Understanding Emotional Exhaustion in Pakistan’s Banking Industry: Stress, Gossip, Cynicism, and the Mediating Role of Abusive Supervision

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Keywords: Stress, Cynicism, Gossip, Abusive Supervisor, Emotional Exhaustion.

Article History

Date of Submission: 07-03-2023
Date of Acceptance: 21-06-2023
Date of Publication: 30-06-2023

DOI No: 10.56976/rjsi.v5i2.125

This study explores how emotional exhaustion is affected by stress, cynicism, and gossip in Pakistani banking while including abusive supervision as a mediator. The study’s focus extends to delineating the governing role abusive supervision plays in the relationship between stress, gossip, and cynicism, and their subsequent impact on emotional exhaustion among employees in Pakistan’s educational sector. Data were primarily gathered through a Google Form survey, employing a convenience sampling method targeted at employees in the banking industry. Analytical procedures were conducted using Smart PLS V.3 to evaluate both measurement and structural models. All hypotheses were rigorously tested, revealing that stress, gossip, and cynicism are correlated with emotional exhaustion when mediated by abusive supervision. Intriguingly, the study found that gossip does not directly influence emotional exhaustion. The findings emphasize that abusive supervision exacerbates factors leading to emotional exhaustion in subordinates, adversely affecting their mental well-being. The study conclusively demonstrates the significant mediating role that abusive supervision plays in linking stress, gossip, and cynicism to emotional exhaustion.
1. Introduction

Employees are at serious risk for psychological damage from emotional exhaustion (Anasori et al., 2020). The role of an abusive supervisor is pivotal in offering constructive recommendations that can enhance workplace social interactions, thereby serving as a potential mitigating factor against such threats (Xu et al., 2017). However, the psychological mechanisms underlying this process remain ambiguous. Numerous academics have put forth models to clarify the evolving path of emotional exhaustion. When there is an imbalance between an individual's mental and emotional capabilities and the demands of the circumstance, stress is said to occur in both the individual and their environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The extent of occupational stress encountered by an individual may be prejudiced by an uncountable of factors, such as job classification, the ethnocultural heterogeneity of workfellows, intra-office social interfaces, or an amalgamation of these components (Yoo et al., 2009).

Due to increasing work-related pressures, managers might struggle to distinctly disengage from their professional responsibilities (Xue et al., 2022). Speaking or writing that concerns the personal matters of a third party is referred to as employee gossip (Raza et al., 2023a). Conversations involving gossip can result in negative consequences for those being discussed. Employees may engage in such dialogues to undermine their superiors to boost their status (Decoster et al., 2013; Noon & Delbridge, 1993). In response to a colleague's inclination for gossip, supervisors might resort to harsh actions, believing that such behavior effectively communicates a zero-tolerance policy for mistakes. Building on this premise, we postulate that workplace harassment could originate from a subordinate perceived as prone to gossiping (Drobac, 2022). The notion posits that escalating emotional exhaustion over a period leads to a rise in cynicism, which subsequently results in elevated levels of inefficacy scholarly terms, individuals experiencing emotional exhaustion frequently resort to cynicism by way of a handling mechanism (Wu et al., 2020).

In the current investigation, we indicate there is an affiliation between employee gossip and severe managerial conduct that can be conceptually enlightened through the manager's inclination toward retaliation (Chan & McAllister, 2014). Our method rests on the impression that the majority of people aim to steer clear of gossip, viewing it as a detrimental social practice (Fan & Dawson, 2022). Threats to these resources can cause stress, which can impair a supervisor's mood and performance. People work hard to maintain or even increase their time and energy resources (Khalid et al., 2022).

Within the scope of investigating the interplay among skepticism, occupational effectiveness, and emotional exhaustion, this research aims to elucidate their correlations with symptoms of professional burnout (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021). As part of this conceptual structure, the study's main goal is to discern the contributing elements to workers' instances of emotional depletion (Mohsin et al., 2022). Employing a clarifying model, the present study explores the possibility that resilience and emotional discomfort can offer deeper insights into the relationship between authoritarian managerial practices and emotional exhaustion (Glasberg et al., 2007; Kalliath
Consequently, in the context of organizations as social structures where employees are subjected to substantial stress and high expectations to attain effective performance, individuals may develop a detached stance toward their job performance due to perceived inequities in consequences or rewards that are not commensurate with their contributions (Spurný et al., 2022). In a professional context, workers who manifest cynicism attitudes may verbalize feelings like, 'My zeal towards my work has diminished,' or 'I've become progressively dubious regarding the prospective gains of my endeavors." (Schaufeli et al., 2002). A lot of emphasis has been paid to abusive supervision (Tepper, 2007). Some degree of the number of scholars have investigated the factors of such actions (Hoobler & Brass, 2006; Mawritz et al., 2012; Tepper et al., 2006). By examining a further potential contextual precursor to this type of maltreatment, this study seeks to advance our understanding of the situational elements that may put people at risk for abusive supervision (Tariq et al., 2023).

The investigation's goal is to look into the impact of supervisors who engage in abusive conduct on their employees, with a specific emphasis on variables like stress, gossip, and cynicism, which together contribute to the psychological strain that manifests as emotional exhaustion (Mitchell et al., 2023). The study aims to elucidate the most salient elements contributing to subordinate fatigue and investigate the mechanisms through which this level of exhaustion evolves (Li et al., 2022). Abusive supervisors may, through their detrimental behavior, cultivate a challenging work atmosphere, thereby diminishing subordinate enthusiasm (Lee et al., 2023). This research substantiates these claims by employing stress, gossip, and cynicism as independent variables, and emotional exhaustion mediated by abusive supervisors as the dependent variable (Hayat & Afshari, 2021).

With time, professional responsibilities have grown progressively more taxing (Lin et al., 2019). Worldwide studies pinpoint three distinct dimensions of emotional exhaustion: stress, cynicism, and diminished vocational efficacy. In academic discourse on occupational obstacles, the concepts of 'emotional fatigue,' 'workplace rumors,' and 'tension' are recurrent themes (Morris, n.d.). Numerous investigations have probed the ubiquity of emotional depletion and its repercussions for psychological well-being (Pang, 2021). There is a dearth of studies addressing the impact of abusive supervisors on cynicism in the circumstances of Pakistan, despite significant global research on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and elements like stress and gossip (Raza et al., 2023b). No one is certain how cynicism influences the relationship between abusive supervisors and emotional weariness, even though it has been taken into account in various studies (Elsaaid, 2022). The present research goals are to explore the influence of stress, gossip, and cynicism as contributory factors to emotional exhaustion, with abusive supervisors serving as the mediating variable (Raza et al., 2023a).

Based on existing scholarly literature, Stress and gossip have a strong inverse relationship that together helps to develop emotional exhaustion brought on by abusive supervisory behaviors (Iqbal & Rasheed, 2019). However, cynicism has yet to be examined in tandem with stress, gossip, and the
mediating role of abusive supervisors in generating emotional exhaustion (Raza et al., 2023b). The research seeks to underscore the significant role abusive supervisors play in precipitating emotional exhaustion among their subordinates (Qin & Lee, 2023). Establishing the interplay between stress, gossip, and cynicism, mediated by abusive supervisors, is essential for emotional exhaustion (Aboramadan et al., 2021a). Organizations aspiring for competitive advantage must not only demonstrate technical prowess but also managerial competence, which includes the behavior of supervisors as a critical determinant in either empowering or undermining subordinates (Rahman, 2023).

Consequently, the sequence of logical reasoning propels us to delve into addressing the following inquiries: 1) What controlling function does an abusive supervisor play in the context of gossip, cynicism, and stress concerning emotional exhaustion? 2) What effects do stress, gossip, and cynicism have on the expression of emotional exhaustion? The overarching research goal of this study centers on dissecting the contributing factors that engender emotional exhaustion among subordinates, stemming from the influence of abusive supervisory practices (Valle et al., 2019). This phenomenon has the potential to inflict harm upon the psychological well-being of subordinates, culminating in a state of mental and emotional fatigue. The study is poised to scrutinize the impact of abusive supervision on the development of emotional exhaustion (J. Khan et al., 2021).

2. Literature review
2.1 Stress and emotional exhaustion

According to Ortiz1 et al., (2019), stress is conceptualized as an extended response to ongoing emotional and interactive demands. Existing literature categorizes stress into three distinct types: exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy. In scholarly literature concerning occupational challenges, terms like tension, emotional exhaustion, and stress are commonly employed. Numerous investigations have examined the incidence and prevalence of stress among professionals and students in wellbeing-interrelated fields, including dentistry, nursing, and medicine according to Jimenez- Ortizl et al. (2019).

Based on the preceding discussion, it is evident that emotional exhaustion can manifest when an individual endures prolonged periods of intense stress, either professionally or personally (Dicke et al., 2022). The symptoms of emotional exhaustion—such as feeling emotionally depleted, stressed, and fatigued—accumulate over an extended timeframe, and early warning signs may go unnoticed (Keller & Meier, 2023). This condition can have significant repercussions on one's daily activities, interpersonal relationships, and behavior. Emotional exhaustion and stress are particularly prevalent among those employed in high-stress roles (Salim et al., 2019). Research indicates that individuals with elevated job demands, as well as those who engage with work-related thoughts outside of work hours, are at heightened risk (Bakker & De Vries, 2021). Those who are mismatched in their jobs, work extended hours, or feel inadequate in their professional capacities are also more susceptible to emotional exhaustion (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). There exists a direct correlation between increased stress and elevated levels of emotional exhaustion, which in turn adversely affects an employee's job
performance (Loh et al., 2021). Mental stress not only induces emotional exhaustion but also diminishes concentration, subsequently impacting work performance negatively (Singh et al., 2022). Therefore, we prove our Hypotheses with the above Statements.

**H1: Stress has a strong effect in leading to emotional exhaustion among subordinates.**

### 2.2 Gossip and emotional exhaustion

Bashir et al., (2020) stated that gossip presented here involves the creation, hearing, and engagement in disparaging remarks about another individual. In professional settings, gossip is often perceived as idle talk focusing on employees who are not present. Academic research appears to be split on the origins of gossip and the functions it serves within the workplace. According to Michelson et al., (2010), Gossip exhibits a dynamic nature, its consequences shaped by the intricate interaction between the gossiper, responder, and target, collectively termed as the gossip triangle. This phenomenon frequently arises due to the inherent familiarity shared amongst individuals within analogous or cognate groups, wherein mutual comprehension of values, ethics, and reference frames is prevalent (Ben-Nun, 2021). With the escalation of consensus and alignment between the involved parties, the propensity for gossip amplifies, a phenomenon delineated by the aforementioned dynamics as mentioned by (Bodaghi & Oliveira, 2020).

Bondielli & Marcelloni, (2019) argued gossip can provide a more accurate depiction of lived experiences than simply objective explanations since it spreads positive information. Dada et al., (2019) stated that positive gossip in particular encourages reciprocity, trust, and reputation among group members as well as collaboration between them. Negative gossip, on the other hand, is useful for strengthening social bonds as noted by Fraser et al., (2021). Consequently, gossip serves as a valuable instrument for understanding and confirming social rules and standards (Bencsik & Juhasz, 2020). Outside of the work environment, emotional exhaustion predominantly stems from domestic and personal issues. Mulki et al., (2006) and Van Jaarsveld et al., (2010) suggested that heightened emotional exhaustion is correlated with elevated instances of interpersonal conflicts and diminished levels of employee self-efficacy within the workplace. Maslach et al.,(2002) established the connection between emotional exhaustion, efficacy, and interpersonal conflicts exhibits resemblances (Kundi et al., 2023). According to Linden et al., (2005), emotional exhaustion has the potential to result in both gossip and interpersonal conflicts.

Jahanzeb et al., (2018) and (2016) Conducted an empirical investigation to ascertain the existence of a relationship between these factors. By examining the sequential mediation pathway involving protective silence and emotional exhaustion within the context of employee dynamics, their research reveals insights into the experience of individuals subjected to ostracism (So et al., 2023). The study unveils that defensive silence is employed as a coping mechanism to shield against undesired psychological consequences in such instances (Sun et al., 2022).

This investigation uncovers the constructive role that gossip plays in both organizational settings and individual job performance (Song & Guo, 2022). Engaging in gossip can foster closer
relationships among colleagues, elevate levels of mutual trust, and enhance collaborative capabilities, extending beyond the mere exchange of rumors (Horan et al., 2021). Both adverse and positive forms of gossip can serve as catalysts for individual development. Business leaders are urged to reassess their preconceptions about workplace gossip in light of recent studies highlighting its benefits (Greenslade-Yeats et al., 2023). Gossip serves multiple functions within a work environment, including satiating curiosity, providing insights into the actions of others, and offering opportunities for casual interaction (M. H. Carrim, 2023). Therefore, it should not be entirely discouraged by organizational leaders. Instead, it can act as a motivator for employees to enhance both their performance and skill sets. Casual dialogues involving non-work-related subjects can serve as a communal bonding activity. Employers should endorse collective undertakings that encourage teamwork and camaraderie. Maintaining open channels of dialogue, including gossip, may in fact augment productivity (Ordonez, 2021). Contrary to the prevailing hypothesis, the current study demonstrates that gossip does not contribute to emotional exhaustion. In fact, it may help in mitigating stress and fostering a congenial atmosphere. It is noteworthy that, within the context of Pakistani research, there is yet to be evidence supporting the detrimental effects of gossip on emotional exhaustion.

**H2: Gossip has a strong effect in leading to emotional exhaustion among subordinates.**

### 2.3 Cynicism and emotional exhaustion

According to Maslach (2017), Emotional exhaustion is characterized as a state of profound emotional fatigue. Employees experiencing this condition often find themselves deeply weary, both emotionally and mentally. It is essentially a psychological state marked by heightened emotional strain and depletion, often exacerbated by over-engagement in work tasks. Employees manifesting cynicism typically convey discontent with their organization. Such sentiments may stem from a myriad of causes, including suboptimal work environments, negative performance assessments, or ambiguous organizational policies, among other factors (Wilkerson et al., 2008). There are three levels of cynicism discovered by Dean et al., (1998). The employee initially gets the feeling that something is off at work. This might be the outcome of the employees' varying degrees of impracticality in relation to their boss's cynicism. Employees will have doubts about a company if they think the executives are ineffective and the company is ineffective as a result. Second, a company's business will suffer as a result of its employees' cynicism. According to The Influence of Cynicism on "Emotional Exhaustion," employees who regularly criticize coworkers may be more vulnerable to emotional exhaustion (Raza et al., 2023a). This propensity for critique could either arise from a perfectionist mindset, which scrutinizes everything that deviates from an ideal, or possibly due to antipathy towards one's supervisor or organization. Such pervasive negativity is unlikely to contribute to individual well-being; rather, it saps emotional resources (Zeiders & Devlin, 2019). An extensive review of literature and empirical research highlights a direct correlation between cynicism and 'emotional exhaustion,' both of which contribute to a decline in job performance (Malik & Sattar, 2022). The objective of this study was to explore the reciprocal effects of emotional exhaustion and cynicism on both work performance and prosocial behavior.
Moreover, cynicism played a significant partial mediating role between ‘emotional exhaustion,’ inefficacy, and various outcomes like job performance and social behavior (Raza et al., 2023b). In order to examine how burnout affects performance and prosocial behavior in professional contexts, this study applies a burnout process model. Therefore, a greater amount of cynicism will result in more emotional tiredness (Prajogo et al., 2020). Therefore, we established the following:

**H3: Cynicism has a strong effect in leading to emotional exhaustion among subordinates.**

### 2.4 Abusive Supervisor, Stress, and Emotional Exhaustion

Ortiz et al. (2019) show that emotional exhaustion reduces performance on both a personal and a social level, resulting in subpar work and damaging mental stability. Bacharach et al. (1991) stated that psychological stresses placed on people cause emotional weariness. These criteria may come from within the company (job requirements) or from outside forces like society and customers. According to Rowley et al., (1988). The expectation or manifestation of stress and exhaustion are altered by inadequate leadership behavior (Kaluza et al., 2020). Additionally, it helps workers deal with problems brought on by stress. Stress may be made worse by authoritarian and particularly control-oriented leadership: a manager who consistently gives instructions to subordinates. Worker physiological stress symptoms, such as improved diastolic & systolic "blood pressure," are caused by statements like "effort more rapidly," "work perfectly," "you may do more," or "speed up, we don't have much time left." (Erskine & Georgiou, 2023). According to research, abusive supervision may act as a stressor in and of itself, aggravating the detrimental effects of work-related stress on employee well-being (Shen et al., 2021). Understanding these dynamics can assist organisations in creating policies that support a healthier and more productive workplace while reducing the negative impacts of harsh discipline and stress on employees (Vogel & Bolino, 2020).

**H4: Abusive Supervision has a mediating effect on relationships with Stress leading to emotional exhaustion among the subordinates.**

### 2.5 Abusive Supervisor, Gossip, and Emotional Exhaustion

Abusive supervision is defined as the level of aggressive nonverbal and vocal behaviors that subordinates perceive their superiors to be displaying (Khan & Khan, 2022). Regarding bodily contact, this rule does not apply. The interpretation of a superior's behavior may change depending on the circumstance. Additionally, different subordinates will view their leaders from different angles (Drewniak et al., 2020). Research has also shown that employees under abusive supervision leave the company more frequently and have a bad attitude about their careers and personal lives. Employees who experience greater aggression from their managers get emotionally exhausted and bully their coworkers (Menon & Priyadarshini, 2018).

In the social realm, gossip is a common occurrence that may be found in both public forums and one-on-one interactions. According to this study, gossip is an unpleasant explanation made while a third party is not there and is present (Agneessens & Labianca, 2022). According to earlier studies, employees spread both good and bad rumors about their coworkers inside their own teams, and the bad rumors are directed toward those employees who have fewer friends (Raza et al., 2023a).
Additionally, research has shown that spreading rumors about coworkers can help to unwind staff members and foster a sense of camaraderie inside an organization. Women are known to promote conversation in same-gender interactions in order to draw social comparisons (Hoffner, 2020). Therefore, based on empirical and theoretical data, we anticipate that unfavorable supervisor feelings (as an emotional reaction to subordinates' negative gossip) will result in abusive supervision (Naeem et al., 2019). As a result, employees may resort to gossip as a coping mechanism. It is proved that abusive supervisors have a detrimental impact on the relationship between gossip and emotional exhaustion, supporting our premise that they cause employees to have unfavorable ideas and feelings about their employers (Aboramadan et al., 2021b).

**H5: Abusive Supervisor has a mediating effect on relationship with Gossip leading toward Emotional Exhaustion among subordinates.**

### 2.6 Abusive Supervisor, Cynicism, and Emotional Exhaustion

The skepticism employees harbor towards their organization is often expressed as organizational cynicism. Such negative sentiment may arise from an array of unfavorable conditions experienced by workers, which may include substandard performance evaluations, inadequate work environments, or ambiguous organizational policies, among other factors (Wilkerson et al., 2008). The change process can also contribute to organizational cynicism. An employee may lose trust in the company if he believes that the change is not going well (Sguera et al., 2022).

According to James et al., (2016), Employees can criticize management or the organization with cynicism. Cynicism is associated with negative traits including loneliness and a lack of hope. Kuo's (2010) & Dean et al., (1998) defined cynicism which prompted a variety of related studies, including an examination of cynicism's impact on "Chinese employees" to gauge their level of cynicism. As a result, we based our conclusions on the definitions of cynicism. Considerations include lengthening workdays, growing workloads, inadequate management, and new workplace agreements (Alsadaaan et al., 2021).

Cynical workers frequently blame their managers, bosses, and governing bodies for bad things that happen to them, especially when there is poor organizational growth and insufficient adaptation (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). These individuals lack faith in managerial practices and feel that their concerns go unheard by those in authority, consequently leading to subpar or even absent performance (Wanous et al., 2000).

Social ideals, environmental factors, and interpersonal relationships all have an impact on people's opinions, attitudes, and behaviors. Although Pollock et al., (2000) suggest that people and the social circumstances in which they live have similar functions to connections and nodes in a larger network. I'm not sure that "social information theory" explains how or when influence originates. The network needs nodes to meet the requirements of people's social and psychological well-being (Bogaerts et al., 2021). The following reasons make it reasonable to assume the link between gossip and cynicism as a result: Gossip is accompanied by contextual information shared by bystanders and
gossipers. (DiFonzo et al., 1994). Social context is required for the gossip-based dissemination of information. by (Rosnow & Georgoudi, 1985)

Existing research consistently demonstrates that cynicism, whether in a workplace or personal relationship, negatively influences an individual's emotional well-being. Abusive supervision fosters cynicism among subordinates, which in turn leads to 'Emotional Exhaustion (Raza et al., 2023a).’ A direct link exists among these variables: abusive supervision, cynicism, and emotional exhaustion. While previous studies have confirmed the adverse effects of cynicism on positive workplace behavior, our investigation will specifically explore the potential negative role of abusive supervision concerning cynicism and its subsequent impact on emotional exhaustion (Yu et al., 2020).

**H6: Abusive Supervisor has a mediating effect on relationships with Cynicism leading towards Emotional Exhaustion among subordinates.**

**CONCEPTUAL MODEL**

**Figure No 1: Conceptual Model**
3. Methodology

3.1 Population and sample size

In this investigation, the selected sample size exceeds 10,000 individuals, as the research is confined to Karachi, Pakistan—a city with an estimated population exceeding 24 million. Utilizing a convenience sampling strategy focused on the banking sector, the study aims to include participants from various banks. Given the convenience of data collection from banking professionals in Karachi, we gathered primary data. Considering the expansive target population, the Raosoft.com sampling method suggests that a sample size of 377 is sufficient for this study, accounting for a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level.

3.2 Questionnaire design

Data for this research was gathered via a structured questionnaire featuring close-ended, multiple-choice questions to facilitate efficient response times and straightforward analysis. The questionnaire will be completed by a diverse cohort of employees and students, thereby enabling the exploration of variable relationships. Employing a Likert scale, each question will offer respondents a choice among five options: 1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly Agree. This structured response format is designed to aid in the identification of relationships among the variables under study. Cynicism and abusive supervision were measured by adopting the scale of (Ezeh et al., 2018), and emotional exhaustion was measured by adopting the scale of (Schaufeli et al., 2020). Stress items were measured by the scale of (Liu et al., 2022). Beyond gathering responses from participants, the data will be subjected to statistical analyses using Smart PLS V.3, employing techniques like reliability testing, regression, and correlation to ascertain if the study addresses an existing research gap and fulfills its stated objectives. The relationships among independent, mediating, and dependent variables will be assessed following the sample size. (Ozgur et al., 2015)

4. Findings and Results

4.1 Measurement Model

Initially, the measurement model underwent evaluation for both reliability and validity, the outcomes of which are displayed in Table 1. The outer loadings for the independent variables (cynicism, stress, and gossip), the dependent variable (emotional exhaustion), and the mediating variables (abusive supervisor) all exceed 0.7, corroborating the dataset's reliability across these variable categories. Internal consistency is quantified through composite reliability—akin to how Cronbach's alpha functions—which represents the variance discrepancy between the aggregate scale score and the cumulative real score variance. As indicated in Table 1, the figures for composite reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and rho-A substantiate that all values meet the criteria for adequacy. According to Fornell & Larcker (1981), Numerous recent assessments assert that they do not invariably demonstrate an absence of discriminant validity in typical research settings. An alternate methodology for gauging discriminant validity is the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, derived from the multitrait-multimethod matrix. This specialized technique was employed to evaluate
discriminant validity, and the findings are presented in Table 3. Here, the HTMT value surpasses the 0.85 threshold, indicating that discriminant validity presents a concern (Hair et al., 2013). The strongest HTMT correlation in the aforementioned table, 0.836 for emotional weariness and cynicism, demonstrates a sufficient level of discriminant validity and displays a respectable level of the measuring model.

Figure No2: SEM Analysis
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>loadings&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>AVE&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>CR&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>rho&lt;sub&gt;A&lt;/sub&gt;&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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<td></td>
<td>AS4</td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>AS5</td>
<td>0.856</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AS6</td>
<td>0.935</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AS7</td>
<td>0.874</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>AS8</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AS9</td>
<td>AS10</td>
<td>AS11</td>
<td>AS12</td>
<td>AS13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>0.934</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td>0.874</td>
<td>0.728</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional Exhaustion</th>
<th>EE1</th>
<th>EE2</th>
<th>EE3</th>
<th>EE4</th>
<th>EE5</th>
<th>EE6</th>
<th>EE7</th>
<th>EE8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td>0.832</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td>0.754</td>
<td>0.894</td>
<td>0.904</td>
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</table>

### Table No 2: Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abusive Supervisor</th>
<th>Cynicism</th>
<th>Emotional Exhaustion</th>
<th>Gossip</th>
<th>Stress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abusive Supervisor</td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynicism</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.768</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>0.675</td>
<td>0.658</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossip</td>
<td>0.676</td>
<td>0.587</td>
<td>0.675</td>
<td>0.948</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>0.786</td>
<td>0.567</td>
<td>0.768</td>
<td>0.765</td>
<td>0.853</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table No 3: Hetrotrait-monotrait (HTMT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abusive Supervisor</th>
<th>Cynicism</th>
<th>Emotional Exhaustion</th>
<th>Gossip</th>
<th>Stress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abusive Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynicism</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>0.543</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossip</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>0.367</td>
<td>0.667</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>0.765</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>0.754</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Structural Model

Evaluation of the structural model was conducted using bootstrapping methods with a sample size of 5,000, focusing on the p-value, beta coefficient, and associated t-values. Table 4 delineates the outcomes for each hypothesis. It reveals that Hypothesis 1 (H1) is supported, albeit with a negative effect, as indicated by (b = -0.884; t = 7.456, p = 0.000), thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. For the second hypothesis, a significant association between gossip and emotional exhaustion was found, mediated by an abusive supervisor (b = 0.943, t = 7.463, p = 0.004); hence, H2 is affirmed and the null hypothesis is dismissed. The third hypothesis is also substantiated by the data, with values (beta = 0.565, t = 9.836, p = 0.000), suggesting a positive beta value and a significance level under 0.05, thereby endorsing H3. The fourth hypothesis demonstrates a significant relationship between stress and emotional exhaustion, indicated by (beta = 0.802, t = 3.693, p = 0.000), and thus, H4 is upheld while the null hypothesis is rejected. Conversely, the fifth hypothesis is negated due to a negative beta value and a significance level exceeding acceptable bounds (b = -0.634, t = 0.576, p = 0.587); therefore, H5 is rejected and the null hypothesis stands. Finally, the table indicates that Hypothesis 6 (H6) is validated, yet it exhibits a negative effect due to a negative beta value; however, the significance level is less than 0.05. This is represented by (b = -0.446, t = 4.874, p = 0.004).

Table No 4: Result of Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: Stress→Abusive Supervisor→Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>-0.884</td>
<td>7.456</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: Gossip→Abusive Supervisor→Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>0.943</td>
<td>4.763</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Cynicism→Abusive Supervisor→Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>0.565</td>
<td>9.836</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4: Stress→Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>0.802</td>
<td>3.693</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**H5: Gossip \( \rightarrow \) Emotional Exhaustion**  
-0.634  0.576  Rejected  0.587

**H6: Gossip \( \rightarrow \) Emotional Exhaustion**  
-0.436  4.874  Rejected  0.004

**Figure No 3: SEM Analysis R Values**

**Table No 4: Q^2 and R^2 value**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$Q^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>0.463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive Supervisor</td>
<td>0.565</td>
<td>0.364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table above presents the results of cross-validated redundancy, as determined through blindfolding procedures. Emotional exhaustion is explained to the tune of 58.9% by the presence of an abusive supervisor ($R^2 = 0.589$), and conversely, emotional exhaustion accounts for 56.5% of the variation in the overall model ($R^2 = 0.565$). These $R^2$ values, which are 0.589 and 0.565, exceed the benchmark value of 0.26 as suggested by Cohen (1998), thereby confirming the model’s significance. In addition, Q2 was calculated using cross-validated redundancy methods for this research. As displayed in the table, both Q2 values surpass zero: emotional exhaustion is at 0.463 and abusive supervisor is at 0.364 thereby establishing the predictive relevance of the model.

4.3 Discussion

The findings provide substantial insights into the relationships between variables such as abusive supervision, gossip, stress, and emotional exhaustion, which were hypothesized at the outset. Our first hypothesis, which postulated a relationship between an unspecified variable and emotional exhaustion, was supported but demonstrated a negative effect. This negative relationship is congruent with prior studies that have shown adverse outcomes associated with various workplace variables (Halbesleben & Bowler, 2007). However, the negative effect necessitates further exploration to identify the mitigating factors. The second hypothesis indicated a significant relationship between gossip and emotional exhaustion, mediated by an abusive supervisor. This finding echoes earlier research by Brown & Mitchell, (2010), who established that abusive supervision could act as a conduit for various stressors, including gossip, thereby exacerbating emotional exhaustion.

Our data robustly supported the third hypothesis. This complements existing literature such as the work by Williams and Smith (2018), where similar positive relationships were found in high-stress occupations.

The fourth hypothesis also gained empirical support; stress was significantly related to emotional exhaustion. This outcome aligns well with traditional stress theories like the Job Demand-Control Model (Karasek, 1979), signifying the detrimental impact of stress on emotional well-being. Contrary to the other findings, the fifth hypothesis was rejected. This could be an anomaly or may suggest the presence of other moderating variables, as discussed in earlier inconclusive findings by Taylor et al., (2020).

Finally, the sixth hypothesis was validated but exhibited a negative effect. Even though the effect is negative, the relationship remains significant, resonating with Seidler et al., (2014) findings that some workplace factors may have a paradoxical effect on emotional exhaustion. In conclusion, our findings contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge and have crucial implications for both research and practice. Future research might look into the negative aspects uncovered in Hypotheses 1 and 6, to delve deeper into the complexities of these relationships.
5.1 Managerial implications

The findings of this research not only contribute to academic literature but also offer valuable insights for organizational management. Below are some of the key managerial implications derived from the study's outcomes: The results indicate that factors like abusive supervision and workplace gossip contribute significantly to emotional exhaustion among employees. Managers need to be cognizant of their leadership style and the kind of work environment they are fostering. Emotional exhaustion is detrimental to both employee well-being and organizational productivity (Halbesleben & Bowler, 2007). The mediating role of abusive supervision in the relationship between workplace gossip and emotional exhaustion suggests that curbing such supervisory behavior could alleviate emotional strain on subordinates. Leadership training programs aimed at improving managerial conduct could be a step in the right direction (Brown & Mitchell, 2010). Given the robust relationship between stress and emotional exhaustion, organizations could benefit from implementing stress management programs. Such interventions should aim to improve job design and work-life balance, consistent with the Job Demand-Control Model (Karasek, 1979). While most of the factors studied had a negative impact on emotional exhaustion, some hypotheses indicated positive effects as well. Organizations could aim to identify and promote such positive factors, which would enhance employee engagement and productivity (Williams & Smith, 2018). Given that one of our hypotheses was not supported, this could be an indication that existing HR policies may not adequately address all the factors contributing to emotional exhaustion. A re-evaluation and adjustment of HR policies might be beneficial (Taylor et al., 2020). The study found that some variables have a paradoxical impact on emotional exhaustion. Managers should be cautious while interpreting such factors and consider more holistic approaches for employee well-being (Pihl-Thingvad et al., 2019).

5.2 Limitation

The current study presents some limitations that warrant consideration. Firstly, the scope of this investigation is confined to a specific set of variables, including stress, cynicism, and gossip, with the mediating effect of abusive supervision on emotional exhaustion. Consequently, the research framework may not encapsulate the full spectrum of factors that contribute to emotional exhaustion.

Secondly, the study leans on subordinates' subjective assessments of abusive behavior by supervisors, thereby possibly not capturing the actual frequency of abusive supervision. This limitation may circumscribe the applicability of the managerial implications derived from our findings. Future research could ameliorate this shortcoming by incorporating multiple perspectives from within workgroups, potentially achieving a consensus regarding the prevalence of abusive supervisory behaviors. Lastly, it should be noted that collective perceptions of abusive supervision may not necessarily reflect the true frequency of such behavior by supervisors. However, the shared viewpoints within a workgroup could have considerable influence on the management of abusive supervision and emotional exhaustion. If a consensus among workgroup members emerges, indicating frequent abusive behaviors by supervisors, organizations may need to undertake specific
supervisor-centric interventions. Additionally, they should create supportive environments that help mitigate stress, gossip, and cynicism among employees. By addressing these limitations, future research could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting emotional exhaustion and the mechanisms through which abusive supervision operates. (Meurs & Perrewé, 2011).

5.3 Future recommendation

The present study, while comprehensive, is not exhaustive in the variables it explores, leaving room for future inquiry. Subsequent researchers might consider delving deeper into the internal and external ramifications of stress, gossip, and cynicism. Specifically, they could examine the consequences of these variables on project delays, failures, and even the successful implementation of complex systems like Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). Moreover, future research could focus on devising effective strategies to enhance the dynamics between supervisors and subordinates, whether in academic settings involving students or in professional contexts with employees. Exploratory studies might consider the utility of third-party interventions or other mediating factors to improve these relationships.

6. References


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