$).

A second alternative model was tested to examine the possible cross-process effects between two subordinate-rated variables: abusive supervision and subordinate NA. Similar to the logic for alternative model test number one, subordinates higher in NA may have more critically evaluated their supervisors because their affective state influenced the degree to which they were attuned to negative information (Tepper et al., 2006). We thus altered the direction of the relationship and let subordinate NA relate to abusive supervision. We also included the path from abusive supervision to WFC given the potential main effect of abusive supervision on WFC (Tepper, 2000). Although this competing model (Model 3, Table 3) provided acceptable fit indices (CFI = .92, IFI = .92, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .08), its fit was worse than the fit of our hypothesized model; the degrees of freedom remained the same, but the chi-square value of the competing model was much higher than the value for the hypothesized model ($\Delta\chi^2(0) = 27.23$).

With the third alternative model we allowed WFC to relate to subordinate NA due to the consideration that subordinates' NA could be influenced by their family members' experience of conflict between the work and family domains. Thus, the third competing model considered a path from WFC to subordinate NA. The results from Table 3 indicated that the alternative model (Model 4) demonstrated a reasonable fit to the data (CFI = .93, IFI = .93, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06), and compared to the hypothesized model, the former produced the same degrees of freedom with a significantly decreased chi-square value ($\Delta\chi^2(0) = -8.69$). Furthermore, the path estimate from WFC to subordinate NA was significant ($\beta = .29, p < .01$). Although we cannot draw conclusions about reciprocal relationships from a cross-sectional study, along with support for the path from subordinate NA to WFC in the hypothesized model, these results suggested that subordinate NA and WFC seem to influence one another.

Fourth, we tested a partial mediation model with supervisor interactional justice relating directly to abusive supervision and abusive supervision relating directly to performance. This fourth alternative model (Model 5) was chosen based on previous evidence that supervisors' interactional justice perceptions trigger them to engage in more abusive behaviors (Aryee et al., 2007), and that abusive supervision directly affects subordinate performance (Tepper, 2000). As shown in Model 5, Table 3, these two new paths did not significantly improve model fit ($\Delta\chi^2(2) = 3.65, p > .05$).

Next, given previous evidence that higher NA prompts one respond to injustice more negatively (Tepper et al., 2006), it was likely that supervisors with higher negative affect might engage in more abusive supervision after experiencing unfair treatment. Thus, in the fifth alternative model, and at the suggestion of an anonymous reviewer, we treated supervisor NA as a moderator of the relationship between supervisor interactional justice perceptions and abusive

supervision. Results from Model 6, Table 3 indicate that this alternative model demonstrated a very poor fit to the data ($\Delta\chi^2(34) = 887.37, p < .001, CFI = .34, IFI = .39, RMSEA = .10, SRMR = .16$), and the interactive effects of supervisor NA and supervisor interactional justice on abusive supervision were not significant.

Finally, research has suggested that higher NA subordinates tend to be hypersensitive to negative stimuli and are prone to perceive supervisors higher on NA to be abusive (Tepper et al., 2006). Thus, in the last alternative model, we included the interaction between supervisor and subordinate NA on abusive supervision. Results from Model 7, Table 3, showed that this alternative model provided a worse fit to the data than the hypothesized model ($\Delta\chi^2(34) = 35.55, p > .05, CFI = .86, IFI = .86, RMSEA = .10, SRMR = .14$), and the interaction term of supervisor NA X subordinate NA was not significant in predicting abusive supervision.

Taken together, the results provided support for our hypothesized model. However, an alternative model (Model 4) that included a path from WFC to subordinate NA provided a slightly better fit to the data than our hypothesized model. Unfortunately we are unable to test directionality due to our cross-sectional design, but we acknowledge that there may be a potential reciprocal relationship between WFC and subordinate NA. Please see the Discussion section (section 4.3) for a more detailed treatment of this finding.

4. Discussion

Building on work on trickle-down model specification in the abusive supervision literature, the present study proposed and tested a model of how supervisors' workplace perceptions are associated with their affect, their behavior, subordinates' affect, and the perceptions of subordinates' family members. Consistent with our predictions, we found that supervisors' interactional justice perceptions were negatively associated with supervisors' NA,

which was positively related to supervisors engaging in abusive supervision. Abusive supervision, in turn, was positively associated with subordinates' NA, which was associated with greater family member perceptions of work-family conflict. In particular, the findings contribute to the abusive supervision and justice literatures in the following ways.

4.1. Theoretical implications

First, the study extends the growing but still very limited body of research on the antecedents of abusive supervision. Researchers have generally agreed that abusive supervision causes significant problems in the workplace for those who are abused and for others indirectly, but little research has investigated why abusive supervision behaviors occur (see Aryee et al., 2007; Tepper et al., 2006 for exceptions). We have added support to the research that implicates supervisors' interactional justice perceptions as an antecedent of abusive supervision, via their negative affect. This finding is congruent with extant empirical findings that show unjustly-treated supervisors may abuse their direct reports (Aryee et al., 2007; Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Tepper et al., 2006), that is, the direct relationship between supervisor perceptions of injustice and the abuse of their subordinates. But, our contribution lies in the finding that supervisors' NA serves as a mediator between supervisors' interactional justice perceptions and abusive supervision. This finding is congruent with organizational justice theory--that injustice perceptions create anxious, negative feelings that prompt the need to restore balance, often through enacting negative behavior.

Second, this study proposed and theorized a trickle-down model to answer the following question: Why do employees (both subordinates and supervisors) experience agitation and distress, i.e., negative affect, at work? This question is of particular importance because subordinates high in negative affect tend to hold negative attitudes and engage in dysfunctional

behaviors at work (Brief & Weiss, 2002), and supervisors high in negative affect can contaminate subordinates' affect, cognition, and behavior (George, 2000; Sy, Cote, & Saavedra, 2005). That is, negativity of this sort seems to be contagious. Our results indicate that subordinates experience NA when their supervisors are abusive and higher in NA, and one specific reason why supervisors seem to experience higher NA is that they themselves feel they have been treated poorly. Hence, we have supported a trickle-down model where poor interpersonal treatment is linked with distress, both for subordinates and supervisors.

How then do subordinates express their negative affect? Our results demonstrate subordinates' negative affect seems to trickle down to detrimentally affect relationships in the home and family sphere. Hoobler and Brass (2006) used the theory of displaced aggression (that victims will enact negative behavior on less powerful others) to support a direct relationship between abusive supervision and family members' reports of low-level distress in the home, i.e., family undermining, and Restubog and colleagues (2011) used displaced aggression to support findings that emotional distress links abusive supervision to negative interactions with spouses in the home. We, however, demonstrated that the mechanism for these processes may be subordinate negative affect. Our family member sample, made up of spouses, other relatives, and children, seemed to bear the brunt of events which began with abusive bosses, and ended with feelings of conflict between work and home for these nonwork others. As such, this study adds evidence to the far-reaching implications of bad bosses—into the marriage but also even the parent-child relationship sphere.

Unsupported was our hypothesis that subordinate negative affect would also mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and supervisors' ratings of subordinate performance. Previous studies have shown that abusive supervision degrades performance for those who are

abused (Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2009), however results from our investigation suggest that negative affect may not be responsible for this phenomenon. More likely, abused employees who are higher in negative affect may engage in dysfunctional or hostilely-intended behaviors such as psychological withdrawal or even sabotage (Greenberg, 2010). Another possible explanation for our lack of support for the abuse-NA-low performance link may lie in the source of the performance rating--supervisors. Abusive supervisors may be likely to rate their subordinates' performance as low for a host of reasons (e.g., lack of training, missed deadlines, shoddy work) that have nothing to do with subordinates' NA. Future research is encouraged to detect linking mechanisms between abusive supervision and subordinate job performance beyond NA. As well, we suggest the exploration of other sources of performance evaluations (coworkers, customers) as potential contexts in which abusive supervision-driven negative affect may affect perceptions of subordinates' performance.

4.2. Practical implications

On a practical level, the current investigation offers implications for organizational management of employee affect. By extension, our results show that organizations may help lower or even eliminate employees' negative affect and family members' perceptions of work-family conflict by stemming the tide of supervisors' abusive behaviors. Leadership training programs such as those which include open discussions about the negative implications of abusive behavior, and role-playing showing what behaviors are not only considered abusive by subordinates but also what alternative leadership styles are recommended for higher morale, can be utilized to reduce the prevalence of abusive supervision in organizations. Moreover, the linkage of supervisors' NA and their abusiveness suggests organizations should pay attention to supervisors' affect, which may be a distal driver of subordinates' feelings and behaviors.

Organizations should strive to implement fair practices and policies that do not trigger supervisors' injustice perceptions and negative affect, and therefore prompt dysfunctional and/or abusive behaviors. Development interventions should be designed to understand the expectations supervisors hold about what constitutes a fair workplace from an interpersonal standpoint. These factors likely vary among individual supervisors and may include expectations such as recognition for specific accomplishments, ample notification of organizational changes that affect their jobs, and managers' consideration of their individual needs for work-life flexibility. Once organizations understand what factors supervisors draw from in forming perceptions of interactional justice, they can work to ensure these expectations (commonly called employees' psychological contracts) are not violated, and the model that we detailed here, including abusive behavior and negative affect is therefore not put into motion.

Our model is a process model of behavior and affect that ultimately predicts family members' sense of the stress which their family member (the subordinate in our model) experiences due to the pressures of the latter's job. Our model suggests that when subordinates are abused by their bosses, this is related to the affect they display in home and family relationships, and, moreover, that family members seem to detect the behavior indicative of this negative affect loud and clear. In meta-analytic summaries of findings from the work-family literature, negative affect has a strong association with negative forms of work-life integration such as dissatisfaction with family life and psychological strain from work interfering with family life (Michel & Clark, 2011). Psychological well-being outside of work is important not only to employers because it predicts future job performance (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000), but also to general life functioning because it makes for happier families and personal relationships (Steinberg, 2003). Hence, the greater ramifications of stemming the conflict between work and

home are far-reaching, and our model provides insights into some specific workplace factors that seem to create this conflict: injustice, abusive supervision, and resultant negative affect. In sum, more conflict-free workplaces could mean less stressed workers and more conflict-free home lives.

4.3. Strengths, limitations, and future research

Several methodological strengths increase confidence in our results. First, obtaining information from three distinct sources (i.e., subordinates, supervisors, and family members) reduced common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Second, our structural equation modeling technique enabled us to estimate the relationships among latent variables after correcting for biases due to random error (Bollen, 1989). Also, this technique allowed us to evaluate the overall hypothesized model and compare other, plausible alternative models to our hypothesized model (Tomarken & Waller, 2005).

Despite its strengths, the current study is not without limitations. First, our cross-sectional design could not unambiguously specify the direction of causality. For example, in the hypothesized model and an alternative model (Model 4, Table 3), we found that subordinate NA and WFC seemed to relate to one another, but the direction is far from clear. As a practical example, a subordinate's negative affect may be a consequence of, for example, his or her teenage daughter's displeasure with Dad or Mom (i.e., the subordinate) letting work interfere with family time. But equally plausible is that the teenager's assessment of the degree to which that subordinate is letting work spillover to negatively affect family could be partially determined by the negative affect that subordinate displays, and the teenage daughter detects, at home. While it makes practical sense that WFC and negative affect influence one another dynamically, we encourage future researchers to use longitudinal or experimental designs to

document and understand this pattern of relationships between affect and family member perceptions of conflict.

Another limitation of our cross-sectional design is one central to all cross-sectional studies that measure negative affect: A single-occasion design simply cannot differentiate between stable or trait-like aspects of affect or cognition, and state, situational, or occasion-specific aspects, regardless of measurement techniques such as varying the timeframe of the reported behavior (Haynes & O'Brien, 2000; Smith & Mumma, 2008). So, as footnote 2 regarding our measurement of negative affect attests, we have modeled our negative affect variable as a state-like malleable affect, yet it is undoubtedly conflated with respondents' trait-based negative affect. Future studies utilizing experience sampling to pinpoint within-subject daily mood fluctuation (e.g., Miner & Glomb, 2008) could be effectual in delineating this state versus trait conflation. Third, as one of our anonymous reviewers pointed out, restriction of range on the supervisor-rated subordinate performance variable ($M = 4.14$, $S.D. = .57$) could have been an issue. Range restriction in this variable could have caused its relationship with subordinate NA to be weaker than it might have been in a sample with more variance in subordinate performance ratings. Acknowledging this, Hypothesis 3 may have been supported in another sample, and is worthy of future replication. Finally, in the current sample, age, sex, education, and dyadic tenure were all measured with categorical response options. Although it is not uncommon for studies to employ parametric analysis with ordinal scales used to measure demographic variables, our results should be considered with caution. Future studies should pay attention to this detail and treat age and dyadic tenure as continuous variables (i.e., ask participants to indicate their actual age and dyadic tenure).

A promising avenue for future research comes from the organizational justice literature. Because not all appraisals of unjust workplace events and resultant negative affective states result in negative employee behavior, it is important to understand the factors that ameliorate the call to negative behaviors. Future research linking the coping literature with the aggression literature may help in understanding how this link can be broken (Aquino & Thau, 2009). Second, Berkowitz (1989) offers that when people fear harm to themselves and others they are less likely to become reactive to unjust or frustrating events, such as abusive supervision. Models which test fear and similar protective responses, building on the recent work of Restubog and colleagues (2011), may be instrumental in detailing limitations of the links between injustice, negative affect, and abusive supervision. Third, in regard to perceptions of abuse by employees, when employees feel that there is a just reason for negative interpersonal treatment, these attributions for events can stem the call to negative behavior and attitudes on the employee's part. Initial work by Breaux, Tepper, Carr, and Folger (2010) does support this idea: When a supervisor's abusiveness is seen as something that is not entirely under the supervisor's control, subordinates judge their abusive treatment as less unjust. So, a next research step may be to understand how attributions for abusive treatment affect whether supervisors are perceived as abusive, and how these are then related to subordinate affect and behavior.

Another logical extension of our study would be to examine the trickle-down process from supervisors to subordinates in terms of discrete emotional states such as anger, fear, or guilt. Although our focus in the current study was state negative affect (a general mood state), more specific supervisor emotions have been shown to affect employee emotions (Weiss et al., 1999). For example, supervisors' anger and their angry behavior may raise subordinates' fear on the job. Relatedly, the effect that supervisors' discrete emotions have on subordinates' emotional

reactions may be contingent on subordinates' personality characteristics and/or situational factors (Roseman, Spindel, & Jose, 1990).

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the current study extends research on abusive supervision by specifying how negative affect plays a role in trickle-down effects. We find that negative affect explains the relationship between unjust interpersonal circumstances, supervisor behavior, and family members' perceptions of conflict in the home. Our findings highlight the role of abusive supervision as a bridge that transfers supervisors' feelings of unfair work events and their NA to subordinates' NA and home life. We encourage future studies to continue to define precise mechanisms that perpetuate trickle-down effects of abusive behavior and to incorporate affective components to predict abusive behavior.

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Notes

1. The citation of this study will be included after the blind review process. This citation has been submitted to the Editor along with this manuscript.
2. Our chosen timeframe of “the past few months” for reports of negative affect has been considered somewhere in between state- and trait-like negative affect (Spector, 2000). It has been called a medium, unequivocal timeframe. Researchers who explicitly seek to measure trait NA tend to ask participants to think of a time period that is longer than just a few months (six months - Aquino, Grover, Bradfield, & Allen, 1999; one year - Begley & Czajka, 1993). Our timeframe was chosen to operationalize negative affect as a malleable state-like mood in our model, but at the same time to match the definition of abusive supervision being “the sustained display of.... behavior” over time (Tepper, 2000), and to acknowledge the fact that most of our target sample had been working with their present supervisor for 1 to 2 years at the time of the study.