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The Effect of Supervisor's Abuse on Hotel Employees' Job Satisfaction, Affective Organizational Commitment and Work Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Our study examines the impact of abusive supervision on affective organizational commitment (AOC). The study further examines work engagement (WENG) and job satisfaction (JSAT) as mediating mechanisms in the relationship between abusive supervision and AOC. The aforesaid hypothesized relationships were tested utilizing data gathered from frontline employees in upscale hotels in two waves in Ghana. We tested the hypothesized relationships using structural equation modeling. The findings reveal that abusive supervision is not significantly related to AOC. However, the findings demonstrate that WENG and JSAT fully mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and AOC. Theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed.

KEYWORDS

Abusive supervision;
affective organizational
commitment; job
satisfaction; work
engagement; hotel industry

Introduction

The hotel industry is one of the most labor intensive and service-focused industries in the world Chang et al., 2020). It is one of the top job creators which requires a variety of skills and provides opportunities for a quick mode of entry into the workforce for the youth, women and migrant workers (International Labor Organization, 2010). In spite of this, the industry is infamous for its poor pay and employment conditions and a low take-up of human resource (HR) practices (Norbu & Wetprasit, 2021; Peng et al., 2020). As a result, the industry is saddled with a number of HR issues including abusive supervision (Kaya & Karatepe, 2020; Wang et al., 2020). Abusive supervision refers to a supervisor's incessant display of nonphysical adverse

behaviors toward an employee (Tepper, 2000). Given its destructive nature, abusive supervision has attracted enormous research attention in over two decades (Guo et al., 2020). Generally, employees perceive abusive supervision as an undesirable treatment, and usually tend to reciprocate it with undesirable behaviors (Hsiao et al., 2020; Pan et al., 2018).

Affective organizational commitment (AOC) denotes an employee's attachment to the company, identification with the company and its goals, and involvement in the company (Aguilar-Quintana et al., 2020; Meyer, 2017). Because employees who are emotionally tied to hotels show positive behavioral outcomes, like lower quitting intentions (Hsiao et al., 2020), hotels must institute appropriate measures to enhance AOC among employees. This is particularly so with upscale hotels that are supposed to offer the best of quality services to high-end customers (Kim et al., 2022).

There is a dearth of research on mechanisms through which abusive supervision influences employee AOC. Empirical evidences suggest that abusive supervision is related to WENG and JSAT, and WENG and JSAT is linked to AOC (Ampofo, 2020, 2021; Lee & Ok, 2016). In addition, WENG and JSAT have been identified as mediating mechanisms in the hospitality and tourism research (Ampofo, 2021; Wang et al., 2020). However, we are unaware of any research that has empirically examined the mediating role WENG and JSAT in the nexus between abusive supervision and AOC. Against this backdrop, this study attempts to achieve two objectives. First, the study seeks to examine whether job satisfaction (JSAT) mediates the abusive supervision-AOC relationship. Second, the study aims at examining whether work engagement (WENG) mediates the abusive supervision-AOC nexus. We selected JSAT and WENG as mediators, because hotel companies are in need of employees with high levels of JSAT and work engagement to commit best quality services to increase organizational performance, especially after the pacification of the Covid-19 pandemic which has had detrimental impact on the hotel industry globally (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022; Haldorai et al., 2020; Koo et al., 2020). Furthermore, work resources are critical for the employee's JSAT and WENG in hotel companies, and rudeness from supervisors can deplete the number of resources employees possess in the company (Ampofo, 2021; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Wang et al., 2020). Past studies have shown that dissatisfied and disengaged employees are emotionally detached from their hotel companies (Ampofo, 2020; Lee & Ok, 2016). Highly satisfied and engaged frontline hotel employees have also been identified to be more friendly and accommodating to guests (Ampofo, 2020; Pan et al., 2018).

Our paper leverages on the social exchange theory (SET) to provide a valuable explication for the proposed relationships. SET suggests an exchange relationship between an employee and the employer, where both parties have obligations to fulfill to each other (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The current study views AOC as an exchange relationship, since employees

would likely build strong bond with companies that offer them with favorable treatments (Ampofo, 2021). When employees feel unfairly treated in the company, they are likely to display displeasure and therefore emotionally detach themselves from the company (Schaufeli et al., 2006).

The present study makes important and relevant contributions to the hospitality and tourism research. AOC has been linked to several job outcomes, including knowledge hiding, turnover intentions and service performance (Khalid et al., 2018; Shum, 2020; Tews & Stafford, 2020). Prior research has also shown that abusive supervision is related with AOC (e.g., Ogunfowora, 2013; Zhang & Liao, 2015). In the hospitality and tourism literature, only two studies have been conducted on the relationship between abusive supervision and AOC. Zang et al. (2021) found that abusive supervision is linked to AOC, while Jung et al. (2018) found that abusive supervision was not related to organizational commitment. Our study adds to the few research on abusive supervision and AOC in the hospitality and tourism research.

Second, Zang et al. (2021) and Jung et al. (2018) drew sample from China and South Korea, respectively. Although abusive supervision has been researched in the hospitality industry in Ghana (Ampofo, 2021), no study has linked the construct to AOC. This is important, because upscale hotel business in Ghana has become intensely competitive, such that managers of hotels require employees who emotionally attached to the company to help the company obtain a sustainable competitive advantage (Ampofo, 2021). In addition, Ampofo (2021) indicated that abusive supervision is a common phenomenon in the hospitality industry of Ghana due to factors, including high unemployment rate. Our paper is the first to extend research on abusive supervision and AOC to the hospitality industry in Ghana. Hence, this study increases generalizability of results on abusive supervision and AOC.

Third, Jung et al. (2018) found that WENG fully mediated the impact of abusive supervision on AOC. However, their result was not grounded in theory. As earlier indicated, our paper leverages on SET to explain the possible mediation effect of WENG on the abusive supervision-AOC linkage. In addition, Jung et al.'s (2018) study participants included employees in food and beverage section of the selected hotels. Their study was also uncertain whether the participants were frontline employees. However, participants of this study include full-time frontline employees in hotels. Moreover, South Korea is a developed country, while Ghana is a developing country. Thus, our paper is novel, because it is the first to test WENG as a mediator in the abusive supervision-AOC relationship in a developing country.

Fourth, our paper contributes to the hospitality and tourism research by adding to the single variable (WENG) which has been identified as a mediator in the abusive supervision-AOC relationship (Jung et al., 2018). Despite JSAT identified as a mediator in the effect of abusive supervision on life satisfaction

in the hotel industry (Ampofo, 2021), no study has investigated how abusive supervision affects AOC via JSAT. This is the first study to examine the potential mediating role of JSAT in the abusive supervision-AOC nexus.

Literature review

The hotel industry in Ghana

In Ghana, although the hotel industry is still in its growth stage, the country can boast of few upscale hotels (Amissah et al., 2021). Four- and five-star hotels are considered upscale hotels in the country based on Ghana Tourism Authority classification of hotels. According to the Authority, a four-star hotel “provides superior quality furnishing and a complete range of facilities, amenities and guest services,” while a five-star hotel “provides deluxe accommodation and marked superiority in the extent and quality of facilities, amenities and guest services” (Mensah & Dei Mensah, 2013, p. 53). Unlike small hotels, upscale hotels are characterized by distinct operations, such as tailored person-to-person interactions, higher employee–client relations, and varied facilities and service products (J. Kim et al., 2022). Employee commitment in four- and five-star hotels has become even more important given the persistent growth in the number of hotels in the Accra Metropolis as a result of increase in tourist arrivals, including business activities and international conferences (Ampofo, 2020; Seidu et al., 2021). Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, statistics indicated that the number of hotel rooms in Ghana increased from 34,423 in 2011 to 55,163 in 2018 (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2019). Also, there has been the entry of popular multinational chain hotels, including Kempinski, Tang Palace, Movenpick Ambassador, Hilton, Sheraton and Marriot, onto the Ghanaian market (Amissah et al., 2016; Ampofo, 2020). While this is good for the industry, it has undoubtedly raised the bar of quality standards and heightened competition as they all need to attain their expected occupancy levels in order to remain profitable and survive.

Social exchange theory (SET)

SET is important, as frontline employees’ offer much to the organization, and expect appropriate rewards in return (Ampofo, 2021; De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Thus, SET suggests that there is a trusted and loyal relationship when both employer and employee adhere strictly to the rules of the exchange process (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). An important tenet within SET is the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), which suggests that an employee who receives benefits from the employer may feel morally obliged to repay the employer (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Employees who receive resources (e.g., respect, salary, social support from

supervisor) from the employer are encouraged to reciprocate by displaying positive outcomes (Chen & Wu, 2020; Kim & Qu, 2020; De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Although social exchange is premised on a mutual exchange, what is to be reciprocated is not precise and mandatory (Ampofo, 2020; Haar & Roche, 2010). For example, after attending an expensive employer-sponsored training course, an employee may decide to leave the organization. On the other hand, an employee may not receive expected rewards (e.g., promotion, bonus) after exerting considerable effort to complete a strategically important project.

Abusive supervision

There is abusive supervision when a supervisor is constantly involved in antagonistic verbal and nonverbal behaviors, but not physical contact (Tepper, 2000). Abusive supervisor's behaviors include rude interactions, ridiculing employees in public, silent treatment, and holding back vital information from employees (Ampofo, 2021; Chen et al., 2021; Ma et al., 2020). Abused employees may perceive that they are disrespected, demeaned and undermined by their supervisors (Lyu et al., 2016). Prior studies have shown that abused hotel employees reported negative outcomes, such as silence (Wang et al., 2020), increased turnover (Moin et al., 2021; Tews & Stafford, 2020), job dissatisfaction (Pan et al., 2018), knowledge hiding (Khalid et al., 2018) lower proactive customer service performance, and decreased organizational identification (Lyu et al., 2016).

Job satisfaction

JSAT, which denotes an individual's feeling about his or her job including its various facets (Spector, 1997), has been found to have positive impact on hotel employees' behaviors, including lower turnover intention, enhanced life satisfaction, and heightened job performance (Ampofo et al., 2021b; Koo et al., 2020; Ozturk et al., 2014). Given the importance of JSAT to researchers and practitioners in the hotel industry, several work factors, including coworker support, job embeddedness, material rewards (e.g., incentives, promotion, and special leave), transactional leadership behavior, and emotional rewards (e.g., empowerment, and recognition) have been identified as predictors of employee JSAT (Ampofo et al., 2021a; Belias et al., 2021; Dartey-Baah & Ampofo, 2016; Karatepe, 2009; Koo et al., 2020).

Work engagement

Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined WENG as an individual's positive and fulfilling cognitive and emotional state connected with work. They indicated that WENG includes three dimensions, namely. The first dimension is "vigor,"

which denotes energy, determination, and persistent efforts at work. Dedication is the second component of WENG and it reflects an employee's feeling of high enthusiasm and inspiration, and strong involvement at work. The third dimension is "absorption." This reflects the state of being fully concentrated on the job. Employees who are absorbed in their work feel that time is fast spent during work (Guan et al., 2020; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Teng et al., 2021). Empirical studies evidence that engaged hotel employees report positive behavioral outcomes, such as lower turnover intentions, augmented life satisfaction, and higher extra-role performance (Ampofo, 2021; Karatepe, 2013; Lee & Ok, 2016). Employees become engaged at work as a result of a number of work variables, including intrinsic motivation, workplace ostracism, and social perceptions (Haldorai et al., 2020; Orłowski et al., 2021; Putra et al., 2017).

Affective commitment

AOC reflects an employee's emotional attachment to his or her company (Ampofo, 2020; Sobaih et al., 2020). This study concentrates on AOC, because it explains the overall organizational commitment construct better than continuance commitment and normative commitment (Lombardi et al., 2019; Susomrith et al., 2019). In addition, AOC has been found to have stronger impact on job outcomes than continuance commitment and normative commitment (Meyer et al., 2002). Employees with high levels of AOC are inspired to increase organizational citizenship behavior and decrease quitting intentions (Lombardi et al., 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2020). A conceptual distinction has been drawn between AOC and WENG. AOC is conceptualized as a state of positive attachment to the larger company, while positive attachment to the job (not the larger company) is the main referent of WENG (Coetzer et al., 2020; Macey & Schneider, 2008).

Hypotheses

Abusive supervision and affective commitment

According to SET (Blau, 1964), abused employees may feel unappreciated in the company and consequently feel morally obligated to pay back the company in a similar manner by demonstrating decreased AOC. Resources in the organization may include respect, material benefits and supervisor social support via advice, mentorship, coaching and coaching (Ariza-Montes et al., 2021; Kotze, 2018). In a weak exchange relationship, supervisors will likely deprive employees of these work-related resources and cause employees to recompense with diminished AOC (Saks, 2006). Empirically, Zang et al. (2021) found that abusive supervision impairs AOC, while Jung et al.'s (2018) study revealed a non-significant effect of abusive supervision on

organizational commitment. In this study, we expect abusive supervision to influence AOC in the Ghanaian context because of the intense competition characterizing upscale hotels in the country that has led to poaching of talented employees (Ampofo, 2020; GNA, 2016; Mensah-Kufuor et al., 2015). Hence, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1. Abusive supervision is negatively related to AOC.

The mediating effect of job satisfaction

Supervisors who exhibit tendencies of abusive behaviors may deny employees of several important work-related resources, which include supervisor support (Ampofo, 2021). Employees who work under an abusive supervisor may also feel disrespected and uncomfortable in the hotel organization (Kim et al., 2020; Lyu et al., 2016). Under these circumstances, employees may feel unfairly treated by the company, and hence feel the duty to reciprocate with unsuitable behavior, such as decreased JSAT (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). In turn, employees who are dissatisfied with their job may feel disappointed in, undermined by, and angry at the company (Ampofo, 2021). Consequently, dissatisfied employees may develop feelings of obligation to repay the company with undesirable behaviors, such as decreased AOC. Empirical studies in the hospitality industry have evidenced that abusive supervision decreases JSAT (Ampofo, 2021; Wang et al., 2020), while JSAT enhances AOC (e.g., Ampofo, 2020; Ampofo et al., 2022). Consistent with the above arguments, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2. JSAT mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and AOC.

The mediating effect of work engagement

Congruent with the notion of reciprocity within SET (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), employees who perceive their supervisors to be abusive may feel hurt and uncomfortable in the hotel. Given employees poor relationship with their supervisor (Ma et al., 2020), they may lack important work resources to be engaged in their work (Bakker, 2017; Cain et al., 2018). Employees with feelings of mistreatments from their supervisor in the hotel may feel obliged to recompense with unfavorable behavior, such as lower WENG (Ampofo, 2021). That is, employees who lack sufficient job resources as a result of the supervisor's abusive behaviors may feel hesitant to engage in their work (Ampofo et al., 2021a). In a recent empirical study, Ampofo (2021) found

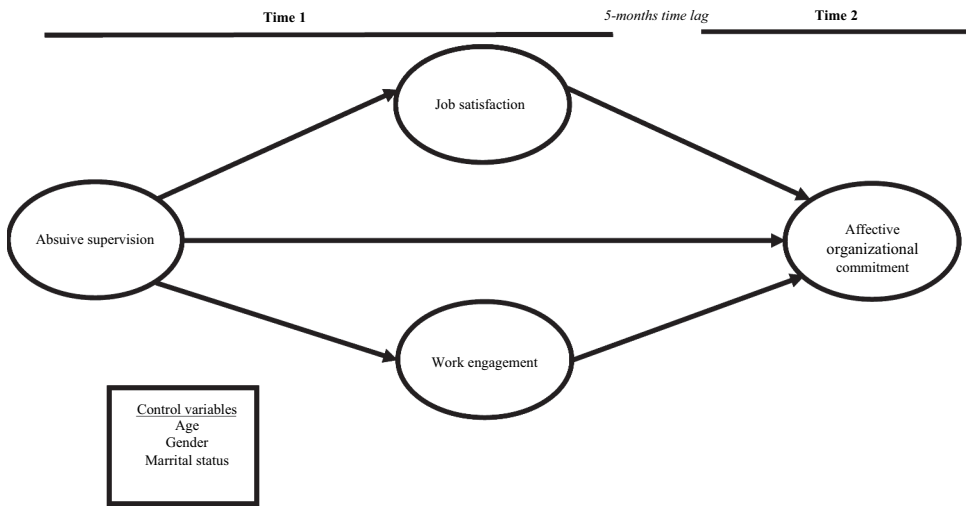


Figure 1. Research model.

that abusive supervision reduced frontline hotel employees’ WENG. In addition, Wang et al.’s (2020) empirical study revealed that abusive supervision negatively impacted hotel employees’ WENG. In turn, disengaged employees may feel morally obliged to restore the imbalance in the exchange relationship with employer by offering decreased AOC. Past studies have evidenced that WENG positively impacted AOC (e.g., Ampofo et al., 2022). Accordingly, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3. WENG mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and AOC.

Research model

The research model which is illustrated in Figure 1 suggests that abusive supervision is related to AOC. The figure further shows that abusive supervision impacts AOC via WENG and JSAT. The figure finally shows that age, gender and marital status are control variables.

Method

Participants and procedures

Data were part of a larger study collected from full–time frontline hotel employees who served as waiters or waitresses, front–desk agents, bartenders, reservations agents and bell attendants. Part–time frontline employees were excluded, because they were not entitled to benefits, such as retirement

benefits. Managers were also excluded because of their roles as decision-makers and supervisors. The researchers contacted management of 7 four-star and 3 five-star hotels in Accra. Most 4- and 5- star rated hotels in Ghana are situated in Accra, which is the national capital of the country. The purpose of the study was explained to them and their consent for data collection was sought. However, consent was obtained from management of four 4-star and one 5-star hotels, which had a total population of 472 frontline employees. Different levels of hotels have totally different services, employee training or management strategies (Ampofo, 2020). However, data were gathered from 4-star and 5-star hotels in the current study, because perceptions of abusive supervision in hotels in Ghana are common and synonymous, irrespective of the levels of hotels (Ampofo, 2021). The HR department of the participating hotels provided lists of all full-time frontline employees. We administered a cover letter and a questionnaire to participants in a sealed envelope. Moreover, questionnaires were sealed upon completion and handed over to the researcher. We employed convenience sampling technique, because this sampling technique in the hotel industry is representative enough in Ghanaian context. In addition, the practical constraints did not allow for probability sampling methods. Ethical clearance was obtained from Edith Cowan University. The approval number is 18628.

We employed Time 1 and Time 2 surveys to have a time lag between predictor variable and mediating and outcome variables. Specifically, abusive supervision was measured in Time 1, while AOC, JSAT, and WENG were operationalized in Time 2. Demographic characteristics of participants were assessed in Time 1. A pretest via 20 hotel employees was performed to assess the understandability and readability of the items. Participants were granted personal interviews after completing the survey. We amended the wording of the items.

We collected data between August 2019 and February 2020. We invited 472 employees who offer frontline services in hotels to participate in the Time 1 survey. Of this number, 364 employees successfully completed the survey. This represents 77% response rate. In Time 2, 276 provided responses to the surveys. This denotes 75% response rate. Eighty-eight Time 1 participants voluntarily withdrew from the Time 2 survey. After cautious screening through the returned surveys, two surveys had about 90% incomplete responses. We compelled to expunged the two surveys from the analysis. In total, there were 274 successful responses in both surveys. All responses were tracked using hotel/location/number/participants' initial names. All returned questionnaires were tracked via hotel, location, number, or initial names of respondents.

The findings show that about 64% and 63% males and married, respectively. Additionally, 76% of the participants were not above 40 years, while 24% were above 41 years, but less than 60 years. Finally, 65% of the participants held senior high school certificates, 23% bachelor degrees, and 12% master degree.

Measures

Table 2 summarizes the definition, description, measures, references and reliabilities supporting the four main research variables, that is, AOC, WENG, abusive supervision and JSAT. The table provide further information on control variables. In this study, age, gender and marital status were used as control variables.

Data analysis

We used SPSS version 25 and AMOS version 25 to perform data analysis. Expected maximization technique in SPSS was used to replace data that were missing completely at random. Items including “In general, I don’t like my job” (JSAT), and “I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ at this organization,” “I do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organization,” and “I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization” (AOC) were reverse scored. Linearity was tested using skewness and Kurtosis. Assumptions of homoscedasticity and multicollinearity were not violated in the present study. Means and standard deviations were assessed using descriptive statistics, while interrelationships among the variables were assessed using bivariate correlation.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to assess the psychometric properties of the measures via the Analysis of Moment Structures version 25 (Hair et al., 2010). We performed item parceling due to the relatively small sample size (Ampofo et al., 2021a). This approach was used for all research variables, with the exception of job satisfaction which had three items. Furthermore, the hypotheses were assessed via structural equation modeling (SEM). We performed partial and full mediation models, and compared their results to each other. The model with better fit statistics was utilized to test the hypotheses. We bootstrapped the sample to 5000, and used 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals. A significant mediating effect was obtained when lower bounds confidence interval (LBCI) and upper bounds confidence interval (UBCI) did not cross zero. The following fit statistics were used in the study: “ χ^2/df , comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)” (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Sobel test was used to determine the specific indirect effects.

Common latent factor (CLF) analysis was utilized to test the potential threat of common method variance (CMV, Podsakoff et al., 2003). Two CFAs were performed, that is, CFA with CLF and CFA with no CLF. CFA with CLF was deducted from CFA with no CLF. In our paper, CMV was not a concern because the difference was not significant.

Results

Summary statistics and correlation analysis

The results in Table 2 show that all the variables were normally distributed, since all values of skewness and Kurtosis were with +2 and -2. The results further delineate that abusive supervision was negatively correlated with JSAT ($r = -0.159$, $p < .01$) and WENG ($r = -0.138$, $p < .01$), while AOC was positively correlated with JSAT ($r = 0.234$, $p < .001$) and WENG ($r = 0.229$, $p < .001$). Abusive supervision had non-significant correlation with AOC ($r = -.007$, $p > .05$).

Measurement model

Table 3 shows results for CFA. The statistics fitted the data adequately ($\chi^2 = 75.217$, $df = 48$, $p = .001$), CFI = 0.983, TLI = 0.976, RMSEA = 0.046). Discriminant validity was adequate, since maximum shared variance did not exceed average variance extracted (AVEs). Convergent validity was sufficient, because AVEs were lower than composite reliabilities (CR). Finally, there was indication of additional internal consistency of the measures, since CR were above 0.60 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Hypotheses testing

Table 4 compares results for the partially-mediated model to results of the fully-mediated model. The fully-mediated model ($\chi^2 = 152.870$, $df = 80$) had a better fit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 0.855$, $p > .05$, $\Delta df = 1$) than the partially-mediated model ($\chi^2 = 152.065$, $df = 79$). Additionally, the fit statistics for the fully-mediated model (CFI = 0.957; TLI = 0.942; RMSEA = 0.058) were better than those for the partially-mediated model (CFI = 0.956; TLI = 0.941; RMSEA = 0.058). Thus, the fully-mediated model was used to test the hypotheses.

The direct paths from abusive supervision to JSAT ($\beta = -0.186$, $t = -2.709$) and WENG ($\beta = -0.203$, $t = -2.770$) in Figure 2 were negative and significant. Additional results in Figure 2 show positive and significant direct paths from JSAT to AOC ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 2.158$), and from WENG to AOC ($\beta = 0.308$, $t = 3.564$). Because of the full mediation effect, there was no impact of abusive supervision on AOC. Earlier results in Table 1 provide additional evidence that abusive supervision is not significantly correlated with AOC. Hence, hypothesis 1 was not confirmed.

The indirect effect of abusive supervision on AOC was significant ($\beta = -.095$, LBCI = $-.169$, UBCI = $-.034$). The Sobel (Table 5) test results also indicate that JSAT ($z = -2.162$) and WENG ($z = -2.745$) mediated the relationship between abusive supervision and AOC. This suggests that JSAT and WENG are the individual mechanisms through which abusive supervision impacts AOC. Hence, hypotheses 2 and 3 were supported.

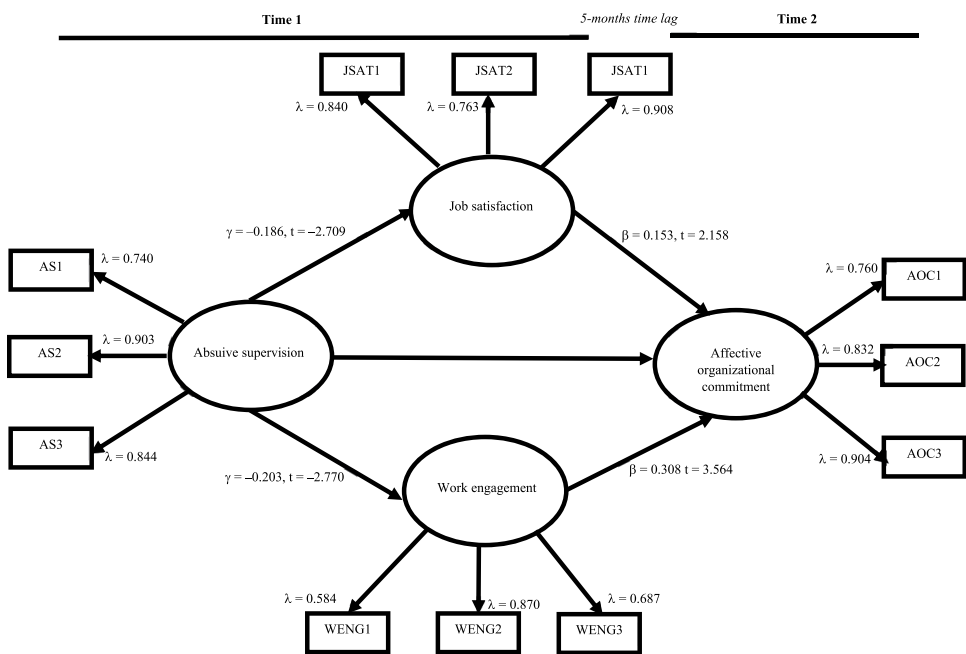


Figure 2. Path estimates for the full mediation model. Notes: AS = Abusive supervision. WENG = Work engagement. TI = Turnover intentions. JSAT = Job satisfaction. AOC = Affective organizational commitment

Discussion

Conclusions

Our paper makes significant additions to the hospitality and tourism literature by examining the nexus between abusive supervision on AOC. Our study further examined whether JSAT and WENG mediate the impact of abusive supervision on AOC. There are at least three significant observations evolving from the above-stated findings.

First, abusive supervision did not predict frontline employees' AOC. A possible interpretation is that the lack of employment prospects in Ghana causes most employees to remain calm about their supervisors' unmannerly behaviors (Amoah et al., 2021). Specifically, employees tend to endure frequent mistreatments from supervisors for the fear of being unemployed for a long time when they quit the company. (Amissah et al., 2016) In Ghana, there is a huge number of job seekers, including graduates, who throng companies, including hotels, with unsolicited applications (Ampofo, 2021). Consequently, it appears most people stay in their jobs not because of emotional attachment. Rather, they stay because they lack alternative job. The finding corroborates previous finding that abusive supervision is not a predictor of AOC (Jung et al., 2018). However, the finding does not support Zang et al.'s (2021) finding that abusive supervision diminishes AOC.

**Table 1.** Measurement variables.

Variable	Description	Measure	Reference	α
Abusive supervision	My supervisor makes negative comments about me to others. My supervisor gives me the silent treatment. My supervisor expresses anger at me when they are mad for another reason. My supervisor is rude to me. My supervisor breaks promises they make. My supervisor puts me down in front of others. All in all, I am satisfied with my job. In general, I don't like my job. In general, I like working here.	5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)	Harris et al. (2011)	0.884
Job satisfaction	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own. I do not feel like 'part of the family' at this organization. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization.	7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)	Mitchell et al. (2001)	0.874
Affective organizational commitment	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. I am enthusiastic about my job. I am enthusiastic about my job. My job inspires me. I am proud of the work that I do. I feel happy when I am working intensely. I am immersed in my work. I get carried away when I am working.	5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)	Meyer and Allen (1997)	0.892
Work engagement	Gender of participants Marital status of participants Age of participants	7-point Likert scale (0 = never; 6 = always)	Schaufeli et al. (2006)	0.886
Gender		1 = male, 2 = female	Lee et al. (2020)	
Marital status		1 = married, 2 = single	Kuruüzüm et al. (2009)	
Age		1 = < 30 years, 2 = 30–40 years, 3 = 41–50 years, 4 = 51–60 years	Lee et al. (2020)	

Note: α = Cronbach's alpha.

Table 2. Summary statistics and correlations.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	2.011	0.887								
2. Gender	1.361	0.481	−0.069							
3. Marital status	1.369	0.483	−0.402***	−0.149*						
4. Education	1.901	0.588	0.409***	−0.068	−0.194**					
5. Abusive supervision	2.067	0.782	0.215***	−0.046	−0.133*	0.047				
6. Job satisfaction	4.436	1.636	−0.006	0.087	−0.061	−0.110	−0.159**			
7. Work engagement	4.069	1.163	0.010	0.032	0.000	−0.018	−0.138*	0.347***		
8. Affective organizational commitment	3.453	0.978	0.067	0.115	−0.009	−0.016	−0.007	0.234***	0.229***	
Skewness							0.764	−0.672	−0.526	−0.842
Kurtosis							0.656	−0.504	−0.125	0.029

Notes: SD = standard deviation; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001 (two-tailed)

Table 3. Confirmatory factor analysis.

	λ	CR	AVE	MSV
Affective organizational commitment		0.872	0.696	0.134
AOC1 ("I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization," and "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own")	0.760			
AOC2 ("I do not feel like 'part of the family' at this organization" and "I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization")	0.832			
AOC3 ("This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me," and "I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization")	0.904			
Job satisfaction		0.877	0.704	0.181
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	0.840			
In general, I don't like my job.	0.763			
In general, I like working here.	0.908			
Work engagement		0.762	0.523	0.181
WENG1 ("At my job, I feel strong and vigorous," "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work," and "I am enthusiastic about my job")	0.584			
WENG2 ("I am enthusiastic about my job," "My job inspires me," and "I am proud of the work that I do")	0.870			
WENG3 ("I feel happy when I am working intensely," "I am immersed in my work," and "I get carried away when I am working")	0.687			
Abusive supervision		0.870	0.692	0.037
AS1 ("My supervisor makes negative comments about me to others" and "My supervisor gives me the silent treatment")	0.740			
AS2 ("My supervisor expresses anger at me when they are mad for another reason" and "My supervisor is rude to me")	0.903			
AS3 ("My supervisor breaks promises they make" and "My supervisor puts me down in front of others")	0.844			

Notes: λ = standardized loading, AVE = average variance extracted, MSV = maximum shared variance, CR = composite reliability.

Table 4. Results: Model comparison.

Models	χ^2	<i>df</i>	χ^2_{dff}	<i>df</i> _{diff}	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Partial mediation model	152.065	79	—	—	0.956	0.941	0.058
Full mediation model	152.870	80	0.855	1	0.957	0.942	0.058

Notes: CFI = comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker Lewis index, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, χ^2 = chi-square, *df* = degrees of freedom, *dff* = difference.

Table 5. Sobel test results.

Relationship	Mediating effects
Abusive supervision → Job satisfaction → Affective organizational commitment	$z = -2.162$
Abusive supervision → Work engagement → Affective organizational commitment	$z = -2.745$

Notes: All *z* values are significant ($p < 0.05$).

Second, JSAT fully mediates the effect of abusive supervision on AOC. The finding is in consonance with SET (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), because frontline employees who are denied important work-related resources by their supervisors are likely to reciprocate by demonstrating reduced JSAT, which will in turn diminishes their emotional attachment to the hotel company. Once employees feel that the hotel company via their supervisor has failed to comply with rules regarding the exchange process, they are unlikely to respond with positive behaviors (De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Employees become satisfied with their job as a result of the resources they receive from the company, which include social support.

Research indicates that social support is a resource and has an instrumental value, because it helps an individual to obtain additional resources (Hobfoll, 2001; Kiazad et al., 2014). Because social support may not come from abusive supervisors, employee may feel obliged to lower their JSAT. Dissatisfied employees are likely to feel unhappy about the company and therefore display tendencies of emotional detachment (Kim et al., 2020). The finding supports prior findings that abusive supervision diminishes JSAT (e.g., Ampofo, 2021), and JSAT augments AOC (e.g., Ampofo, 2020).

Finally, WENG fully mediates the association between abusive supervision and AOC. Congruent with SET (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), employees who do not receive adequate resources from abusive supervisors are likely to reciprocate by displaying diminished WENG. Because WENG is a consequence of the compilation of work-related resources (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022), employees who are denied important work resources such as supervisor support are likely to feel worried and frustrated and thus show negative behavioral outcomes like decreased WENG. When employees are work-disengaged, they may feel uncomfortable in the company and therefore feel obliged to recompense the company with emotional detachment. The finding validates earlier findings that abusive supervision is negatively related to WENG (e.g., Wang et al. (2020), and WENG is positively related to AOC (e.g., Ampofo et al., 2022). In sum, abusive behaviors from supervisors influenced frontline employees' WENG and JSAT which in turn diminished their AOC. Hotel companies with frontline staff who are low on WENG, AOC and JSAT as a result of supervisors' abuse are more likely to find it difficult to obtain and sustain competitive advantage (e.g., Koo et al., 2020).

Theoretical implications

There are at least four contributions that the findings of this paper offer to the hospitality and tourism literature. First, the finding demonstrates that abusive supervision does not influence AOC. This is important due to the mixed previous findings on the relationship (Jung et al., 2018; Zang et al., 2021). The finding indicates that abusive supervision may not predict AOC in both developed and developing countries.

Second, the findings highlight JSAT fully mediates the impact of abusive supervision on AOC. This is important, because only WENG has been identified as a mediator in the association between abusive supervision and AOC (Jung et al., 2018). This gap in literature suggests that implicitly there has not been exhaustive investigation of mediators of the influence of abusive supervision on AOC so far.

Third, the findings of this paper demonstrate that WENG is a full mediator in the relationship between abusive supervision and AOC. The finding is important, since only one study has found WENG as a mediator in the

influence of abusive supervision on AOC (Jung et al., 2018). The finding is also important because there has been no empirical research that has tested the WENG as a mediator in the abusive supervision-AOC relationship in the Ghanaian context.

Finally, the findings of this paper extend knowledge about abusive supervision in the hospitality and tourism literature. This is important, because only one study has investigated abusive supervision in the hotel industry in Ghana (Ampofo, 2021). Hence, the findings enhance the generalizability of results on abusive supervision in the hospitality industry.

Practical implications

Research has evidenced the negative implications of abusive supervision on companies as employee turnover, silence and knowledge hiding (e.g., Khalid et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020). It is obvious in our paper that abusive supervision diminishes frontline employees' WENG, JSAT, and AOC. These findings cannot be embraced, especially now that managers of hotels are so much interested in employees who are work-engaged, satisfied with their job, and emotionally attached to the company to help them recover from the hard-hit devastating repercussions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In the light of the above costly implications of abusive supervision, it is imperative for hoteliers to realize how serious abusive supervision is to the company and develop effective approach to mitigate its impacts.

Management of hotel companies should put in place formal policies to normalize supervisors' behaviors in the company. A policy like "no-tolerance" for abusive behavior can be initiated in the company. Management should have it visibly displayed in vantages areas in the company to remind everyone of management absolute hate for abusive supervision.

In addition, managers of hotels should delineate an explicitly-spelt out and effective punishment system concerning abusive supervision. Management should note that supervisors would only comply to any policy against abusive supervision when the punishment system is fully implemented. Supervisors who are punished for being abusive to employees and the kind of punishment meted out to them should be made public in the hotel company in order to serve as a deterrent to others.

Furthermore, hoteliers should seriously take into consideration the leadership philosophy of individuals during leader development and hiring. Specifically, hotel management should be interested in hiring supervisors who have a strong belief in creating and fostering quality interpersonal ties. Given our current social media world, managers of hotels can follow applicants via social media to monitor their interactions with others. Moreover, hotel managers should put in place appropriate mechanisms that would boost

the confidence of employees to voice abusive behaviors exhibited by their supervisors in the company. Frontline employees should be incentivized for speaking out about abusive behaviors of supervisors.

In closing, hotel management should provide training to supervisors who have been identified to show tendencies of hostile behaviors. If possible, they should be offered adequate counseling to reorient them about the consequences of abusive behaviors. Also, frontline employees should be included in any training concerning abusive supervision. They should be offered training on how to obviously identify to behaviors from supervisors that are perceived as abusive. During the training, frontline employees should be educated on how to react to abusive supervisors.

Limitations and future research

The present study notes at least five limitations. First, convenience sampling technique was used to select the study's participants. To minimize sample bias and generalize results, future research should use random sampling techniques. Second, this study drew sample from 4 – and 5-star rated hotels in Accra. Future studies could expand the sample size by including other categories of hotels. The study can be replicated in other developing countries in Africa and Asia because of their relatively similar economic and social characteristics.

Third, although statistics showed a no issue of CMB issue in the study, future research can employ multiple data sources, and complement self-report data with informant report data to additionally mitigate the effects of CMB (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Fourth, employees may imitate the abusive behaviors of their supervisors and likely extend those behaviors to others, including coworkers and customers (Lyu et al., 2016). Future research can examine how subordinate's abusive behaviors influence coworker's AOC, and/or how coworker's abusive behaviors affect the focal employee's AOC in hotels. In closing, future qualitative research that delves deeper and unearths the experiences of hotel frontline staff with respect to the variables under study would be important.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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