Abusive Supervision: A Case Study of Public Sector Entity in Pakistan's Electricity Distribution Sector

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Abusive supervision is a phenomenon that attaches many drawbacks to itself. Supervisory abuse may take many forms, such as mocking or making fun of subordinates, verbally abusing or yelling at subordinates, taking undue credit and withholding benefits. Consequently, organisations pay a heavy price for such abusive behaviour, including but not limited to legal costs, health-related costs, lower efficiency, absenteeism and higher turnover intention. This case study examines the prevalence of abusive supervision in a government organisation, the Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO). A series of interviews were conducted and analysed using content analysis. The findings revealed that the quality of relationships between supervisors and subordinates is very strained and is based on personal rather than organisational associations. The main repercussive consequences among subordinates were ingratiation, poorer job performance and indulgence in corruption and malpractice.

Key words: *Abusive Supervision, Supervisors, Subordinates, Narrative Analysis, Public Sector.*

Introduction

Tepper (2000), defined abusive supervision, as subordinates perceptions of the extent to which their supervisors engage in the substantial display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviours, excluding physical contact, which has a persistent and pessimistic effect upon employees, their job outcome and lastly on the organisation. Researchers show that subordinates health and family issues, as well as their welfare, are much dependent on

leaders' treatment towards them (Kelloway & Barling, 2010). Many surveys on abusive supervision represent that 10% to 16% of American workers have been experiencing abusive supervision regularly (Namie & Namie, 2000; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler & Ensley, 2004). The annual cost of employees' depression to U.S. organisations has been estimated at $50 billion for medical treatment (Durso, 2004) and $44 billion for absence and low efficiency (Stewart, 2003). In Pakistan's context, surveys show that 15% of Pakistani employees are a victim of abuse including that of verbal, non-verbal or threats and further to these men are more vulnerable to threats and abuse (16%) as compared to women (13%). There is further terrifyingly media news that indicates that the occurrence of these abuses has amplified in current years. Numerous researchers have recognised many ways of abusive supervisory behaviours, which include making fun of subordinates in front of other people, taking control of a vital piece of information, and persistent use of pained language, coercion and bullying tactics (Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002). Bowling & Michel (2011) have further described precise examples of how supervisors abuse their subordinates by adopting various ways, e.g., discrediting or devaluing innovative ideas, deceiving subordinates and annoying and less care for their privacy. A belief of rude supervision evokes imagery of an oppressive supervisor who openly ridicules and tries to undermine persons reporting them (Ashforth, 1994). A literature review shows that many studies have been carried out on abusive supervision where researchers have attempted to explore the antecedents that cause abusive supervision. However, very few studies have been carried out to get insight from subordinate's perspective of how their supervisor's abuse subordinates. Moreover, previous research has been carried out in developed countries but no considerable research work has been carried out in developing countries like Pakistan. The objective of this study is to find out the major themes of abusive behaviour prevailing in Pakistan Public Sector Entity (PPSE). The explanations tracking the qualitative route focus on answering these main questions:

- How supervisors use employee services for their personal use?
- Which coping strategies employees use to safeguard themselves against abuse?
- How supervisors respond to the coping strategies?

Literature Review

Normally, supervisors are considered a major source of organisation information by their subordinates upon whom they adjust their behaviour (James, Joyce & Slocum, 1988; Murphy, Wayne, Liden & Erdogan, 2003). If supervisors treated their subordinates with aggressiveness, the same ill behaviour would transfer to their peers and customers. A continuous process of abuse is transferred to the lower level employees in a hierarchy, and then subordinates exhibit that abuse toward customers. Thus, supervisors teach employees at the lower level of the hierarchy these abusive behaviours, and employees, in turn, treat others in the same way. This is how, abusive supervision travels from top to bottom (Hon & Lu,

2016; Kluemper, MossholderDan, BingDragos & Ilie, 2018). These instances surface the fact that abusive supervision can compel employees to sense that they are unduly tackled and may force them to investigate further their self-worth abilities and qualities (Burton & Hoobler, 2011; Tepper, 2000).

The constant abusive behaviour from seniors would discourage employees from delivering excellence services hence tarnishing the overall organisation image (Ashkanasy et al., 2018; Hon & Lu, 2016). Researchers have explored many dimensions of consequences attached to abusive supervision. These dimensions include perceptions of injustice, negative work attitudes, low morale to work-to-family conflict, intention to leave and productivity deviance (Aryee, Chen, Sun & Debrah, 2007; Liu, Kwan, Wu & Wu, 2010; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). Those subordinates who face abuse, their psychological cost is relatively high the psychological cost that one has to bear due to abusive behaviour is a strain and emotional tiredness. Abusive supervision may attach with it a substantial health issue and these health issues cost a lot to employee or organisation as well. Psychological pain in the form of emotional tiredness is linked with low productivity and higher turnover (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Many other drawbacks including high levels of emotional fatigue, apparent family-work conflict, turnover intentions and low levels of job contentment and organisational dedication (Ashforth, 1997; Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2004; Tepper, 2000) are associated with the issue of abusive behaviour of supervisors. O'Neill & Davis (2011) explored that supervisors who used to show pessimistic behaviours, like annoyed reaction, irritation, negative expression, may hamper the services and quality of employees which would ultimately affect the organisation image.

Researchers show that victims of abusive supervision face extreme psychological grief (Duffy, Ganster & Pagon, 2002; Zellars et al., 2002), and indications of stress that includes dysfunctional thoughts, emotions, e.g., anxiety, depression and emotional exhaustion. Studies show that supervisory abuse also affects a large number of entities and individual outcomes, such as less efficiency, higher legal expenditure and low worker welfare (Lian et al., 2014, 2014; Tepper, 2000; Tepper, Duffy, Henle & Lambert, 2006). Tepper (2000) observed that interpersonal relations have a striking influence on a personal's psychological welfare. Researchers show that subordinates react towards the organisation when they find that the major cause of abuse towards them is because of the organisation management, as an organisation seems indifference if they are abused by their supervisors (Bowling & Michel, 2011; Greenbaum, 2014).

The phenomenon of abusive supervision is present since a relationship established between the two, i.e., supervisor and subordinate. A supervisor abuses their subordinates owing to various reasons. Previous research studies have proved that supervisors abuse their subordinates through various means. It is because those supervisors are equipped with

authority that is often used to abuse their subordinates through different ways and that abuse casts a catastrophic effect upon the supervisor and subordinate's relationship that results in mistrust. The element of trust is a driving force both for supervisor and subordinates to get things done and to move forward the organisational goals. It is also evident if trust is broken then it becomes nearly impossible to re-establish it and it results in series of effects, e.g., long-term bitterness, fear, a lack of teamwork, withholding a financial benefit, public ridicule and threats (Chan & McAllister, 2014).

Research Methodology and Design

This research has been carried out to understand the concept of abusive supervision in PPSE from the subordinate's perspective. Qualitative research design using a case study approach is the most appropriate way to get more in-depth insights and to investigate the factors that compel supervisor to demonstrate abusive behaviour in PPSE. Target respondents are those potential subordinates working under some supervisors. Purposive sampling techniques have been used, which is consistent with a case study. The sample of this research consists of 10 respondents for the interview including 2 Executive Engineers, 4 Sub-divisional Officers and 4 Line Superintendents. The respondents belonged to a particular cadre of formation of PPSE. There are 90 officers of that particular cadre in that formation. A total of 30, choosing every 3rd in the seniority list, were contacted but only 10 consented for interview.

Open-ended and in-depth interviews were designed to discover the phenomenon which is normally used in the case study. Respondents who have experienced the abuse gave their responses which were mutually understood by both interviewer and interviewee (Demir & Abell, 2010). The interview was conducted like a dialogue.

Data Analysis and Results

Content analysis of collected data was performed starting with organising the data and arranging the findings. All of the recordings of interviews were transcribed. Mostly interviews were taken in Urdu for the convenience of interviewees. These interviews were converted into English and were sent to interviewees for their approval that the meanings were accurately transcribed. All the statements were grouped to form patterns and from there themes emerged. The themes and patterns were presented to a group of academicians and also were discussed with the respondents to ensure the validity and the reliability of triangulated data.

The following themes are based on the answers given by respondents in response to the questions asked of them by researchers.

Theme	Description
Supervisor's Perceptions	Supervisors develop perceptions about the capabilities of their subordinates and treat them accordingly. When subordinates perform above or below supervisors' expectations, perceptions of those subordinates develop along with their corresponding manners of treatment. These perceptions and treatments may be good or bad.
Supervisor's Personal Gains	Treatment of subordinates depends on supervisors' gains. Subordinates who fulfil the legal and illegal demands of their supervisor receive better treatment and vice versa.
Office Politics	Supervisors play office politics to manipulate outcomes. In a government department, the elements of office politics can be traced. Thus, supervisors use various means to exert their authority, including abusing subordinates.
Official Pressure	Supervisors are normally responsible for organisational results and are assigned various official tasks to prove their efficiency. This situation creates enormous pressure on them and their teams, which leads to abusive behaviour.
Supervisor's Self-Centric Approach	Supervisors do not give importance to their subordinates in decision-making, problem-solving and official matters. In a mechanistic organisation, there is a strict chain of command that prioritises the supervisor's absolute authority.
Misuse of Power	Supervisors frequently misuse their powers to satisfy their own needs. They use their power to benefit their friends and loved ones at the cost of the department's resources. The services of subordinates are used for supervisors' personal work instead of organisational work. Towards this end, subordinates are forced to take bribes, gifts and other favours from ordinary people who visit the office for their grievances.
Intangible Compensation	Supervisory officers in MEPCO do not get additional monetary incentives besides their salaries, while higher ranking officials are compensated for overtime, honoraria and off-day wages. The inclination of officers towards illegal means may be to meet their financial obligations. As they have to work more, they may get intangible incentives as a source of compensation.
Tangible Benefits / Unfair Means	Supervisors compensate those who earn illegal money for them. Those subordinates are given special treatment rather than lawful punishment, because supervisors encourage and protect subordinates for their illegal work.

Remuneration / Fringe Benefits Compensation	Very few people know of remuneration and fringe benefits in MEPCO. They are not given information on their lawful dues, welfare, scholarship, etc. Moreover, salary is not performance-based. People who do official work receive the same salary as those who do the personal work of supervisors in addition to official work.
Favouritism	Bonuses are denied to deserving subordinates if they are implicated by their supervisors in some issues. Moreover, rewards and honoraria should be given to officials who perform dedicatedly for the organisation. However, here subordinates are nominated for rewards based on the personal liking of supervisors even if the subordinates have no hallmark achievements to their credit.
Dissatisfaction among Staff	Fringe benefits in MEPCO are much lower than private companies. Subordinates work 12 to 14 hours daily instead of eight hours and are told that they have to work for 24 hours if the situation demands. As higher management is busy with their own issues, no one is ready to listen to field staff's problems. Engineers constitute the major workforce of the organisation, but even they are not being paid properly. Austere measures imposed by the federal government result in minimal increments. Salary increments of five to ten percent are awarded once a year when the federal government allows it, but that increase does not match the inflation level. As such, MEPCO employees experience difficulties managing their daily expenses.
Mental Fatigue	People in MEPCO are forced to work more than 12 hours a day. They are exhausted from working so long almost on a daily basis, but get nothing in return. This state of affairs is making staff mentally ill and fatigued.
No Over-Time	Company rules do not allow officers to avail overtime for extra working hours in field offices. In some cases, they have to work 20 to 24 hours a day. The administration has clearly ordered that MEPCO employees are bound to work 24 hours if duty demands it. However, there are no written rules supporting this norm. This has spread discontent among the staff.
Work Privacy	In MEPCO, employees are perceived to not need work privacy due to a lack of cultural change. People were even unaware that work privacy is necessary in distributing official assignments. Some subordinates reported that their work privacy is invaded in different ways, e.g. checking through supervisors or drivers, assigning officers to monitor the activities of another officer, etc. Supervisors themselves eavesdrop on their subordinates through cell phones or

	intercoms, irrespective of their designations.
Improper Seating Arrangements	There is no infrastructure available in MEPCO that promotes work privacy. No furniture or computers are available for staff to dispose of their day-to-day operations. Although there is a complete standard operating procedure (SOP) that outlines the disposal of confidential posts, no one cares to implement the SOP.
Hostile Relations	If a subordinate does not maintain good working relations with his/her supervisor, then he/she is made a target and is monitored through various means. The subordinate may be continuously watched through a cell phone to pressure him/her. Sometimes peons or drivers are assigned to keep an eye on the activities of the hostile subordinate.
Lack of Trust	Supervisors are wary of subordinates. Their relationship is less friendly and lacks mutual trust. As a result, they do not know how to develop or work as a team.
Authority Display	Supervisors normally display authority in front of their peers or friends to show how powerful they are. It is culturally-driven; in Pakistani culture, a person with more authority enjoys a better status in life. Sometimes such display of power is used to undermine the capabilities of subordinates or to prove them wrong. Supervisors also show authority to overcome or balance their shortcomings and shield themselves from any kind of threats from subordinates.
Vested Interest	Supervisors ridicule their subordinates due to vested interest. They use abuse to undermine the abilities of their subordinates and make them aware that they are inferior. It is also used to warn subordinates that if they do not fulfil supervisors' interests, no respect will be given to them.
Work Burden	Extreme pressure to achieve targets and the burden of work compel supervisors to show abusive behaviour. There is heavy strain on supervisors regarding recovery and line loss targets. Moreover, daily complaints of customers make supervisors' jobs hectic. This scenario moulds their hostile behaviour.
Persistent Behaviour	Supervisors who mock their subordinates or undermine their capabilities do not do it "once in a blue moon" rather; they exhibit such behaviour whenever they find any pretext or even without pretexts. They mock subordinates to satisfy their ego and to maintain their superiority. As they do not face any resistance from their subordinates, this behaviour becomes persistent.

Grooming Leadership Qualities	Supportive supervisors always groom leadership qualities among their subordinates. Grooming improves critical thinking qualities among subordinates, so that they are able to settle issues on their own without consulting higher management. Grooming a new team of leaders also takes the organisation further in achieving its goals.
Natural Behaviour	Supervisors who are kind-natured, helpful and down-to-earth show more helping behaviour. Conversely, supervisors who are proud and self-centred reflect hostile behaviour towards their subordinates.
Lack of Leadership	Supervisors who are more inclined towards illegal activities like bribes and theft are less supportive of subordinates and would prefer to safeguard their own interests. They do not care about official work and turn a deaf ear when official work suffers. Such supervisors have neither leadership qualities nor role model abilities for their subordinates. They also do not help in crisis; instead, they prefer to free themselves from the situation.
Lack of Knowledge	Supervisors do not realise the sensitivity or importance of providing awareness to subordinates about the rules and regulations that govern employees' services. Supervisors themselves are ignorant of department rules, which often lead to court cases and undue representation from complainants.
Non-Cooperation between Departments	There is no synchronisation among the departments. Official posts are rotated and delivered manually, so there are increased chances of misplacement or concealment of information that is otherwise beneficial for staff. Manual work also invokes substantial risk of information manipulation. Clearly, MEPCO is still far away from modernisation.
Poor Management	The role of management cannot be overlooked. Management leaves all responsibility on the shoulders of supervisors and does not accept feedback. The whole system is doomed if supervisors do not perform their duties diligently.
Low Transparency	Supervisors are tasked with counselling and teaching their subordinates. However, it seems that supervisors avoid their responsibilities and are least interested in their own duties.
Job Security	In government organisations, supervisors cannot fire anyone from their jobs because the rules do not allow it. Such substantial job security is a major reason for people to choose government jobs. However, in the case of an extreme issue, subordinates can be suspended from work. Even so, they enjoy all benefits during the

	suspension period.
Personal Resentment	Supervisors are vested with the power to punish and reward their subordinates. They sometimes use their authority to get things done through undue favours. If the subordinates do not provide that favour, supervisors use their authority to punish them.
Future Problems	At the very outset of their careers, subordinates encounter various issues. The emerging circumstances compel them to leave their jobs. However, with appropriate counselling, this situation would be different.
Promotion	In government organisations, people are promoted on seniority cum fitness bases. There are no performance-based criteria set for promotions. Performers as well as non-performers enjoy equal chances of promotion.
Lack of Job Opportunity	Corruption and terrorism have badly affected Pakistan. There are no new investments and existing industrial units are facing shutdowns due to the energy crises. The skyrocketing prices of inputs are also unaffordable for firms to remain competitive. Due to this, the rate of unemployment has been increasing steadily.
Absence of Acknowledgment	A pat on the back leaves a greater and more lasting impact on employees' perceptions of their work achievement than salary packages or fringe benefits. Appreciation of one's work is necessary for motivation as well as dedication towards work.
Salary Package	Maslow's Theory of Needs elaborates five basic needs of human beings. The second need is security. It appears that people in MEPCO are not being fulfilled with that basic need, as they believe that their unsatisfactory salary packages are the driving force to leave the organisation.
Corruption	Corruption and malpractices are ruining the country. It is the same in the case of MEPCO. Subordinates are forced to adopt corrupt practices to fulfil the illegal demands of their supervisors. Most of them are inclined towards unfair means to earn money and display no remorse in doing so. Long working hours, continuous abuse, no appreciation and no career progression has made them indifferent towards the morality of their deeds.
Undue Benefits	In societies like Pakistan, nepotism and favouritism are prevalent in achieving one's work. Supervisors exploit subordinates' services and in return, subordinates perform for their supervisors instead of for the department. In exchange, they are awarded various privileges.

Refusal	In some instances, subordinates dare to refuse their supervisors' demands to do their personal work. However, this is only done by subordinates who have strong financial backgrounds.
Sense of Helplessness	Subordinates' feelings are badly influenced by supervisors' potential reactions to their refusal. However, they do not have any remedial measures to say no to supervisors, because various benefits are attached to supervisors' authority that are otherwise basic rights of subordinates.
Disciplinary Cases	Supervisors use the power to punish or reward for their own nefarious purposes. If subordinates do not accept their illegal demands, they may be falsely accused in fabricated cases that invoke disciplinary reprimands. This puts their job security at high risk.
Hindrance in Career	In government organisations, promotion of staff is carried out on seniority cum fitness bases. However, there is a robust tool called Annual Confidential Report (ACR) that involves the grading of subordinates' performances by their supervisor. Subordinates who receive poor remarks in their ACRs do not get promoted further. This visible power curbs subordinates' retaliation against their supervisors.
Lack of Retaliation	A majority of subordinates never think to retaliate against their orders. They comply with their orders because challenging one's supervisor is a taboo in MEPCO that has now been embedded in its organisational culture.
Consequences or Revolt	Some subordinates try to retaliate against illegal orders, but that retaliation does not go unnoticed and has bad consequences.
Personal Benefits	Personal benefits have taken precedence for individuals, whether they are supervisors or subordinates. They give priority to personal goals over organisational goals and use various tactics to achieve their goals.
Sense of Fear	Subordinates working in MEPCO are afraid of the disciplinary actions that may be taken against them on the pretext of "misconduct". Harsh punishments can be imposed, ranging from withholding benefits for a specific period to job demotion. Employees thus always flatter their supervisors to avoid being victims of rules and regulations.
Minimised Communication	Subordinates who do not flatter their supervisors tend to minimise contact with supervisors. They only communicate with supervisors when the situation demands; otherwise, they remain isolated from

	their supervisors.
Resentment	Supervisors consider themselves as supreme. They treat their subordinates like slaves who are there to serve them rather than the organisation. If subordinates indicate any reservations or attempt to raise their voices, they become victims of supervisors' various tactics of ill-treatment.
Threats	Threats are a standard tool used to subdue subordinates and may include taking back privileges or far-flung transfers. Most of the time, threats deliver the desired results. As such, threats restrain the powers of subordinates to complain against unjustified treatment from their supervisors.
Obstinacy	Some subordinates are still reluctant to obey the illegal orders of their supervisors. They believe that voicing their concerns to their supervisors may change their way of managing. However, rather than revisiting their behaviour, supervisors become more violent towards these subordinates and implement sterner ways to teach them a lesson.
Mental Suffering	There is a lot of mental suffering and chaos that is imposed by supervisors. Strangely, employees who are abused by their supervisor find their jobs interesting and suitable, with the exception of its dark sides.
Feelings of Bonded Slavery	Many subordinates perform their duties with the concept of bonded slavery. They do not have any motivation or enthusiasm towards their work; they are just there to earn bread and butter for their families.

Discussion and Conclusion

Abusive supervision may annex catastrophic outcome with it, as subordinates feel a sense of deprivation, constant unwarranted pressure and lack of authority over their work. Supervisors use various tactics like invading the privacy of subordinates, ridiculing them publicly, being non-supportive, etc. Targets of abuse also show decreased performance towards their job and are involved in fulfilling the needs of their supervisor through unfair means to get rid of the abuse. By doing so, they indulge themselves in corruption and malpractices. Our research also indicates that abusive supervision may incite subordinates to retaliatory tactics, however, that retaliation is limited due to fear of loss of personal benefits (e.g., Aquino et al., 2006; Duffy et al., 2002; Inness, Barling & Turner, 2005).

Abusive supervision also conveys a message that targeted mistreatment is justified to run the affair of the organisation (Tyler & Blader, 2000). In this study, it is observed that supervisors abuse their subordinates for the sake of personal benefits. They adopt various abusive tactics to use subordinates' services for their personal use. Those subordinates who fulfil their desires get in turn the patronage of their supervisors to hide their evil works. It is also evident that subordinates use ingratiation to neutralise or even to minimise the effects of abusive supervision.

It is evident that all the subordinates interviewed were ready to switch their job, but at the same time they were avoiding retaliation and were more concerned about retaliation consequences. This phenomenon may be associated with the economic structure of the country as people want to retaliate but fewer chances for new jobs stop them from initiating any form of retaliation against abuse. Our study explored that the subordinates have given up the resistance against illegal orders of their supervisors on the surface although the spirit of resilience can be traced in their attitude (Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

It is also explored that those subordinates who had no escape from abusive attitude were highly depressed and even abusive to the people who are working under them. This research tells that mental distress of subordinates is the outcome of supervisory abuse (Tepper, 2000); where supervisors are less abusive subordinates feel less distress. Research also indicates that association between abusive supervision and mental suffering may attach considerable social as well as financial cost to the organisation (Ross & Mirowsky, 1989).

Subordinates are found to be low performers as most of their time is consumed with earning the blessings of their supervisor who are busy fulfilling their personal gains whereas organisational goals have never been their priority. Abusive behaviour of supervisor is also a major hurdle in creativity. The supervisor ruthlessly eliminates new ideas and subordinates feel a sense of helplessness if they want to bring some positive change in their department. This finding can also be traced in the study carried out by Liu, Liao & Loi (2012).

Targeted subordinates feel an extreme level of depression, anxiety and helplessness as they do not find any other way out to rid themselves of this oppressed situation (Carson, Mackey & McAllister, 2017; Haggard, Robert & Rose, 2011; Tepper, Moss, Lockhart, Carr & Bennett, 2007). It is observed that people working in PPSE are told from day one that they will have to perform 24 hours duty in an emergency situation and on normal days supervisors and subordinates have to work at least 12 to 16 hours. This scenario may be characterised as highly demanding and risks associated may carry a higher cost for both supervisor and subordinates. Such atmosphere compels supervisors to engage in abuse and through abusive behaviour they try to compensate themselves by illegal means (Tepper, 2007).

Subordinates are dissatisfied with their job due to enormous abusive behaviour and were ready to quit their jobs if they found any opportunity. This is also studied by other researchers (Bowling & Michel, 2011; Hobman, Restubog, Bordia & Tang, 2009; Lin, Wang & Chen, 2013; Tepper et al., 2009; Tepper, Mitchell, Haggard, Kwan & Park, 2015). It is evident that persistent abusive behaviour of supervisors has contributed a negative behaviour of subordinates towards their job as they too are more committed towards their own personal goals rather than the organisational goal (Kluemper et al., 2018; Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

The overall scenario also indicates less organisational commitment on the part of supervisors who are more inclined towards their own gains (Burris, Detert & Chiaburu, 2008; Hon & Lu, 2016). If we think of the word "PPSE" then the immediate reaction we expect from anyone may be "CORRUPTION" that is a cost that an organisation has to pay because of its abusive/destructive supervisors (Van Dick et al., 2004). Those subordinates who experience abuse always think about quitting their job, rarely have commitment towards their work and often encounter work/family conflict. It is observed that the subordinates were not satisfied with their job as well; they were doing their job as no other opportunity was available to them.

Economic condition and social structure of the country has stemmed their desire to move to some other organisation, as most of the respondents are reluctant to move away from their hometown and minimum job switching options has made it difficult for respondents to quit their existing job even in the face of persistent abuse (Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2004, 2007). This study also concluded that abusive supervision has embedded in the PPSE culture and has become an everyday phenomenon which is affecting the entire organisation.

Managerial Implications and Future Research

This study has given a gloomy picture of PPSE in its operations, where supervisor directed abuse on subordinates is thwarting the image of the entire organisation. This study also examined that abusive behaviour of supervisors was not to achieve an organisational goal but to further their personal goals. The findings of the study may be used to explore further to determine the appropriate working hours for supervisors and subordinates as there are no defined working hours for supervisors and subordinates. Annual Confidential Reports may be designed keeping in view the modern techniques where supervisors may exert less control so that they could not blackmail their subordinates. Moreover, this research may provide a platform for management to review existing fringe benefits and compensation policy. Transparency in organisational affairs is the key to success. Apparently, there is no mechanism to monitor the supervisors who are involved in unethical activities. There is a need for a balanced job description for subordinates. Quantifiable goals must be incorporated in subordinate's job description to overcome the situation of work being assigned on day to day basis by the supervisors.

Future research is warranted to understand why supervisors are involved in corruption and why they show abusive behaviour to their subordinates. Further researches may also be carried out on how to transform supervisor's personal goals into organisational goals. Quantitative research may also be used to get insights of abusive phenomenon from a different perspective.

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