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Leverage self- and other-compassion to prevent the abuse trickle-down

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Abstract

Although previous research has shown that abuse can trickle down from managers to supervisors, it remains unclear why many abused supervisors do not perpetuate the abuse of their subordinates. To address this issue, drawing upon frustration-aggression and self-regulation theory, the current research investigated the underlying mechanism of frustration and the mitigative effects of self- and other-compassion in the manager abuse—supervisor frustration—supervisor abuse circle. Across two field studies (a time-lagged survey study, N = 381; and an experience sampling study, N = 66 with 593 daily observations), we find support for our arguments at both between- and within-person levels. Our findings support that there is a positive indirect relationship between manager abuse and supervisor abuse via supervisor frustration and that the indirect effect is weaker among supervisors who possess higher levels of self- and other-compassion. We discuss the implications for theory and human resource practice.

Keywords abusive supervision, abuse trickle-down, frustration, self- and other-compassion

Leverage self- and other-compassion to prevent the abuse trickle-down

Abusive supervision, defined as "persistent hostile verbal and nonverbal behavior (not including physical contact) perceived by subordinates" (Tepper, 2000, p.178), has been linked to plenty of negative consequences for employees, such as decreased performance and increased depression (see Fischer et al., 2021; Tepper et al., 2017 for reviews). The more worrisome problem is that these detrimental impacts will not only stay between the abusers and the abused but is highly contagious (Mawritz et al., 2012). It perpetuates "an organizational atmosphere of abuse" (Lian et al., 2012, p.108) and elicits greater organizational counter-productivity--known as "abuse trickle-down" within the organizational hierarchy. Managers' (those in higher-level managerial positions)[1] abusive behaviors move downward, triggering supervisors' (those in lower-level managerial positions) abusive behaviors (e.g., Liu et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2012; Tu et al., 2018). Considering the destructiveness of abusive supervision, it is essential to understand how and why abuse trickle-down occurs and, most importantly, how to prevent it.

To achieve this goal, we first strive to add knowledge to a critical question: how to break the vicious abuse trickle-down. Most trickle-down studies focus on supervisors' imitation and identification with others (Liu et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2019), however, these studies ignore important individual factors which may strengthen or mitigate the harmful effect of manager abuse. Individuals are active actors in coping with adversities, including being abused (Tepper et al., 2017), which means a vital pathway to address the "how" question is to start with supervisors themselves. Building on the literature on compassion and self-regulation, we argue that

cultivating self-compassion and other-compassion can effectively break the abuse trickle-down (Chwyl et al., 2021; Neff, 2003a, 2003b; Thau et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2019). Although supervisors may engage in destructive behavior towards their subordinates due to the negative impact of manager abuse on their emotional regulation, we argue that compassion can bolster individual self-regulation and promote effective coping with suffering. Compassion refers to "an agentic action by which employees may replenish their own depleted resources and thereby recover" (Schabram & Heng, 2022, p.453). For example, self-compassion enhances self-regulation by separating the self (self-esteem, self-concept) and emotions and experiences (Chwyl et al., 2021; Neff, 2003a, 2003b). Therefore, based on the self-regulation theory, we posit that self- and other-compassion are essential boundary conditions that can curb the abuse trickle-down. Specifically, self-compassion can mitigate supervisors' frustration caused by manager abuse, while other-compassion can decrease the likelihood of supervisors inflicting harm on their subordinates. Thus, compassion represents a crucial boundary in breaking the vicious cycle of the abuse trickle-down.

Second, previous studies on the trickle-down effects have identified several mediating mechanisms, such as social exchange, social learning, and displaced aggression (Wo et al., 2015, 2019). Those who focus on abusive manager behavior mostly use social exchange or learning mechanisms, for instance, previous studies argued that supervisors' imitation of managers leads to the abuse trickle-down (Liu et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2012; Tu et al., 2018). Those displaced aggression mechanism studies primarily focus on the more entangled perceptions of supervisors

(e.g., psychological contract violation, Hoobler & Brass, 2006; perception of interactional justice, Aryee et al.,2007; Hoobler & Hu, 2013) rather than specifically on certain people or behavior (e.g., abusive manager behavior). Drawing upon the frustration-aggression theory and displaced aggression literature (Berkowitz, 1989; Dollard et al., 1939), we aim to advance research on abuse trickle-down by investigating supervisor frustration as a crucial affective mechanism (Eissa & Lester, 2017; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). Based on Wo et al.'s (2019) argument, "the transmission of affectively based processes that take little time to process may occur more quickly than transmission via cognitively based processes that require greater thought" (p. 2276). Previous studies have also demonstrated the role of affective mechanism (e.g., frustration) in individual responses to adverse events (Eissa & Lester, 2017; McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002) and as a trigger for aggression (Berkowitz, 1989; Dollard et al., 1939). Therefore, by replicating the displaced aggression pathway in the context of abusive supervision, our study reinforces the understanding of why abuse can trickle down in organizations, which also extends beyond previous studies focusing mainly on cognitive perspectives, such as social learning or social exchange mechanisms (Liu et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2012).

Our research makes several contributions. Firstly, by investigating the moderating role of self- and other-compassion, we answer Tepper et al.'s (2017) call for research into how victims avoid or overcome the negative influences of abusive supervision. Meanwhile, we provide insights into how abuse victims can actively prevent abuse trickle-down. In the trickle-down abuse process, we identify the benefits of self- and other-compassion for incumbents. To our

knowledge, our study is among the first to investigate the role of compassion in abusive literature. In this way, we identify novel boundary conditions (i.e., compassion) of trickle-down effects. Also, we tested whether and how compassion functions in the workplace.

Second, we strengthen the understanding of abuse trickle-down effect in the organizational hierarchy by investigating a frustration-aggression perspective. Previous studies have shown that managers' abuse can trigger supervisors' abusive behaviors (Liu et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2019). However, these studies either did not test the mechanisms involved in the abuse trickle-down (Liu et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2012) or primarily focused on the cognitive mechanism (Taylor et al., 2019) while neglecting the role of emotions in supervisor's behavior. Our study advances the literature by investigating the mediating effect of supervisor frustration on the abusive trickle-down. We answered the call by Wo et al. (2019), "Further investigation on affect-based constructs raises interesting research opportunities for the trickle literature." (p. 2273). In so doing, we patched the negativity in understanding the abuse contagion.

Finally, our study contributes to the leadership literature by using a multi-level approach (between-person level and within-person level) to investigate the antecedents and outcomes of supervisor frustration, which is crucial as abusive supervision researchers have been called for more attention to multi-level dynamics of abusive supervision (e.g., Tepper et al., 2017). We first (Study 1) explored the abusive trickle-down effect at the between-person level. Relatedly, using a diary study design (Study 2), we revealed the abuse trickle-down effect from managers to supervisors on a daily basis. This dynamic investigation of abuse trickle-down can provide

valuable insights into preventing daily abusive supervision in the workplace.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Theory and Hypotheses Development

Abuse trickle-down from manager to supervisor

The frustration-aggression theory (Dollard et al., 1939) states that frustration arises when an individual's efforts to achieve their goals are blocked or interrupted. According to the "context-feelings-response" model, frustrating context influences the incumbent's emotional and behavioral responses via feelings of frustration (Spector, 1978). Frustration is a negative feeling that arises when an employee's goal acquisition and maintenance are impeded by organizational factors, resulting in the sense of hindrance, failure, and an expectation gap (Spector, 1975). Eissa and Lester (2017) also suggested that frustrating events in organizations (e.g., situational constraints) affect employees' feelings of frustration, which in turn affect behavioral responses (e.g., abusive behavior). Therefore, it is plausible that manager abuse, as frustrating events or hindering factors, could contribute to supervisors' frustration.

This study posits that manager abuse will result in supervisor frustration drawing on the frustration-aggression theory. First, when supervisors are abused by their manager, it often causes dissatisfaction in their work and life, leading to higher psychological stress, emotional exhaustion, and poor mental health (see Fischer et al., 2021 and Tepper et al., 2017 for reviews).

The failure to meet the supervisor's physical and mental health needs may cause frustrating feelings for the supervisor. Second, according to Tepper (2000), managers' abuse often makes supervisors feel disrespected or unfairly treated. This adverse treatment and negative feedback from managers make it difficult for supervisors to achieve their goals and cause frustration (Liao et al., 2021; Liao et al., 2018). This adverse treatment can make it challenging for supervisors to obtain sufficient work resources from managers (e.g., social support and self-efficacy) (Xu et al., 2012), leading to increased supervisory frustration. Recent meta-analytic evidence also supports a strong association between aggressive behavior and frustration (Hershcovis et al., 2007). Therefore, we argue that once supervisors are abused by their managers, it increases the feelings of frustration in the supervisor.

Subsequently, we argue that supervisor frustration triggered by manager abuse can lead to abusive supervision. According to Berkowitz (1989) and Dollard et al. (1939), frustration can result in aggressive behavior. When supervisors are frustrated by their manager's abusive behavior, they may develop destructive behaviors such as conflict with others (Spector, 1978). Eissa and Lester's (2017) study showed that supervisor frustration was positively related to abusive supervision. Hence, supervisors may retaliate against their managers by engaging in deviant behavior (Yu & Duffy, 2021). However, given that managers usually have more significant social power, confrontation is often not wise, so they may exhibit deviant behavior toward individuals with less power (Lian et al., 2012), engaging in displaced aggression (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). Subordinates are more likely to be targeted than other targets (such

as customers and other supervisors) because they possess little power to revenge (Aquino, 2000).

In addition, abusive behavior is a form of indirect aggression (e.g., verbal and nonverbal aggression), which is less risky for individuals to use than direct aggression against others (e.g., fighting; Archer & Coyne, 2005). It is reasonable to argue that once frustrated, supervisors are more likely to act abusively toward employees as displaced aggression in response to unfavorable conditions. Therefore, the frustration from the manager's abuse can trigger abusive behavior towards lower-level employees. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

H1: *Abusive manager behavior has an indirect positive relationship with abusive supervisor behavior through the supervisor's frustration.*

Protective factors of self- and other-compassion

From the above, we have illustrated the abuse trickle-down via frustration. Further, exploring how to stop the abuse trickle-down is imperative. Supervisors are an essential link between managers and subordinates, and it is crucial to explore how they react after being abused by their managers. Therefore, from the perspective of the abused supervisor, we hold that individuals can change their behavior, both to respond effectively to the abuse and to control their desires and impulses (e.g., to retaliate against the abuser or to be cathartic on others) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). The self-regulation perspective suggests that successful human functioning requires the capacity to overcome innate desires and habitual behaviors so that individuals can behave in accordance with social norms and expectations. This perspective highlights individuals' ability to change their behavior, contending that they possess the drive

and capacity to manage their desires and impulses (e.g., to retaliate against those who insult them) in order to act in line with their long-term goals (e.g., to maintain positive relationships with others or to achieve high performance) (Vohs & Baumeister, 2016). There is evidence that compassion in the workplace can increase self-regulation, evokes positive emotions, and helps people feel valued at work (Dutton et al., 2014; Seppälä et al., 2017). Thus, compassion affects not only oneself but also performance actors, third parties, and organizations. In this aspect, compassion is an excellent way to deal with suffering (Dutton et al., 2014; Neff, 2003; Neff et al., 2021; Seppälä et al., 2017). Accordingly, drawing on compassion literature and self-regulation perspective, we argue that supervisors' self- and other-compassion could prevent the abuse trickle-down.

Self-compassion is a positive attitude and healthy behavior linking to oneself in periods of suffering, in which individuals adopt an accepting, non-judgmental attitude toward themselves in the face of stress, frustration, failure, or other adverse condition, with three essential components: self-kindness, the sense of common humanity, and mindfulness (Chwyl et al., 2021; Neff, 2003a, 2003b; Neff et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2019). *Self-kindness* means individuals extend their tolerance and understanding rather than simply holding themselves to harsh standards or being self-critical. *The sense of common humanity* means individuals recognize that others will also experience the difficulties they are experiencing and not isolate them. *Mindfulness* means individuals to be aware of their feelings or emotions, break away from their current negative emotions as much as possible, and analyze their current encounters with a rational perspective

rather than being held hostage by their emotions (Chwyl et al., 2021; Neff, 2003a, 2003b; Zhang et al., 2019). Researchers have argued that self-compassion can be induced as a state. For example, Leary et al. (2007) treated self-compassion as both a trait and a state. Self-compassion is now often conceptualized as a character trait, a condition, and a learnable skill (Neff & Germer, 2017; Rabon et al., 2019). In this study, we adopt the broad definition of compassion, including trait and state components. Specifically, we define compassion as "the feeling that arises when we are confronted with another's suffering and feel motivated to relieve that suffering" (Neff, 2003b, p. 81), which captures both propensity and volatility features.

Self-compassion can help individuals to adopt positive strategies to cope with abusive supervision (Lanaj et al., 2022; Schabram & Heng, 2022; Zhang et al., 2019). As mentioned above, abuse by managers may thwart supervisors from achieving their needs and valued goals. Then, supervisors may suffer from frustration and thus trigger negative emotions and beliefs (such as anger, perception of incompetence, and inability to perform). Supervisors with high self-compassion are likelier to adopt positive coping strategies in the face of abuse (Zhang et al., 2019). First, self-compassion can help individuals not push through when the circumstances around them are challenging and distressing. Instead, they turn inward for self-explanation and comfort (Kreemers et al., 2018), thus repairing impaired self-regulation. Research shows that high self-compassion enables people to cope more successfully with adverse events, such as failure, rejection, and loss, than those with low self-compassion (Yang et al., 2021). Therefore, we argue that individuals with high self-compassion can better deal with abuse from managers,

quickly reorganize their mindset, and detach from adverse events.

Second, self-compassion removes the boundaries between self and others (Chwyl et al., 2021; Neff, 2003a, 2003b; Zhang et al., 2019). Self-compassion enables people to see themselves as tiny beings in the larger community of all humanity. Individuals are more likely to feel a sense of connection to others and the world. Thus, supervisors will view managers' abuse as something everyone experiences and not as something they suffer alone, reducing their frustration (Chwyl et al., 2021; Neff, 2003a, 2003b; Zhang et al., 2019). Thus, the sense of common humanity could help people cope and console themselves following abuse.

Finally, individuals with high self-compassion are more likely to perceive and appreciate the positive aspects of their situation (Chwyl et al., 2021; Neff, 2003a). Research has found that even when there is a conflict situation, high self-compassion helps individuals view their "frustration events" at the moment objectively (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012). They would adjust their emotions and constructively resolve the conflict, and afterward, they would view the conflict from a more neutral rather than negative perspective (Kreemers et al., 2018). Thus, self-compassion enables individuals to objectively consider the reasons for the abuse when superiors abuse them and prevent their frustration. Together, we propose the hypothesis:

H2: *The supervisor's self-compassion moderates the positive relationship between abusive manager behavior and supervisor frustration, this relationship will be weaker when the supervisor's self-compassion is high rather than low.*

Although the frustration-aggression theory suggests that frustration triggers aggression, the

hypothesis also suggests that not all frustration triggers aggressive behavior (Berkowitz, 1989). This hypothesis asserts that individuals may seek alternative responses to frustration. For example, Watkins et al. (2019) argued that individuals' concern for others inhibits aggressive behavior and that abusive behavior is less likely to occur in contexts where an individual's empathic concern is sufficient (Hu et al., 2022).

Other-compassion is an interpersonal process that involves noticing, feeling, sensing, and acting to alleviate another person's suffering and occurs when one expresses concern for what happens to another person (Dutton et al., 2014; Goetz et al., 2010; Seppälä et al., 2017). The suffering or sorrow of others often evokes other-compassion and leads to acts of helping, comforting, or otherwise alleviating the suffering of others (Goetz et al., 2010; Schabram & Heng, 2022). Notably, consistent with self-compassion, we consider other-compassion to be both a character trait and a state.

We argue that when supervisors experience frustration, supervisors' other-compassion can mitigate the positive relationship between frustration and abusive supervisory behavior. First, individuals with other-compassion could develop a sense of empathy (Brodbeck et al., 2002; Goetz et al., 2010). Individuals with other-compassion will attempt to overcome or suppress negative emotions (e.g., frustration, anger, and hostility), revenge, or venting intentions and behaviors elicited by others' offense or hurt (Brodbeck et al., 2002; Goetz et al., 2010). They will have a more profound understanding of how each other interacts and then alleviate the attitude of blaming others by putting themselves in others' shoes. As a result, individuals with high

other-compassion are more likely to pass on their goodwill to others than their malice (Gilbert, 2019). Therefore, we expect supervisors will be less likely to abuse their subordinates when they have high other-compassion.

Second, supervisors with high other-compassion will anticipate the pain the abuse can cause the employee when frustrated. After suffering frustration, a supervisor may choose not to abuse a subordinate because high compassion for others will associate them with the pain of others (Jazaieri & Rock, 2021), so they will attend to alleviating the suffering of others. Empirical research also proved that other-compassion might urge individuals to be more likely to be concerned about the suffering of others and, therefore, not inflict their suffering on others (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012; Schabram & Heng, 2022). At this point, they will self-regulate and attenuate the impact of the frustration on themselves, then exhibit less abusive behavior (Gilbert, 2019). Thus, we propose the hypothesis:

H3: *The supervisor's other-compassion moderates the positive relationship between supervisor frustration and abusive supervisor behavior, this relationship will be weaker when the supervisor's other compassion is high rather than low.*

An integrated model

According to frustration-aggression theory, frustration mediates the relationship between abusive manager and supervisor behavior. Then, self-compassion moderates the relationship between abusive manager supervision and frustration. Supervisors with a higher self-compassion will display less frustration when their managers abuse them. Meanwhile, other-compassion

moderated the relationship between frustration and abusive supervisor behavior. Individuals with high other-compassion will exhibit less abusive supervisor behavior in the face of frustration and vice versa. We further hypothesized that self- and other-compassion might influence abusive manager behavior and abusive supervisor behavior through frustration; when self- and other-compassion are both high, the relationship between abusive manager behavior and abusive supervisor behavior becomes weaker. Accordingly, in conjunction with H1 to H3, we formulate the hypothesis:

H4: *The positive indirect effect of abusive manager behavior on abusive supervisor behavior via supervisor frustration will be weaker when the supervisor's self-compassion and other-compassion are both higher.*

Overview of studies

To test our hypothesized conditional process model, we conducted three field studies (two main studies and one supplementary study). In our first two field studies, we followed the approach of Ma et al. (2021) by testing both intrapersonal and interpersonal effects to enhance the robust examination of the model, which is also being called for by a growing number of organizational scholars. For example, Tang et al. (2022) proposed that "researchers should conduct studies at both levels of analysis (i.e., within- and between-person) to provide a comprehensive view of the phenomena of interest" (p. 25); Gabriel et al. (2014) also pointed out that inferring the nature of the relationship between variables at only one level of analysis could lead to the problem of ecological fallacies. Therefore, by conducting tests from both within-person and between-person

levels, we can provide a more robust examination of our model.

Specifically, Study 1 tests our model (cf. Figure 1) with supervisor-employee paired data using a time-lagged design. The time-lagged design helps us better understand each variable's chronicle characteristics. However, individuals may experience significant changes in mood and behavior over time and context. The characteristics of such situational changes and why they occur are difficult to interpret accurately using a time-lagged design (LaCaille et al., 2013). In contrast, the experience sampling method can collect dynamic individual data influenced by social contextual factors and is more suitable for studying the relationship between variables within individuals (LaCaille et al., 2013).

Given that the focal variables in this study may change on a daily basis, in Study 2, we use an experience sampling method to provide a further ecologically valid test of our hypotheses. We decided to use a fixed interval contingent design (i.e., on a daily basis) because the predictability for participants can enhance compliance. In contrast, event-contingent designs require participants to initiate and are more reactive as participants know exactly which events are of interest (Fisher & To, 2012). In addition, our approach is also in line with previous studies of daily abusive supervision (e.g., Liao et al., 2021).

Finally, while our study focused on investigating the abuse trickle-down effect through the displaced aggression mechanism, it is essential to acknowledge that other mediating mechanisms, such as social exchange and social learning, may also contribute to explaining this phenomenon (Wo et al., 2015, 2019). Moreover, researchers have suggested that exploring multiple mediators

could provide a more comprehensive understanding of why the trickle-down effect occurs (Wo et al., 2019). Therefore, we conducted an additional supplementary study to eliminate potential alternative explanations, namely social learning and social exchange, and highlight the significance of our selected mediators.

Study 1

Method

Participants and procedure. We collected data at two-time points from supervisors and employees in companies located in Mainland China. At Time 1, the supervisor rated their self-compassion, perceived abusive manager behavior, and demographic information. Two weeks later (Time 2), the supervisor rated their frustration, other-compassion, and negative affect. Meanwhile, the employee rated their perception of abusive supervisor behavior. Notably, to ensure employees have regular interactions with their supervisors, we asked supervisors to provide a list of all employees on their team, and then the researcher contacted a random employee from all the lists to rate the supervisor. We used two weeks time lag to control the potential common method bias, and this time lag has been used in previous abusive supervision studies (e.g., Lian et al., 2012). In order to match the supervisor and employee data, the supervisor and subordinates were asked to create an identification code and report the code at each time point. All participants provided informed consent and were assured that their survey responses would remain anonymous and confidential from their manager/supervisor.

Of the 500 paired questionnaires delivered, we obtained a matched sample of 381

supervisor-employee dyads (each supervisor paired with one employee) with an overall response rate of 76.2%. In the final sample, 43.8% of the employees were male, and 74.8% of the employees had a bachelor's degree or above. The average age of the employees was 35.36 years old (*SD* = 8.59); the average organizational tenure of the employees was 8.16 years (*SD* = 7.57). Of supervisors, 55.6% were male, and 82.2% had a bachelor's degree or above. The average age of the supervisors was 40.91 years old (*SD* = 7.87); the average organizational tenure of the supervisors was 11.97 years (*SD* = 8.33).

Measure. We followed Brislin's (1980) translation-back-translation procedure to translate English scales into Chinese. Unless otherwise indicated, the response options for all the measures were 5-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Abusive manager behavior and abusive supervisor behavior. We used a 15-item Tepper's (2000) scale to measure abusive manager and supervisor supervision. Participants indicated the frequency of their leader's abusive behavior (my manager or my supervisor) toward them during the recent three months on a scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). A sample item is "My leader put me down in front of others." Cronbach's alpha (α) was .95 (abusive manager behavior) and .96 (abusive supervisor behavior).

Self-compassion. We used a 5-item scale by Schabram and Heng (2022) to measure supervisors' self-compassion. A sample item is "I am kind to myself when experiencing suffering." Cronbach's alpha (α) was .85.

Other-compassion. We used a 5-item scale by Schabram and Heng (2022) to measure

supervisors' other compassion. The items are "If I see employees at work going through a difficult time, I try to act caring toward that person," "I like to be there for employees in times of difficulty," and "When employees feel sadness, I always try to comfort them." Cronbach's alpha (α) was .94.

Frustration. We used a 3-item scale by McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2002) to measure supervisors' frustration. We asked the supervisor to evaluate his feelings in the last two weeks of work with their leaders. The items are "frustration experienced from," "tenseness experienced," and "irritation experienced." Cronbach's alpha (α) was .85.

Control variable. Frustrated aggression theory suggests that an individual's aggressive behavior is susceptible to his or her negative affect (Dollard et al., 1939). Therefore, the present study controlled for supervisors' trait negative affect. We used a 5-item scale by Lanaj et al. (2019) to measure supervisors' negative affect. The item is "distressed," "upset," "scared," "nervous," and "afraid." Cronbach's alpha (α) was .94.

Analytic strategy. We specified an overall path model in Mplus 8.0 to estimate the hypothesized relationships simultaneously. To test the indirect and conditional indirect effects (i.e., hypotheses 1 and 4), we combined the bootstrapping approach (bootstrap Resamples = 5000) to generate bias-corrected confidence intervals (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

Result

Confirmatory factor analysis. We used Mplus 8.0 to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of our focal variables to verify discriminant validity. The results showed that the

hypothesized six-factor model (abusive manager behavior, abusive supervisor behavior, frustration, self-compassion, other-compassion, and negative affect) fit the data well ($\chi^2/df = 2.00$, CFI = .92, TLI= .92, RMSEA= .05, and SRMR= .04), and was superior to several alternative models (see Table 1), suggesting that our measures had desirable discriminant validity.

Insert Table 1 about here

Test of hypotheses. Table 2 shows means, standard deviations, and correlations for variables, and Table 3 shows the unstandardized coefficients of path analysis results. Hypothesis 1 posited that abusive manager behavior has an indirect positive relationship with abusive supervisor behavior via the supervisor's frustration. As shown in Table 3, after controlling negative affect[2], there was a significant positive correlation between abusive manager behavior and frustration (b = .13, SE = .06, p = .026). Meanwhile, abusive manager behavior and frustration were positively related to abusive supervisor behavior (b = .29, SE = .05, $p < .001$, and b = .15, SE = .04, p = .001, respectively). Further, bootstrap analysis results indicate that the indirect effect was significant (indirect effect = .02, 95% CI= [.001, .06]). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 posited that the supervisor's self-compassion moderates the positive relationship between abusive manager behavior and supervisor frustration. As shown in Table 3, a significant negative interactive effect of abusive manager behavior and self-compassion on

frustration (b = -.16, SE= .06, p = .01). We conducted the simple slope (see Figure 2) test at different values of the moderator (± 1 *SD* of mean) developed by Aiken and West (1991). The positive relationship between abusive manager behavior and supervisor frustration is significantly weaker for supervisors with high self-compassion than for supervisors with low self-compassion (b = .03, SE = .08, p = .704, 1 *SD* above the mean; b = .24, SE = .06, p < .001, 1 *SD* below the mean). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3 posited that the supervisor's other-compassion moderates the positive relationship between supervisor frustration and abusive supervisor behavior. Table 3 shows a significant negative interactive effect of other-compassion and frustration on abusive supervisor behavior (b = -.12, SE= .04, p = .005). We conducted the simple slope (see Figure 3) test at different values of the moderator (± 1 *SD* of mean) developed by Aiken and West (1991). The positive relationship between supervisor frustration and abusive supervisor behavior is significantly weaker for supervisors with high self-compassion than for supervisors with low self-compassion (b = .05, SE = .05, p = .384, 1 *SD* above the mean; b = .25, SE = .06, p < .001, 1 *SD* below the mean). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Insert Tables 2 & 3, Figure 2 & 3 about here

To test Hypothesis 4, we conducted a moderated mediation analysis and calculated the indirect effects at different values of self- and other-compassion. As shown in Table 4, the indirect effect of abusive manager behavior on abusive supervisor behavior via frustration was

significantly stronger for supervisor' self- and other-compassion all were low than high (estimate = .001, 95% CI = [-.01, .03], included 0, 1 *SD* above the mean; estimate = .06, 95% CI = [.02, .13], excluded 0, 1 *SD* below the mean; indirect effect difference = .06, 95% CI = [.01, .13], excluded 0). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Insert Table 4 about here

Discussion

We tested hypotheses using a sample of time-lagged data. Consistent with our hypotheses, Study 1 revealed that abusive manager behavior is positively associated with supervisor behavior through the supervisor's frustration. In addition, supervisors with high self-compassion are less likely to feel frustrated, and supervisors with high other-compassion are less likely to abuse others. However, Study 1 has limitations. First, abusive supervision, frustration, and self- and other-compassion may vary over a short time (e.g., on a daily basis; Liao et al., 2021; Sabey et al., 2021). Our design has a shortage of capturing the dynamic facet of measured variables. Therefore, we recruited an additional set of leader-employee pairs to participate in an experience sampling study, which allowed us to further test our research hypotheses in Study 2.

Study 2

Method

Participants and procedure. Study 2 was a daily survey covering two work weeks (i.e., ten working days, Monday to Friday). Data collection for this study involved a one-time survey to

collect demographic information from participants (i.e., supervisors and their direct subordinates). One week after the initial survey, we conducted daily surveys over two weeks. Participation was voluntary, confidentiality was assured, and informed consent was obtained during the general survey. We collect our daily surveys at two-time points every day. At the noon surveys (11:30 -12:00), supervisors were asked to report their perceived daily abusive manager behavior, daily frustration, daily negative affect, and daily self- and other-compassion. Subordinates were asked to report their perceived daily abusive supervisor behavior at the end of the workday surveys (17:30 -18:00). To match data, the supervisor and subordinates were asked to report a unique code in every survey.

We initially invited 74 supervisors and their direct subordinates (each supervisor was paired with one subordinate) and ultimately obtained a usable sample of 593 daily observations (response rate = 89.8% of a total possible of 660) from 66 supervisor-subordinate dyads (response rate = 89.2%).

In the final sample, 39.4% of the employees were male, and 68.2% had a bachelor's degree or above. The average age was 28.93 years old (*SD* = 7.03); the average organizational tenure was 4.03 years (*SD* = 5.39). Of supervisors, 43.9% were male, and 66.7% had a bachelor's degree or above. The average age was 37.63 years old (*SD* = 8.62); the average organizational tenure was 10.35 years (*SD* = 7.96).

Measure. We followed Brislin's (1980) translation-back-translation procedure to translate English scales into Chinese versions. All of the measurement items were rephrased to reflect the

day level. Unless otherwise indicated, the response options for all the measures were 5-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To provide a robust estimation of within-person reliability, we followed Geldhof et al. (2014) and reported McDonald's Omega (ω), rather than Chronbach's alpha, for all our daily measures.

Daily abusive manager and supervisor supervision. To measure daily abusive manager and supervisor supervision, we used a 5-item scale revised by Barnes et al. (2015), a shortened version of Tepper's (2000) original scale. Note that in Study 2, to capture the daily fluctuations, participants indicated the frequency of their leader's abusive behavior toward them today on a scale ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (five or more times), which is different from Study 1 (on a scale ranging from 1 "never" to 5 "always"). A sample item is "Today, my leader yelled or swore to me." McDonald's Omegas (ω) was 0.97 (abusive manager behavior) and 0.97 (abusive supervisor behavior).

Daily self-compassion. We used a 3-item scale by Zhang et al. (2019) to measure daily supervisors' self-compassion. We asked participants to what extent they engaged in the following behaviors at work. A sample item is "Today, I showed caring, understanding, and kindness toward myself." McDonald's Omegas (ω) was 0.95.

Daily other-compassion. Following Zhang et al.'s (2019) method, we adapted a 3-item scale by Schabram and Heng (2022) to measure daily other-compassion. We asked participants to what extent they engaged in the following behaviors at work. The items are "Today, I tried to act caring toward those employees who were going through a difficult time at work," "Today, I

was there for employees in times of difficulty," and "Today, I tried to comfort employees those who felt sadness." McDonald's Omegas (ω) was .94.

Daily Frustration. We used a 3-item scale by McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2002) to measure supervisors' frustration. We asked participants to describe how they feel now about their leaders. The items are "frustration experienced," "tenseness experienced," and "irritation experienced." McDonald's Omegas (ω) was .93.

Control variable. Similar to study 1, we controlled for supervisors' daily negative affect. We used a 5-item scale by Lanaj et al. (2019) to measure supervisors' negative affect. We asked participants to describe how they feel now. The item is "distressed," "upset," "scared," "nervous," and "afraid." McDonald's Omegas (ω) was .92.

Analytic strategy. Given the multilevel structure of Study 2 data (i.e., daily observations nested in persons), we specified a two-level overall path model in Mplus 8.0 to estimate the relationships simultaneously. Following Preacher et al. (2016)'s recommendation, we used a variance-decomposing strategy (i.e., all focal variables were decomposed into within- and between-part variances in the path model) to focus on within-person level effects while constraining between-person effects.

Before hypothesis testing, we estimated the null models in Mplus 8.0 to partition the variance of our daily variables. Results showed that all of our daily variables had significant within-level variances, ranging from 37.4% to 61.7%, suggesting these variables significantly differed within persons and justifying the multilevel modeling approach. We also employed a

Monte Carlo simulation in software R to generate bias-corrected confidence intervals with obtained coefficients and parameters (Bauer et al., 2006).

Result

Confirmatory factor analysis. We used Mplus 8.0 to conduct a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) of our focal variables to verify discriminant validity. The results showed that on a daily basis, the six-factor model (abusive manager behavior, abusive supervisor behavior, frustration, self-compassion, other-compassion, and negative affect) fit the data well ($\chi^2/df = 2.13$, CFI = .96, TLI = .96, RMSEA= .04, $SRMR_{within} = .04$, and $SRMR_{between} = .04$). Moreover, it was superior to several alternative models (see Table 5), suggesting that our daily measures had desirable discriminant validity.

Insert Table 5 about here

Test of hypotheses. Table 6 shows means, standard deviations, and correlations for variables, and Table 7 shows the unstandardized coefficients of multilevel path analysis results. Hypothesis 1 posited that abusive manager behavior has an indirect positive relationship with abusive supervisor behavior via the supervisor's frustration. As shown in Table 7[3], after controlling for negative affect at the within-person level, there was a significant positive correlation between abusive manager behavior and frustration ($\gamma = .47$, SE = .16, $p = .003$). Meanwhile, abusive manager behavior and frustration were positively related to abusive

supervisor behavior (γ = .21, SE = .06, $p < .001$, and γ = .55, SE = .18, p = .002, respectively). Further, the result based on 20000 Monte Carlo replications showed the indirect effect was significant (indirect effect = .26, SE= .12, 95% CI= [.06, .54], excluding 0). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 posited that the supervisor's self-compassion moderates the positive relationship between abusive manager behavior and supervisor frustration. As shown in Table 7, a significant negative interactive effect of abusive manager behavior and self-compassion on frustration (γ = -.13, SE= .05, p = .005). We conducted the simple slope (see Figure 4) test at different values of the moderator (± 1 *SD* of mean) developed by Aiken and West (1991). The positive relationship between abusive manager behavior and supervisor frustration is significantly weaker for supervisors with high self-compassion than for supervisors with low self-compassion (estimate = .34, SE = .12, p = .004, 1 *SD* above the mean; estimate = .60, SE = .20, p = .003, 1 *SD* below the mean). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3 posited that the supervisor's other-compassion moderates the positive relationship between supervisor frustration and abusive supervisor behavior. As shown in Table 7, there was a significant negative interactive effect of other-compassion and frustration on abusive supervisor behavior (γ = -.11, SE= .05, p = .021). We conducted the simple slope (see Figure 5) test at different values of the moderator (± 1 *SD* of mean) developed by Aiken and West (1991). The positive relationship between supervisor frustration and abusive supervisor behavior is significantly weaker for supervisors with high self-compassion than for supervisors

with low self-compassion (estimate = .43, SE = .13, p = .003, 1 *SD* above the mean; estimate = .68, SE = .23, p < .001, 1 *SD* below the mean). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Insert Tables 6 & 7, Figure 4 & 5 about here

To test Hypothesis 4, we conducted a moderated mediation analysis and calculated the indirect effects at different values of self- and other-compassion. As shown in Table 8, results based on 20000 Monte Carlo replications showed that the indirect effect of abusive manager behavior on abusive supervisor behavior via frustration was significantly stronger for supervisor' self- and other-compassion all were low than high (estimate = .41, SE = .20, 95% CI = [.14, .77], excluded 0, 1 *SD* below the mean; estimate = .14, SE = .07, 95% CI = [-.006, .37], included 0, 1 *SD* above the mean; indirect effect difference = .27, SE = .14, 95% CI = [.10, .49], excluded 0). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Insert Table 8 about here

Discussion

Results from multi-level path modeling reveal that on a daily basis, self- and other-compassion moderate the mediating role of supervisor frustration in transmitting the effect of abusive manager behavior to abusive supervisor behavior. Accordingly, the results were cross-validated across two studies in different study designs (time-lagged design vs. experience

sampling method) and levels (between-person vs. within-person level).

Supplementary Study

Although our initial two studies revealed the mechanism of the abuse trickle-down effect through the displaced aggression, it is crucial to note that alternative mediating mechanisms, such as social exchange and social learning, can also explain this effect (Wo et al., 2015, 2019). Thus, exploring multiple mediators could provide a more comprehensive understanding of why the trickle-down occurs. Accordingly, we conducted an additional study to eliminate potential alternative explanations regarding social learning (likelihood of rewards) and social exchange mechanisms (perceived organizational support), thereby highlighting the significance of our selected mediators[4].

Method

Participants and procedure. A cross-sectional study was conducted using a snowball sampling approach to recruit participants. Supervisors were invited to participate in our study, and an online questionnaire was sent to them. Of the 398 questionnaires delivered, we obtained 302 valid samples with an overall response rate of 75.88%. In the final sample, 47.4% were male, and 91.1% had a bachelor's degree or above. The average age was 33.34 (*SD* = 9.35); the average organizational tenure was 6.41 (*SD* = 7.57).

Measures. We used the same scales from Study 1 to assess abusive manager behavior (α = .93), abusive supervisor behavior (α = .95), self-compassion (α = .87), other compassion (α = .90), frustration (α = .79), and trait negative affect (α = .84).

Likelihood of rewards. Following Lian et al. (2012), participants were presented with a list of behaviors from the abuse supervision scale (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007) to assess their perceptions of the likelihood of being rewarded for engaging in abusive behavior. A sample behavior is "Ridicules others." Participants' responses ranged from 1 (very unlikely to be rewarded) to 5 (very likely to be rewarded). Cronbach's alpha (α) was .91.

Perceived organizational support. We used a 3-item scale by Eisenberger et al. (2002) to measure perceived organizational support. A sample is "The organization values my contribution to its well-being." Cronbach's alpha (α) was .88.

Results

After controlling for negative affect, there was a positive correlation between abusive manager behavior and frustration (b = .37, SE = .06, p < .001) and the likelihood of rewards (b = .47, SE = .08, p < .001). There was a negative correlation between abusive manager behavior and perceived organizational support (b = -.34, SE = .09, p < .001). Meanwhile, abusive manager behavior, frustration, and the likelihood of rewards were positively related to abusive supervisor behavior (b = .17, SE = .05, p = .001; b = .13, SE = .04, p = .002; b = .17, SE = .03, p < .001, respectively). However, there is no significant relationship between perceived organizational support and abusive supervisor behavior (b = -.02, SE = .03, p = .618). Furthermore, we found that the indirect effect via frustration and likelihood of rewards were significant (indirect effect = .05, 95% CI= [.003, .13]; indirect effect = .05, 95% CI= [.03, .15], respectively), but the indirect effect via perceived organizational support was.not significant (indirect effect = .01, 95%

CI= [-.02, .04]). Thus, our Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Further, abusive manager behavior and self-compassion had a significant negative interactive effect on frustration (b = -.16, SE= .07, p = .023). The simple slope test showed that the positive relationship between abusive manager behavior and supervisor frustration is significantly weaker for supervisors with high self-compassion than for supervisors with low self-compassion (b = .27, SE = .08, p = .002, 1 *SD* above the mean; b = .48, SE = .07, p < .001, 1 *SD* below the mean). Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Moreover, there was a significant negative interactive effect of other-compassion and frustration on abusive supervisor behavior (b = -.18, SE= .04, p < .001). The simple slope test showed that the positive relationship between supervisor frustration and abusive supervisor behavior is significantly weaker for supervisors with high self-compassion than for supervisors with low self-compassion (b = .003, SE = .05, p = .954, 1 *SD* above the mean; b = .25, SE = .04, p < .001, 1 *SD* below the mean). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Finally, we found that the indirect effect of abusive manager behavior on abusive supervisor behavior via frustration was significantly stronger for supervisor' self- and other-compassion all were low than high (estimate = .001, 95% CI = [-.05, .06], 1 *SD* above the mean; estimate = .12, 95% CI = [.03, .24], 1 *SD* below the mean; indirect effect difference = .12, 95% CI = [.01, .23]). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

In summary, our supplementary study provided further evidence supporting the role of frustration as a crucial mediating mechanism between abusive manager behavior and abusive

supervisor behavior. The finding remains significant even after controlling for social learning mechanisms (i.e., the likelihood of being rewarded) and social exchange mechanisms (i.e., perceived organizational support). By controlling for alternative explanations and offering direct evidence for our proposed theoretical explanation, these results increase our confidence in the general pattern observed in Study 1 and Study 2.

General Discussion

Based on the frustration-aggression and self-regulation theory, we explored the preventive factors for the vicious abuse trickle-down. Specifically, we found that self-compassion attenuated the positive relationship between abusive manager behavior and frustration, and other-compassion attenuated the positive relationship between frustration and abusive supervisor behavior. We also identified the mediating role of frustration between abusive manager and supervisor behaviors.

Theoretical implications

Our study makes several important theoretical implications for abusive supervision literature. The first theoretical implication is that we identify novel boundary conditions (i.e., compassion) that break the cycle of abuse trickle-down. Prior literature has reviewed the prevalence of abusive supervision, but the boundary conditions that can prevent this phenomenon are still not well-investigated (see Fischer et al., 2021; Tepper et al., 2017, for reviews). Our study offers new insights from the victim's perspective by examining the moderating role of self- and other-compassion, which are two distinct but related constructs that

help individuals cope with adverse events (Chwyl et al., 2021; Dutton et al., 2014; Neff, 2003a; Zhang et al., 2019). Self-compassion allows individuals to practice self-care (e.g., acceptance) and positive framing, which can mitigate the effects of frustration and other negative emotions (Chwyl et al., 2021; Leary et al., 2007). Other-compassion, on the other hand, fosters empathy and concern for others, which can reduce the likelihood of abusive behavior (Watkins et al., 2019). By examining the moderating effects of self- and other-compassion, we shed light on the factors that can break the cycle of abuse trickle-down and promote a more positive work environment.

Second, we contribute to the frustration-aggression theory by demonstrating that frustration is a key mediating factor in the abusive trickle-down effect in the organizational hierarchy. Our findings align with previous research that links frustration to negative emotions and aggressive supervisor behavior (Berkowitz, 1989; Dollard et al., 1939). In this aspect, by focusing on the affective mechanism of frustration, we build on previous studies highlighting the importance of the affective mechanism in understanding the abusive trickle-down effect (Wo et al., 2019). Our study replicates Wo et al.'s (2015, 2019) findings on the mechanisms of trickle-down effects, particularly regarding abusive manager behavior as a specific psychological contract breach or interpersonal injustice.

Finally, abuse could be either chronic or situational (Foulk et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2012). We argue that combining these two approaches is essential: the time-lagged design posits that people behave similarly in a specific environment. However, individuals may experience enormous

changes in their emotions and behaviors over time and context, but the characteristics of such changes and why they occur are difficult to interpret accurately using a time-lagged design (LaCaille et al., 2013). As our study's focal variables are susceptible to change over time, an experience sampling approach is warranted. Overall, we used both research methods to understand the critical factors that center on the vicious cycle of abuse. Thus, this research contributes to the available literature by helping us better understand the role of self- and other-compassion in inhibiting abuse trickle-down.

Practical implications

Our study has salient practical implications. First, our study highlights the critical role of frustration in transmitting abusive supervision. We suggest that managers should be aware that abuse not only directly impacts the supervisors being abused but can trickle down to the wider followers. It is necessary to develop training programs and interventions to prevent abusive supervision for organizations. Furthermore, we emphasize the importance of supervisors' self-regulation, particularly in managing frustration. Supervisors should learn to respond resiliently to frustrating events and develop effective regulation strategies. Our study also underscores the need for supervisors to recognize the harm caused by abuse and to treat employees with tenderness. As mentioned above, treating employees as they would want to be can help break the cycle of abuse trickle-down and promote a benign work environment.

Second, our research shows that self-compassion enables victims to experience less negative frustration when they suffer from abuse. In light of the positive role of self-compassion

in coping with various frustrating events including abuse, employees and organizations could cultivate and develop self-compassion. Studies have concluded that self-compassion can be taught by training programs: people can learn to be more compassionate with themselves (Barnard & Curry, 2011). Several studies have shown that even when participants are only briefly instructed to see things in a self-compassionate way, for example, by instructing participants to recognize that others have experienced the same negativity, participants' self-compassion can be enhanced and thus reap positive psychological and behavioral results (Leary et al., 2007; Rahimi-Ardabili et al., 2018).

Third, we also revealed the role of other-compassion in suppressing the individual's aggressive behavior. Other-compassion can help individuals better cope with adverse events, emotions, and experiences (Gilbert, 2019; Schabram & Heng, 2022) because it encourages individuals to be easily touched by others' suffering and try to understand and alleviate others' pain (Seppälä et al., 2017). As studies have demonstrated the destructive effects of abusive behavior on organizations (Taylor et al., 2019; Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2017; Xu et al., 2012), and we believe that the cultivation of other-compassion will be a viable strategy to reduce the hostile climate in organizations. Thus, organizations may consider fostering other-compassion culture to shape a positive work climate and ensure that the psychological well-being of organization members is met. Treating others with compassion can be particularly adept at attenuating or eliminating the negative behaviors they perpetrate on others (Dutton et al., 2014).

Limitations and future directions

First, this paper explores the role of the individual self- and other-compassion in stopping the abuse trickle-down. However, many team- or group-level factors can also serve as boundary conditions for preventing the abuse trickle-down. For example, Babalola et al. (2022) explored the role of group ethical voices in attenuating abusive team supervision. Tu et al. (2018) explored the moderating role of team performance between exposed and enacted abuse. Otherwise, a study on bullying found that in classes with low bullying, the bullied experienced more adjustment problems (Pan et al., 2021). Therefore, would the same effect be found in organizations with low abuse or high organizational compassion? Also, what role do performance and team morale concerns play in the trickle-down of abuse? Future research could explore the impact of these factors on abusive supervision.

Second, this study used a time-lagged design and an experience sampling method, which could help us comprehensively understand the relationship between the variables. However, we cannot determine the direction of the causal relationship between those variables. Thus, future studies may examine these relationships using a field-based quasi-experimental design or laboratory setting. For example, the vignette experiment method can explore the relationship between compassion in abusive (induced through vignettes) and frustrating emotions. Also, the role of self- and other-compassion can be explored by engaging individuals in recalling experiences of abuse by managers. Nevertheless, we encourage future researchers to investigate the causal relationships of our study through these experimental methods.

Finally, because our study was conducted in China and all participants were Chinese, we

could not explore cross-cultural differences in self and other-compassion. Dutton et al. (2014) called on researchers to examine cross-cultural differences in compassion in response to work. Culture may influence the norms of society (Li et al., 2022; Sullivan et al., 2012;), how people express suffering, and the meaning and motivation of people's compassion (Kitayama & Markus, 2000). For example, in a collectivist culture, people are more concerned about others and thus may be more other-compassion. In contrast, people may be more concerned about themselves in an individualistic culture and thus have more self-compassion (Kitayama & Markus, 2000). We hope future researchers can replicate and develop this study's results in other cultures.

Conclusions

The contagious nature of abusive supervision in organizations highlights the need to understand the mechanisms by which it occurs and the protective factors that can prevent this vicious trickle-down. Based on frustration-aggression and self-regulation theory, we found that supervisors who exhibit high levels of self-compassion generate less frustration when confronted with abusive managers. Additionally, supervisors who demonstrate high levels of other-compassion exhibit less abusive supervisor behavior towards their subordinates when experiencing frustration. We hope that future research will build upon our study to explore the protective factors that can prevent the vicious trickle-down effect of abusive supervision and investigate the antecedents of abusive supervision.

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Footnotes

1. Following Mawritz et al. (2012) and Taylor et al. (2019), We use “supervisor” to refer to front-line (i.e., lower-level) leaders who typically have direct leadership over lower-level employees and interact on a daily basis. We use “manager” to refer to the supervisor's leaders, who usually receive reports from the supervisor. In addition, we use the term “employee” to refer to the supervisor's subordinates; they are usually at the lowest organizational level and report to the supervisor.

2. We also ran analyses without the control to ensure analytical robustness (Becker et al., 2016). The results without controlling negative affect were essentially identical. We retained the control in the final analyses to rule out confounds due to the relatively high correlation (i.e., $r = .45$, $p < .001$; see Table 2) between frustration and negative affect. Results without control are available upon request.

3. As in Study 1, we ran analyses without the control and found that results excluding negative affect were identical. We again retained the control in the final analyses to rule out confounds that may originate from a relatively high correlation (i.e., $r = .41$, $p < .001$; see Table 6) between frustration and negative affect.

4. See our online supplementary materials for more details.

Table 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Study 1)

Models	χ^2	*df*	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
6-factor model	1946.16	974	2.00	.92	.92	.05	.04
5-factor model: abusive manager behavior and abusive supervisor behavior were combined into one factor	5285.04	979	5.40	.66	.64	.11	.16
5-factor model: self-compassion and other-compassion were combined into one factor	2620.64	979	2.68	.87	.86	.07	.06
5-factor model: frustration and negative affect were combined into one factor	2277.35	979	2.33	.89	.89	.06	.06
1-factor model: all variables were combined into one factor	8237.47	989	8.33	.42	.40	.14	.19

Notes. a: *N*=381. b: 6-factor model includes abusive manager behavior, abusive supervisor behavior, frustration, self-compassion, other-compassion, and negative affect.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities (Study 1)

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Abusive manager behavior	1.46	.65	(.95)					
2. Frustration	2.33	.81	.25***	(.85)				
3. Self-compassion	3.57	.67	-.22***	-.15**	(.85)			
4. Other-compassion	3.53	.86	-.12*	.06	.36***	(.94)		
5. Abusive supervisor behavior	1.50	.70	.39***	.27***	-.16**	-.18**	(.96)	
6. Supervisor trait negative affect	1.96	.84	.26***	.45***	-.17**	-.08	.25***	(.94)

Notes. a: N=381. b: Cronbach's alphas are in parentheses along the diagonal. c: $^{***}p < .001$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{*}p < .05$

Table 3. Results of the Path Analysis Model (Study 1).

Variables	Frustration		Abusive supervisor behavior	
	Estimate	*p*-value	Estimate	*p*-value
Control variables				
Negative affect	.38(.05)	<.001	.07(.04)	.129
Independent variable				
Abusive manager behavior (AM)	.13(.06)	.026	.29(.05)	<.001
Mediator				
Frustration			.15(.04)	.001
Moderator				
Self-compassion (SC)	-.05(.06)	.428		
Other-compassion (OC)			-.15(.04)	<.001
Interaction				
AM * SC	-.16(.06)	.010		
Frustration * OC			-.12(.04)	.005

Notes. a: *N*=381. b: Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. c: All results came from a path model that included all variables.

Table 4. Conditional Indirect Effects (Study 1)

Conditions	Abusive manager behavior → Frustration → Abusive supervisor behavior	
	Estimates (SE)	95% CI
1. Low SC, Low OC	.06 (.03)	[.02, .13]
2. High SC, Low OC	.01 (.03)	[-.04, .06]
3. Low SC, High OC	.01 (.02)	[-.03, .06]
4. High SC, High OC	.001 (.01)	[-.01, .03]
Indirect effect difference		
Difference between Conditions 1 and 4	.06 (.03)	[.01, .13]

Table 5. Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Study 2)

Models	χ^2	*df*	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	$SRMR_W$	$SRMR_B$
6-factor model	1009.11	474	2.13	.96	.96	.04	.04	.04
5-factor model: abusive manager behavior and abusive supervisor behavior were combined	4299.51	484	8.88	.73	.69	.12	.17	.09
5-factor model: self-compassion and other-compassion were combined	2317.45	484	4.79	.87	.85	.09	.09	.07
5-factor model: frustration and negative affect were combined	2309.03	484	4.77	.87	.85	.08	.12	.09
1-factor model: all variables were combined	9928.90	504	19.70	.33	.27	.18	.22	.32

Notes. a: $N_{\text{within-dyad}} = 593$, $N_{\text{between-dyad}} = 66$. b: 6-factor model includes daily abusive manager behavior, abusive supervisor behavior, frustration, self-compassion, other-compassion, and negative affect. c: W= within, B= between.

Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities (Study 2)

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Daily manager abuse	1.39	.89	*(.97)*					
2. Daily frustration	1.55	.98	.10*	*(.93)*				
3. Daily self-compassion	3.11	1.04	-.10*	-.14**	*(.95)*			
4. Daily other-compassion	3.14	1.19	-.16***	-.04	.47***	*(.96)*		
5. Daily supervisor abuse	1.43	.92	.48***	.16***	-.16**	-.19**	*(.97)*	
6. Daily negative affect	1.41	.75	.13**	.41***	-.18***	-.13**	.11*	*(.92)*

Notes. a: N=593. b: McDonald's Omegas (ω) are in parentheses along the diagonal. c: $^{***}p < .001$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{*}p < .05$.

Table 7. Results of the Multilevel Path Analysis Model (Study 2).

Variables	Frustration		Abusive supervisor behavior	
	Estimate	*p*-value	Estimate	*p*-value
Control variables				
Negative affect	.06(.09)	.468	.12(.11)	.266
Independent variable				
Abusive manager behavior (AM)	.47(.16)	.003	.21(.06)	<.001
Mediator				
Frustration			.55(.18)	.002
Moderator				
Self-compassion (SC)	-.13(.12)	.262		
Other-compassion (OC)			-.02(.07)	.830
Interaction				
AM * SC	-.13(.05)	.005		
Frustration * OC			-.11(.05)	.021

Notes. a: $N_{\text{within-dyad}} = 593$, $N_{\text{between-dyad}} = 66$. b: Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. c: All results came from a multilevel path model that included all variables.

Table 8. Conditional Indirect Effects (Study 2).

Conditions	Abusive manager behavior → Frustration → Abusive supervisor behavior	
	Estimates (SE)	95% CI
1. Low SC, Low OC	.41 (.20)	[.14, .77]
2. High SC, Low OC	.23 (.11)	[.01, .51]
3. Low SC, High OC	.26 (.11)	[.04, .55]
4. High SC, High OC	.14 (.07)	[-.006, .37]
Indirect effect difference		
Difference between Conditions 1 and 4	.27 (.14)	[.10, .49]

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

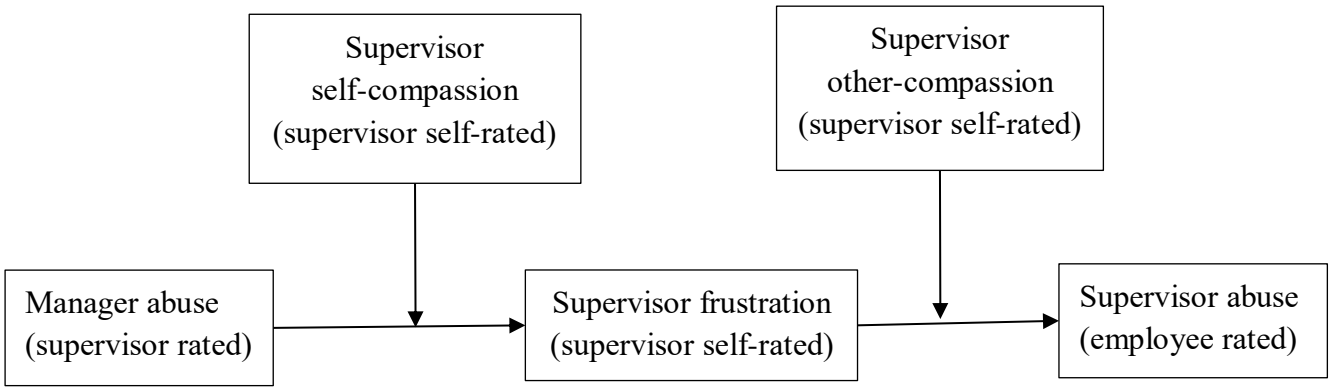

Figure 2. The Interactive Effect of Abusive Manager Behavior and Self-compassion on Supervisor Frustration (Study 1)

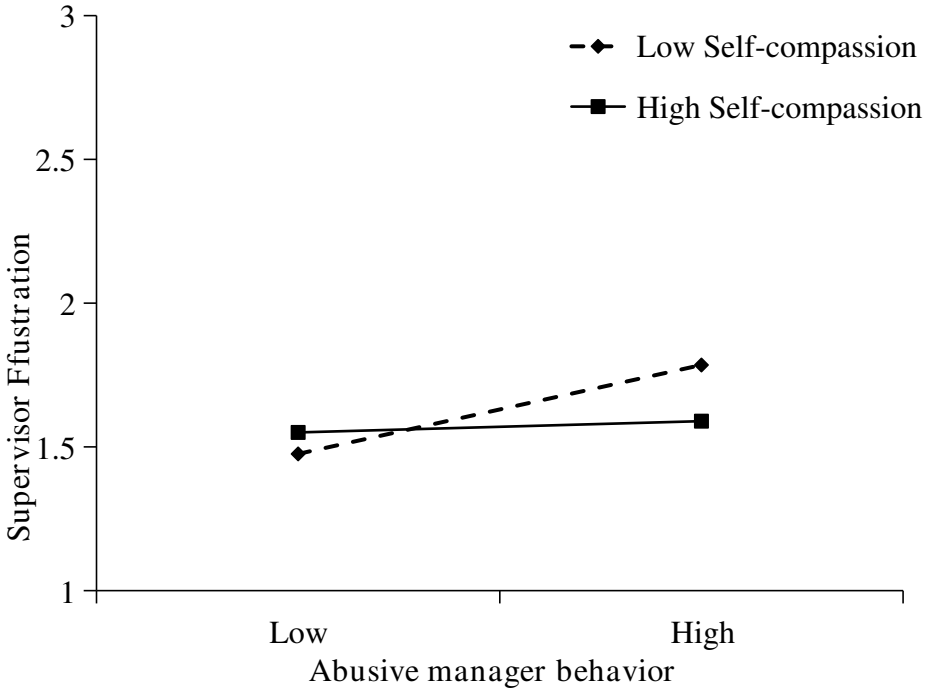

Figure 3. The Interactive Effect of Supervisor Frustration and Other-compassion on Abusive Supervisor Behavior (Study 1)

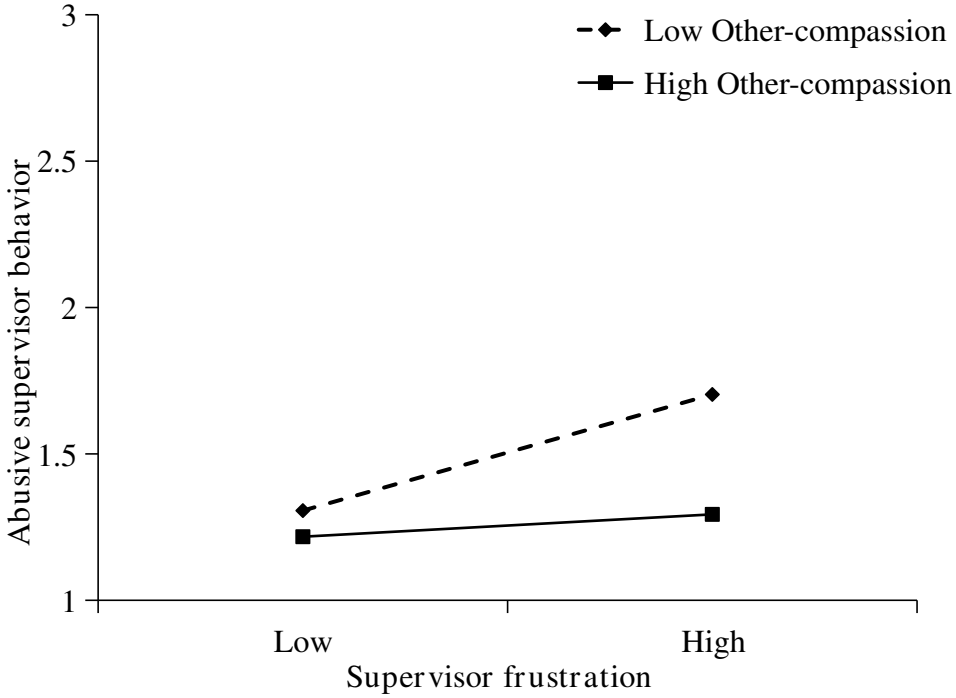

Figure 4. The Interactive Effect of Daily Abusive Manager Behavior and Daily Self-compassion on Daily Supervisor Frustration (Study 2)

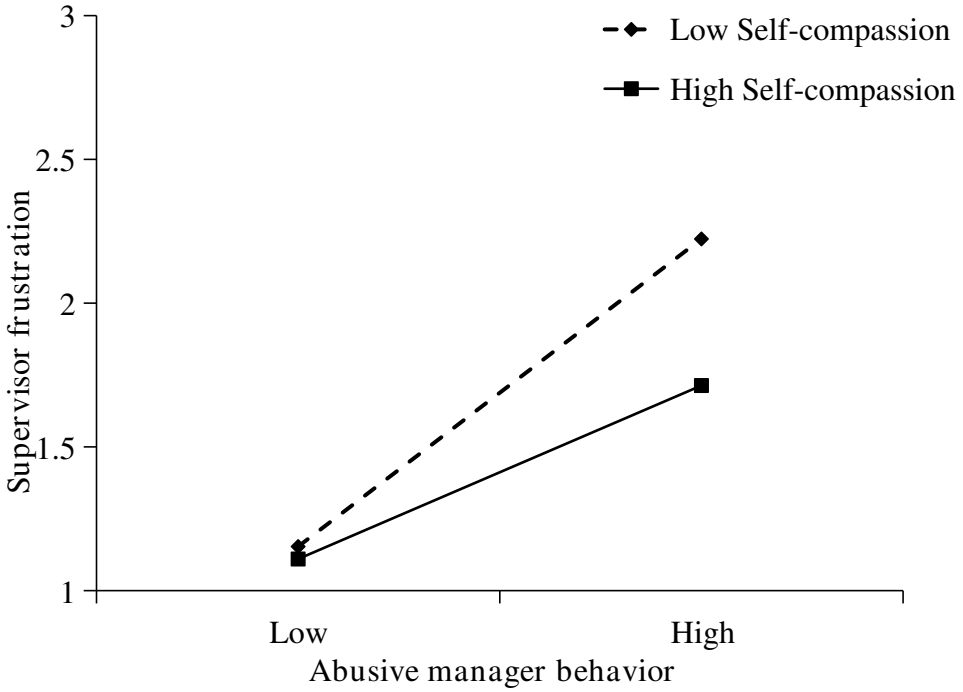

Figure 5. The Interactive Effect of Daily Supervisor Frustration and Daily Other-compassion on Daily Abusive Supervisor Behavior (Study 2)