

**THE MODERATING ROLE OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
ORIENTATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ABUSIVE SUPERVISION
AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: EVIDENCE FROM SRI
LANKA'S APPAREL ORGANIZATIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Abusive supervision refers to the sustained display of hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors by supervisors towards their subordinates, which can significantly impact employees' attitudes and behaviors. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) encompasses discretionary actions by employees that are beneficial to the organization, but are not explicitly recognized by the formal reward system. This study investigates how performance improvement orientation, defined as an individual's focus on learning, growth, and achieving higher levels of performance, might influence the relationship between abusive supervision and OCB. This study is important because it explores how a performance improvement orientation can buffer or exacerbate the negative effects of abusive supervision on OCB, offering new insights into mitigating workplace harm. This study fills a gap by investigating the moderating role of performance improvement orientation, which has not been extensively studied in the context of abusive supervision and its impact on OCB. By applying Goal-Setting Theory, this study aims to clarify how clear, challenging goals and effective performance management practices can mitigate the negative effects of abusive supervision and promote positive organizational citizenship behaviors. Data were collected through questionnaires from employees in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka, using a convenience sampling method. Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 224 were returned and deemed to be usable. The data were analyzed using SPSS to explore the negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behavior and to demonstrate the moderating role of performance improvement orientation on this relationship by employing correlation and regression analyses. This study revealed a significant negative relationship between abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, our findings highlight the significant moderating role of performance improvement orientation, demonstrating how it influences the effects of abusive supervision on OCB. Consequently, this study demonstrates that a performance improvement orientation positively moderates the relationship between abusive supervision and OCB. In high-performance improvement-oriented environments, employees may be more resilient or less negatively impacted by abusive supervision because they are driven by personal and professional growth goals. Conversely, in low-performance improvement-oriented settings, the negative effects of abusive supervision on OCB might be more pronounced, as employees may lack the intrinsic motivation to overcome adverse supervisory behavior.

Keywords: Abusive supervision, goal-setting theory, organizational citizenship behavior, performance improvement orientation.