Research Paper

Relationship Between Abusive Supervision and Authentic Leadership of Employees in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined to see the relationship between abusive supervision and authentic leadership of employees in Bangladesh. Data were collected from purposively selected 150 employees from different job sectors, aged 25-50 years using the Bangla version of Abusive Supervision Scale (Nasir & Rana, 2017) and Authentic Leadership Self-Assessment Scale (Nasir & Rana, 2017) along with a Personal Information Form (PIF) and the data were analyzed by correlation and simple regression. As predicted, abusive supervision was significant negative correlation with authentic leadership ($r = -.189$, $p < .01$). On the other hand, simple regression analysis indicated that 3.6% of the variance in authentic leadership could be explained by abusive supervision ($R^2 = .036$). Implications of the present study have been discussed in the light of relevant studies.

I n this era of globalization, interaction and leadership skill is must for an employee for achievement motivation. But we often find out that in many industries or organizations, many supervisors or managers are seen to do many negative behaviors (like- insulting in front of everyone, miscalling aimlessly etc.) with their subordinates or employees that may affect in both body and mind very badly. For this bad effect, the composition of leadership skill of an employee is interrupted subsequently. Any work which is supervised by these kinds of negative behaviors done by supervisor or managers is called Abusive Supervision. Abusive Supervision may include behaviors such as use of derogatory names, engaging in explosive outburst including information, aggressive eye contact, the silent treatment, and humiliating or ridiculing someone in front of others. (Keashly, 1998; Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002).

Abusive Supervision can be characterized as sustained or enduring in the sense that it is likely to continue until (1) the target terminates the relationship, (2) the agent terminates the relationship, or (3) the agent modifies his or her behavior. (Jezl, Molidor, & Wright, 1996; Shepard & Campbell, 1992). Studies have demonstrated that employees respond negatively

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to supervisor mistreatment by engaging in behaviors that are harmful to the organization (Ambrose, Seabright, & Schminke, 2002; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Thau, Bennett, Mitchell & Marrs, 2009). In the same manner employees will tend to engage less in behaviors that benefit the organization if they perceive mistreatment by their supervisors. In one of the studies that examined the relationship between abusive supervision and positive job behavior, Zellars, Tepper and Duffy (2002) found that abusive supervision is negatively related to subordinates' organizational citizenship behavior. Other researchers have also found abusive supervision to be negatively related with job and life satisfaction (Tepper, 2000), organizational commitment (Duffy & Ferrier, 2003), and organizational citizenship behavior (Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler & Ensley, 2004).

The interpersonal perspective claims that authentic leadership is a collective process, created by leaders and followers together Authentic leaders model positive attributes such as hope, optimism, and resiliency. Finally, authentic leaders are capable of judging ambiguous ethical issues, viewing them from multiple perspectives, and aligning decisions with their own moral values. Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang & Avey (2009) found that authentic leadership leads to trust in management and positively affects group performance measured by unit sales growth. Hassan & Ahmed (2011) found that authentic leadership promotes subordinates' trust in the leader and contributed to work engagement. Jensen & Luthans (2006) found that employee's perception of leaders' authentic behavior served as the strongest single predictor of employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment and work happiness. Laschinger, Wong & Grau (2012) found that authentic leadership has negative direct effect on workplace bullying and emotional exhaustion and a positive effect on job satisfaction. Woolley, Casa, & Levy (2011) reported a positive relationship between authentic leadership and followers' psychological capital, partially mediated by positive work climate and a significant moderating effect from gender. Walumbwa et al. (2011) found authentic leadership to positively affect desired group outcomes like group level performance and citizenship behavior.

Abusive supervision and authentic leadership are some of the very new research areas in the applied field of industrial psychology. In our society, still now it is not clear about what abusive supervision is and how abusive supervision can impact on the leadership qualities for both employees and organization. Especially for women employees, abusive supervision is one of the leading causes of workplace violence. With the help of this study, we can use existing knowledge about relationship of abusive supervision and authentic leadership so that organization should be concerned with how their employees view when being exposed to abusive supervision. Based on above literature, the specific objectives of the present study were to examine whether there was any relationship between abusive supervision and authentic leadership.

METHODOLOGY
Sample
The respondents for this study comprised of 150 employees drawn from different job sectors in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Among the participants surveyed, 46 were governmental employees and 104 were nongovernmental employees. The participant's age ranged between 25 to 50 years. With regards to educational attainment, 90 had higher degrees while 60 had passed the higher secondary certificate exams.

Measures
Data were collected with the help of following instruments.

- *Personal Information Form (PIF):* A demographic and personal information questionnaire was used to collect information about employees' age, occupation, educational level and the name of working place.
- *Bangla Version of Abusive Supervision Scale:* The Bengali version (Nasir & Rana, 2017a) of Abusive Supervision Scale (Tepper, 2000) was used to assess the level of abusive supervision of the participant. Abusive Supervision measure is a 15-item, self-report scale that elicits information on the extent to which subordinates feel that they have been non-physically abused by their supervisor or to indicate the prevalence of supervisor abusive behaviors. The items are preferred with the statement, "My boss…". Respondents will use a five-point response scale where 1 is "I cannot remember him/her ever using this behavior with me", 2 is "He /She very seldom uses this behavior with me", 3 is "He/She occasionally uses this behavior with me", 4 is "He/She uses this behavior moderately often with me", and 5 is "He /She uses this behavior very often with me". The scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89.
- *Bangla Version of Authentic Leadership Self-Assessment Questionnaire:* The Bangla version (Nasir & Rana, 2017b) of Authentic Leadership Self-Assessment Questionnaire was developed by Northouse P.G. in 2010. It is a 16-item instrument that measures four factors of authentic leadership: self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. All items are answered using a 5-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scale has a Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.70 to 0.90.

Procedure

Standard data collection procedures were followed in the present study. One fifty adult respondents were approached individually as well as their working time. First, the general purpose of the study was narrated to the participants and they would be assured that every information will be confidential and their responses are very important for the research purpose. When the psychological climate is good enough for scale administration, the questionnaires were distributed among the participants. Two different scales were administrated to the participants at a single sitting. Also further clarifications were done whenever they faced any problems to understand the items. Participants were told to respond as honestly as possible. After completion of participants' responses, the questionnaires were collected and they were given thanks for their sincere co-operation.

RESULTS

Pearson's product moment correlation and simple regression were administered for data analysis with the help of SPSS to explore the relationship between abusive supervision and authentic leadership of employees in Bangladesh. The obtained results were as follows:

Table 1 Bivariate correlation between abusive supervision and authentic leadership

Variables	1	2
Abusive Supervision	-	-.189**
Authentic Leadership		-

**$p <. 01$

Correlation analysis shown in the Table 1 indicated that the relationship between abusive supervision and authentic leadership ($r=-.189$, $p<.01$) was negatively correlated and

correlation coefficient was found not to be significant. Therefore, abusive supervision significantly played an important role to effect on the authentic leadership of employees.

Table 2 Simple regression of abusive supervision on authentic leadership

Predictor	B	SEB	β	R	R²
Constant	30.300	5.233			
Authentic leadership	.264	.114	.188	.190	.036

Simple regression shown in the Table 2 indicated that the unstandardized regression coefficient ($B = .264$) explained that abusive supervision decreased.264 units with each one-unit increased in authentic leadership, On the other hand, the standardized regression coefficient ($β =.188$) indicated that abusive supervision decreased .188 standard deviation units with each one standard deviation unit increase in authentic leadership. Therefore, abusive supervision decreased employees' authentic leadership. Again, $R² = .036$ indicated that 3.6% of the variation in authentic leadership could be explained by the variation of abusive supervision.

Table 3 ANOVA table for regression of abusive supervision on authentic leadership

SV	SS	df	MS	F	p value
Regression	1252.028	1	1252.028		
Residual	33736.646	148	227.950	5.493	.000
Total	34988.673	149			

*$p < .01$

As shown in Table 3, authentic leadership could be significantly influenced by abusive supervision ($F = 5.493$, $p<.01$).

Above all the results, it could be said that abusive supervision was regarded as a significant predictor for influencing the employees' authentic leadership.

DISCUSSION

The present study investigated to examine whether there was any relationship between abusive supervision and authentic leadership of employees in Bangladesh. The findings of correlation analysis shown in the Table 1 indicating that the relationship between abusive supervision and authentic leadership were negatively correlated and correlation coefficient was found to be significant for authentic leadership. Therefore, abusive supervision significantly played an important role to effect on the authentic leadership of employees.

Again, the findings of simple regression analysis presented in Table 2 and Table 3 also supported that 3.6% of the variance in employees' authentic leadership could be explained by abusive supervision. Therefore, it could be said that the more abusive supervision, the lesser authentic leadership.

These results lend support to the proposition that when employees are treated unfairly by their supervisors that it leads to employees' withdrawal of leadership qualities that benefit the organization or the supervisor (Ambrose, Seabright & Schminke, 2002). Thus, the negative relationship found between abusive supervision and employees' authentic leadership is a demonstration that the participants were reacting to the perceived maltreatment by their supervisor by engaging in negative behavior. This result is also

consistent with the social exchange explanation of work behavior where employees tend to reciprocate good gestures by their supervisors by engaging in behaviors that benefit the organization (Walumbwa et al, 2010). In the same manner employees tend to withdraw beneficial organizational behavior when they perceive their supervisors as less supportive. This is consistent with earlier studies of Ambrose, Seabright & Schminke, 2002; Thau et al, 2009; Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002, that demonstrated that when employees perceive their supervisors as abusive, they engage less in positive job behaviors.

The potential harm associated with abusive supervision ought to serve as a warning to organizations. Employees regard abusive supervision as a source of injustice that in turn, has implications for their attitudes and well-being (Rego, Sousa, Marques, & Cunha, 2012). Kayworth & Leidner, (2002) found the link between abusive supervision and the various indexes of psychological distress are also disturbing because even the milder manifestation may engender significant social and financial costs of organizations. In order to elicit positive work behavior from employees it may be necessary to treat the employees fairly with a more quality supervision that will make the workers to feel less abused by their superiors.

The interpretation and generalization of the results of this study should be done with caution. This study is a correlational study and the issue of cause-and-effect relationship was not established. Further studies may explore longitudinal approach or involve experimentation where abusive supervision is manipulated to determine its effect on prosocial behavior. This study also used only self-report measure of abusive supervision and authentic leadership and therefore may have problems associated with common source bias. However, the anonymity promised and the confidentiality assured to the participants may have reduced this bias. Further studies should include other personal and organizational variables as prosocial behavior and organizational citizenship behavior. The study has some limitations such as it is only carried out only on 150 employees from different job sectors. They were selected purposively to collect data that cannot reveal the whole picture of entire employees' situations.

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