From a restless pillow to a ruffled mind: testing a moderated mediation model of off-the-job antecedents of abusive supervision

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Abstract

Purpose – Although work-related antecedents of abusive supervision are well-known, knowledge on the cross-domain antecedents of this destructive leadership behavior is scarce. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate off-the-job supervisors' after-work experiences that may influence their work behavior. The authors explore how and when a supervisor's poor recovery experiences lead to abusive supervisory behaviors through a negative start-of-workday mood for high vs low supervisor sleep quality.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors conducted a single-source, three-phase field study ($N = 422$) to test the proposed moderated mediation model for participants from a large telecommunications company located in Anhui province, People's Republic of China.

Findings – Poor recovery experiences in the supervisor's personal life can spill over to their work domain and provoke abusive supervisory behavior through the mediating effect of a negative start-of-workday mood. Moreover, a supervisor's good night's sleep (i.e. first-stage moderator) serves as a key mitigating factor to diminish the negative start-of-workday mood resulting from a lack of relaxation, mastery experiences and

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control experiences (except for the lack of psychological detachment from work) and lessens abusive supervision.

Originality/value – This study contributes to the literature examining off-the-job events to understand the antecedents of abusive supervision that are beyond organizations' control but significantly influence workplace behaviors, showing that not all antecedents of abusive supervision exist in the workplace; some are transferred from the home domain through nonvisible moods. Finally, the inclusion of sleep quality as a first-stage moderator provides insights on preventing abusive supervision caused by nonwork-related events. This adds a unique dimension to the abusive supervision literature by highlighting factors in the home domain that can prevent negative spillovers to the work domain. The authors conclude with some theoretical and practical implications for researchers and practitioners.

Keywords Recovery experiences, Start-of-workday, Negative mood, Abusive supervision, Sleep quality

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Abusive supervision, defined as "the sustained display of hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors [towards subordinates], excluding physical contact" (Tepper, 2000, p. 178), has impending detrimental effects on organizations as well as on employees' motivation, job performance and attitudes (for a meta-analysis and review, see Mackey *et al.*, 2015; Martinko *et al.*, 2013; Tepper *et al.*, 2017). Despite extensive scholarly debates for over 15 years, abusive supervision persists in organizations (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019; Shillamkwese *et al.*, 2020), imposing heavy costs (Akram *et al.*, 2021; Akram *et al.*, 2019). The extant literature sheds light on several antecedents of this behavior, such as poor subordinate performance (Liang *et al.*, 2016; Tepper *et al.*, 2011; Walter *et al.*, 2015), high subordinate performance (Khan *et al.*, 2018; Tariq *et al.*, 2021), subordinate deviant behavior (Mawritz *et al.*, 2017; Shillamkwese *et al.*, 2020), supervisor emotional exhaustion (Lam *et al.*, 2017) and organizational deviance (Lian *et al.*, 2014). However, these antecedents only capture on-the-job factors that instigate abusive supervision. It is imperative to investigate the cross-domain supervisor-specific factors that extend beyond work, as individuals' work and nonwork lives are intertwined (Ford *et al.*, 2007; Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013). This will help in designing holistically effective work policies, interventions and support systems to reduce abusive supervision.

Work hours account for one-third of a supervisor's day; additionally, one-third each comprise after-work life experiences and sleep experiences, respectively, both of which collectively influence their cognitions, emotions and work behaviors (Leavitt *et al.*, 2017; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008; Williams and Alliger, 1994). Accordingly, practitioners are increasingly becoming aware of the relationships between nonwork domains and leader effectiveness (Friedman, 2008). Moreover, researchers have argued that nonwork hour experiences "should be considered alongside more proximate work events in shaping our understanding of how employees feel and perform at work" (Rothbard and Wilk, 2011, p. 976). Research has thus emerged to investigate the potential antecedents of abusive supervisory behavior in events that happen beyond work, such as supervisors' sleep quality (Barnes *et al.*, 2015) and family–work conflict (Courtright *et al.*, 2016). This study aims to contribute to this literature by investigating after-work recovery factors that can influence supervisors' workplace behavior. We integrate the literature on effort-recovery (Meijman and Mulder, 1998), job-stress recovery (Geurts and Sonnentag, 2006; Westman and Eden, 1997) and affect regulation (Thayer *et al.*, 1994) to explain how home domain events (i.e. recovery from work) contribute to abusive supervisory behavior at work.

Recovery is defined in many ways (Demerouti *et al.*, 2009). It is labeled as a process of restoration (Hartig *et al.*, 2003), recuperation (Strauss-Blasche *et al.*, 2000) or unwinding (Frankenhaeuser and Johansson, 1986). It allows an individual's functioning to return to the prestressor level (Craig and Cooper, 1992) and facilitates resource replenishment (Meijman and Mulder, 1998; Trougakos and Hideg, 2009) by reducing or eliminating the effects of strain (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008). Insufficient recovery experiences or the inability to relax or psychologically detach from work (Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013) may induce strain that demands additional effort while performing normal work tasks (Meijman and Mulder, 1998). While two supervisors may face similar challenges, the one with insufficient recovery experiences after work will start the subsequent workday in below-par condition (e.g. negative affect or mood) and may be unable to invest extra effort to perform adequately, which would influence their feelings, thoughts and actions at work. To better understand how poor recovery experiences can influence workplace behaviors, we examine the construct of mood – a powerful link (Leavitt *et al.*, 2017) between home and work domains.

Mood (unlike disposition; see Rothbard and Wilk, 2011) is a shorter-term, diluted response to general environmental stimuli (Tellegen, 1985) or "transient episodes of feeling or affect" (Watson, 2000, p. 4). An individual's mood at the start of the workday frames their interpretation and subsequent behavior at work (Rothbard and Wilk, 2011). Moreover, a bad mood may motivate one to engage in certain behaviors (Miner and Glomb, 2010) to repair or control it (Tice and Bratslavsky, 2000), such as aggression to improve (regulate) one's mood (Bushman *et al.*, 2001). Research on the transfer of affect and emotions between domains (i.e. spillover; Sonnentag, 2003) documents that mood can spill over from one domain to another (Song *et al.*, 2008), such that one's mood at home (e.g. poor recovery) can influence that at work. Arguably, supervisors who start the workday in a bad mood that spilled over from the home domain are more likely to display aggressive work behaviors. Accordingly, we use spillover theory to propose that a bad mood caused by environmental stimuli (poor recovery experiences) in one domain (home) can lead to a bad mood in another domain (work). This negative mood potentially increases the supervisor's chances of being abusive in an effort to repair or control it.

However, home domain factors can also help prevent the negative mood from poor recovery that spills over into the work domain. We observe the third element of the "one-third element" of a supervisor's day-to-day life: their sleep quality. Good sleep can provide a mental break not only from daytime activities (Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013) but also from evening activities (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008). Sleep plays a crucial role in recuperation (Siegel, 2005), weakens the negative effect of poor recovery experiences and alleviates the negative start-of-workday mood. Research suggests that a good night's sleep can compensate for the lack of poor recovery experiences during the evening, thus reducing their effects on work behavior (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008). Accordingly, good-quality sleep can crucially mitigate the spillover of negative moods caused by poor recovery experiences, thereby reducing the chances of abusive supervision.

This study aims to advance the literature on abusive supervision in three ways. First, it contributes to the small but growing stream of research examining off-the-job events to understand the antecedents of abusive supervision that are beyond organizations' control but significantly influence workplace behaviors. It signifies the importance of home domain events that employees ascribe to how work events unfold. Second, we apply the spillover theory to explain the underlying mediating mechanism, that is, a negative start-of-workday mood that explains how environmental stimuli such as poor recovery experiences in the home domain can lead to abusive supervisory

behavior. Not all antecedents of abusive supervisory behavior exist in the workplace; some are transferred from the home domain through nonvisible moods. Previously, organizational scholars have tested the affect spillover from one domain (home) to another (work) over relatively short periods. Our study theoretically and empirically bridges the gap in the spillover literature by testing whether the affect spillover of a supervisor's poor recovery experiences lasts until the next morning and whether it leads to abusive supervisory behaviors. Finally, the inclusion of sleep quality as a moderator not only responds to the recent call for the investigation of day-level moderators of the relationship between experiences and behaviors at work (Uy *et al.*, 2017) but also addresses the question of how to prevent abusive supervision caused by events unrelated to work. This adds a unique facet to the abusive supervision literature by highlighting factors in the home domain that can be beneficial in preventing negative spillovers to the work domain. To summarize, our moderated mediation model (see Figure 1) provides a nuanced view of how and when a supervisor's poor recovery experiences during off-work hours lead to next-day abusive supervisory behaviors, and the mitigating mechanisms in the home domain that prevent such spillovers to the work domain.

Literature review and hypothesis development

Spillover of poor recovery experiences

The spillover theory elucidates "a process by which feelings, attitudes, and behaviors spill over from one role to another for the same individual" (Carlson *et al.*, 2011, p. 940). It is an intraindividual and interdomain phenomenon whereby an individual's behaviors, skills, values or moods transfer from one domain to another (Carlson *et al.*, 2006). Existing spillover research (e.g. see Carlson *et al.*, 2011; Crouter, 1984; Song *et al.*, 2008) suggests that what an individual experiences at home can spillover to work or vice versa. For example, stress experienced in any of the life domains (home or work) may spread to other domains (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000; Carlson *et al.*, 2011). An employee may arrive at work each day in a different mood depending on what "spilled over" from the home domain (Rothbard and Wilk, 2011), and this can subsequently influence an individual's work performance (Zedeck, 1992). Therefore, following the spillover theory, we propose that a supervisor's poor

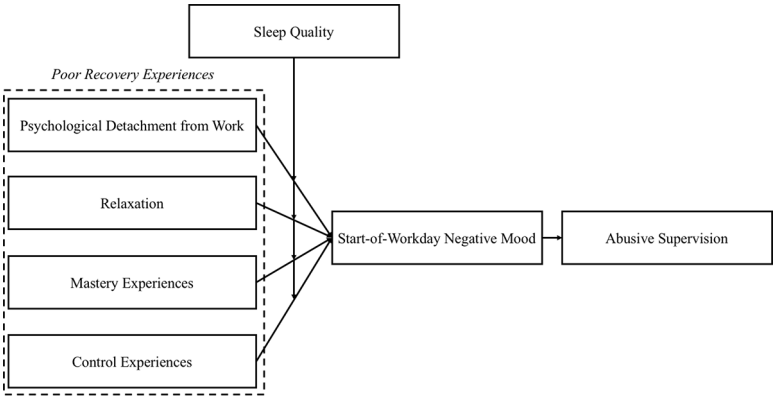


Figure 1.
Hypothesized research model

Source: Authors' work

recovery experiences in the evening may spillover to provoke next-day abusive behavior through their negative mood at the start of the workday.

Recovery experiences and negative start-of-workday mood

The literature on the job-stress recovery and the effort-recovery models (Meijman and Mulder, 1998; Geurts and Sonnentag, 2006; Westman and Eden, 1997) suggests that the effort a supervisor expends in satisfying their efficiency and productivity demands at work (Burton *et al.*, 2012) is unavoidably connected to acute load reactions (Derks and Bakker, 2014), such as high stress levels (Srivastava *et al.*, 1994). During nonwork hours (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008), stress-related reactions return to prestressor levels, referred to as recovery (Craig and Cooper, 1992) under optimal circumstances (e.g. temporal mental disengagement from work; Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013; Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007). This indicates that workplace effort and stress are an inherent part of such behaviors, but recovery through a combination of personal strategies helps in energy restoration and maintaining employees' well-being (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007). Activities for restoration (Hartig *et al.*, 2003) and recuperation (Strauss-Blasche *et al.*, 2000) can be performed during vacations, weekends (Fritz and Sonnentag, 2005; Westman and Eden, 1997), free evenings (Rook and Zijlstra, 2006) and rest breaks at work (Trougakos *et al.*, 2008). They enable individuals to recover from the stress imposed by work demands and the effort that employees put into their work (Kinnunen *et al.*, 2011).

Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) have categorized four activities as recovery experiences: detachment from work and its thoughts, relaxation (deliberate or less deliberate), challenges and opportunities for the mastery of new skills or competencies and control over the activities performed during off-work hours. "Psychological detachment" from work (Etzion *et al.*, 1998) refers to an "individual's sense of being away from the work situation" (p. 579). In a state of detachment, the individual not only refrains from performing job-related tasks (Sonnentag and Bayer, 2005) and is physically absent from the workplace but also mentally switches off and withdraws from thoughts about job-related tasks and problems (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008). *Relaxation* (Benson, 1975) is characterized by "decreased sympathetic activation" (low activation; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008, p. 675) and high affect. The state of relaxation (mental or physical) can be achieved by deliberately adopting and practicing relaxation techniques (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008), such as meditation or progressive muscle relaxation (Grossman *et al.*, 2004; Jacobson, 1938). Relaxation can also be achieved less deliberately through engaging in other nonstressful activities (Kanner *et al.*, 1981; Kinnunen *et al.*, 2011), such as listening to music, reading a book, or taking a walk (Hartig *et al.*, 2003; Pelletier, 2004). *Mastery experiences* refer to off-the-job activities that provide employees with challenges and opportunities to acquire new skills (such as learning a new instrument or language), competencies and self-efficacy (Fritz and Sonnentag, 2007; Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007). *Control* refers to an individual's ability to decide which activity they will perform and when (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007). Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) have operationalized recovery through the activities of detachment and relaxation through the effort-recovery model (Meijman and Mulder, 1998), while recovery through mastery experiences and control over off-work time is explained through the conservation of resources (COR) perspective (Hobfoll, 1998).

The effort-recovery model (Meijman and Mulder, 1998) proposes that engaging in work tasks and demands requires effort, which can lead to load reactions in terms of the exertion of stress hormones and feelings of fatigue (Meijman and Mulder, 1998). Therefore, recovery experiences, such as psychological detachment and relaxation during which no further demands are made on functional systems (neuroendocrine and

cardiovascular) and internal resources (self-regulation) are necessary. The COR perspective suggests that job pursuits involve the consumption of a valuable individual resource such as energy. Activities that allow individuals to experience feelings of mastery and control provide an inherent sense of accomplishment that can help in resource restoration and replenish employees' consumed resources (Hobfoll, 1998). Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) suggest that regulation of off-work-hour activities can increase confidence and self-efficacy and externally promote recovery from job strain and well-being. On the contrary, an inability to psychologically detach from job-related issues or problems and enter a state of relaxation leads to incomplete recovery (Meijman and Mulder, 1998) and persistent demands on the individual's functional systems. Similarly, a lack of opportunities to master skills and control one's leisure time can impede an individual's ability to have fulfilling recovery experiences.

Existing research on the four recovery experiences suggests that poor recovery experiences lead to the activation of a negative mood in the morning and cause fatigue, whereas positive recovery experiences (i.e. relaxation) lead to morning serenity and positive mood activation (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008; Kinnunen *et al.*, 2011). Individuals who are psychologically detached from work during off-work hours experience more positive moods (Sonnentag and Bayer, 2005). Moreover, Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) stated that recovery experiences of mastery and control were related to lower levels of emotional exhaustion and the need for recovery. Performing activities that involve mastering a new skill in the evening creates a positive affect the next morning (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008). Similarly, a sense of control over one's leisure time increases an individual's self-efficacy, promoting the belief that they decide how their time is spent (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007), leading to a positive affect.

The crux of the aforementioned literature is that recovery experiences during off-work hours in the home domain predict a range of positive and negative outcomes (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008); negative experiences (poor recovery) are associated with negative affect (Gable *et al.*, 2000), whereas positive experiences (sufficient recovery) are associated with positive affect (Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013; Watson *et al.*, 1988). Moreover, according to affect regulation literature, sufficient recovery experiences critically influence an individual's mood and a combination of different recovery experiences such as relaxation, stress management and cognitive and exercise techniques, can help in alleviating bad moods (Thayer *et al.*, 1994). When an individual is unable to engage in recovery activities, particularly after work, they are unable to recover lost resources and experience negative affect. Kinnunen *et al.* (2011) argued that when faced with poor recovery experiences (Derks and Bakker, 2014), an individual will start the subsequent workday in suboptimal condition. The inability to recover at home from the strain and stress of work engagement could lead to an individual experiencing negative affect and mood at work. We thus propose the following hypotheses:

H1a. Poor recovery experiences of psychological detachment from work have a positive relationship with start-of-workday negative mood.

H1b. Poor recovery experiences of relaxation have a positive relationship with start-of-workday negative mood.

H1c. Poor recovery experiences of mastery experiences have a positive relationship with start-of-workday negative mood.

H1d. Poor recovery experiences of control experiences have a positive relationship with start-of-workday negative mood.

Negative start-of-workday mood and abusive supervision

A particular day's recovery experience quality could strongly influence an employee's start-of-workday mood as they face stressful situations at work. Sufficient recovery experiences enable an individual to return to the prestressor level, whereas poor recovery leads to a negative start-of-workday mood. To explain how a supervisor's poor recovery experiences could influence their work behavior, we draw on the spillover process, which is an intraindividual and interdomain phenomenon whereby an individual's behaviors, skills, values, or moods from one domain can transfer to another (Carlson *et al.*, 2006). Existing spillover research suggests that an individual's experiences at home can spillover to work or vice versa (Carlson *et al.*, 2011; Crouter, 1984; Song *et al.*, 2008). For example, stress experienced in one life domain (home or work) could transfer to another domain (Carlson *et al.*, 2011; Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). An employee may arrive at work each day in a different mood depending on what "spilled over" from the home domain (Rothbard and Wilk, 2011), which could influence their work performance (Zedeck, 1992).

When experiencing a negative mood, employees are motivated to look for new ways (Bushman *et al.*, 2001) or behaviors (Miner and Glomb, 2010) to repair or control it (Tice and Bratslavsky, 2000). Several studies have documented behaviors that employees engage in to repair or control negative moods. For example, some employees repair unpleasant moods by engaging in work, whereas others withdraw from work and engage in activities like talking to friends or taking a break (Miner and Glomb, 2010). Research also suggests eating as an activity undertaken by some people to improve their negative mood (Canetti *et al.*, 2002; Liu *et al.*, 2017). While these activities are harmless and do not impact other employees negatively for mood control or repair, evidence suggests that aggressive behavior (e.g. abusive supervision) is also adapted for such purposes (Bushman *et al.*, 2001).

Abusive supervision is a form of aggression (Tepper, 2000) that can be "directed against convenient and innocent targets when retaliation against the source of one's frustration is not possible or feasible" (Tepper, 2007, p. 269) or aimed directly at subordinates (Khan *et al.*, 2018; Walter *et al.*, 2015). Owing to their positions of higher responsibility and authority, supervisors have fewer opportunities to disengage from work but seek work breaks to repair or control their negative mood. Under such circumstances, they may revert to aggressive behavior aimed at subordinates who are either convenient targets or induce frustration, thereby provoking retaliation. Supervisors may then use abusive behaviors toward their subordinates to regulate (improve) their own negative start-of-workday mood. The following hypothesis is thus proposed:

H2. The start-of-workday negative mood has a positive relationship with abusive supervision.

Negative start-of-workday mood as a mediator

The extant abusive supervision research has mainly investigated the work-related antecedents of abusive supervision, largely overlooking nonwork antecedents. Supervisors are more than mere employees and are influenced by events occurring beyond work that subsequently influence their work performance (Zedeck, 1992). Poor recovery experiences may instill a negative mood in the home domain that can spillover to the work domain and impel supervisors to engage in behaviors that repair or control that negative mood. Therefore, poor recovery can act as an antecedent of abusive supervision originating from the supervisor's nonwork life. Therefore, we propose the following:

H3 (3a, 3b, 3c and 3d). Poor recovery experiences (a) psychological detachment from work, (b) relaxation, (c) mastery experiences and (d) control experiences have an indirect effect on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood.

Sleep quality as a moderator

To better understand the spillover effect from a supervisor's poor recovery experiences in the evening to their next-day abusive behavior through negative start-of-workday mood, we further propose that a good night's sleep may potentially mitigate the negative mood arising from poor recovery experiences at home and its spillovers to work behavior. We previously proposed that when an individual is unable to engage in recovery activities, particularly after work, they are unable to recover the resources lost owing to work activities and experience negative affect. Given that an individual's self-regulation improvements affect multiple spheres of their life (Barber *et al.*, 2017), a good night's sleep may similarly influence the home-to-work spillover of poor recovery experiences.

As mentioned earlier, supervisors' emotions, thoughts and behaviors are influenced by three distinct life experiences: work life, personal life and sleep experiences. Sleep provides a mental break not only from daytime activities (Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013) but also from evening activities (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008), including recovery experiences. A good night's sleep is considered a common and natural way to replenish an individual's self-regulatory resources (Liu *et al.*, 2017). Accordingly, an individual's sleep has been examined as an important predictor of their regulatory capacity because of the natural tendency of day-to-day regulatory resource fluctuations (Barnes *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, high-quality sleep mitigates the effect of an individual's poor recovery experiences on their negative start-of-workday mood by replenishing the self-regulatory resource pool. At times when an individual is unable to experience sufficient recovery, a good night's sleep could help to prevent the ensuing onset of a negative mood and assist in the recuperation process (Siegel, 2005). Existing research supports this proposition, as the relationship between disruptive events and negative affect can be attenuated by good sleep (Zohar *et al.*, 2005). Accordingly, we propose that sleep can offset the resulting negative mood from poor recovery experiences in the home domain. The following hypotheses are thus proposed:

H4 (4a, 4b, 4c and 4d). Sleep quality moderates the direct relationship between poor recovery experiences (a) psychological detachment from work, (b) relaxation, (c) mastery experiences and (d) control experiences and start-of-workday negative mood such that the relationship is weaker (stronger) when sleep quality is good (poor).

Moderated mediation model

We further examine the role of sleep quality in the relationship between the supervisor's recovery experiences and next-day abusive supervision through negative start-of-workday mood. Sleep quality reduces the spillover process between affect levels at work and home (Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013), indicating that sleep can hinder negative mood spillovers from home to work. Notwithstanding poor recovery, supervisors can prevent the resulting negative mood from influencing their next-day work behaviors by resorting to a good night's sleep. Based on Sonnentag *et al.*'s (2008) study, we propose that sleep quality can diminish the negative influence of poor recovery experiences on next-day abusive

supervisory behavior through the start-of-workday mood. In doing so, we also answer the call from researchers to investigate day-level moderators to better understand the relationship between nonwork experiences and work behaviors (Uy *et al.*, 2017). The following hypotheses are proposed based on these arguments:

H5 (5a, 5b, 5c and 5d). Sleep quality moderates the indirect relationship between poor recovery experiences (a) psychological detachment from work, (b) relaxation, (c) mastery experiences and (d) control experiences and abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood such that the mediated relationship is weaker (stronger) when sleep quality is (poor).

Method

Procedure and sample

We recruited participants for a single-source, three-phase questionnaire study from a large telecommunications company located in Anhui province, People's Republic of China. We approached the company's human resources department to invite full-time, mid-level managers for our field study. A hired research assistant (RA) helped us in contacting the study's participants through e-mail. The e-mail described the study's purpose and incentives for completing the study, for example, feedback about study results or coffee and movie coupons. Additionally, the RA assured the participants regarding the confidentiality of their responses. After obtaining the managers' consent for participation, the RA conducted an online survey related to their background and demographic information. A month after completing the initial survey, the RA provided face-to-face training to the participants on completing the three-phase surveys using their company-owned handheld computers.

The three-phase questionnaire study was conducted over two days, as each participant was required to respond to the surveys at bedtime, at the start of the workday and in the evening. In the first phase (Day 1, Time 1), respondents were asked to rate their poor recovery experiences (i.e. their psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery experiences and control experiences) at bedtime. In the second phase (Day 2, Time 2), respondents were asked to rate their negative mood, sleep quality and sleep quantity at the start of the workday. Finally, in the third phase (Day 2, Time 3), in the evening, respondents were asked to rate their abusive supervisory behavior that day. To verify that participants completed each survey at the appropriate time, we checked the survey timestamps. Handheld computers coded responses as invalid if they were answered at the wrong time, that is, when bedtime responses were answered in the morning and/or morning responses were answered in the evening.

Of the 814 managers who were contacted, 654 expressed their interest in the study and attended an orientation session conducted by the RA; of them, 533 completed the online survey on their background and demographic information. In the three-phase survey, the RA checked the responses of each participant to the bedtime, morning and afternoon surveys to verify their completion at the appropriate time. Finally, the RA matched bedtime responses with next-morning responses and morning responses with same-day evening responses, generating 422 matched data sets. The final sample, therefore, comprised 422 responses, and the remaining 111 participants were excluded from the final sample owing to inappropriate response timings.

The final sample (N = 422) included 53.6% men and 46.4% women (0 = male, 1 = female). In terms of age, 63.3% of the sample ranged between 19 and 49 years, 19.5% under 18 years and 17.1% more than 49 years (1 = under 18 years, 2 = 19–25 years, 3 =

26–33 years, 4 = 34–41 years, 5 = 42–49 years and 6 = over 49 years). In terms of supervisors' job status/type, 32.6% reported having short-term contracts, 35% reported having long-term contracts and 32.4% reported having permanent status (1 = short-term contract, 2 = long-term contract and 3 = permanent status).

Measures

We followed recent studies (Butt *et al.*, 2019; Tariq and Ding, 2018; Tariq and Weng, 2018; Weng *et al.*, 2020; Weng *et al.*, 2020) and the translation–back translation method (Brislin, 1980) to convert the English language survey into Chinese. We enlisted two bilingual Chinese professors to convert the surveys from English to Chinese independently.

Poor recovery experiences: We used the 16-item recovery experience questionnaire developed by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) to measure the supervisor's poor recovery experiences. Following the work of Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) and Sonnentag *et al.* (2008), we adopted four-item scales for each recovery experience: psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery experiences and control experiences. Participants were asked to indicate to "what degree the items reflected their free evenings over the past week from Monday to Friday" using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

A sample item of psychological detachment from work was, "I did not forget about work." The coefficient alpha for psychological detachment from work was 0.92. A sample item of relaxation was, "I did not kick back and relax." The coefficient alpha for relaxation was 0.91. A sample item of mastery experiences was "I did not learn new things." The coefficient alpha for mastery experiences was 0.89. A sample item of control experiences was, "I did not feel I could decide for myself what to do." The coefficient alpha for control experiences was 0.90. Responses were recorded using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree), with a high score indicating the supervisor's poor recovery experience (e.g. lack of psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery experiences and control experiences concerning after-work free time).

Negative start-of-workday mood: The supervisor's negative mood was measured at the beginning of their workday before any interactions with their subordinates. We used the following statement to collect responses about supervisors' negative start-of-workday mood: "Over the past week from Monday to Friday, tell us how you felt before you began your day, on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = very slightly or not at all; 7 = extremely)." The supervisor's negative start-of-workday mood was measured using six items from the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS; Watson *et al.*, 1988). This shortened version of the negative mood scale has been used in previous studies (Hoobler and Hu, 2013; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008; Tepper *et al.*, 2006) to ameliorate survey fatigue. A sample item of negative start-of-workday mood was "distressed." The coefficient alpha for this scale was 0.93.

Abusive supervision: We used the five-item abusive supervisory scale (Mitchell and Ambrose, 2007) to measure abusive supervisory behavior. Participants were asked to visualize a subordinate and indicate "how often they had been subjected to each behavior over the past week from Monday to Friday using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = never; 7 = always)." Sample items included "Tell him/her he/she is incompetent" and "Tell him/her his/her thoughts or feelings are stupid." The coefficient alpha for this scale was 0.86.

Sleep quality: Following Sonnentag and Binnewies (2013), we measured sleep quality using a single validated item (Hahn *et al.*, 2011) derived from the Pittsburgh sleep quality index (Buysse *et al.*, 1989). One item, "How do you evaluate your last night's sleep?" is highly correlated with the full Pittsburgh sleep quality index (Hahn *et al.*, 2011;

Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013). We used a seven-point Likert scale (1 = very poor; 7 = very good) such that a high score indicated better sleep quality.

Control variables: Several variables (i.e. supervisor's gender, age, job type and sleep quantity) were chosen as control variables based on their potential influence on the study variables. We included supervisor gender (0 = male, 1 = female), supervisor age (1 = under 18 years, 2 = 19–25 years, 3 = 26–33 years, 4 = 34–41 years, 5 = 42–49 years and 6 = over 49 years), supervisor job status/type (1 = short-term contract, 2 = long-term contract and 3 = permanent status) and sleep quantity: "How many hours of actual sleep did you get last night (this may be different from the number of hours you spent in bed)?" as control variables in our data analyses. We adopted the sleep quantity item from Buysse *et al.* (1989) to measure the supervisor's sleep quantity. Supervisor gender was included because gender differences may influence affect (Hoobler and Hu, 2013), and male supervisors are more likely to engage in hostile and aggressive behaviors (e.g. abusive supervision; Tepper *et al.*, 2006). Considering the previous evidence (Charles *et al.*, 2001), supervisor age was controlled for because negative affect decreases with age. Supervisor job status was controlled for, as it has the potential to influence affective processes and behaviors (Tariq and Ding, 2018; Tariq and Weng, 2018). Finally, we also controlled for the supervisor's sleep quantity, as it has been well-documented that sleep quantity may impact an individual's affective feelings and self-regulatory resources (Barnes *et al.*, 2015).

Results

The intercorrelations, descriptive statistics and estimated reliabilities of the latent variables are reported in Table 1. The tabulated results indicate preliminary support for our hypothesized relationships, whereby the supervisor's poor recovery experiences, including the lack of psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery experiences and control experiences, are related to abusive supervision ($r = 0.47$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$; and $r = 0.46$, $p < 0.01$, respectively). Moreover, the lack of psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery experiences and control experiences are related to the supervisor's negative start-of-workday mood ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.47$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$; and $r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$, respectively). Finally, the supervisor's negative start-of-workday mood is related to abusive supervision ($r = 0.67$, $p < 0.01$).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS to confirm the factorial validity of the used measures. Schreiber *et al.* (2006) recommended the following fit indices to assess model adequacy: χ^2/df, incremental fit index (IFI), comparative fit index (CFI), relative fit index (RFI), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). CFI, IFI, RFI and TLI values above 0.90 and RMSEA scores below 0.08 represent the best model fit. The baseline six-factor model – abusive supervision, relaxation, negative moods, control experiences, psychological detachment and mastery experiences – showed the best fit to the data (CMIN/df = 2.69, CFI = 0.94, IFI = 0.94, RFI = 0.90, TLI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.06). The three alternative measurement models (Bentler and Bonett, 1980) were compared and tested with the baseline model (see Table 2). In the first alternative model, all independent variables – relaxation, control experiences, psychological detachment and mastery experiences – were combined into one factor, and a four-factor model was tested. In the second alternative model, all IVs were combined with the mediator (negative mood), and a three-factor model was tested. In the third alternative model, we loaded all constructs on a single factor, which showed the poorest fit to the data. Thus, the baseline six-factor model was retained because of its best-fit indices compared to the three alternative models.

Table 1.
Intercorrelations, descriptive statistics and estimated reliabilities among the latent variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	0.46	0.49	(–)										
2. Age	3.39	1.76	0.08	(–)									
3. Job type	1.99	0.80	−0.09	0.06	(–)								
4. Sleep quantity	6.46	1.72	−0.06	0.02	−0.06	(–)							
5. Psychological detachment from work	5.72	1.19	0.05	−0.03	−0.02	0.04	(0.92)						
6. Relaxation	5.43	1.44	0.07	−0.07	−0.03	0.04	0.44**	(0.91)					
7. Mastery experiences	5.52	1.28	0.07	0.01	−0.06	0.03	0.55**	0.42**	(0.89)				
8. Control experiences	5.24	1.44	0.01	−0.01	0.02	0.06	0.61**	0.39**	0.69**	(0.90)			
9. Start-of-workday negative mood	4.99	1.23	0.04	−0.05	0.03	0.04	0.58**	0.47**	0.60**	0.62**	(0.93)		
10. Abusive supervision	5.12	1.14	0.03	−0.07	−0.01	0.02	0.47**	0.45**	0.49**	0.46**	0.67**	(0.86)	
11. Sleep quality	5.68	1.40	0.04	−0.02	−0.01	0.05	0.51**	0.38**	0.44**	0.53**	0.52**	0.41**	(–)

Notes: $N = 422$; Significant at: **$p < 0.01$; figures in parentheses are alpha internal consistency reliabilities

Model	Variables	χ^2/df	IFI	RFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
One-factor model	All constructs combined as one factor	21.31	0.31	0.22	0.32	0.38	0.54
Three-factor model	Abusive supervision, relaxation + negative moods + control experiences + psychological detachment + mastery experiences	16.30	0.42	0.39	0.41	0.44	0.42
Four-factor model	Abusive supervision, negative moods, relaxation + control experiences + psychological detachment + mastery experiences	11.07	0.51	0.45	0.51	0.54	0.31
Six-factor model (baseline)	Abusive supervision, relaxation, negative moods, control experiences, psychological detachment, mastery experiences	2.69	0.94	0.90	0.93	0.94	0.06

Notes: N = 422; CFA = confirmatory factor analysis; IFI = incremental fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root-mean square error of approximation; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RFI = relative fit index

Table 2. Results of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA; model fit indices)

Analytical approach

We used the PROCESS macro data analysis technique, an extension of SPSS (Hayes, 2013; Preacher *et al.*, 2007), to test the hypothesized mediation and moderated mediation relationships. We ran two different sets of analyses following the recent work of Eissa and Lester (2017), Hongbo *et al.* (2019) and Tariq *et al.* (2020), who tested a similar pattern of relationships (i.e. formal mediation and moderated mediation relationships). First, we used the PROCESS macro Model 4 to examine the formal mediation hypotheses (*H1–H3*). Following the recommendations of Bauer *et al.* (2006), we calculated the indirect effect of supervisors' poor recovery experiences on their abusive supervision via negative start-of-workday mood. We obtained a confidence interval around the indirect effect by bootstrapping with 5,000 replications, which is considered an appropriate method for estimating an indirect effect (Wang *et al.*, 2013). According to Preacher *et al.* (2010), it produces confidence intervals that account for the nonnormal sampling distribution of the indirect effect. Second, we used the PROCESS macro Model 7 to examine the formal moderated mediation hypotheses (*H4* and *H5*).

Tests of mediation hypotheses

Table 3 provides the results of the complete mediation analysis. *H1a–H1d* stated that poor recovery experiences through (a) psychological detachment from work, (b) relaxation, (c) mastery experiences and (d) control experiences, respectively, are related to negative start-of-workday mood. The findings show that poor recovery experiences that lack psychological detachment from work (B = 0.60, SE = 0.04, t = 14.48, LLCI = 0.52, ULCI = 0.68, $p < 0.001$; Table 3), relaxation (B = 0. 40, SE = 0.04, t = 10.92, LLCI = 0.33, ULCI = 0.48, $p < 0.001$; Table 4), mastery experiences (B = 0.58, SE = 0.04, t = 15.24, LLCI = 0.50, ULCI = 0.65, $p < 0.001$; Table 5) and control experiences (B = 0.53, SE = 0.03,

Table 3.
Results of mediation analysis (psychological detachment from work → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)

Results of mediation analysis (psychological detachment from work → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)

	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision					
Antecedents	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.34****						0.47****
Constant	2.16	0.35	6.25****	1.48	2.83		1.67	0.30	5.54****	1.08	2.26	
Psychological detachment from work	0.60	0.04	14.48****	0.52	0.68		0.12	0.04	2.71*	0.03	0.20	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.56	0.04	13.68****	0.48	0.64	
Gender	0.04	0.10	0.39	−0.16	0.24		0.02	0.08	0.25	−0.14	0.19	
Age	−0.02	0.03	−0.87	−0.08	0.03		−0.02	0.02	−1.05	−0.07	0.02	
Job type	−0.03	0.06	−0.55	−0.15	0.09		0.02	0.05	0.43	−0.08	0.12	
Sleep quantity	0.01	0.03	0.43	−0.04	0.07		0.01	0.02	0.06	−0.05	0.05	

Results of direct, indirect and total effects of psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood

Predictor	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effect				
Psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision	0.12	0.04	0.03	0.20
Indirect effect				
Psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood	0.34	0.06	0.23	0.44
Total effect				
Psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood	0.45	0.04	0.37	0.53

Notes: $N = 422$; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; $^*p < 0.05$; and $^{***}p < 0.001$
Source: Authors' work

Results of mediation analysis (relaxation → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)

Antecedents	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision					
	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.23***						0.48***
Constant	3.35	0.34	9.86***	2.68	4.02		1.65	0.29	5.72***	1.08	2.22	
Relaxation	0.40	0.04	10.92***	0.33	0.48		0.13	0.03	4.20***	0.07	0.20	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.55	0.04	14.71***	0.48	0.63	
Gender	0.02	0.11	0.15	−0.20	0.23		0.01	0.08	0.04	−0.16	0.17	
Age	−0.01	0.03	−0.41	−0.07	0.05		−0.02	0.02	−0.81	−0.06	0.03	
Job type	−0.03	0.07	−0.47	−0.16	0.10		0.02	0.05	0.47	−0.08	0.12	
Sleep quantity	0.01	0.03	0.41	−0.05	0.07		0.01	0.02	−0.02	−0.05	0.05	

Results of direct, indirect and total effects of relaxation on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood

Predictor	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effect				
Relaxation on abusive supervision	0.13	0.03	0.07	0.20
Indirect effect				
Relaxation on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood	0.22	0.05	0.13	0.32
Total effect				
Relaxation on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood	0.36	0.03	0.29	0.43

Notes: $N = 422$; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; ***$p < 0.001$

Source: Authors' work

Table 4.
Results of mediation analysis (relaxation → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)

Table 5.
Results of mediation analysis (mastery experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)

Results of mediation analysis (mastery experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)

Antecedents	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision					
	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.36***						0.47***
Constant	2.37	0.33	7.28***	1.73	3.01		1.71	0.29	5.84***	1.13	2.29	
Mastery experiences	0.58	0.04	15.24***	0.50	0.65		0.12	0.04	3.08***	0.04	0.20	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.55	0.04	13.18***	0.47	0.63	
Gender	0.01	0.10	0.11	−0.18	0.20		0.01	0.08	0.18	−0.15	0.18	
Age	−0.04	0.03	−1.50	−0.10	0.01		−0.03	0.02	−1.21	−0.07	0.02	
Job type	0.01	0.06	0.07	−0.11	0.12		0.03	0.05	0.59	−0.07	0.13	
Sleep quantity	0.02	0.03	0.59	−0.04	0.07		0.01	0.02	0.10	−0.04	0.05	

Results of direct, indirect and total effects of mastery experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood

Predictor	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effect				
Mastery experiences on abusive supervision	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.20
Indirect effect				
Mastery experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood	0.32	0.05	0.21	0.41
Total effect				
Mastery experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood	0.44	0.04	0.37	0.52

Notes: $N = 422$; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Authors' work

t = 16.21, LLCI = 0.47, ULCI = 0.60, $p < 0.001$; Table 6) are significantly related to negative start-of-workday mood. Therefore, *H1a–H1d* were supported.

H2 stated that the negative start-of-workday mood is related to abusive supervision. The findings of Mediation Analysis 1 (i.e. psychological detachment from work → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.56, SE = 0.04, t = 13.68, LLCI = 0.48, ULCI = 0.64, $p < 0.001$; Table 3), Mediation Analysis 2 (i.e. relaxation → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.55, SE = 0.04, t = 14.71, LLCI = 0.48, ULCI = 0.63, $p < 0.001$; Table 4), Mediation Analysis 3 (i.e. mastery experiences → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.55, SE = 0.04, t = 13.18, LLCI = 0.47, ULCI = 0.63, $p < 0.001$; Table 5) and Mediation Analysis 4 (i.e. control experiences → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.59, SE = 0.04, t = 13.62, LLCI = 0.50, ULCI = 0.67, $p < 0.001$; Table 6) were significant. Therefore, *H2* was supported.

H3a–H3d stated that the negative start-of-workday mood mediates the relationship between poor recovery experiences of (a) psychological detachment from work, (b) relaxation, (c) mastery experiences and (d) control experiences, respectively, and abusive supervision. Regarding indirect effects, the findings of Mediation Analysis 1 (i.e. psychological detachment from work → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.34, SE = 0.06, LLCI = 0.23, ULCI = 0.44; Table 3), Mediation Analysis 2 (i.e. relaxation → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.22, SE = 0.05, LLCI = 0.13, ULCI = 0.32; Table 4), Mediation Analysis 3 (i.e. mastery experiences → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.32, SE = 0.05, LLCI = 0.21, ULCI = 0.41; Table 5) and Mediation Analysis 4 (i.e. control experiences → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; B = 0.31, SE = 0.05, LLCI = 0.22, ULCI = 0.40; Table 5) were significant. Therefore, *H3a–H3d* were supported.

The results of the moderated mediation analysis generated by PROCESS macro Model 7 are reported in Table 4. *H4a–H4d* stated that sleep quality moderates the direct relationship between poor recovery experiences of (a) psychological detachment from work, (b) relaxation, (c) mastery experiences and (d) control experiences, respectively, and negative start-of-workday mood such that the relationship is weaker (stronger) when sleep quality is good (poor). The interaction term of psychological detachment from work and sleep quality is negative but insignificant (B = –0.05, SE = 0.02, t = −2.11, LLCI = −0.09, ULCI = 0.00, $p < ns$; Table 7). Therefore, *H4a* was rejected. By contrast, the interaction terms of relaxation and sleep quality (B = −0.06, SE = 0.02, t = −3.79, LLCI = −0.10, ULCI = −0.03, $p < 0.001$; Table 8), mastery experiences and sleep quality (B = −0.07, SE = 0.02, t = −4.16, LLCI = −0.10, ULCI = −0.04, $p < 0.001$; Table 9) and control experiences and sleep quality (B = −0.08, SE = 0.02, t = −4.47, LLCI = −0.11, ULCI = −0.04, $p < 0.001$; Table 10) are negative and significant. Therefore, *H4b–H4d* were supported.

Furthermore, we plotted the interaction terms (i.e. relaxation × sleep quality, mastery experiences × sleep quality and control experiences × sleep quality) to further provide evidence of moderation. Using the simple slope test (Preacher *et al.*, 2006), we found that the effect of lack of relaxation on negative start-of-workday mood is weaker when sleep quality is high (B = 0.18, t = 2.85, $p < 0.01$) and stronger when sleep quality is low (B = 0.24, t = 7.59, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, the effect of lack of mastery experiences on negative start-of-workday mood is weaker when sleep quality is high (B = 0.29, t = 4.58, $p < 0.001$) and stronger when sleep quality is low (B = 0.36, t = 11.38, $p < 0.001$). Finally, the effect of lack of control experiences on negative start-of-workday mood is weaker when sleep quality is high (B = 0.29, t = 4.59, $p < 0.001$) and stronger when sleep quality is low (B = 0.37, t = 11.70, $p < 0.001$). Thus, the simple slopes and plotted interaction terms (see Figure 2) provided support for *H4b–H4d*.

Table 6.
Results of mediation analysis (control experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)

Results of mediation analysis (control experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision)											
Antecedents	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision				
	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.39***						0.46***
Constant	2.97	0.29	10.19***	2.40	3.54		1.92	0.29	6.72***	1.36	2.48	
Control experiences	0.53	0.03	16.21***	0.47	0.60		0.06	0.04	1.51	−0.02	0.13	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.59	0.04	13.62***	0.50	0.67	
Gender	0.08	0.10	0.88	−0.10	0.27		0.03	0.08	0.36	−0.14	0.20	
Age	−0.03	0.03	−1.09	−0.08	0.02		−0.03	0.02	−1.08	−0.07	0.02	
Job type	−0.07	0.06	−1.24	−0.19	0.04		0.02	0.05	0.35	−0.08	0.12	
Sleep quantity	0.01	0.03	−0.07	−0.06	0.05		0.01	0.02	0.04	−0.05	0.05	
Results of direct, indirect and total effects of control experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood												
Predictor							Effect		SE	LLCI		ULCI
Direct effect												
Control experiences on abusive supervision							0.06		0.04	−0.02		0.13
Indirect effect												
Control experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood							0.31		0.05	0.22		0.40
Total effect												
Control experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood							0.37		0.03	0.30		0.43

Notes: N = 422; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Authors' work

Results of moderated mediation analysis (psychological detachment from work → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

Antecedents	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision					
	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.35***						0.47***
Constant	5.64	0.26	21.95***	5.14	6.15		2.33	0.31	7.43***	1.71	2.95	
Psychological detachment from work	0.56	0.13	4.33***	0.31	0.81		0.12	0.04	2.71*	0.03	0.20	
Sleep quality	−0.09	0.09	−0.94	−0.27	0.09		–	–	–	–	–	
Psychological detachment from work × Sleep quality	−0.05	0.02	−2.11	−0.09	0.00		–	–	–	–	–	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.56	0.04	13.68***	0.48	0.64	
Gender	0.05	0.10	0.51	−0.14	0.25		0.02	0.08	0.25	−0.14	0.19	
Age	−0.02	0.03	−0.83	−0.08	0.03		−0.02	0.02	−1.05	−0.07	0.02	
Job type	−0.03	0.06	−0.45	−0.15	0.09		0.02	0.05	0.43	−0.08	0.12	
Sleep quantity	0.01	0.03	0.42	−0.04	0.07		0.01	0.02	0.06	−0.05	0.05	

Results of direct, conditional indirect effects of psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood at high, mean and low values of sleep quality

Predictor	Mediator	Moderator sleep quality	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Index of moderated mediation model	Start-of-workday negative mood	–	−0.03	0.02	−0.06	0.01
Direct effect						
Psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision	–	–	0.12	0.04	0.03	0.20
Conditional indirect effect						
Psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	Low	0.35	0.10	0.18	0.55
Psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	Mean	0.31	0.10	0.13	0.53
Psychological detachment from work on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	High	0.28	0.11	0.07	0.51

Notes: $N = 422$; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; $^*p < 0.05$; and $^{***}p < 0.001$
Source: Authors' work

Table 7.
Results of moderated mediation analysis (psychological detachment from work → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

Table 8.
Results of moderated mediation analysis (relaxation → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

Results of moderated mediation analysis (relaxation → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

Antecedents	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision					
	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.39***						0.48***
Constant	5.63	0.25	22.72***	5.14	6.12		2.38	0.30	8.03***	1.80	2.97	
Relaxation	0.24	0.04	6.54***	0.17	0.31		0.13	0.03	4.20***	0.07	0.20	
Sleep quality	0.28	0.04	6.87***	0.20	0.36		–	–	–	–	–	
Relaxation × Sleep quality	−0.06	0.02	−3.79***	−0.10	−0.03		–	–	–	–	–	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.55	0.04	14.71***	0.48	0.63	
Gender	0.01	0.10	0.03	−0.19	0.19		0.01	0.08	0.04	−0.16	0.17	
Age	−0.01	0.03	−0.23	−0.06	0.05		−0.02	0.02	−0.81	−0.06	0.03	
Job type	−0.02	0.06	−0.26	−0.13	0.10		0.02	0.05	0.47	−0.08	0.12	
Sleep quantity	0.01	0.03	0.04	−0.05	0.06		0.01	−0.02	−0.02	−0.05	0.05	

Results of direct, conditional indirect effects of relaxation on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood at high, mean and low values of sleep quality

Predictor	Mediator		Moderator sleep quality	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Index of moderated mediation model	Start-of-workday negative mood		–	−0.04	0.01	−0.06	−0.01
Direct effect							
Relaxation on abusive supervision	–		–	0.13	0.03	0.07	0.20
Conditional indirect effect							
Relaxation on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood		Low	0.18	0.04	0.10	0.27
Relaxation on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood		Mean	0.13	0.04	0.06	0.22
Relaxation on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood		High	0.09	0.05	0.01	0.19

Notes: $N = 422$; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Authors' work

Results of moderated mediation analysis (mastery experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

Antecedents	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision					
	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.45***						0.47***
Constant	5.61	0.23	24.00***	5.15	6.07		2.39	0.32	7.60***	1.77	3.01	
Mastery experiences	0.36	0.04	8.16***	0.27	0.45		0.12	0.04	3.08***	0.04	0.20	
Sleep quality	0.20	0.04	5.19***	0.13	0.28		–	–	–	–	–	
Mastery experiences × Sleep quality	−0.07	0.02	−4.16***	−0.10	−0.04		–	–	–	–	–	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.55	0.04	13.18***	0.47	0.63	
Gender	0.01	0.09	0.05	−0.18	0.18		0.01	0.08	0.18	−0.15	0.18	
Age	−0.03	0.03	−1.16	−0.08	0.02		−0.03	0.02	−1.21	−0.07	0.02	
Job type	0.02	0.06	0.27	−0.10	0.13		0.03	0.05	0.59	−0.07	0.13	
Sleep quantity	0.01	0.03	0.33	−0.04	0.06		0.01	0.02	0.10	−0.04	0.05	

Results of direct, conditional indirect effects of mastery experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood at high, mean and low values of sleep quality

Predictor	Mediator	Moderator sleep quality	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Index of moderated mediation model	Start-of-workday negative mood	–	−0.04	0.01	−0.06	−0.02
Direct effect						
Mastery experiences on abusive supervision	–	–	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.20
Conditional indirect effect						
Mastery experiences on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	Low	0.25	0.04	0.17	0.33
Mastery experiences on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	Mean	0.20	0.04	0.13	0.27
Mastery experiences on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	High	0.15	0.04	0.07	0.23

Notes: $N = 422$; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; ***$p < 0.001$

Source: Authors' work

Table 9.
Results of moderated mediation analysis (mastery experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

Table 10.
Results of moderated mediation analysis (control experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

Results of moderated mediation analysis (control experiences → start-of-workday negative mood → abusive supervision at the high, mean and low values of sleep quality)

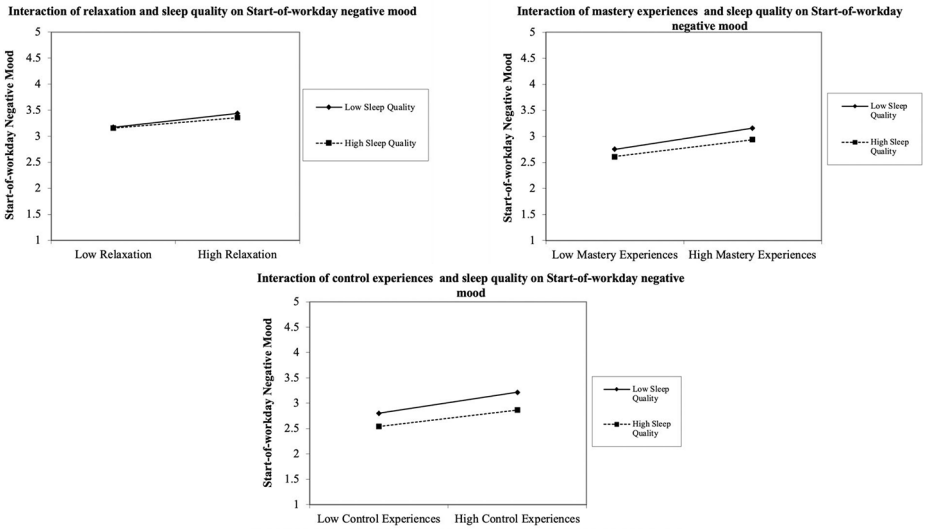
Antecedents	Start-of-workday negative mood						Abusive supervision					
	B	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2	*B*	SE	*t*	LLCI	ULCI	R^2
						0.47***						0.46***
Constant	5.78	0.23	24.99***	5.32	6.23		2.21	0.33	6.72***	1.56	2.85	
Control experiences	0.37	0.04	9.82***	0.30	0.44		0.06	0.04	1.51	−0.02	0.13	
Sleep quality	0.13	0.04	3.09***	0.05	0.22		–	–	–	–	–	
Control experiences × Sleep quality	−0.08	0.02	−4.47***	−0.11	−0.04		–	–	–	–	–	
Start-of-workday negative mood	–	–	–	–	–		0.59	0.04	13.62***	0.50	0.67	
Gender	0.05	0.09	0.60	−0.12	0.23		0.03	0.08	0.36	−0.14	0.20	
Age	−0.02	0.03	−0.86	−0.07	0.03		−0.03	0.02	−1.08	−0.07	0.02	
Job type	−0.04	0.06	−0.73	−0.15	0.07		0.02	0.05	0.35	−0.08	0.12	
Sleep quantity	0.01	0.03	−0.14	−0.05	0.05		0.01	0.02	0.04	−0.05	0.05	

Results of direct, conditional indirect effects of control experiences on abusive supervision via start-of-workday negative mood at high, mean and low values of sleep quality

Predictor	Mediator	Moderator sleep quality	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Index of moderated mediation model	Start-of-workday negative mood	–	−0.05	0.01	−0.07	−0.02
Direct effect						
Control experiences on abusive supervision	–	–	0.06	0.04	−0.02	0.13
Conditional indirect effect						
Control experiences on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	Low	0.28	0.05	0.19	0.37
Control experiences on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	Mean	0.22	0.04	0.14	0.29
Control experiences on abusive supervision	Start-of-workday negative mood	High	0.16	0.04	0.09	0.24

Notes: $N = 422$; LLCI = lower level of the 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper level of 95% confidence interval; ***$p < 0.001$

Source: Authors' work



Source: Authors' work

Figure 2.
Interactions of poor recovery experiences and start-of-workday negative mood

Table 4 also provides the indices of moderated mediation, direct and conditional indirect effects of the supervisor's poor recovery experiences on abusive supervisory behavior through negative start-of-workday mood at values (*−1 SD, mean, +1 SD*) of the supervisor's sleep quality. *H5a–H5d* stated that sleep quality moderates the indirect relationship between poor recovery experiences of (a) psychological detachment from work, (b) relaxation, (c) mastery experiences and (d) control experiences, respectively, and abusive supervision via negative start-of-workday mood such that the mediated relationship is weaker (stronger) when sleep quality is good (poor). for psychological detachment from work, the index of the moderated mediation model is negative but insignificant (i.e., psychological detachment from work → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; $B = -0.03$, $SE = 0.02$, LLCI = −0.06, ULCI = 0.01; Table 7). Therefore, *H5a* was rejected.

For relaxation, the index of the moderated mediation model is negative and significant (i.e. relaxation → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; $B = -0.04$, $SE = 0.01$, LLCI = −0.06, ULCI = −0.01; Table 8). Moreover, the conditional indirect effects of lack of relaxation on abusive supervision via negative start-of-workday mood are significantly weaker at a higher level of supervisor's sleep quality ($B = 0.09$, $SE = 0.05$, LLCI = 0.01, ULCI = 0.19; Table 8) and significantly stronger at a lower level of supervisor's sleep quality ($B = 0.18$, $SE = 0.04$, LLCI = 0.10, ULCI = 0.27; Table 8). Therefore, *H5b* was supported.

For mastery experiences, the index of the moderated mediation model is negative and significant (i.e. mastery experiences → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; $B = -0.04$, $SE = 0.01$, LLCI = −0.06, ULCI = −0.02; Table 9). Moreover, the conditional indirect effects of lack of mastery experiences on abusive supervision via negative start-of-workday mood are significantly weaker at a higher level of supervisor's sleep quality ($B = 0.15$, $SE = 0.04$, LLCI = 0.07, ULCI = 0.23; Table 9) and significantly stronger at a lower level of supervisor's sleep quality ($B = 0.25$, $SE = 0.04$, LLCI = 0.17, ULCI = 0.33; Table 9). Therefore, *H5c* was supported.

For control experiences, the index of the moderated mediation model is negative and significant (i.e. control experiences → negative start-of-workday mood → abusive supervision; $B = -0.05$, $SE = 0.01$, LLCI = −0.07, ULCI = −0.02; Table 10). Moreover, the conditional indirect effects of lack of control experiences on abusive supervision via negative start-of-workday mood are significantly weaker at a higher level of supervisor's sleep quality ($B = 0.16$, $SE = 0.04$, LLCI = 0.09, ULCI = 0.24; Table 10) and significantly stronger at a lower level of supervisor's sleep quality ($B = 0.28$, $SE = 0.05$, LLCI = 0.19, ULCI = 0.37; Table 10). Therefore, *H5d* was supported.

Discussion

This study aimed to extend a recent stream of organizational research focused on investigating the antecedents of abusive supervision beyond the workplace that can influence supervisors' workplace behavior, often in unforeseen ways (Barnes *et al.*, 2015; Courtright *et al.*, 2016). To accomplish this objective, we conceptualized a lack of recovery experiences during after-work hours as an event from the supervisors' home domain that could function as an antecedent of abusive supervisory behaviors in the work domain. We further theorized negative mood as the mechanism whereby supervisors feel the need to display such hostile behaviors and presented sleep as a key factor mitigating such negative moods and negative behaviors at work.

Based on three-phase data, the study revealed that a lack of recovery experiences in the form of psychological detachment, relaxation and mastery experiences were related to next-day abusive supervisory behavior. The results did not support the notion that a lack of control experiences during after-work hours was not related to abusive supervision. A key explanation for this discrepancy could be that control stems from one's ability to decide when and how to perform off-the-job activities rather than participating in those activities. Inability to detach from work, relax and master new skills comes under the umbrella of actual activities performed, whereas control is related more to an individual's ability to decide the timing and nature of a particular activity. Nevertheless, a lack of all four activities contributes to the onset of a negative mood, leading to abusive supervision, which supports *H1a–H1d*, *H2* and *H3a–H3d*. In line with the work of Kinnunen *et al.* (2011), the findings suggest that recovery experiences during nonwork hours can help to maintain well-being in the face of stressful situations, and their absence is related not only to negative mood but also to destructive work behaviors. Pertaining to the moderating effect of sleep quality, the results largely supported the hypothesized moderated mediation relationships, revealing that a negative mood, arising from the lack of recovery experiences in terms of relaxation, mastery and control experiences and leading to next-day abusive supervision, could be ameliorated when supervisors get good-quality sleep the previous day (supporting *H4b–H4d* and *H5b–H5d*). The results further indicate that sleep did not moderate the relationship between negative mood and subsequent abusive supervision after a lack of recovery in terms of psychological detachment from work (rejecting *H4a* and *H5a)*. As highlighted by the recovery literature (Meijman and Mulder, 1998), a lack of psychological detachment could hinder the brain's functional (neuroendocrine and cardiovascular) systems from de-stressing. This finding also sheds light on the negative effects of staying "on" with work after work hours because under such circumstances, the mind is still focused on work processes and a good night's sleep does not prove helpful. Overall, this study's findings resonate with those throughout the literature (Barnes *et al.*, 2015; Courtright *et al.*, 2016), suggesting that a holistic approach toward supervisors' lives could help highlight events that are beyond organizations' control but can influence supervisors' work behavior.

Theoretical contributions

In essence, our moderated mediation model provides a framework for understanding which situations or events at home can be potential antecedents of workplace supervisory abuse and contributes to the abusive supervision literature.

First, in terms of the growing stream of literature investigating nonwork antecedents of abusive supervision, we integrated the literature on effort-recovery (Meijman and Mulder, 1998), job-stress recovery (Geurts and Sonnentag, 2006; Westman and Eden, 1997) and affect regulation (Thayer *et al.*, 1994) to explore the home domain factors that create a negative affect leading to aggressive behaviors in supervisors. Research suggests that effort is inherent in work and recovery is needed to revert to prestressor levels, the lack of which causes negative affect. Our results support this notion by demonstrating that supervisors who experienced poor recovery during the evening at home experienced negative moods that induced aggressive workplace behaviors. This study supports the notion that events in employees' home lives can significantly influence their work effectiveness and experiences (Barnes and Wagner, 2009) by demonstrating that off-work recovery experiences at home can impact supervisors' feelings and actions the next day at work – thus indicating the need for more research on abusive supervision to explore factors in the supervisors' home domain that prevent recovery.

Second, drawing from spillover theory, we show that a negative start-of-workday mood arising from environmental stimuli at home (such as poor recovery experiences) can lead to abusive supervision at the workplace. Previously, organizational scholars have tested the affect spillover from one domain (home) to another (work) over relatively short periods. To the best of our knowledge, there is a gap in the spillover literature regarding whether affect spillover – more specifically, the affect spillover of a supervisor's poor recovery experiences – can persist until the next morning. Indeed, one's recovery experiences in the evening may "reset" their affective states the next morning. Finding and testing spillovers of poor recovery experiences to the next morning "is important because the morning affect is relevant for on-the-job behavior throughout the day" (Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013, p. 199). We found that supervisors' poor recovery experiences in the evening produce lasting effects on negative start-of-workday mood through spillover; they then behave aggressively (abusive behavior toward subordinates) to regulate or improve their negative start-of-workday mood. Therefore, our findings theoretically contribute to the spillover literature by highlighting that the affect spillover of a supervisor's poor recovery experiences can last until the next morning in the form of a start-of-work day negative mood, which can ultimately instigate abusive supervisory behavior.

Finally, our findings suggest that a supervisor's sleep quality can offset the spillover effects of their poor recovery experiences on negative start-of-workday mood and subsequent abusive behavior. Our findings extend previous research by demonstrating that sleep quality not only has a restorative function (Scott and Judge, 2006; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008) but can also interrupt the spillover process. When predicting supervisors' start-of-workday mood, we found a spillover effect of their poor recovery experiences during the evening on their negative start-of-workday mood; however, this effect was reduced when they were able to get good sleep the previous night. This finding is consistent with that of previous research (Wright *et al.*, 2011), which indicates that an individual's sleep quality may buffer the detrimental effects of negative life stressors on subsequent mental disturbances. This study extends the literature on abusive behavior and provides solutions to prevent negative experiences from the home domain from spilling over to the work domain. Extant literature suggests that employees' home and work lives are closely interconnected (Leavitt *et al.*, 2017) and reciprocally influence each other, sometimes in

unexpected ways (Ilies *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, this study contributes to the abusive supervision literature by proposing that potential mitigating factors in the home domain be investigated to prevent negative spillovers to the work domain and resultant destructive leadership behaviors.

Limitations and future research directions

This study's theoretical contributions must be viewed in light of its limitations that need to be addressed in future studies. First, we collected single-source data, and the use of self-reporting measures raises the possibility of common-method bias (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). We minimized its potential influence by collecting data at three different times of day (i.e. multiwave research design). Similarly, the use of a single-item scale to measure sleep quality may raise concerns about its psychometric properties (e.g. reliability and validity). We used as few items as possible, which is a common practice in conducting multiwave studies (Popelnukha *et al.*, 2021; Tariq *et al.*, 2021; Walter *et al.*, 2015) because it helps reduce participants' burden and encourages their continued participation (Fisher and To, 2012). Future studies using multisource data to reduce common-method bias, multi-item scales, as well as an objective rather than a subjective rating of sleep quality such as actigraphy (Barber *et al.*, 2017 for objective measures of sleep quality) would add to the credibility of our findings.

Second, organizational scholars (Barnes *et al.*, 2015; Courtright *et al.*, 2016) go beyond the static approach to abusive supervision and suggest that it is "momentary," which implies that supervisors' abusive behavior fluctuates on a daily basis. In line with this, the study design did not allow us to explicitly assess the effects of weekend recovery experiences on mood and subsequent abusive behavior. Previous research has shown that weekend experiences significantly influence an individual's health and behavior thereafter (Fritz and Sonnentag, 2005). Future studies could address these concerns by conducting a study of daily diaries, for example, to investigate the within-person approach to abusive supervisory behavior. A daily diary research design would allow researchers to include a weekend, helping to isolate the day-to-day recovery experience effects from the weekend recovery effects.

Third, we focused only on the supervisor's negative start-of-workday mood to understand the relationship between poor recovery experiences and abusive supervision and did not use the complete PANAS scale to capture the supervisor's start-of-work day affective experiences or feelings. The PANAS measure comprises four dimensions: positive affect, serenity, negative affect and fatigue (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2008). Six PANAS items could be used to measure positive affect (i.e. "active," "interested," "excited," "strong," "inspired" and "alert"), four items to measure serenity ("calm," "relaxed," "laid-back" and "placid"), six items to measure negative affect ("distressed," "upset," "irritable," "nervous," "jittery" and "afraid") and four items to measure fatigue ("fatigued," "tired," "exhausted" and "spent"). This study only considered six items to measure supervisors' negative mood ("distressed," "upset," "irritable," "nervous," "jittery" and "afraid"). Therefore, future studies could use the complete PANAS scale to obtain a comprehensive understanding of poor recovery experiences and abusive supervision via positive affect, serenity, negative affect and fatigue.

Fourth, organizational scholars have argued that negative affect is more stable (Sonnentag and Binnewies, 2013) based on the observation that "bad is stronger than good" (Baumeister *et al.*, 2001, p. 325). In line with this, Sonnentag and Binnewies (2013) found spillover effects for negative affect but not for positive affect. Therefore, we focused on supervisors' negative start-of-workday moods to investigate the relationship between their poor recovery experiences and abusive supervision and did not consider start-of-workday

events or interactions that may also influence such moods (Obaid *et al.*, 2021; Tariq and Weng, 2019; Tariq *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, future studies should consider negative vs positive affect/mood and start-of-workday events to obtain a complete understanding of the relationship between poor recovery experiences and abusive supervision.

Fifth, our study did not examine the influence of recovery experiences at work on the spillover process of poor recovery experiences during the evening on next-day abusive behavior at work. Recovery experiences at work may also mitigate the influence of incomplete recovery experiences during the evening on next-day abusive behavior. Rest breaks (Trougakos *et al.*, 2008) and a nap at work (Dinges *et al.*, 1988) have been shown to influence mood and behavior at work. Thus, future studies could examine the relative influence of such recovery experiences on abusive supervision at work versus those that occur after work.

Managerial implications

For companies desiring to limit abusive supervisory behavior at work, our study offers several managerial implications. First, our results go beyond propositions for improving selection methods or recommending termination as the only effective solutions to reduce the occurrence of abusive supervisory behavior. Our findings suggest that abusive supervision could be a function of supervisors' incomplete recovery experiences (e.g. the lack of psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery experiences and control experiences). Supervisors must mentally switch off and psychologically detach themselves from work when at home. There is a need to intentionally segment work and nonwork life (Rothbard *et al.*, 2005), and companies can facilitate this process by discouraging employees from taking work home and by not contacting them after hours with work-related requests. Along with mentally switching off from work, supervisors should engage in activities that help them relax, for example, listening to music (Pelletier, 2004) or taking a walk (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007) in a beautiful natural environment (Hartig *et al.*, 2003), and those that translate to the mastery of a new skill or competency.

Second, our study suggests that supervisors should be aware of events that trigger or instigate their abuse. Appropriate leadership training may help them connect the dots and make connections between incomplete recovery experiences and negative start-of-workday moods, which ultimately translate into abusive behavior. When faced with poor recovery experiences, supervisors may then be more inclined to postpone important decisions or reschedule important meetings or interactions with subordinates that may be adversely affected by abusive behaviors (Ahmed *et al.*, 2021).

Third, our study highlights the influence of supervisors' sleep quality, which can potentially mitigate the impact of poor recovery experiences on next-day abusive behavior. Given the importance of an individual's sleep on their next-day behavior, it is paramount to educate supervisors on the need to adopt healthy sleep patterns and sleep hygiene measures, such as minimizing the consumption of alcohol and caffeine before going to bed, practicing relaxation techniques, and regularizing bedtimes (Mastin *et al.*, 2006).

Conclusions

Our study contributes to the limited research that explores the nonwork antecedents of abusive supervision. It provides a nuanced view of why and when supervisors' poor

recovery experiences during off-work hours lead to next-day abusive supervisory behavior. Our findings suggest that supervisors' recovery experiences during the evening hours matter and should be considered in shaping the understanding of their emotions and behavior at work.

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