

## Mediating Role of Organizational Citizenship Behavior in the Relationship with Abusive Supervision and Employees' Innovative Self-Efficacy in Shiraz University of Medical Sciences

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** The aim of this study was to explain the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior variable in the relationship between abusive supervision and innovative self-efficacy.

**Methods:** This is a correlational descriptive study using structural equations modelling. The research sample consisted of 200 employed staff of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences who were selected by stratified random sampling method. The basic tools of this research consisted of 3 scales including Tepper's abusive supervision, organizational citizenship behavior developed by Lin et al., and employees' innovative self-efficacy scale of Tierney & Farmer and Dörner. To examine the validity and correlational analysis, SPSS (version 22) was used. For structural equation modeling (SEM) and also for the model fitness, the Lisrel (version 8.1) was used.

**Results:** Findings indicated that there was a significant relationship between all variables. Also, there was a negative and significant effect on the employees' organizational citizenship behavior ( $t\text{-value}=-3.96$ ,  $\text{sig}=0.0001$ ). In addition, organizational citizenship behavior had a positive and significant effect on the employees' innovative self-efficacy ( $t\text{-value}=5.10$ ,  $\text{sig}=0.0001$ ). Therefore, organizational citizenship behavior has a mediating role in the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' innovative self-efficacy.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, it could be concluded that managers of this organization, and even other organizations, can increase supportive supervisory behaviors and decrease abusive behaviors and provide the conditions for the development of organizational citizenship behavior among the employees, thus creating the feeling of innovative self-efficacy through development of the capability to offer and implement new ideas. In this way, they may improve the quality of performance in the organization and provide the context for further development of the organization and enhancing its efficiency and responsiveness to environmental expectations.

**Keywords:** Abusive Supervision, Innovative Self-efficacy, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Health Management Behavior.

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### Introduction

Supervision can occur in various levels and aspects of educational systems, so that by improving the performance, it provides the context for the success of these systems. Kilminster et al. (1), Evans et al. and (2) Shim (3) define supervision as the process of encouraging and provision of guidance and feedback on the issues of personal, professional and educational development in order to improve the performance. In this process, success in fulfilling organizational goals and implementation plans is insured (4). However, supervisors should fulfill various responsibilities (5). If, instead of fulfilling responsibilities, the supervisors is engaged

in negative and abusive behaviors, they have adopted abusive supervision.

Abusive supervision refers to “subordinates’ perceptions of the extent to which their supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors -except for physical abuse-against them” (6). Generally, abusive supervision leads to numerous negative consequences for the organization including job stresses or behavioral deviations in the employees (7), so that they lose their motivation for work (8). Under such circumstances, it seems that they not only may not perform their regular duties, but also cannot be expected to fulfill the duties and behaviors beyond their role, that is

“organizational citizenship behavior”.

Organizational citizenship behavior is a set of voluntary behaviors carried out although they are not a part of a person's responsibilities, and these behaviors improve the functioning of the organization (9-13). An example of organizational citizenship behaviors includes compliance with organizational norms, helping the employees, refusing to complain about the shortage of resources, etc. (14). The most reliable categorization of organizational citizenship behaviors, which has been used and emphasized in most studies, is the one introduced by Organ. He categorizes organizational citizenship behavior into five aspects of conscientiousness, altruism, civic virtue, sportsmanship, and courtesy.

Researchers believe that organizational citizenship behaviors in today's world are highly important for all organizations because these behaviors are voluntary and are not motivated by reward (13, 15-17). Thus, they reduce the need for formal, direct and close control (18-21). It should be noted that the main method of promoting these behaviors is using informal and indirect methods (22, 23). It seems that the development of this capability can lead to the enhancement of positive behaviors such as the tendency to exhibit innovation and the feeling of innovative self-efficacy.

Innovation refers to originality and fulfillment of new approaches and accumulation of knowledge which include three steps of acquisition of knowledge, production of ideas and implementation of the solution (24) which includes creativity (25, 26). Its prerequisite is the development of the feeling of innovative self-efficacy in individuals. Innovative self-efficacy refers to the individuals' feeling of having the capability to present and implement new ideas (27).

Innovation can lead to the technical, economic and social development of organizations (28) and increase their fitness to the environmental conditions (29). Various personal, group and organizational factors affect the development of innovation (30-32). In addition, managers by facilitating and helping to create new work ideas and methods among employees, can increase innovation (26).

Various studies have been conducted regarding the relationship between each of the research variables and innovation. For instance, research has shown that there is a negative and significant relationship between abusive supervision and decline in supports and also between the supervisors and subordinates and organizational citizenship behavior (20, 33, 34). Also, there is a positive and significant

relationship between the employees' organizational citizenship behavior and innovation (35-38). In addition, abusive supervision has a negative and significant effect on the employees' innovation and creativity (39, 40). Studies indicate that so far no research has been conducted regarding the aim of this research, which is determining the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior variable in the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' innovative self-efficacy. Accordingly, given the research and theoretical background, the conceptual model of the research can be seen in ure 1.

## Methods

This is correlational descriptive research using structural equations modeling (SEM) because this method studies the direct and indirect causal structural relationships between variables by using a correlational design. In the proposed model, the abusive supervision variable has been introduced as an independent or exogenous variable and the organizational citizenship behavior variable has been assumed to be a mediating variable that affects the variable of innovative behavior. The statistical population consists of all the staff employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences that worked in the year 2018 (approximately 420); Of them, 200 staff were selected by using a stratified random sampling method and based on Morgan's table. It should be noted that the benchmark minimum sample size to perform the structural equation model is 200 people. It should be noted that the staff of the 9 deputies of the University of Medical Sciences, participated equally in the study. Questionnaires were distributed randomly within each department and the willingness of people was the inclusion criteria to participate in the research. Accordingly, 225 questionnaires were distributed and 200 questionnaires were returned.

The tools used in this research included the abusive supervision scale that includes 15 items designed to measure abusive behaviors of supervisors. This questionnaire was developed by Tepper in 2000. The English questionnaire was translated into Persian. This tool has suitable validity, and its reliability coefficient is 0.90. In this research, the validity and reliability of this tool were calculated and the results indicated that its validity coefficient was between 0.43 and 0.67 and its significance level was 0.0001; also, its reliability, based on Cronbach's alpha, was 0.89 which shows that this scale has appropriate reliability. Organizational citizenship behavior scale includes 20 items adapted from the works of Podsakoff et al. (15) and Moisson (17). This scale was developed

to measure organizational citizenship behavior. It should be noted that this tool was translated from English into Persian and has a very suitable ;its reliability coefficient was reported 0.95 in Lin et al.'s study. In this research, statistical analyses showed that the validity coefficient of this scale was between 0.41 and 0.62 at its significance level was 0.0001. Also, its reliability based on Cronbach's alpha was 0.89 which shows that this scale has asuitable reliability. The third instrument was Innovative Self-efficacy Scale that was translated from English into Persian and includes the two aspects of creating ideas and implementing ideas. The aspect of creating ideas has been developed by Tierny and Farmer and the aspect of implementing the ideas has been developed by Dorner (27). His studies show that the validity coefficient of this questionnaire is between 0.66 and 0.84, and its reliability, based on Cronbach's alpha, is 0.85. The validity and reliability of this scale were calculated and the results showed that the validity coefficient of this scale at the significant level (0.001) was between 0.55 and 0.75, and its reliability, based on Cronbach's alpha, was 0.83 which shows that this scale has appropriate reliability.

We also used SPSS (version 22) to examine the validity and correlational analysis of data and also the Lisrel (version 8.1) to examine the structural equation model and determine the model fitness. Also, to examine the fit of the model, we used the indicators chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), the chi-square/degrees of freedom, the incremental fit index (IFI), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) . The appropriate level of indicators in the chi-square/degrees of freedom was less than 3; IFI and CFI were greater than .90; and RMSEA was less than 0.10 (41). It should be noted that in order to follow the research ethics, after obtaining the necessary permits, we distributed a questionnaire among the staff and the participants were assured of confidentiality of their information (42). In addition, each person was given one day to complete the

questionnaires and then the questionnaires were collected.

## Results

Based on the findings, among the sample individuals (200), there were 112 females and 88 males. In addition, based on work experience, 14 participants had less than 5 years of experience, 59 persons between 5 and 10 years, and 127 persons more than 10 years. Analysis showed that the abusive supervision score was lower than the average and the scores on the dimensions of innovative self-efficacy and organizational citizenship behavior were higher than the average (3). Among the dimensions of self-efficacy, the highest mean is related to the ability to implement the idea and the highest mean in the dimension of organizational citizenship behavior is related to altruism. Next, before the data obtained using structural equations modeling were analyzed, the correlation between the variables was calculated. The results indicated that there was a negative and significant relationship between abusive supervision and employees' innovative self-efficacy and various aspects of their organizational citizenship behavior, except for the aspect of altruism. However, a positive and significant relationship was observed among other research variables (Table 1).

It should be noted that after studying the correlations between the research variables, their causal relationships were studied by using structural equations modeling. The results obtained from the structural model of research variables based on t-values are shown in Figure 1.

Based on Figure 2, abusive supervision had a negative and significant effect on the employees' organizational citizenship behavior (t-value=-3.96). In addition, the employees' organizational citizenship behavior had a positive and significant effect on the employees' innovative self-efficacy (t-value=5.10).

Figure 3, which presents the significance coefficients of the research model, shows the

**Table 1:** The correlations matrix between research variables

Variable	Mean	Std	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Abusive supervision	2.07	0.53								
2 Creating ideas	4.01	0.56	-0.12**							
3 Implementing ideas	4.12	0.52	-0.24**	0.54**						
4 Altruism	4.48	0.50	-0.10	0.29**	0.21**					
5 Conscientiousness	3.85	0.67	-0.21**	0.14**	0.40**	0.34**				
6 Sportsmanship	4.11	0.62	-0.31**	0.35**	0.39**	0.27**	0.36**			
7 Courtesy	4.27	0.44	-0.25**	0.43**	0.21**	0.47**	0.27**	0.50**		
8 Civic virtue	4.07	0.52	-0.40**	0.41**	0.48**	0.39**	0.32**	0.40**	0.52**	

P<0/01\*\*, P<0/05\*

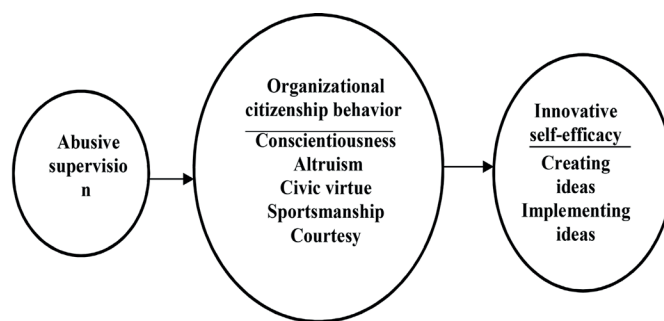


Figure 1: The conceptual model of the research

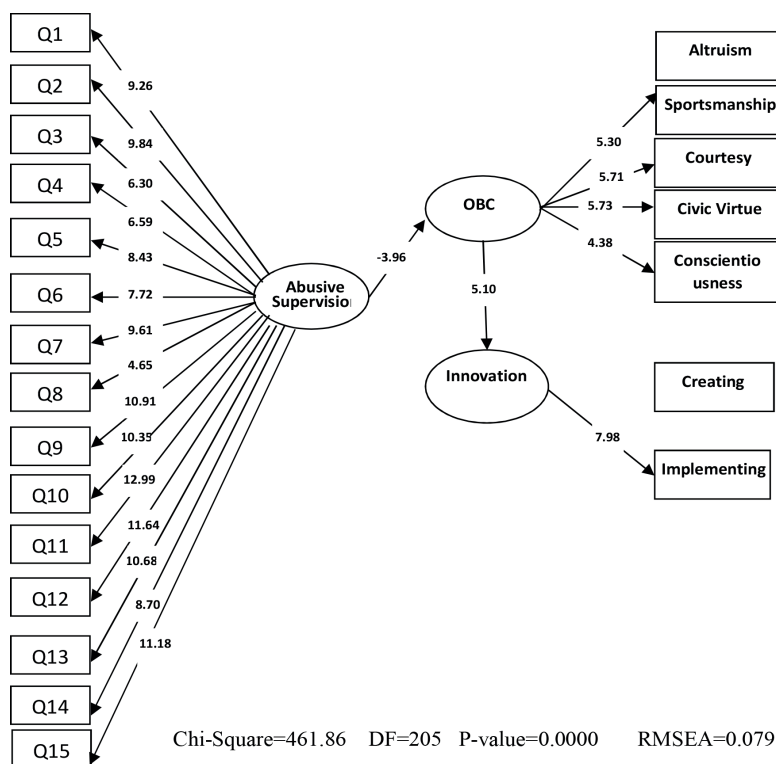


Figure 2: The structural model with the main components based on t-values

significant relationships between the research variables. It should be noted that in Table 2 the results of model fitting have been presented. As seen, Chi-square to the degree of freedom ratio was less than 3. RMSEA index was also less than 0.09 and NFI, CFI and IFI indices also had values above 0.9. On the whole, all these indices demonstrated suitable goodness of fit for the model.

### Discussion

The aim of the present research was to study the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior variable in the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' innovative self-efficacy. The results of statistical analysis indicated that the rate of abusive supervision was lower than the average and this indicates favorable supervising status at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. In addition,

the scores of organizational citizenship behavior and innovative self-efficacy of the staff of this organization were higher than the average; this finding indicates the favorable status of such behaviors at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. The reason for this finding may be the appropriate supervisory behavior of its managers. Also, the organizational culture of the University of Medical Sciences and other individual and organizational factors can also be effective (26-32), but these factors have not been examined in this study. In this way, the results show that abusive supervision has a negative and significant effect on the employees' organizational citizenship behavior. This finding indicates that if the supervision practiced by supervisors and managers in the organization is effective and encourages the employees to participate effectively in fulfillment of organizational goals (3) and if it is free from abuse of position and negative

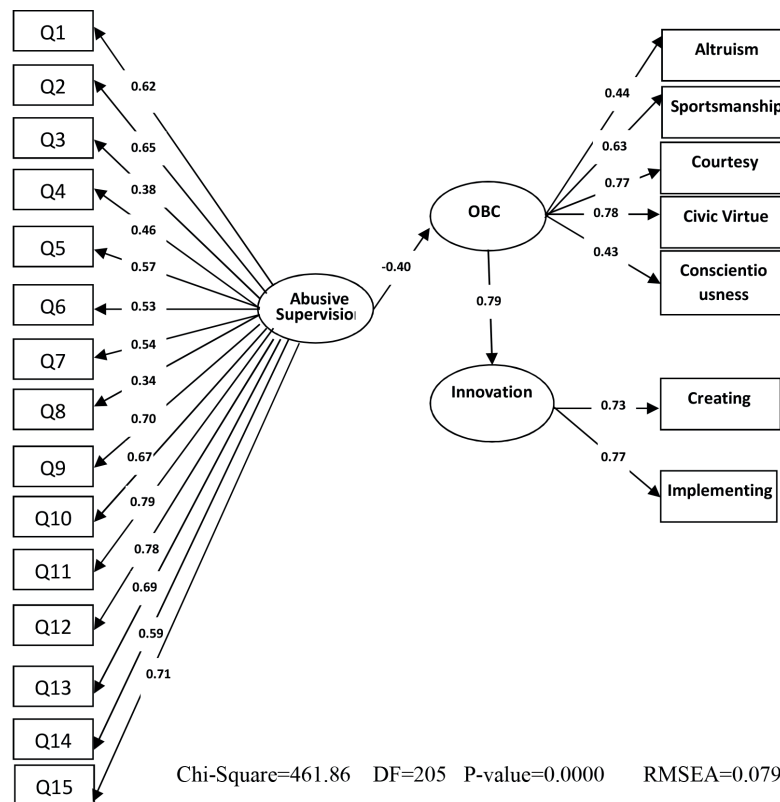


Figure 3: The structural model with the main components based on significance coefficients

Table 2: The final model fit indices

Recommended cut-off values	CMIN/df < 3	df	CMIN	IFI >0.90	CFI >0.90	NFI >0.90	RMESA <0.09
Default model	2.25	205	461.86	0.94	0.94	0.90	0.079

supervisory behaviors, it will lead to individuals' tendency toward citizenship behavior, i.e. voluntary behaviors beyond the specified tasks including conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship, and courtesy. The probable reason for this finding is that the support of supervisors and managers in the process of supervision over the employees' activities can encourage the individuals to exhibit citizenship behavior, but if such support is not provided and supervisors and managers behave unfairly and do not care about showing such behaviors, the individuals' tendency to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior is decreased. On the other hand, it seems that if supervisors and managers do not observe ethical considerations during the process of supervision over their employees' activities, abuse their position, and show negative behaviors, due to contagious nature of such behaviors, individuals may turn to deviant behavior and have no tendency to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior. Also based on Bandura's Social Learning Theory (43), people learn from interactions with others in a social context by observing the behaviors of others.

In fact, people learn through observation, imitation, and modeling. Unconsciously in many people, learning is done positively and negatively and will have beneficial or detrimental consequences. This finding is in line with the studies conducted by Fakhar (33), Kacmar et al. (34) and Bowler et al. (13). Because Fakhar (33) found that abusive supervision is positively associated with turnover intention and can be effective in reducing organizational citizenship behavior. Kacmar et al. (34) also found that there was a significant relationship between citizenship behavior and relationship conflict between the employees and supervisors. According to Bowler et al. (13), the quality of the relationship between the manager and staff influences the employees' views of organizational citizenship behavior.

Another finding of this research is the positive and significant effect of organizational citizenship behavior on the employees' innovative self-efficacy. Based on this finding, if organizational citizenship behavior is promoted among the employees in all its aspects including conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship and courtesy, individuals tend to

exhibit behaviors that increase production and efficiency and lead to the organization's success (12, 13). Under such conditions, they try to develop their innovation capability in order to offer new ideas and implement them and enhance the quality of services, efficiency and help the organization gain competitive advantage (43), the result of which being creation of the feeling of innovative self-efficacy. Therefore, the probable reason for this finding is that when a high level of organizational citizenship behavior is demonstrated, individuals cannot be indifferent to organizational issues; consequently, they tend to take actions which lead to improvement and development of personal and organizational performance and help the organization (44). Therefore, they try to develop their innovative capability and use their innovative capability to offer and implement new ideas in order to resolve problems and improve the condition of the organization. Therefore, under these conditions, their feeling of self-efficacy in presenting and implementing new ideas is developed. Of course, this should also be considered that often presenting new ideas and making it operational is voluntary. Therefore, those who feel more responsible are more likely to be innovative in the organization. This finding is in line with the studies conducted by Sharma and Bhatnagar (35), Yan and Yan (36) Turnipseed and Turnipseed (37), and Newton, Blanton and Will (38). Sharma and Bhatnagar (35) found that organizational citizenship behavior is a strong predictor of innovative work behavior among knowledge workers. In addition, Yan and Yan (36) showed that civic virtue had a significant and positive relationship with innovation. Turnipseed and Turnipseed (37) found that the dimension of citizenship behavior was positively linked to innovative ideas. Newton et al. (38) showed that there was a relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and psychological communication with the employees' innovation.

Considering the above points and based on the findings, it could be concluded that organizational citizenship behavior has a mediating role in the relationship between abusive supervision and innovative self-efficacy in the employees of the Shiraz department medical education. Therefore, it could be concluded that managers of this organization can encourage proper supervisory culture, in which the most important cultural factor is the improvement of managers' behaviors, especially the greater use of supportive behaviors towards the employees. They can find out the problems of their unit staff by holding periodic meetings. They can trust the staff more by having more informal interactions and

direct contact with them. Such activities can reduce the negative side of supervision and encourage people to become more involved in corporate citizenship behaviors. They can also provide an innovative context by giving their employees more freedom to act. Using the potential of non-formal education can also be effective in changing the dominant culture at the University of Medical Sciences to improve the supervision behaviors, encourage organizational citizenship behavior, and innovation. In this way, they may improve the quality of performance in the organization and provide the context for further development of the organization and enhance its efficiency and responsiveness to environmental expectations.

**Conflict of Interest:** None declared.

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