The unwelcoming experience of abusive supervision and the impact of leader characteristics: turning employees into poor organizational citizens and future quitters

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ABSTRACT
Over three studies (i.e., two 2 × 2 experiments and a multi-source field study), we examine the relationship between abusive supervision, leader characteristics, and organizational inclusion on employee outcomes. Drawing on the group value theory of organizational justice and multiple needs theory of organizational justice, we argue that abusive supervision is counterproductive to making employees feel welcome. Specifically, we demonstrate that abusive supervision demoralizes employees’ feelings of organizational inclusion. Additionally, we draw upon research that suggests that the display of hostility inherent in abusive supervision can be perceived differently when it comes from a strategic versus impulsive source. We build upon this reasoning to examine and explain how leader characteristics might alter the effect of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion. More specifically, we suggest that leader political skill (i.e., strategic source) and leader neuroticism (i.e., impulsive source) act as moderators of the relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion. We integrate organizational justice and inclusion theories to demonstrate that abusive supervision can be interpreted as an unwelcoming experience that ultimately has the ability to turn employees into poor organizational citizens (i.e., decrease engagement of OCBs) and future quitters (i.e., increase of turnover intentions). Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Due to the recent significant demographic shifts and the associated broad implications for organizations and society (Langdon et al., 2002), there has been a substantial amount of media and scholarly interest regarding the topic of inclusion. Inclusion has been defined as the degree to which an individual believes he or she is an esteemed member of an organization (Shore et al., 2011). Shore and her colleagues also note that this belief comes from experiencing treatment that satisfies an individual’s needs for belongingness and affirming his or her uniqueness. As organizations face the reality of an increasingly diverse workforce, scholars and practitioners have placed a significant emphasis on understanding how to create environments where diverse individuals feel welcomed, esteemed, and included (Bell et al., 2011; Bilimoria et al., 2008; Roberson, 2006; Shore et al., 2009, 2011; Theodorakopoulos & Budhwar, 2015). Notably, research has demonstrated that employees’ perceptions of inclusion impact a variety of critical workplace outcomes, such as commitment, performance, turnover, citizenship behaviour, and job satisfaction (e.g., Acquavita et al., 2009; Avery, McKay, Wilson, et al., 2008; Cho & Mor Barak, 2008; Downey et al., 2015; Nishii, 2013; Nishii & Mayer, 2009). These findings convey that organizational inclusion matters.

In response to this shift in demographics, organizational leaders have been tasked with the role of communicating and demonstrating the importance of inclusiveness within their respective organizations, as their conduct can saliently convey a sense of inclusion (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). Echoing this point, Liden, Bauer, and Erdogan (2004) note that immediate supervisors play an essential role as key representatives of the organization through which members form their judgements (e.g., inclusiveness). Scholars also suggest that the direct supervisor is frequently the principal organizational leader responsible for granting access to rewards or opportunities for their respective employees and it is critical that this particular leader behave in a manner that creates a sense of inclusion (Douglas et al., 2003). Consequently, research in the area of diversity and inclusion has generally concluded that leader behaviour can directly affect employees’ beliefs regarding inclusiveness promoted by organizations (Avery et al., 2007; Nishii & Mayer, 2009; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Reskin, 2000; Wasserman et al., 2008). It is important to note that this stream of research has predominantly focused on positive acts (i.e., bright-side) with respect to what can be done to create more welcoming environments (Bell et al., 2011; Cottrill et al., 2014; Nishii & Mayer, 2009; Shore et al., 2011).

Whereas diversity and inclusion researchers have highlighted bright-side organizational practices and what should be done, justice scholars have highlighted the growing and significant issue of dark-side leadership and what is occurring (Tepper, 2000, 2007; Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Rice, 2017). Dark-side leadership research should be of particular value to the inclusion literature, as diversity and inclusion research has also revealed that some organizational members face various forms of harassment, discrimination, and marginalization in the workplace (e.g., Avery, McKay, Wilson, 2008; Deitch et al., 2003; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Ragins et al., 2007; Raver & Nishii, 2010; Rice, 2017; Van Laer & Janssens, 2011). Despite this apparent conceptual overlap, very little
research has focused on examining the impact of dark-side leadership on organizational inclusion and the boundary conditions of this particular relationship. So we have a limited understanding of how leader characteristics affect the link between abusive supervision and employee outcomes. Subsequently, our research provides a unique contribution to this gap by investigating how leader characteristics influence the relationship between a specific dark-side leadership behaviour (i.e., abusive supervision) and important employee outcomes through employees’ perceptions of organizational inclusion.

First, it is useful to turn to the literature to examine the critical influence of leadership on employee attitudes and behaviours. According to justice theorists (Ambrose et al., 2002; Cropanzano et al., 2001; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Folger, 1994, 1998; Tyler et al., 1996), when a leader humiliates and mistreats a follower, it degrades a follower’s status as a valuable and appreciated organizational member. This type of abusive and unfair treatment is riddled with disrespect and hostile aggression and it should inherently violate the needs of belongingness and uniqueness being affirmed, which undermines the experience of organizational inclusion (Shore et al., 2011). Given key theoretical propositions of the group value model of justice (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992) and multiple needs theory of justice (Cropanzano et al., 2001), we propose that abusive supervision is a demoralizing experience that has a negative impact on organizational members’ perceptions of organizational inclusion. In other words, the display of hostility is inherently an unwelcoming and degrading experience. Subsequently, employees that are abused will sense that they are not welcomed in the organization, and in turn, become poor organizational citizens (i.e., decreased citizenship behaviour) and future quitters (i.e., increased turnover intentions).

We focused on citizenship behaviour and turnover intentions due to research that emphasizes that organizational inclusion manifests in behavioural and attitudinal responses that demonstrate employees’ belief that they are allowed to participate and are enabled to contribute fully to the organization (Miller, 1998). Whereas employee performance is generally described as doing your specific job duties as required (Landy & Fair, 1983; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995), citizenship behaviour often entails going above and beyond what is in your job description and exhibiting discretionary behaviours (Bolino & Turnley, 2003), which is more closely aligned with full participation associated with feelings of inclusion (Miller, 1998; Shore et al., 2011). Similarly, we focused on turnover intentions as an attitudinal response due to it representing employees’ intentions to leave, which is more aligned with feeling unwelcomed and a low level of belonging (Shore et al., 2011).

Abusive supervision was chosen as the focal construct of interest for three reasons. First, abusive supervision is rooted in the justice literature (Tepper, 2000). Therefore, this concept allows us to remain consistent with our organizational justice framework (Cropanzano et al., 2001; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Second, although various labels such as petty tyranny, unethical leadership, toxic leadership, and supervisor undermining have been used to describe similarly “destructive” leadership behaviours (e.g., Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Duffy et al., 2002), most of the dark-side leadership research conducted to date has used the term abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000, 2007; Tepper et al., 2017). Classic examples of abusive supervision include having loud and angry tantrums, humiliating or ridiculing someone in front of others, derogating someone’s status, withholding necessary information, and giving someone the silent treatment (Aryee et al., 2007; Tepper, 2000; Bies & Moag, 1986). Subsequently, this sustained display of marginalization and hostile treatment of employees should undermine perceptions of organizational inclusion.

While past research on abusive supervision has found the behaviour to be related to aggravating or emotionally charged circumstances with leaders who are dispositionally inclined to engage in abusive behaviour (Tepper, 2007; Fox & Spector, 2010), recent theorizing suggests that this may not always be the case (Tepper et al., 2012). Importantly, recent abusive supervision research suggests that it is essential to distinguish between strategic and impulsive expressions of this type of aggressive behaviour (Tepper et al., 2012). Strategic abuse is described as “thoughtful and deliberate expressions of hostility that are performed with specific objectives in mind”, whereas impulsive abuse is explained as “automatic and uncontrolled actions that may occur outside of the supervisor’s awareness” (Tepper et al., 2012, p. 194). In short, impulsive abuse occurs when individuals lack composure and have dispositions in which they are inclined to “flip their lids” (Dodge & Coie, 1987; Fox & Spector, 2010), whereas abuse is considered strategic when individuals calculate their displays of hostility (Tepper, 2007; Tepper et al., 2012). Some leaders are thought to employ strategic abuse as a way of accomplishing set goals and targets within the context of an organization (G. R. Ferris et al., 2007). In this way, strategic abuse can be used by supervisors as a management tool to assert a position of dominance and authority over subordinates. For example, a supervisor might be adamant about setting deadlines and exercise a ritual of name-calling when employees miss them as a way of asserting structure and directing activities towards optimal productivity. In this scenario, targets of strategic abuse are both reminded of “who’s in charge” as well as guided towards focusing on organizational outcomes. On the other hand, impulsive abuse is seen as a brisk, emotionally-fuelled display of hostility towards employees. In the case of impulsive abuse, supervisors express their anger and frustration in the form of emotional outbursts, without regard for the consequences on employees or organizational setting. Since different displays of hostility can each have unique psychosocial responses from employees, the distinction between these types of abuse becomes important to study (Fox & Spector, 2010; Scott et al., 2009). Therefore, in order to account for this distinction and how it may impact our primary relationship of interest, we chose to examine how certain leader characteristics signal whether the display of hostility is strategic (i.e., the hostility is calculated by the abuser) or impulsive (i.e., the hostility is uncontrolled by the abuser). To this end, we chose to focus on two key variables that appear to mirror strategic and impulsive expressions of hostility: leader political skill and leader neuroticism. There are several reasons why we believe these variables are particularly useful for understanding how supervisors experience and display their frustrations with employees via abusive behaviours. Since political skill enables individuals to manage and display behaviours in a way that purposefully aligns with intended goals (G. R. Ferris et al., 2005), it seems probable that political skill is tied to strategic behaviour, including calculated
abusive supervision. To this end, Tepper et al. (2012) discussed how abusive supervision could be considered a political activity. On the other hand, highly neurotic individuals experience emotions as imbalanced and unpredictable (Costa & McCrae, 1992), which likely leads to more impulsive, or less controlled displays of hostility and abuse. More generally, these characteristics likely influence the extent to which supervisors are planned and deliberate or hasty and short-sighted in their display of aggression. Thus, we targeted leader political skill (i.e., a strategic source) and leader neuroticism (i.e., an impulsive source) as moderators.

We aim to make several contributions to the literature in this article. First, we integrate organizational justice and inclusion literatures by examining the relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion from a fairness perspective. Tepper et al. (2011) note that inclusion is achieved by experiencing treatment that conveys belongingness and uniqueness. To this end, leader misconduct, such as abusive supervision, can enhance our understanding of organizational inclusion regarding what is currently happening in the workplace that demoralizes employees’ perceptions of inclusion. As opposed to viewing inclusion as only a matter of relating to diversity, we offer that inclusion is also a matter of organizational justice. Second, we identify leader political skill and neuroticism as moderators of the primary hypothesized relationship. We extend current theorizing by empirically demonstrating that the display of hostility can be strategic or impulsive, which can alter the impact the effect of abuse has on various outcomes. Furthermore, our examination of the role of leader characteristics contributes to the dearth of research on the impact of leader level factors influencing abusive supervision (Tepper, 2007; Mackey et al., 2017; Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017). Lastly, we elucidate the role of organizational inclusion as a mediator in the abusive supervision-work outcome relationship. Our goal is to demonstrate that abusive supervision can be viewed as an unwelcoming experience that can ultimately turn employees into poor organizational citizens and future quitters. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model.

**Theory and hypotheses development**

**Abusive supervision and organizational inclusion: an organizational justice perspective**

Tepper et al. (2011) propose that inclusion refers to the degree to which individuals believe that he or she is an esteemed member of an organization through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness. This proposition of inclusion suggests that the way an individual is treated by others is vitally important to his or her sense of inclusion. Similarly, Tyler and Lind (1992) group value of justice theory proposes that fair treatment from organizational leaders conveys to employees that they have a respected and esteemed status within the organization. Brown et al. (2005) also suggest that supervisory fairness promotes inclusion because it entails treating others justly (i.e., fair treatment satisfies the need of belonging) and providing followers with voice (i.e., voice opportunities satisfy the need of uniqueness, given it allows people to share their unique perspective and an opportunity to contribute). Conversely, mistreatment by other people (e.g., a leader) greatly threatens a person’s sense of inclusion and makes him or her feel ostracized (K. D. Williams, 1997).

Abusive supervision is a salient form of severe mistreatment and is status-degrading. Tepper (2000) described abusive supervision as ‘employees’ perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviours, excluding physical contact’ (p. 178). Abusive supervision involves a leader making derogatory comments about an individual to other organizational members (i.e., violating the need of belonging; Tepper, 2000) and telling an individual that their thoughts and feelings are stupid (i.e., violating the need of uniqueness; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). Thus, we argue that the blatant mistreatment inherent in abusive supervision should adversely impact employees’ needs of belongingness and being valued for their uniqueness. Research has demonstrated the demoralizing nature of abusive supervision (Bies & Moag, 1986; Tepper, 2000, 2007; Tepper et al., 2017; Tyler & Lind, 1992).

The relationships between abusive leaders and their followers are rife with interpersonal conflicts and persistent assaults on followers’ feelings of respect, dignity, and self-efficacy (Duffy et al., 2002). Conversely, research has confirmed a positive relationship between fair treatment and employees’ sense of appreciation and fulfilment (McAllister & Bigley, 2002). For example, while examining two samples of school personnel, Pierce et al. (1989) reported a negative relationship between managerial disrespect and employee esteem. This particular pattern has emerged in additional research samples as well (e.g., D. L. Ferris et al., 2009, 2012). Tepper (2000) concluded that the cruel disregard, belittlements, outrages, and punishments interwoven in abusive supervision cause employees to feel alienated and
irrelevant. We argue that there is a link between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion because Tepper et al. (2011) suggest organizational members derive their perception of being esteemed members through balancing the two themes of belongingness and uniqueness. Taken together, we suggest that there is a negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational members’ perceptions of organizational inclusion.

H1: Abusive supervision is negatively related to employees’ perceptions of organizational inclusion.

**Cognitive and strategic source: the moderating role of leader political skill**

As noted previously, abusive supervision is a supervisory display of hostility towards subordinates (Tepper, 2000). Recent abusive supervision research suggests that this display of hostility can come from strategic or impulsive sources (Tepper et al., 2012), which can alter the effect of abusive supervision on psychological responses by subordinates (Fox & Spector, 2010). Subsequently, we propose that the supervisory display of hostility is strategic when the abuse is coming from a politically skilled leader. Political skill has been defined as “the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one’s personal and/or organizational objectives” (G. R. Ferris et al., 2005, p. 127). In line with abusive supervisory behaviours, research suggests politically skilled leaders may demonstrate a certain level of aggression (G. R. Ferris et al., 2007; Harris et al., 2007; Turnley & Bolino, 2001), however, research also suggests that politically skilled individuals are calculating in their use of influence tactics and thus many not be perceived negatively by others (Treadway et al., 2007; 2013) when engaging in aggressive behaviours.

Researchers have found political skill to be comprised of various dimensions, which include social astuteness, interpersonal influence, and apparent sincerity (G. R. Ferris et al., 2005). Additionally, individuals with a high level of political skill are high self-monitors (G. R. Ferris et al., 2005). Empirical evidence has also demonstrated that political skill is positively related to conscientiousness (Blickle et al., 2013), emotional intelligence (Meisler, 2013), and core-self evaluations (Zhang et al., 2018). This suggests that they are highly cerebral and possess a high level of composure. We argue that politically skilled leaders can strategically use these skills in combination with aggressive behaviours to achieve their goals. Specifically, politically skilled leaders will use their social astuteness (i.e., the ability to accurately understand social interactions, interpret one’s own behaviour as well as that of others, and to be keenly attuned to diverse social situations (G. R. Ferris et al., 2005) to engage in aggressive behaviours that are appropriate for their work environment and the subordinates that report directly to them. As high self-monitors, politically skilled leaders are able to adjust their behaviour in response to the situation and the people in that situation (G. R. Ferris et al., 2005). This may take the form of abusive behaviours in the appropriate circumstances. Through their use of interpersonal influence (i.e., the ability to exert a powerful influence on others in a subtle and convincing manner, and to appropriately adapt and calibrate one’s own behaviour to each situation in order to elicit particular responses from others (G. R. Ferris et al., 2005)), politically skilled leaders are adept at using tactics like aggression to achieve their goals. Interestingly, because of their apparent sincerity this behaviour may not be perceived as abusive because it is subtle and convincing (Treadway et al., 2007). Indeed, researchers suggest that politically skilled individuals are better capable of disguising their intentions (Treadway et al., 2007) and if they are perceived as being abusive by others it will likely be perceived as out of character and the result of provocation or a strategic leadership behaviour that is temporarily used to get results.

Consequently, leaders with a high level of political skill will choose to demonstrate hostility and aggressiveness in specific situations where it is deemed most appropriate (G. R. Ferris et al., 2007), thereby minimizing negative consequences. As such, this display of hostility is a controlled effort to integrate emotional demonstration and regulation with other behaviours in a performance designed to bring about certain desired outcomes (G. R. Ferris et al., 2007; Tepper et al., 2012). Conversely, leaders with a low level of political skill, lack the social astuteness and ability to understand their followers and work situation (Ahearn et al., 2004). As such, leaders with a low level of political skill will tend to display hostility in the more classical and less restrained manner (G. R. Ferris et al., 2007). We suggest that as leader political skill increases, the more restrained the abuse is, which should manifest as a more strategic display of hostility and ultimately lessen the impact of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion because it may not be perceived as abusive by the subordinate.

H2: Leader political skill moderates the negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion, such that high levels of leader political skill will weaken the negative relationship.

**Affective and impulsive source: the moderating role of leader neuroticism**

Conversely, the supervisory display of hostility can be influenced by an impulsive source. This impulsive abuse occurs when the abuse is uncontrolled (Tepper et al., 2012). To target this specific altering effect, we investigated leader neuroticism. Neuroticism is a predisposition to experience a variety of negative emotions (Watson, 2000), such as anger, anxiety, irritability, and depression (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Watson et al., 1988). Research has demonstrated that neuroticism is positively related to impulsiveness (Costa & McCrae, 1992). This suggests that displays of hostility stemming from individuals with a high level of neuroticism is emotionally-driven and uncontrolled.

Scholars have proposed that highly neurotic individuals tend to be more emotionally reactive (Brief & Weiss, 2002), possess a heightened level of hostility (Costa & McCrae, 1988), and are emotionally unstable (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Highly neurotic individuals also lack composure (Le et al., 2011). Conversely, individuals with a low level of neuroticism are more calm, collected, and emotionally stable (Eissa & Lester, 2016). As such, leaders with a high level of neuroticism will tend
to display their hostility in a manner that is uninhibited due to being more emotionally unstable and their aggressive behaviour will be overt. This type of display should intensify the damaging effect of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion. Consequently, we argue that the negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion is magnified when leader neuroticism is high.

Given their lack of composure, general hostility towards others, and the cited empirical evidence related to their relationships with others, we hypothesize that as leader neuroticism increases, the more impulsive the display of hostility becomes, which should intensify the negative impact of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion. As leader neuroticism increases, the abuse will be less restrained and more explosive.

\[ H3. \text{Leader neuroticism moderates the negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion, such that high levels of leader neuroticism will strengthen the negative relationship.} \]

**Poor organizational citizens and future quitters: ultimate outcomes of a noninclusive experience**

Whether it is influenced by strategic or impulsive sources, abusive supervision will generally produce detrimental outcomes for organizations (Tepper, 2007; Tepper et al., 2012). Shore and colleagues argued that organizational inclusion should impact members’ citizenship and intentions to leave an organization. Similarly, Cropanzano et al. (2001) proposed that feelings of belonging and affiliation are fulfilled by displays of fair treatment, and once basic socioemotional needs (e.g., organizational inclusion) are satisfied, employees incorporate organizational membership, which in turn leads to positive employee or organizational outcomes. Conversely, when the psychological need for inclusion is violated by acts of mistreatment (e.g., abusive supervision), employees are unlikely to incorporate organizational affiliation, which in turn leads to negative employee and organizational outcomes. Specifically, feelings of low organizational inclusion consequential to abusive supervision should decrease employees’ desires to help the organization achieve its goals and increase their desire to leave and abandon the organization. In other words, abused organizational members will reduce citizenship behaviour and are more likely to quit (Tepper, 2007; Nishii & Mayer, 2009; Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Thus, we hypothesize that organizational inclusion should mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and employee work outcomes (i.e., citizenship behaviour and turnover intentions). As previously hypothesized, we anticipate that leader political skill and neuroticism will moderate (first-stage) the abusive supervision-organizational inclusion relationship. Therefore, the conditional indirect effects of abusive supervision on the outcomes through organizational inclusion will be dependent upon the moderating roles of leader political skill and neuroticism.

\[ H4a. \text{The conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on citizenship behavior through organizational inclusion will be weaker when leader political skill is high.} \]

\[ H4b. \text{The conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on turnover intention through organizational inclusion will be weaker when leader political skill is high.} \]

\[ H4c. \text{The conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on} \]

\[ H4d. \text{The conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on turnover intention through organizational inclusion will be stronger when leader neuroticism is high.} \]

**Methods**

**Study 1 and 2 introduction**

Study 1 and 2 were designed as a $2 \times 2$ experiment. We used an experimental vignette methodology. As such, we can offer empirical evidence regarding causality. In an effort to be in line with our theoretical framework, we wanted to support the directionality of the abusive supervision-organizational inclusion relationship. We specifically tested the relationship between organizational inclusion and abusive supervision. This type of research design is also utilized by researchers in an effort to assess how individuals use and combine available information when making evaluative judgements (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014; Karren & Barringer, 2002), such as organizational inclusion. This allowed us to test the interactive effects of abusive supervision and supervisor characteristics on organizational inclusion. Additionally, this experimental research design allows for an implicit assessment of participant beliefs, which reduces the concerns regarding socially desirable bias that is often an issue found with survey data. Given these distinct strengths, researchers have confirmed the appropriateness of experiments to assess individuals’ evaluations on various sensitive organizational topics, such as fairness and diversity/inclusion issues (Karren & Barringer, 2002; Nicklin et al., 2011; Rousseau & Anton, 1991).

**Study 1 and 2 methods**

**Study 1 participants and procedure**

Fifty-three undergraduate business students at a large university in the southern part of the United States participated in Study 1. The sample demographics were 40% female, 91% working adults (i.e., worked a minimum of 20 hours per week), and 40% minority participants. Participants were asked to evaluate organizational inclusion based upon several managers’ treatment of their direct reports. They were provided with 360-degree performance evaluations of six mid-level managers who were being evaluated on organizational inclusion during a performance evaluation. The order in which the manager profiles were presented was randomized to control for order effects. The profiles contained information regarding four competencies (subordinate treatment, leader characteristics, talent management, and staffing ability). Based upon our interest in and predictions about (1) abusive supervision and (2) leader political skill, only these two characteristics were manipulated (i.e., high/low) across the leader profiles of specific interest. The other cues were held constant and clearly marked in the moderate range.
Four profiles were fully manipulated. Thus, we used a 2 (low level vs. high level of abusive supervision) x 2 (low level vs. high level leader political skill) design. The fifth profile was the control condition wherein abusive supervision and leader political skill levels were moderate and talent management was given a low ranking and staffing ability was given a high ranking. The sixth profile was a duplicate scenario of the high level of abusive supervision and low level leader political skill scenario. Rater reliability is often a potential weakness of experimental studies (Aiman-Smith et al., 2002). Nonetheless, the reported means between our manipulated condition (M = 2.54) and its duplicate condition (M = 2.60) regarding organizational inclusion were not statistically different. Thus, the rater reliability seems to be consistent. Responses to the control profile and duplicate profile were removed prior to analysis (Aiman-Smith et al., 2002). As such, our analyses were based on 212 observations (53 participants x 4 profile ratings). It is important to acknowledge that we used the Durbin-Watson test (d-statistic) to examine the presence of serial or auto-correlation. In within-subject research designs, auto-correlation can be a concern in relation to interpreting findings. The value of d lies between 0 and 4 (Durbin & Watson, 1971). If the value of d is significantly less than 2, then evidence of positive serial correlation exists. If the d-statistic is significantly more than 2, then evidence of negative serial correlation exists. A value of 2 suggests autocorrelation is not present (Gujarati, 2003). A value in between 1.5 and 2.5 are considered relatively normal (Field, 2009). Field also noted that values under 1 and more than 3 are serious concerns. The Durbin-Watson test revealed a d value of 2.25 with respect to Study 1. Thus, the presence of auto-correlation appears to be absent from the data.

**Study 1 two x two experimental design and manipulations**

Within each 360-degree supervisor evaluation, both descriptive and numerical ratings (i.e., cues) were provided for each of the hypothetical supervisors’ assessed characteristics. Following Aiman-Smith et al.’s (2002) recommendations, we supplemented written information with graphical images of the cue levels. Specifically, we manipulated abusive supervision and leader political skill with various cues: (i) with percentile ratings, where values (on a 1-100 scale) indicated a supervisor scored at or above this percentage of other mid-level supervisors; (ii) with graphics (i.e., bar charts and tables); and (iii) with colour, such that green signalled desirable and red indicated undesirable levels of respective supervisor abilities. In the low abusive supervision condition, subordinate treatment were scored at 91 or 92 out of 100, and the leader’s abilities to “yells at and belittles subordinates in front of other,” “tells subordinates their thoughts and feelings are stupid,” “makes derogatory comments about subordinates to others,” and “tells subordinates that they are incompetent” (operationalized via items from Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007) were distinctly noted as “no concern,” which resulted in higher subordinate treatment ratings. In the high abusive supervision condition, subordinate treatment was scored at the 30 or 35 percentile (slight variations were included to prevent participants from cuing on nearly identical supervisor scores across profiles), and the items noted above were noted as “high concern,” which resulted in lower subordinate treatment ratings.

Leader political skill was similarly manipulated. In the high leader political skill condition, supervisors’ attributes were rated 89 or 92 out of 100 and the four supervisor’s attribute indicators, which were “develops good rapport with most subordinates,” “makes most subordinates feel comfortable and at ease around him/her,” “envisions himself/herself in the position of others,” and “tries to find common ground with other subordinates” (operationalized via Ahearn et al., 2004) were rated as strengths. In the low leader political skill condition, the support indicators were rated at 35 or 37 out of 100, and each indicator were rated as a weakness.

**Study 1 manipulation checks**

We tested the strength of the manipulations. Regarding abusive supervision, participants responded to the following item (5-point Likert, 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree): “This manager displays abusive and hostile behaviour towards subordinates.” One way ANOVA revealed that participants indicated higher levels of abusive supervision in the high condition (M = 4.59, SD = .77) than in the low condition (M = 1.48, SD = .91), t(53) = 359.37, p < .1, both being statistically significantly different from the control condition (M = 3.11, SD = .80). With respect to leader political skill and in line with the concept of leader political skill (Ahearn et al., 2004; G. R. Ferris et al., 2005), participants responded to the following item (5-point Likert, 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree): “This manager demonstrates that he/she effectively understands others at work.” Similarly, participants indicated a higher level of leader political skill in high conditions (M = 3.83, SD = 1.14) than in the low conditions (M = 2.12, SD = 1.4), t(53) = 136.15, p < .1, both being statistically significantly different from the control condition (M = 2.94, SD = .79).

There were no significant interaction between our conditions (high vs low abusive supervision conditions and high vs low leader political skill) on our manipulation check items. Additionally, the participants were not knowledgeable of our hypotheses and we randomized the order in which the scenarios were presented.

**Study 1 dependent variable measure**

Organizational inclusion was assessed by asking participants to indicate the degree to which they agreed (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) with four statements proposed by Shore et al. (2011). The items were “This manager’s subordinates are likely to perceive that they are respected and valued employees,” “This manager’s subordinates are likely to have a high sense of belonging to the organization,” “This manager’s subordinates are likely to feel that their uniqueness is encouraged to be retained,” and “This manager’s subordinates are likely to feel a high level of organizational inclusion.” This scale reliability was .93.

**Study 1 data analysis and results**

We only tested Hypothesis 2 in Study 1 using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). PROCESS is an advanced regression-based statistical tool that uses conditional process analysis “to examine the extent to which the mechanism(s) by which an effect operates depends on or varies across situation, context, stimulus, or individual differences” (Hayes & Rockwood, *in press*, p. 3). It focuses on moderated mediation models and conditional indirect effect testing via bootstrapping. In our model, we examine the impact
of abusive supervision on the employee outcomes of turnover intentions and OCBs through organizational inclusion (i.e., the how). We also examine whether this effect is moderated by the characteristics of the leader (i.e., when). Recent advances in the statistical analysis of moderated mediation models recommend the use of conditional indirect effects testing in conjunction with bootstrapping procedures (e.g., PROCESS) instead of the Sobel (1982) traditional multistep method as well as the Baron and Kenny’s (1986) traditional multistep method as well as the Sobel (1982) test due to problems with the assumptions of normal sampling distribution of indirect effects (Hayes, 2009). PROCESS does not make these assumptions and accounts for asymmetries in a sampling distribution by employing a bootstrapping procedure. It also suitable for categorical independent variables found in experimental studies (Hayes & Preacher, 2014).

As expected, the results yielded a significant main effect of abusive supervision F (1, 49) = 73.18, p < .1. Specifically, the participants rated managers in the high abuse condition significantly lower regarding organizational inclusion (M = 2.3) than managers in the low abuse condition (M = 3.51). The mean rating of the control group fell between those two values (M = 2.59). But of greater importance, the data revealed a positive and significant interaction between abusive supervision and leader political skill F(1, 49) = 6.27, p < .5, explaining an additional 1% of variance. The impact of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion is stronger when leader political skill is high rather than when leader political skill is low, which is the opposite of our prediction. Thus, Hypothesis 2 did not receive support. Table 1 shows the mean level of organizational inclusion as a function of abusive supervision and leader political skill. Specifically, simple slope analysis revealed that the slope at high levels of leader political skill was significantly different from zero (boot effect = −.86, p < .1, t-value = −13.2, LCI = −.98, UCI = −.73) and the slope for low levels of leader political skill was as well (boot effect = −.62, p < .1, t-value = −9.48, LCI = −.76, UCI = −.50).

Table 1. Mean level of organizational inclusion as a function of abusive supervision and leader political skill (study 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of abusive supervision</th>
<th>Level of leader political skill</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low level of abusive supervision</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High level of abusive supervision</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>(.51)</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Scores could range from 1 to 5, with higher scores reflecting high organizational inclusion. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Study 2 data analysis and results

In Study 2, we found support for Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 stated that abusive supervision is negatively related to organizational inclusion. One-way ANOVA revealed that managers in the high condition of abusive supervision were rated significantly lower with respect to fostering organizational inclusion towards their subordinates (M = 1.84, SD = .63) t(124) = 280.90, p < .1 than leaders in the low condition of abusive supervision (M = 3.85, SD = .70). Hypothesis 3 was tested using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). This hypothesis predicted that the negative impact of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion will be stronger when leader neuroticism is high. We did not find support for this hypothesis.

Study 3 sample and procedure

Study 3 was designed to overcome the limitations of the experimental studies (i.e., the issue of realism and indirect measures of supervisor-subordinate dyads) and to replicate and extend the findings from study 1 and 2. As such, we collected dyadic data from supervisors and subordinates from organizations located in the southeastern United States. The organizations represented a variety of industries such as banking, accounting, retail, hospitality, education, restaurants, manufacturing, and social services. We administered online questionnaires. Undergraduate business students were asked to serve as organizational recruits in exchange for class extra credit points. In turn, these student volunteers recruited a working professional who was willing to serve as a focal employee. The focal employee then asked his or her immediate supervisor to fill out the supervisor survey. A number of management researchers have used comparable approaches regarding data collection (e.g., Mayer et al., 2009; Piccolo et al., 2010; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997).

Similar to other researchers (Mayer et al., 2009), we implemented several prescribed practices to ensure that the questionnaires were completed by the correct entity. First, we emphasized the significance of honesty and integrity in the scientific process at the introduction of the research opportunity. Second, when participants completed their questionnaires, IP addresses and time stamps were verified. We reviewed these data to confirm that the surveys were completed with unique IP addresses and at different times. We invited 316 students to serve as organizational recruits. We
received responses from 206 focal employees and 188 direct supervisors. In effort to ensure data integrity, we included a specific-instruction response item which instructed participants to respond in a specific way (they were required to mark “Neither agree nor disagree”). If participants failed to respond as instructed, their responses were eliminated from data analysis. After taking these steps and eliminating missing data, we paired data from 246 participants, which yielded 123 usable subordinate–immediate supervisor dyads, for an overall response rate of 39%. Unique identifiers were assigned to the organizational recruits and used to match the supervisor and employee surveys.

Focal employee (i.e., subordinate) respondents were 56% female. They were also 68% Caucasian, 16% Hispanic, 8% African American, 4% Asian American, and 4% other. Additionally, they had an average age of 25 years (SD 7.23), and had an average of 4 years of experience with their organization (SD 4.53). Fifty-three percent of the respondents worked part-time and 47% worked full-time.

Direct supervisor respondents were 57% male. They were 65% Caucasian, 18% Hispanic, 10% African American, 2% Asian American, 1% Native American, and 4% other. They had an average age of 38 years (SD 11.79), and had an average of 8 years of organizational tenure (SD 6.81). Ninety-two percent of direct supervisors worked full-time and 8% worked part-time.

The focal employee survey contained measures of abusive supervision, organizational inclusion, turnover intentions, and demographics (i.e., race, gender, age, education). The supervisor survey contained measures of political skill, neuroticism, subordinate citizenship behaviour, and demographics.

Control variables
In an effort to reduce the concern for alternative explanations, we controlled for the effects of ethnic similarity, gender similarity, employee’s tenure in the organization, employee’s tenure with current supervisor, employee cynicism, and employee neuroticism in an effort to reduce the concern for alternative explanations. Research suggests that these variables may significantly influence abusive supervision and diversity-related issues (Bacharach et al., 2005; Elvira & Cohen, 2001; Tepper et al., 2011). For example, Tepper et al. (2011) suggested that dissimilarity may trigger abuse and Bacharach et al. (2005) argued that dissimilarity may impact inclusion research. Additionally, neurotic followers may have a tendency to experience work interactions from a negative standpoint (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). Cynicism may impact citizenship behaviour and turnover intentions (Dean et al., 1998).

Abusive supervision. We measured abusive supervision by using a 5-item measure developed by Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) on 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Sample items were “My supervisor tells me my thoughts and feelings are stupid” and “My supervisor puts me down in front of others.”

Organizational inclusion. Given Tepper et al. (2011) definition of organizational inclusion (i.e., belief that one is an esteemed member of the organization), we utilized Pierce et al.’s (1989); Pierce & Gardner (2004) ten-item scale of organizational-based self-esteem as a proxy for organizational inclusion.2 This was a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Scale items included “I count around here,” which is an indicator that an individual belongs to an organization (Leary & Downs, 1995; Pierce et al., 1989) and “I can make a difference around here,” which is an indicator that an individual’s uniqueness is valued by the organization (Pierce & Gardner, 2004).

Political skill. Political skill was measured using the six–item political skill inventory (PSI) developed by Ferris et al. (1999). This was a 7-point Likert scale. Sample items included “I understand people well” and “I am good at getting people to respond positively to me.”

Neuroticism. Neuroticism was measured using a 10-item version of the Watson et al. (1988) PANAS scale. Research has shown that neuroticism converges with negative affectivity at high levels and neuroticism and negative affectivity are highly correlated (Costa & McCrae, 1980). Participants were presented with adjectives and asked to indicate the degree to which they had felt this way. The range for this scale was 1, “not at all,” to 5, “extremely.” These items included distressed, jittery, hostile, irritable, ashamed, upset, nervous, guilty, scared and afraid.

Turnover intentions. Turnover intentions were assessed using a three-item scale developed by Cook et al. (1981). “I will probably look for a new job in the next year” and “I often think about quitting.” The ratings were based on a 7-point Likert scale.

Citizenship behaviour. Citizenship behaviour was measured using a twelve-item scale developed by L. J. Williams and Anderson (1991). Sample items include “This employee always gives advance notice when he/she is unable to come to work” and “This employee generally helps others who have been absent.” The ratings were based on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

Results
We utilized SAS to conduct confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) to demonstrate variable uniqueness and to evaluate model fit. With respect to our conceptualized model, the CFA results suggest an adequate model fit ($\chi^2 = 1696.69; df = 924; \chi^2/df = 1.84; p < .1; \text{RMSEA} = .8; \text{SRMSR} = .8$, Hox, 2002; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). This model was superior to two alternative models, one that combined abusive supervision and leader neuroticism and one that combined citizenship and turnover intentions. In testing all of our hypotheses, we conducted several separate analyses. We ran analyses on the full model (leader political skill and all the control variables), a model that only included abusive supervision and control variables that demonstrated a significant impact on the various outcomes, and a model with only abusive supervision. The results were very similar for our hypotheses. Following Becker’s (2005) recommendations, we report the analyses without the control variables. He reasoned if the same conclusions can be drawn
from the data, then we can rule out controls as alternative explanations.

Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 2. Hypothesis 1 was tested with regression analysis.

The data revealed that abusive supervision had a significant negative ($\beta = -0.25, p < 0.05$) impact on organizational inclusion. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. The remaining hypotheses were tested using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013) and Edwards and Lambert (2007) methodology. The data revealed significant interactions between abusive supervision-leader political skill ($\beta = 0.23, p < 0.1$) that explained an additional 6% of variance and abusive supervision-leader neuroticism ($\beta = -0.48, p < 0.1$) that explained an additional 14% of variance on organizational inclusion. To graph the interaction, we mean centred the variables and calculated high leader neuroticism/political skill at one standard deviation above the mean and low leader neuroticism/political skill at one standard deviation below the mean. Figure 2 shows that when leader political skill is high, the negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion is weaker than when leader political skill is low. Simple slope analysis revealed that the slope at high levels of leader political skill was significantly different from zero (boot effect = −0.15, $p < 0.05$, $t$-value = −2.11; LCI = −0.29, UCI = −0.1), but the slope at low levels of leader political skill was more pronounced and significantly different from zero (boot effect = −0.48, $p < 0.01$, $t$-value = −4.80; LCI = −0.68, UCI = −0.28). Figure 3 shows that when leader neuroticism is high, the negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion is stronger than when leader neuroticism is low. With respect for leader neuroticism, simple slope analysis revealed that the slope was significantly different from zero at high levels (boot effect = −0.54, $p < 0.01$, $t$-value = −6.3; LCI = −0.72, UCI = −0.36), whereas the slope was not significant at low levels (boot effect = −0.10, $p = 0.18$, $t$-value = −1.35; LCI = −0.24, UCI = 0.5). Thus, Hypotheses 2 and 3 were supported.

The regression results are located in Tables 3, 4 respectively. Hypotheses 4a and 4b respectively theorized that the conditional indirect effects of abusive supervision on citizenship behaviour and turnover intentions through organizational inclusion would be moderated by leader political skill. The data revealed that the conditional indirect effects were weaker at high levels of leader political skill on citizenship behaviour (boot effect = −0.4; CI = −0.9, −0.1) and turnover intention (boot effect = 0.9; CI = 0.3, 2.2) in comparison to low levels of leader political skill on citizenship behaviour (boot effect = −0.13; CI = −0.26, −0.4) and turnover intentions (boot effect = 0.29; CI = 0.10, 0.62). Thus, Hypotheses 4a and 4b were supported. Hypotheses 4c and 4d respectively speculated that the conditional indirect effects of abusive supervision on citizenship behaviour and turnover intentions through organizational inclusion would be moderated by leader neuroticism. The data revealed that the conditional indirect effects were stronger at high levels of leader neuroticism on citizenship behaviour (boot effect = −0.15; CI = −0.26, −0.5) and turnover intentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1. Abusive supervision</td>
<td>1.55</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Organizational inclusion</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>−0.30**</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leader political skill</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leader neuroticism</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>−0.18*</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Citizenship behaviour</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>−0.9</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>−0.29**</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Turnover intentions</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>−0.36**</td>
<td>−0.8**</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>−0.21*</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** = $p < 0.1$; * = $p < 0.5$

a along top diagonals

N = 123 dyads

Figure 2. Interactive effect of abusive supervision and leader political skill on organizational inclusion.

Low abuse, low political skill = 6.43; High abuse, low political skill = 5.43
Low abuse, high political skill = 6.45; High abuse, high political skill = 6.14
In comparison to low levels of leader neuroticism on citizenship behaviour (boot effect = −.3; CI = −.8, .0) and turnover intentions (boot effect = .6; CI = −.1,.23). Thus, Hypotheses 4c and 4d were supported. The results for the conditional indirect effects can be located in Table 5 and Table 6. We also plotted the conditional indirect based upon the methodology recommended by Edwards and Lambert (2007) regarding first-stage moderation to provide complementary analyses. Hypotheses 4a, 4b, 4c, and 4d are depicted in Figures 4–7 respectively.

### Table 3. Regression results for the moderating effect of leader political skill.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organizational inclusion</th>
<th>Citizenship behaviour</th>
<th>Turnover intentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive supervision</td>
<td>−.32**</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader political skill</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS x LPS</td>
<td>−.8</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational inclusion</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** = p < .1; * = p < .5

ABS = abusive supervision; LPS = leader political skill
N = 123 dyads

### Table 4. Regression results for the moderating effect of leader neuroticism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organizational inclusion</th>
<th>Citizenship behaviour</th>
<th>Turnover intentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive supervision</td>
<td>−.25**</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader neuroticism</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS x LN</td>
<td>−.48**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational inclusion</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** = p < .1; * = p < .5

ABS = abusive supervision; LN = leader neuroticism
N = 123 dyads

### Table 5. Conditional indirect effects of abusive supervision on outcomes through organizational inclusion at ± standard deviations of the moderators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organizational inclusion</th>
<th>Citizenship behaviour</th>
<th>Turnover intentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>CI (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− 1 SD of leader political skill</td>
<td>−.13</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>[−.26, −.4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ 1 SD of leader political skill</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>[−.10, −.1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− 1 SD of leader neuroticism</td>
<td>−.3</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>[−.8, −.0]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ 1 SD of leader neuroticism</td>
<td>−.15</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>[−.26, −.5]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CI = Confidence intervals; SE = Standard error

### Table 6. Index of moderated mediation for hypotheses 4a-4d.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>SE (Boot)</th>
<th>LCI</th>
<th>UCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H4a</td>
<td>−.14</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>−.37</td>
<td>−.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4c</td>
<td>−.14</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>−.25</td>
<td>−.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4d</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General discussion

### Findings and limitations

Taken together, the findings of our three studies demonstrate that abusive supervision has a negative impact on organizational inclusion. Our findings suggest that a supervisory display of hostility towards subordinates is likely to be experienced as an unwelcoming and marginalizing experience. Furthermore, our findings suggest that it is important to acknowledge that a display of hostility can be from a strategic or impulsive source. As such, we found that if the display of hostility is strategic, it can lessen the impact of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion. We also found that if the display of hostility is impulsive, it strengthens the negative impact of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion. As this finding was supported in our multi-source field study (Study 3), it was not supported in our experimental study (Study 2). One potential explanation is that Study 3 benefitted from distinct raters. Whereas employees rated abusive supervision, leaders self-reported their neuroticism. However, we manipulated abusive supervision and leader neuroticism in Study 2 and our manipulation checks yielded a significant interaction effect. Additionally,
there was an unintended relationship between our abusive supervision manipulation check and our leader political skill manipulation check as they were correlated ($r = -0.40$, $p < .1$). This would suggest that our manipulations were not entirely independent. As such, this mixed findings could be that multi-source field studies offer advantages over experimental studies when the variables have similar conceptual underpinnings in establishing a certain level of variable distinctiveness and independence. In our case, it would be the “display of hostility” as this is related to aspects of abusive supervision and neuroticism.

Study 1 and Study 3 provided mixed findings regarding Hypothesis 2. This may be attributed to the $2 \times 2$ design. In Study 1, we attempted to manipulate abusive supervision and leader political skill. Study 1 finding suggests that the participants viewed supervisors in the high abuse x high political skill condition as hypocritical, which lessened their organizational inclusion rating. As noted by Trevino et al. (2000), when leaders are perceived to be hypocritical, individuals become cynical and distrust their words and actions. This is likely the case regarding third party observations. However, in Study 3, high levels of leader political skill weakened the relationship between abusive supervision and organizational inclusion. This finding likely resulted as Study 3 used direct measures. As such, the impact of abusive supervision on organizational inclusion was lessened for employees with highly political skilled leaders. It may be the case that direct employees can perceive abuse as “bad” behaviour experienced and attempts to build a relationship as “good” behaviour experienced, which mitigates the effect of the abuse, whereas third party observers see the combination of abuse and attempts to build a solid relationship as hypocritical, which intensifies the effect of the abuse.
Our research also supports the idea that abusive supervision and organizational inclusion impact citizenship behaviour and turnover intentions (Tepper, 2007; Shore et al., 2011). We specifically found that organizational inclusion mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and (1) citizenship behaviour and (2) turnover intentions. As such, our findings suggest that abusive supervision has the ability to transform employees into poor organizational citizens and future quitters, due to employees not feeling they are welcomed.

Although the findings are noteworthy, we must also acknowledge the limitations of our studies. Regarding our experimental studies (i.e., Study 1 and Study 2), the issue of realism may be a potential concern. In our experimental studies, participants were asked to evaluate hypothetical supervisors based upon manipulated cues. Another limitation of our experimental studies may be rater reliability. Although we included one duplicate condition in the studies, we did not have a duplicate condition for each of the manipulated conditions. Consequently, we cannot eliminate this potential issue in its entirety. One final limitation that we must acknowledge is that by labelling the manipulation as high concern or low concern, we cannot eliminate the possibility that participants viewed high concern as an interpretation of the leader’s abusive behaviour, as opposed to a direct manipulation of abusive supervision. We attempted to mitigate this issue but wording the manipulation check item with “This manager displays abusive and hostile behaviour towards subordinates,” in an effort to be consistent with Tepper’s conceptualization of abusive supervision (2000; 2007). Specifically, in Study 2, the leader neuroticism manipulation check item did not appear. We revised Study 1 material for Study 2 (i.e., switching the manipulation items from leader political skill to leader neuroticism). We thought the finalized version was complete, but when we printed out the material, the manipulation check item was
There are several limitations that must be noted regarding Study 3 as well. Although it is a multi-source study, the data are cross-sectional, so causality cannot be inferred from the cross-sectional data. Additionally, common method variance may play a role in influencing the results of our study (Podsakoff et al., 2003), specifically in the model including organizational inclusion and turnover intentions. Since these variables were rated by the focal employee, there is a risk that our testing of the interactions in our model resulted in an underestimation of the effect. However, the presence of a significant interaction effect reduces the concern of common method variance as interaction effects cannot be created artificially by common method variance (Siemsen et al., 2010). Another limitation is that we used a measure for organizational-based self-esteem as a proxy for organizational inclusion and negative affect as a proxy for neuroticism. Although research suggests conceptual and empirical overlap, direct measures would have been more beneficial.

With the aforementioned limitations, we offer that the complementary nature of pairing experimental studies with a field study should address some of the limitations to a certain extent. Although the issue of realism cannot be completely eliminated from experimental studies, the presence of a field study should reduce that particular concern. Notably, we were able to replicate the findings in our multi-source supervisor-subordinate dyad sample. Regarding the issue of reverse causality that is inherent in the field study, we offer that the experiments provide “cause-and-effect” evidence regarding the abusive supervision-organizational inclusion relationship. Lastly, we offer that although social desirability may be a general concern with survey data, that concern did not impact the findings in the experimental studies.

**Theoretical implications and future research**

The findings of our research have several implications for organizational justice (namely, abusive supervision) and inclusion research. First, beyond its significance for diversity research, inclusion may also be a matter of justice. Justice is a unifying concept. It is the very essence of individuals’ relationships with organizations and organizational leaders (Cropanzano et al., 2007; Lind & Tyler, 1988). If inclusion is truly about uniting diverse individuals in organizations, justice research can play an essential role in enhancing our understanding of inclusion. Second, our research lends support to Shore et al. (2011) novel conceptualization of inclusion. Consequently, it is likely that inclusion is accurately described as the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the organization through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness as they proposed. Notably, the findings also suggest that leader behaviour (i.e., abusive supervision) exhibited a greater impact on organizational inclusion than demographic dissimilarities (i.e., gender and ethnic). Third, given that we used OSE as a proxy for organization inclusion, we build upon the work that has demonstrated that abusive supervision negatively impacts employee self-esteem (Farh & Chen, 2014; Rafferty & Restubog, 2011; Vogel & Mitchell, 2017). We offer that our study complements the work of Farh and Chen (2014) from a theoretical perspective. Whereas Fehr and Chen relied on multilevel leadership theories in teams (Chen & Kanfer, 2006; Hackman, 1992), our theoretical framework was rooted in organizational justice. Additionally, it is also important to note that Rafferty and Restubog (2011) tested their model in a Philippine sample of a large bank. We offer that our Study 3 complements their findings as we tested our model in an American sample. Furthermore, whereas their model was limited to one organization, ours included a diverse range of organizations in different industries. We also believe that the identification of leader-level moderators also extend past research that has examined the relationship between abusive supervision and OBSE.

Fourth, the findings of the experimental studies provide evidence of cause and effect. Abusive supervision scholars have noted the importance of such research (Tepper et al., 2017). Fifth, understanding how the display of hostility can be strategic or impulsive is an important contribution. The findings provide empirical evidence that the strategic and impulsive source of abuse can have distinct effects on psychosocial responses, such as organizational inclusion. The findings also suggest that leader characteristics, such as neuroticism and political skill, can provide valuable insights as to the altering effect abuse can have on workplace outcomes, due to how the hostility is displayed. Consequently, the findings suggest the noninclusive experience of abusive supervision is felt differently. Understanding leader-level boundary conditions of abusive supervision is paramount to moving this field forward (Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017).

Future researchers can continue to identify potential moderators regarding the abusive supervision-organizational inclusion relationship. For example, supervisory organizational embodiment (i.e., shared identity between a supervisor and organization) may be a potential moderator between the leader behaviour-organizational inclusion relationship in future models. Eisenberger et al. (2010) suggested followers may or may not associate leader treatment as organizational treatment. Thus, it may be that if employees feel that their supervisors do not embody the organization; this judgement may impact the degree to which they feel welcomed by the organization. This would be type of moderating influence is consistent with recent abusive supervision research (Mackey et al., 2018; Shoss et al., 2013).

Future research can also examine the relationship between organizational inclusion or exclusion and its relationship with counterproductive work behaviour or deviant behaviour as a consequence to dark-side leadership. We hypothesized that leaders can undermine inclusion that can affect citizenship and turnover, but our study does not adequately answer whether leaders promote exclusion and what are unique outcomes to feelings of exclusion. In other words, are abusive supervisors so demoralizing to organizational members that they convey a message of exclusion and does this also produce deviant organizational citizens. Feelings of exclusion are not necessarily the same as a low sense of inclusion. To this end, we can investigate the distinct outcomes. Are feelings of exclusion tied to overt acts of retaliation? Are feelings of a low level of inclusion tied to covert acts of retaliation (Rice, 2017)? Thus, differentiating between antecedents and outcomes of low
levels of inclusion and feelings of exclusion may be a fruitful area for future research.

One last promising avenue for future research is examining the impact of positive forms of leadership on organizational inclusion. Recent work in this area has found transformational leadership and servant leadership to be unique predictors of important employee outcomes (e.g., citizenship behaviours) as opposed to other forms of positive leadership (Hoch et al., 2018). Our research provides empirical evidence that abusive supervisors can demoralize employees’ perceptions of organizational inclusion, however it would be interesting to examine whether servant and transformational leaders can enhance employees’ perceptions of organizational inclusion. Research suggests servant and transformational leaders are producing employees that are engaged and that participate in citizenship behaviours (Hoch et al., 2018) however, little is known about the relationship between these leadership styles and employees feelings of organizational inclusion. It would be interesting to understand whether or not boundary conditions of this relationship remain undetected. If we believe that treatment from organizational leaders is a critical component of organizational inclusion, then perhaps organizational inclusion is a valuable byproduct of positive forms of leadership (e.g., transformational and servant leadership). This is another way to further the integration of justice and inclusion research.

**Practical implications and conclusion**

Organizations are responsible for the people they place in supervisory roles. As such, organizations should invest in training and human resources practices to ensure they are promoting and hiring the right employees as supervisors. Recent empirical evidence supports this assertion. In a quasi-experiment involving supervisors and employees in a restaurant setting, Gonzalez-Morales et al. (2018) investigated the impact of supervisor support training on employee’s perceptions of abusive supervision. The authors found that training supervisors on supportive strategies led to higher levels of perceived supervisor support and decreased levels of abusive supervision after 9 months of training from an initial training period as compared to a control group. These findings in combination with our results highlight the importance of supervisors in creating a welcoming environment for employees.

Additionally, our results suggest employees react differently to abusive supervision depending on the characteristics of the leader engaging in the abusive behaviour. In terms of their personal feelings of organizational inclusion, they feel less welcomed when the abuse is coming from a highly neurotic leader. However, when the abuse is coming from a highly political skilled leader, the effect of abuse on organizational inclusion can be mitigated to a certain degree. Ultimately, this suggests emotional and impulsive displays of hostility have a problematic magnifying effect, whereas cognitive and strategic displays of hostility have a weakening effect. However, as Tepper et al. (2012) noted, abusing employees is never appropriate, even if the effect of abusive supervision can be weakened through leader characteristics.

Another implication is that allowing abusive leaders to remain employed and unpunished can be detrimental to organizational effectiveness and sustainability. The findings suggest that by demoralizing organizational members, abusive supervisors are adversely impacting citizenship behaviour and turnover. Huselid (1995) concluded that higher employee turnover and lower employee productivity (e.g., citizenship behaviour) can decrease corporate financial performance. Beyond these outcomes of abusive supervision, research suggests that the consequences of abusive supervision translate into annual losses of an estimated 23.8 USD billion in increased health care costs, workplace withdrawal, and lost productivity (Tepper et al., 2006). Furthermore, recent developments in the legal arena may make behaviour of this sort an actionable offence for which organizations could have significant liability (Tepper, 2007; Yamada, 2004). Employing abusive supervisors not only costs organizations their reputation as being an inclusive place, but can also be a liability for organizations in which they may face legal consequences.

For moral (e.g., justice, human rights) and practical reasons, organizations should be genuinely interested in increasing the inclusiveness of the workplace and the role of leadership is essential. The behaviour of organizational leaders should unify and not divide. This is very important due to the potentially divisive issues such as race, gender, culture, and lifestyle that can plague organizations if not managed appropriately. Leaders must set the tone for a cordial and welcoming environment to all employees.

**Notes**

1. One possible explanation for this significant interaction is that both abusive supervision and neuroticism contains elements of hostility. As such, it is likely that this had unintended confounding and magnifying effect on the abusive supervision manipulation check item.

2. We were unaware of any empirically validated measures of Shore et al.’s conceptualization of inclusion at the time of the larger data (Fall 2012). Therefore, we utilized Pierce et al.’s (1989) measure of organizational-based self-esteem as a proxy for inclusion based upon conceptual similarities and empirical evidence. Tepper et al. (2011) proposed that inclusion refers to the degree that an individual believes that he or she is an esteemed member of an organization through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness. Similarly, organizational-based self-esteem (OBSE) is the degree to which an individual believes him/herself to be a capable, significant, and worthy as an organizational member. Shore et al implies that inclusion is achieved (i.e., degree that an individual believes that he or she is an esteemed member of an organization) through experiencing treatment that satisfies the needs of belongingness and uniqueness. The scale items of Pierce et al.’s (1989) captures that the themes of belongingness and uniqueness. For example, belongingness theory (Leary & Downs, 1995) and empirical evidence (e.g., Ferris et al., 2009; Leary et al., 2006; Pierce et al., 1989) suggests that thoughts associated with “I count around her” and “I am important around here” satisfies the need of belonging, whereas thoughts associated with “I can make a difference around here” are a belief that an individual’s uniqueness is valued by the organization (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Consequently, this scale embodies how an individual can simultaneously be treated as an insider (i.e., belonging) and encouraged/allowed to retain their uniqueness within organization, which is characteristic of Shore et al.’s (2011) inclusion matrix. In a separate sample of 90 working professionals, we
also found that organizational-based self-esteem was highly correlated ($r = .694, p < .1$) with the organizational diversity climate measure validated by Pugh et al. (2008) that was designed to measure the inclusiveness of an organization.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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