The Effect of Abusive Management Practices on Employee's Intention to Quit: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

In the workplace, manager's abusive behaviors, such as ridicule or silent treatments towards their subordinates, are widely observed but have received few investigations in China than in the developed world (Wu et al., 2009). Nurtured under the Confucian culture and collectivist social norms, those older generations of employees might think abusive management practices as derived from power and thus to endure them as the managerial normality. However, the millennial employees, especially those born in post-1990's who embrace freedom and equity doctrines ever since, are more likely to resist any abusive behavior regarding employment relations. This paper aims to investigate how highly educated neo generation responds to abusive supervision as well as the likelihood to quit from their jobs if such abuse happened. Using a sample of 376 young employees, we found that leaders' abusive supervision indeed had a positive impact on the employee's intention to withdraw from current employment relations. Furthermore, emotional exhaustion plays a partial mediating role between leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates' turnover intention. However, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) moderates this mechanism in a counter-intuitive way, i.e., the higher quality of LMX, the more likely would abusive management facilitate turnover via emotional exhaustion. This may partially due to "in-group" subordinates having higher expectations from their supervisors, therefore the chance to experience strong cognitive dissonance would be also high. This study sheds lights on effective leadership in the new era.

Keywords: Abusive management practices, intention to quit, leader-member exchange, post-1990's employees.

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Preliminary, Comments Welcome.

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ABSTRACT

In the workplace, manager's abusive behaviors, such as ridicule or silent treatments towards their subordinates, are widely observed but have received few investigations in China than in the developed world (Wu et al., 2009). Nurtured under the Confucian culture and collectivist social norms, those older generations of employees might think abusive management practices as derived from power and thus to endure them as the managerial normality. However, the millennial employees, especially those born in post-1990's who embrace freedom and equity doctrines ever since, are more likely to resist any abusive behavior regarding employment relations. This paper aims to investigate how highly educated neo generation responds to abusive supervision as well as the likelihood to quit from their jobs if such abuse happened. Using a sample of 376 young employees, we found that leaders' abusive supervision indeed had a positive impact on the employee's intention to withdraw from current employment relations. Furthermore, emotional exhaustion plays a partial mediating role between leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates' turnover intention. However, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) moderates this mechanism in a counter-intuitive way, i.e., the higher quality of LMX, the more likely would abusive management facilitate turnover via emotional exhaustion. This may partially due to "in-group" subordinates having higher expectations from their supervisors, therefore the chance to experience strong cognitive dissonance would be also high. This study sheds lights on effective leadership in the new era.

KEY WORDS: Abusive management practices; Intention to quit; Leader-member Exchange; Post-1990's employees

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Questions

The study of negative leadership dates back early in the United States, with several unprecedented concepts such as destructive leadership and tyrant leadership. It is Tepper (2000) who coined the term of "Abusive Supervision", which inspired a series of studies on its definition, antecedents and consequences. According to Tepper (2006: 119), leaders' abusive supervision behaviors affect 13.6% of the employees and caused approximately $23.8 billion loss in the US. Whereas in China, abusive supervision practices are also widely observed in the workplace, by both insider employees and various outsiders. For example, Wu et al. (2009: 515) found that Chinese employees had a stronger perception of leaders' abusive behaviors than their counterparts working in Western hemisphere. But this happens profoundly within the new generations of Chinese employees, especially those post-1990's young workers with high education backgrounds. For them, a majority (67%) believed that "work-life balance" is very important, and they do not want to be interfered by managers during non-working hours (Dan, 2012). They weight more onto the value and interest of work than upon wage and benefits (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003). Raised in a much better living conditions and widely accepted high education, they seemed less likely than their parents and grandparents to tolerate manager's abusive supervision behavior.

A recent survey reported that the overall employee turnover rate was reaching 20.1% in 2016 from 17.7% one year early, and the number was going up to 25.1% for the high-tech sector normally dominated by younger people, and there were as high as 21.6% of these quits were labeled as voluntary.[3] Another survey revealed that the turnover rate of college graduates had remained very high for five successive years since 2013, and the percentage of quitting from their first job within half a year was 33% in 2018.[4] Li (2016) noticed that the younger the company's employees, the higher the average turnover rate. As we know, high turnover rate, in most cases, means high recruiting and

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[3] "2017 Turnover and Salary Adjustment Survey Report", released by www.51job.com, https://www.askci.com/news/hlw/20161216/11044883203.shtml.

[4] "Chinese College Graduates Employment Report 2019", released by MyCos Company, http://www.mycos.com.cn/ It is quite obvious that neo-generation of employees are less like to make commitment towards their first jobs. According to the "First Job Trend Insight" published by LinkedIn, employees' first job duration is getting shorter and shorter, 51 months for post-1970's employees, 43 months for post-1980's employees, 19 months for post-1990's employees and 7 months for post-1995' employees.

replacement costs. Furthermore, high voluntary turnover also signals something wrong with personnel policies and thus to a large extent damage employer's brand. Then, why are there so many neo-generation employees want to quit their first jobs so soon? What are the determinants for this increasing rate of voluntary turnover, given the evolution of work environments? In particular, to what extent and via which mechanism that leadership style, say abusive supervision behavior, influence those young workers' intention to quit?

1.2 What's New in This Paper

As compared with existing literature on this topic, this paper makes several new endeavors.

1. Focus on negative leadership behaviors in Chinese setting.

For most leadership research focused mainly on positive leadership styles, such as Transformational Leadership, Moral Leadership and Charismatic Leadership, etc. There are relatively less works on negative leadership and its consequences. In a few studies conducted by Chinese scholars, extreme negative leadership is often of interest, for example, Destructive Leadership. Nonetheless, extreme negative leadership is not common in reality, at least not that prevail. In contrast, abusive management behaviors, such as ridiculing and blaming subordinates publicly, are widely observed. In general, such abusive supervision should have negative effects in the workplace, like discouraging employee engagement and organizational commitment. As compared with Western scholars who have examined this issues for more than 20 years, Chinese fellows just started to pick it up in recent years.

2. Taking Post-1990's generation of employees, especially those with higher education degrees (bachelors and masters) as subjects.

Although domestic scholars have done relevant research on antecedents and consequences of abusive supervision, there are very few studies involving neo-generation employees, especially the post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds. The paper focuses on highly-educated employees born between 1990 and 1999 with a bachelor or higher degree. Based on Social Exchange Theory, Resource of Conservation Theory and Social Information Processing Theory, we shall discuss what their personalized work value is, how their mental state changes and why they intend to quit.

3. Propose the intensive moderating effect of LMX in different stages

In the related research of abusive supervision, scholars have different views on the moderating role of LMX. Some believe intensive moderating effect, while some others propose weak moderating effect. Based on the characteristics of post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds, this study decomposes LMX's intensive moderating effect into different stages, providing a new perspective for the study of abusive supervision and LMX.

1.3 Research Framework

The paper mainly studies the mechanism of Abusive Supervision on Turnover Intention of post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds, including six parts as follows.

Next section Literature Review summarizes previous research of the four main variables: Abusive Supervision, Emotional Exhaustion, LMX and Turnover Intention. Especially for Abusive Supervision, this part describes its definition, antecedents and consequences in details. Section 3 sets up Theoretical Framework, Research Hypotheses and Model Construction. We developed five primary hypotheses, including the main effect of Abusive Supervision on Turnover Intention, the mediating effect of Emotional Exhaustion and the moderating effect of LMX.

Section 4 describes Empirical Research Design and Data Collection Process. This part mainly introduces the selection of scales and the collection process of questionnaires. The four variables in this study were all measured by foreign authoritative scales. We translated and proofread the scales in details. In Section 5 we shall demonstrate Empirical Analysis and Results. Based on 376 questionnaires, regular Reliability Test and Validity Test were done, together with Correlation Analysis and Regression Analysis. Last section concluded this paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Abusive Supervision

2.1.1 Abusive Supervision Defined

Abusive Supervision was first defined by Tepper (2000). It refers to subordinates' perception of leaders' ridiculing or indifferent behaviors. Abusive supervision behaviors include ridiculing and blaming subordinates publicly; invading subordinates' privacy; disclosing subordinates' errors and failures occurred in the past; giving subordinates silent treatment; doubting subordinates' efforts at work, telling subordinates that he/she is incompetent and so on. There are four characteristics in terms of the definition of Abusive Supervision:

1. Subjectivity. According to Tepper's definition of Abusive Supervision, it is subordinates' subjective perception of leaders' behaviors. Different subordinates have different opinions and judgments about whether the leader's behavior is abusive supervision behavior. Certainly, this subjectivity also involves different degrees of judgement by different individuals.

2. Sustainability. Leaders' abusive supervision behaviors are relatively long-term and continuous. Occasional and accidental behaviors are excluded.

3. Non-physical behavior involved. Abusive supervision behaviors, such as public ridicule and silent treatment, are non-physical behaviors per se in an interactive sense. Physical behaviors are not included.

4. Behavioral. Abusive Supervision refers to behaviors that the leader has already shown. If the leader only shows motivation or intention to abuse subordinates, it does not belong to Abusive Supervision domain.

2.1.2 Antecedents of Abusive Supervision

1. Organizational Level Factors

Power Distance is an essential factor that affects Abusive Supervision. Sun et al. (2013: 47-48) believe that the impact of abusive supervision on leader identification is stronger when power distance is low. Hmieleski & Ensley (2007) believe that the uncertainty of the industry environment, within which a firm operates, is positively related to the frequency of leaders' abusive supervision behaviors. The reason is that leaders' emotions fluctuate with the rapid changes of an industry. Then leaders' negative

emotions are transferred down to their subordinates. The result can explain why leaders' abusive supervision behaviors are more frequent in the industries that change rapidly, such as finance industry and Internet industry.

Organizational Justice is another essential factor of Abusive Supervision. From subordinates' perception, Duan & Zhong (2005) believe that when subordinates perceive the fairness of the organization, they are more likely to give positive feedback of leaders and show positive organizational citizenship behaviors. Otherwise, they tend to give negative feedback and reduce positive extra-role behaviors. From leaders' perception, Tepper et al. (2006: 101-120) believe that procedural unfairness affects leaders' abusive supervision behaviors. When leaders perceive procedural unfairness (with respect to their superiors or policies), their self-esteem and self-efficacy decline, which leads to their negative emotions. Leaders with negative emotions are more likely to abuse subordinates.

2. Leaders' Characteristics

Leaders' personal characteristics are important factors connection with abusive supervision behaviors. Leaders' traits often affect their emotions and feelings at work. Their negative emotions will be transferred down to their subordinates, such as ridiculing, blaming or giving silent treatment to subordinates. According to the research of Aryee et al. (2007), female leaders have fewer abusive supervision behaviors, which might be caused by women's soft personality such as carefulness and conscientiousness. On the other hand, autocratic leaders are more likely to abuse subordinates. When autocratic leaders perceive unfairness, they tend to think their power is jeopardized and diminishing. Their negative emotions are therefore transferred down to subordinates. Tepper et al. (2006: 101-120) believes that depressive leaders have more abusive behaviors. Depressive leaders are more sensitive and irritable, so they are more likely to ridicule and blame their subordinates.

3. Subordinates

Subordinates' demographic features and backgrounds, emotions and performance are important factors that affect their perceptions of leaders' abusive supervision. As mentioned above, subordinates with different characteristics and performance levels have different perceptions of their leaders' abusive behaviors. Zhu et al. (2009) summarized the characteristics of subordinates who easily perceive leaders' abusive supervision. Subordinates with negative emotions, for example, depression, anxiety and less confidence, are more likely to regard leaders' ridicule and silent treatment as

abusive supervision. Whereas subordinates with low-performance levels and violations of workplace rules are often the target of leaders' dislike, even become scapegoat. As such, leaders are more likely to abuse them.

In terms of gender, Ouyang et al. (2015) believe that female subordinates have greater compliance and sufferance, so they are less likely to perceive leaders' abusive supervision. However, leaders' abusive supervision behaviors also happen more towards women due to their obedience and exercising restraint. According to Hofmann's (2012) research, women tend to obtain information based on others' evaluation. Leaders' abusive behaviors, if happened, would do more harm to women's self-esteem than men's. Therefore, female employees are not necessarily less likely to perceive leaders' abusive supervision in the workplace.

In terms of coping styles, subordinates often have two ways to cope with leaders' abusive supervision behaviors. One is indirect coping style, which means subordinates maintained the relationship with leaders through indirect communication. The other is direct coping style, which means subordinates communicate with leaders directly. These two styles will produce different effects. The indirect coping method can protect employees from the negative impacts of abusive supervision in the short term, but it will not help solve the problem fundamentally in the long term. In contrast, the direct coping style can reduce the negative impacts of abusive supervision in the long term. Liu et al. (2009) also discussed this issue in the domestic context. When subordinates perceive the leaders' abusive supervision behaviors, they will adopt a coping style to reduce the negative impacts such as emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. However, the coping style is subject to the subordinates' political skills. When the subordinate's political skill level is high, subordinates who use ingratiation behaviors can alleviate the negative impacts of leaders' abusive supervision. When the subordinate's political skill level is low, subordinates with ingratiation behaviors will aggravate the negative impacts of leaders' abusive supervision.

Subordinates' characteristics and coping behaviors are also mixed to affect leaders' abusive supervision behaviors. Tepper et al. (2001) believe that subordinates' negative coping styles, such as workplace deviations, will increase the negative impacts of abusive supervision. On the contrary, subordinates' positive coping styles, such as actively communicating with leaders and eliminating misunderstandings, will reduce leaders' abusive supervision behaviors. Tepper et al. (2002) also find that subordinates' personal traits play a moderating role between abusive supervision and subordinates'

coping styles. Responsible subordinates tend to adopt positive coping styles, while employees with weak sense of responsibility and low agreeableness tend to choose negative coping styles.

2.1.3 Consequences of Abusive Supervision

1. Emotion. The change of subordinates' cognition and emotions is direct consequences of abusive supervision. For instance, subordinates' job burnout increases and their organizational commitment decreases. Eventually, they are likely to quit. In terms of cognition, leaders' abusive supervision behaviors will reduce subordinates' self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as job security. If the leader does not see the efforts of the subordinate and tells the subordinate that he is incompetent, the subordinate will doubt their work ability, and his self-esteem will also decrease. In terms of emotions, leaders' abusive supervision behaviors can lead to subordinates' emotional exhaustion and psychological pressure. For example, if the leader blames his subordinate publicly to cover his own embarrassment, the subordinates will feel stressful.

2. In-role Behavior. Abusive Supervision reduces subordinates' task performance. Many scholars have argued this point of view, but they demonstrated different mediating and moderating effects. For example, Tepper (2000:178-187) believes that leaders' abusive supervision behaviors hurt subordinates' self-esteem and self-efficacy. Subordinates' job satisfaction will decrease. Social Exchange Theory predicts that subordinates will respond to leaders' abusive supervision behaviors with lower performance. However, the effect of abusive supervision on subordinates' in-role behaviors is influenced by multiple moderating variables. As Harris et al. (2007) believes, the work value perceived by subordinates will moderate this relationship. When subordinates think that their work is not so meaningful, the effect of abusive supervision on subordinates' in-role behaviors will be more pronounced.

3. Extra-role behavior. Abusive supervision can reduce extra-role behaviors such as organizational citizenship behaviors (Zellars et al., 2002). Wu et al. (2009: 510-516) believe that subordinates abused by leaders will lose their trust in their leaders, and their organizational citizenship behaviors will also decrease accordingly. However, this mechanism will become weaker for subordinates with higher degree of tradition abidance.

4. Possible Positive Effect. A few studies have shown that abusive supervision has some positive effects, though this sounds odd. To achieve a certain goal, some leaders

do use abusive supervision style, such as reminding subordinates of their past mistakes and failures in order to improve subordinates' sense of crisis. Liu & Wang (2013) argued that subordinates' performance level and organizational citizenship behaviors increased with leaders' abusive supervision. Lee et al. (2013) found that moderate level of abusive behaviors increases subordinates' creativity. Xu et al. (2015) shown that when leaders' abusive supervision level goes from medium to high, subordinates' anti-productive behaviors gradually decrease. But studies conducted in the East or in the West demonstrate mixed conclusions. In the East, power distance is generally higher, and subordinates have a stronger tolerance of leaders' abusive supervision behaviors. Therefore, leaders' abusive behaviors do not affect subordinates' emotions very much (Sun et al., 2013: 47-48).

2.2 Turnover Intention

Turnover Intention means that employees have the intention of leaving the current organization. Turnover Intention is so far the only variable to best predict employees' quitting behaviors (Mobley et al., 1979). Porter & Steers (1973) thought that Turnover Intention was employees' withdrawal behavior after their job satisfaction decreases. Mobley et al. (1978) argued that Turnover Intention was the sum of various factors. An employee usually incurs the idea of quitting when his/her job satisfaction decreases. Meanwhile, that dissatisfied employee will search for other possible jobs as he/she begins searching other opportunities. These combined effects will facilitate the intention to quit, which in turn will lead to their quitting behavior.

Turnover Intention is the result of various factors. In general, there are five main factors: 1 Environmental factors, such as job opportunities and the unemployment rate. At present, employees in China are less likely to quit because of the COVID-19 pandemic, dire macroeconomic environment and fewer job opportunities. 2 Organizational factors, such as the organizational size and industry classification. For example, the turnover intention of employees in the financial industry is higher than that of traditional industries. 3 Work factors, such as salary and benefits, working conditions, workload, job autonomy and leadership styles. In general, employees tend to retain in the organization with high salaries. Positive leadership styles, such as charismatic leadership, will reduce subordinates' intention to quit; while negative leadership styles, such as destructive leadership, will increase employees' intention to quit. 4 Demographic factors, such as age, gender, education, marital status and work

duration. Usually, married employees will consider the burden of the family with less intention to quit. The accumulation of firm-specific human capital with long tenure also decreases the likelihood of quitting. 5 Psychological factors, such as job satisfaction, job security and organizational commitment. Previous studies have shown that employees' job satisfaction is negatively correlated with their turnover intention and positively correlated with their retention intention (Hulin, 1966; Williams & Hazer, 1986). Employees' organizational commitment is also negatively correlated with their turnover intention (Frankas & Tetrick, 1989).

2.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional Exhaustion is defined as an employees' first psychological state caused by work pressure. After employees lose their trust in the organization and their interest in work (Maslach & Jackson, 1982), they are fatigue and exhausted both physically and psychologically. Furthermore, they seemed cannot return to the previous work state. Work stress could lead to job burnout. Job burnout has three dimensions: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Devaluation. Emotional Exhaustion is the most important dimension of Job Burnout.

2.3.1 Antecedents of Emotional Exhaustion

Work stress is an important source of emotional exhaustion. Under intense work pressure, if the leader forces his subordinate to continue to work, the subordinate will be emotionally exhausted. Previous studies have shown that the main causes of emotional exhaustion are as follows.

1. Personal Characteristics. Employee's gender, marital status, working years are important factors that affect their emotional exhaustion. Maslach & Jackson's (1981: 99-112) study of 1025 human resource service workers found that women are more likely to feel exhausted than men. Single and divorced employees feel exhausted more frequently than married people. Nonetheless, this is somewhat contradicting with Ouyang et al. (2015).

2. Interpersonal Relationship. Cherniss (1980) argued that the interpersonal relationships of employees at work, such as leaders' supportive behaviors and group cohesion, were conducive to reducing employees' emotional exhaustion. The research of Maslach & Pines (1977) found that frequent meetings help employees share their experiences and support each other. Then their emotional exhaustion level would

decrease.

3. Job Characteristics. Studies have shown that the nature of their jobs is an important factor that affects employees' emotional exhaustion level. Maslach (1976) and Mattingly (1977) argued that employees who are engaged in physically hazardous jobs have a higher level of emotional exhaustion.

4. Organizational Context. Freudenberger (1977) studied the relationship between promotion opportunities and emotional exhaustion. Whether there is a parallel or vertical job change, it would reduce and even prevent employees' emotional exhaustion. Reiser (1974) and Eisenberg (1975) studied police officers and found that job development opportunities and the competitive environment would increase employees' pressure, resulting in higher level of emotional exhaustion. As for organizational structural variables, Armstrong (1979) argued that in organizations with standard rules and concentrated decision-making processes, employees would have higher levels of emotional exhaustion. However, Maslach & Pines (1977: 100-112) found that employees in non-standardized and irregular projects had higher levels of emotional exhaustion.

2.3.2 Consequences of Emotional Exhaustion

Many studies have shown emotional exhaustion's impacts on employees' mental health, job performance and turnover intention. In terms of employees' physical and mental health, Pines & Maslach (1978) have shown that emotional exhaustion could increase employees' fatigue, illness and even drug abuse. Jayaratne et al. (1986) argued that emotional exhaustion would increase employees' frustration and anxiety, leading employees more irritable.

In terms of job performance, Maslach et al. (1986) found that employees' emotional exhaustion lead to high absenteeism, low job satisfaction and low production efficiency, which in turn lead to high turnover intention eventually. As for turnover intention, Cropanzano et al. (2003) and Zang (2008) argued that employees' emotional exhaustion would reduce their work input, task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors, which ultimately channel to their turnover intentions.

2.4 Leader-Member Exchange Relationship

LMX Relationship means "Exchange between leaders and subordinates based on the social relationship" (Grean & UhI-Bien, 1995). Traditional leadership theories are

focusing on either leaders' traits or behaviors. The implicit assumption is that leaders treat all subordinates in the same way. But LMX Theory illustrates that leaders will divide their subordinates into two types, "in-group" and "out-group". For the "in-group" subordinates, the leader will give them more trust, understanding and privileges, as well as work flexibility. More resources will also be allocated to the "in-group" subordinates. In contrast, for those "out-group" subordinates, the leader only maintains formal relations with them. Although scholars are still debating on the way and criteria with which leaders classify their subordinates into "in-group" and "out-group", it seems that similar personality traits and demographic characteristics count. Vecchio & Brazil (2007) simply shown that leaders are more inclined to classify subordinates with same gender as "in-group" members.

2.4.1 Antecedents of LMX Relationship

1. Organizational level factors. Previous research found that organizational support, organizational fairness and organizational culture affect LMX quality. Sandy et al. (1997) argued that when subordinates feel a sense of organizational support, they tend to actively build the high-quality relationship with leaders. Liang et al. (2008) also found that employees' sense of organizational fairness was positively correlated with LMX quality. Furthermore, the sense of distributional fairness, procedural fairness and interactive fairness all positively affects LMX quality. When subordinates perceive distributional fairness, they would feel their work values and increase work input. When subordinates perceive procedural fairness, they would participate more in the decision-making process and propose suggestions for the organization. When subordinates perceive the interactive fairness, they would communicate actively with leaders, which promotes a virtuous circle of high-quality exchange relations.

2. Individual level factors. The formation of the exchange relationship between leaders and members is a long-term process. In different periods, the factors that determine the relationship between leaders and members are various. It can be traced back to the first interview between the leader and the subordinate. The leader and the subordinate tend to form an impression of each other during the first interview and follow-up communications. Mutual loyalty and trust were also initially established in this stage (Gomez & Rosen, 2001). In the middle stage, Scandura's (1999) argued that the consistency of the leader and subordinate's expectations, such as personality traits and evaluation feedback, were important factors in determining the exchange

relationship. In the later stage, subordinates' attitudes and behaviors would affect the exchange relationship. For example, the organizational citizenship behaviors of "in-group" subordinates would promote a virtuous circle of high-quality exchange relationships. "In-group" and "out-group" subordinates also begin to transform. For example, leaders might reclassify "out-group" members with high performance as "in-group" members. "In-group" and "out-group" subordinates are dynamically transferred.

2.4.2 Consequences of LMX Relationship

The relationship between leaders and subordinates has an important impact on subordinates' performance, extra-role behaviors and turnover intention. Mayfield & Mayfield (1998) found that work performance of the "in-group" subordinates was about 20% higher than that of "out-group" counterparts. Settoon et al. (1996) and Wu (2006) found that high-quality relationships between leaders and subordinates could improve subordinates' organizational citizenship behaviors and performance. There are two main reasons. Firstly, the subordinates who can be selected as "in-group" members will be more aligned with the expectations of leaders in terms of ability and performance. Social Exchange Theory predicts that "in-group" subordinates will work harder and produce extra-role behaviors to reciprocate the leader and the organization, which further improves their high-quality relationship (Deluga, 1998). Secondly, the leader will allocate more resources to "in-group" subordinates, so they are able to work better than others. Not only that, leader gives "in-group" subordinates more trust, so the communication between leader and "in-group" subordinates is much better. "In-group" subordinates can voice their thoughts and difficulties on time, which forms a virtuous circle. For "out-group" subordinates, they cannot get leaders' enough trust and support, so they might be jealous of their coworkers. They might be even doubting their workability and whether they match with the organization, which leads to subordinates' low work engagement, low job performance, less extra-role behaviors and more turnover intention.

LMX is one of the important factors that affect employees' innovative behaviors. Sun et al. (2008) argued that the high-quality relationship positively affects research staff's innovative behaviors. In the high-quality LMX, subordinates will perceive trust and support from their leaders. They can not only arrange their job more flexibly and freely, but also participate in decision-making process, which promotes their innovative behaviors.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Theoretical Foundation

3.1.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory says that all human activities and behaviors are the results of interest exchanges. For example, the relationship between the leader and the subordinate is a social exchange relationship. Both parties make corresponding actions based on their relationship and perception (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Due to information asymmetry, there are uncertainties and risks in the social exchange relationship. Therefore, both the leader and the subordinate shall assess risk in order to make appropriate behaviors.

Social Exchange Theory discusses two kinds of exchanges: Reciprocal Exchange and Negotiated Exchange. If both parties are uncertain about returns and risks, the relationship is labeled as Reciprocal Exchange. If both parties negotiate a specific agreement and the uncertainty decreases, the relationship is then labeled as Negotiated Exchange (Molm et al., 2000). The relationship between the leader and the subordinate is a hybrid relationship of Negotiated Exchange and Reciprocal Exchange. As for Negotiated Exchange, leaders expect subordinates to complete their work sincerely and achieve a high-performance level. Accordingly, subordinates expect leaders to give corresponding feedbacks in terms of compensation and rewards. The exchange at this level is based on labor contracts and workplace norms. It is also an exchange rule made by leaders and subordinates through negotiations. As for Reciprocal Exchange, leaders expect their subordinates to contribute more to the organization, such as organizational citizenship behaviors. Accordingly, the subordinates expect the leader to provide additional support, trust, and resource preference. If the two parties do not reach the initial expectations, the exchange relationship will be broken. One party will first adjust his or her attitudes and behaviors to rebuild a new relationship.

When leaders perform abusive supervision behaviors, the reciprocal exchange relationship is likely to be broken. Subordinates will feel emotionally depressed. Then their perception of future uncertainty enhanced, and their organizational citizenship behaviors reduced. When their negative emotions accumulate to a certain degree, the negotiated exchange relationship is also to broken. Employees might think they will not

get the expected rewards in the future. Eventually, they might engage in work slowdowns, workplace deviations, etc. The most direct result is to quit.

3.1.2 Conservation of Resources Theory

Conservation of Resources Theory explains how people respond to stress. People tend to maintain, protect and build their own resources, such as social support, personal characteristics, knowledge and time. When people are not under pressure, people tend to reacquire, maintain, and invest their resources to meet the future needs of work. On the other hand, when people do feel being stressed, they tend to save existing resources to avoid further loss of them. In order to cope with stress, people also spend time and energy in negative and resistive behaviors (Hobfoll, 1989). People who lack resources are more likely to feel high pressure and loss of resources. Or put in other way, when people have more resources or reinvest existing resources to obtain new resources, they are less likely to perceive the threat of resource loss. However, when people have fewer resources, their perception of resource loss is stronger.

Resources refer to what people think is valuable, or the way to achieve the goal. Hobfoll (1989) categorized resources into four types. The first type is material resources which provide basic guarantees for other resources, such as shelter. The second type is conditional resources which provide conditions to obtain key resources, such as marriage, status and qualifications. The third type is personal traits which can help people improve their ability to resist stress, such as self-efficacy. The fourth type is energy resources which help people obtain the three above resources, such as time, knowledge and money. When employees invest more resources in their work without corresponding rewards, they will feel the threat of resources deprivation. Then employees will generate negative emotions and reduce their resource input (Hobfoll, 2001).

Leaders 'abusive behaviors are somewhat the deprivation of subordinates' emotional resources, time resources, knowledge resources. When subordinates perceive the loss of emotional resources, they will reduce the input of emotional resources, resulting in emotional exhaustion. When subordinates perceive the loss of time and knowledge resources, they will choose to maintain or reduce resource input. Furthermore, they might take out some resources to deal with resource loss, such as reducing work efforts and organizational citizenship behaviors. The profound result is that they leave the company and go to another organization to find new resources.

3.1.3 Social Information Processing Theory

Social Information Processing Theory says that individuals process information differently because they have different backgrounds as well as in different environments. Such different processing ways should affect people 's attitudes and behaviors (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). In a workplace, employees do process and decode information in different ways.

Abusive supervision is subordinates' subjective judgments. Subordinates have different interpretations of leaders' attitudes and behaviors, which lead to subordinates' different psychological feelings. Specifically, employees' personal characteristics (age, gender, educational background, marital status) and work values vary a lot, so they have different interpretations of leaders' abusive behaviors. Based on MBTI Personality Typology, post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds are more intuitive. What they think is more than what they do. They prefer to get information through their own insight. Plus, they embrace innovation and change (Cai et al., 2001). Compared with their parent and grandparent generations who had been experienced more leaders' abusive behaviors, post-90's employees are more inclined to think deeply about the leaders' abusive behaviors. They tend to regard such abusive supervision intolerable. Likewise, "In-group" and "out-group" subordinates also have different interpretations of leaders' abusive behavior.

3.2 Theoretical Hypotheses

3.2.1 Effect of Abusive Supervision on Turnover Intention

Employees' psychological process of quitting is often related to the stimulation of external events. Lee & Mitchell (1994) proposed the term "Shock of the System" and Rosse & Miller (1984) rather used "Stimulus Event". Leaders' abusive supervision behaviors, such as public ridicule and blaming, could be regarded as a kind of "Shock of the System" or "Stimulus Event", which triggers employees' emotional dissatisfaction and psychological discomfort. When such dissatisfaction and discomfort accumulate to a certain degree, employees will have the intention to quit. If employees know some external job opportunities at the same time, they will probably start searching for other jobs.

According to Social Exchange Theory, when the negotiated exchange relationship between leaders and subordinates is broken, subordinates will adjust their job attitudes

and behaviors to rebuild a new relationship. Leaders' abusive supervision behaviors, such as ridicule and silent treatment, harms the negotiated relationship. Therefore, subordinates will respond to leaders' abuse with negative attitudes and behaviors, such as resistance to leaders, negative responses to work, indifference to colleagues and at last to quit (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007).

The impact of abusive supervision on turnover intention is more pronounced among post-90's employees. Based on Social Information Processing Theory, employees interpret leaders' behaviors differently. Grown in Confucian culture and seeing high power distance, elder-generation employees might habitually regard leaders' abusive supervision as normal. They had more patience and accept leaders' privileges. In contrast, highly-educated post-90's employees are grown up in multiculturalism and individualism. they might be very sensitive and regard above abusive supervision unacceptable, which will, to a large extent, lead to quit. Thus, we have

Hypothesis 1: Other things being equal, leaders' abusive supervision in the workplace is more likely to stimulate post-90's employees' turnover intention.

3.2.2 Mediating Effect of Emotional Exhaustion

Nonetheless, post-90's employee's decision to quit must have a mechanism that reveals the impact of abusive supervision. One important mediating mechanism of leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates' turnover intention would obviously be subordinates' emotional change. Aryee et al. (2008) argued that subordinates' emotional exhaustion plays a significant role between leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates' job performance. Chi & Liang (2013) also found evidence supporting the mediating role of emotional exhaustion between leaders' abusive supervision and employees' turnover rate. For highly-educated post-90's employees, their tolerance for leaders' abusive supervision behaviors is relatively low, but their emotional fluctuations are much stronger. Considering their confidence in own abilities as well as transparency of recruitment information, their emotional exhaustion can be easily triggered by abusive supervision, and emotional exhaustion itself will facilitate to withdraw from work. Thus, we propose

Hypothesis 2: Emotional exhaustion mediates leaders' abusive supervision behavior and the turnover intentions for post-90's employees.

Accordingly, Conservation of Resources Theory predicts that when employees face pressure, they will probably lose some resources. Employees who lack resources will be more likely to feel the threat of resource deprivation. Leaders' abusive supervision is a de fact huge source of pressure. They not only deprive subordinates of their work safety and job development opportunities, but also deprive self-efficacy and self-esteem (Xu et al., 2015). At the same time, subordinates subject to abusive supervision have to spend more resources to cope with leaders' abuse supervision and the uncertainty of future job (Whitman et al., 2014). Those subordinates feel fatigued psychologically and physiologically. Therefore, their emotional exhaustion developed. For example, if a subordinate's effort is not recognized by his supervisor, the subordinate will feel stressed and frustrated. If this leader interrupts the subordinate's work-life balance and invades the subordinate's privacy, the subordinate will feel emotionally exhausted. Once this leader gives negative comments publicly, or blame the subordinates for relieving his embarrassment, the subordinate is likely to experience mental breakdown. All of the abusive supervision behaviors lead to subordinates' high-level emotional exhaustion. Thus we have

Hypothesis 2a: Other things being equal, leaders' abusive supervision is more likely to stimulate emotional exhaustion for post-90's employees.

By Conservation of Resources Theory, when employees perceive possible resources loss, they will reduce their resource investment and save existing resources to avoid further loss. Meanwhile, subordinates would keep away from their leaders, and adopt negative behaviors to cope with the expected resource loss. If the leader's abusive supervision exhausts the existing resources of the subordinate, the subordinate will reduce the work input and save the existing resources. If the subordinate's emotional exhaustion accumulates to a certain level, he or she will consider keeping away from this devastating situation and looking for new resources in other organizations. In other words, they are more likely to quit. (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Han and Liu (2009) also conducted empirical research with Chinese subjects. Results show that emotional exhaustion will reduce employees' job satisfaction, loyalty and increase their intentions to quit.

For highly-educated post-90's employees, their turnover intention due to emotional exhaustion will be more obvious for three reasons. Firstly, post-90's employees have a high degree of education, high comprehensive quality and more confidence in their own abilities, so they believe that they are able to find similar jobs after they quit. Secondly,

recruitment information is more transparent as compared with before, so it is easier for them to find lots of recruitment information online. In the old days, most recruitment information could be only obtained through acquaintances' recommendation, official websites and a few on-site recruitment platforms. This is no longer the case in job hunting. With the popularity of Wechat and other media platforms, companies can establish an official account at zero cost and publish recruitment information anytime. Recruitment platforms such as Zhilian Recruitment and LinkedIn are increasingly popular in China. Meanwhile, a large number of employees upload their resumes onto these platforms, so it is easier for HRs to find suitable candidates. Thirdly, the work value of post-90's employees changes a lot. Unlike their parents and grandparents who preferred to work at state-owned enterprises or government agencies, neo-generation employees do not have the idea of "Permanent Employment". According to our interview, many post-90's employees with high academic backgrounds think that they will consider other opportunities after working with current employer for 2 to 3 years. Some subjects even plan to leave the present firm after working less than 1 year. The relatively short tenures are quite common in the Financial industry and Internet industry where highly-educated employees concentrate. They clearly stated that if leaders' behaviors, organizational types or career development path do not meet their original expectations, their emotional exhaustion levels will surely increase. Then they are more likely to have the intention to quit. Therefore, we have

Hypothesis 2b: Other things being equal, the emotional exhaustion of post-90's employees are more likely to enhance their turnover intentions.

3.2.3 Moderating Effect of LMX Relationship

LMX and abusive supervision are two different constructs, and the two may coexist. Subordinates who had bad relationships with their leaders may not necessarily perceive leaders' abusive supervision. Subordinate who had good relationships with their leaders may otherwise perceive leaders' abusive supervision (Tepper et al., 2007).

Scholars are not in consensus about the LMX's negative moderating effect of leader's abusive supervision on subordinates' emotional exhaustion. On one hand, some scholars argue that high-quality LMX is beneficial to reduce the impacts of subordinates' negative emotions. "In-group" subordinates get more support and resources, and communicate with their leaders more frequently, so they will have more trust in and understanding of, their leaders. When their leaders ridicule the "in-group"

subordinates or violate their privacy, "in-group" subordinates will put themselves in leaders' shoes. They are more likely to forgive their leaders' abusive behaviors and reduce their negative emotions by themselves. In this regard, fewer negative behaviors happen, such as workplace deviation behaviors, silence behaviors and turnover intentions. (Liu & Shi, 2015; Yan, 2012). On the other hand, some scholars argue that LMX will exacerbate the negative impacts of abusive supervision. If leaders support "in-group" subordinates and at the same time implement abusive supervision behaviors, that is, support and abuse coexist, subordinates will feel a strong psychologic dissonance. Their sense of job insecurity emerges and the trust of their leaders diminishes. In this vein, the negative impacts of leaders' abusive behaviors prevail (Lian et al., 2012; Agarwal, 2019; Shen et al., 2019). Following the similar logic, we argue that highly-educated post-90's employees may well go toward negative direction.

That is to say, for post-90's employees, high LMX quality will enhance the relationship between leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates' emotional exhaustion. "In-group" subordinates have higher expectations for their leaders. They believe that leaders should recognize their potential and provide support if necessary. If leaders abuse the "in-group" subordinates, they will feel strong cognitive dissonance. They will be confused by the contradicting words and deeds of their leaders. They may even think their leaders' support is a lie. In order to cope with their cognitive dissonance, they will experience cognitive and emotional fatigue, which leads to high-level emotional exhaustion. Therefore, we have

Hypothesis 3: LMX would positively moderate the relationship between leaders' abusive supervision and the emotional exhaustion of post-90's employees.

For highly-educated post-90's employees, high-quality LMX would also enhance the relationship between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. In other words, "in-group" subordinates are more likely to quit after feeling emotional exhaustion. Firstly, highly-educated post-90's employees take their career development very seriously. With largely improved family economic support, the priority to work is not just to make money, but to realize their values and to pursue their own interests. However, "in-group" subordinates will doubt their future development opportunities should their leaders engage in abusive supervision. They will become not so sure whether they still have the opportunities to be promoted and to realize their personal goals in the current organization. Therefore, "in-group" subordinates are more likely to quit (Hobman et al., 2009). Secondly, "in-group" subordinates spend relatively more time with their leaders.

Given their educational and family backgrounds, post-90's employees cannot be exercising restraint and obedient anymore in front of abusive leaders, because they simply cannot tolerate long-term physical and psychological fatigue. Their work efficiency and performance will decrease in this regard. Finally, "in-group" subordinates are more likely to quit. The research of Gregory et al. (2009) provides evidence for this. The longer the abusive leader and the subordinate work together, the more likely will the subordinate reduce organizational citizenship behaviors to cope with the leader's abusive behaviors. Thus we propose

Hypothesis 4: LMX quality will positively moderate the relationship between the emotional exhaustion and the turnover intentions of post-90's employees.

Apparently, high-quality LMX should also positively enhance the relationship between abusive supervision and turnover intention. This is natural deduction from Hypothesis 3 and 4. If a leader's support and abuse coexist, "in-group" subordinates will feel strong cognitive dissonance, leading to their psychological and physical fatigue. Therefore, they are more likely to quit. In contrast, "out-group" subordinates, by definition, have less support from leaders, so that they will not have high expectations and experience cognitive dissonance. When "out-group" subordinates are abused by their leaders, they are less likely to feel uncertainty about their future development. Therefore, we have

Hypothesis 5: LMX quality will positively moderate the relationship between leaders' abusive supervision and the turnover intentions of post-90's employees.

In sum, our hypothesized relations about the effect of abusive supervision on turnover intention can be illustrated as below:
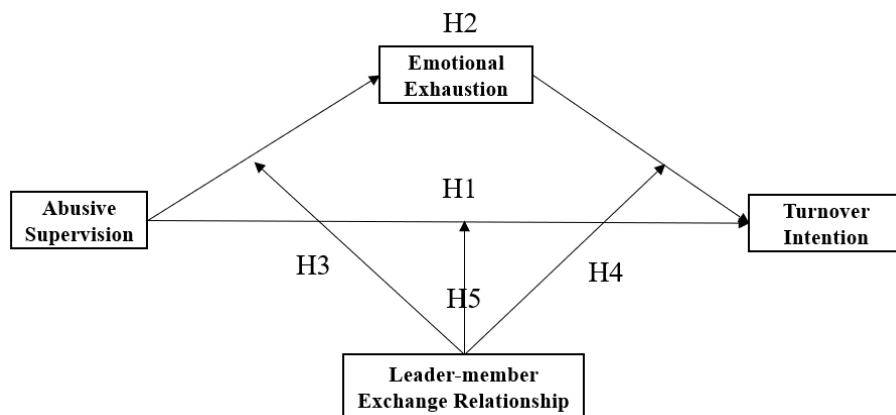
4. Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

4.1 Questionnaire Design[5]

In this study, we collected data by questionnaires. The questionnaire contains information about post-90's demographic features, abusive supervision, emotional exhaustion, LMX and individual turnover intention. Most relevant items are widely adopted in literature.

4.1.1 Basic Information Variables

As discussed in theoretical framework, employees' turnover intention is affected by the employees' characteristics, employees' perception of potential job opportunities and their interaction with leaders, coworkers, and the entire firm. Therefore, the basic information of the questionnaire mainly includes: 1 Employees' characteristic: age, gender, education, marriage status, tenure, working years with leaders. 2 Enterprise's characteristic: firm size (measured by the total number of employees), ownership, and industry classification. 3 Perception of potential job opportunities. We asked the question " Can you find a similar job?", measured by Likert's five-point scale. 4 Employee's work value. We use Hou et al.'s (2014) "New Generation Employee Work Value Scale". There are five dimensions, each with 4 questions and 20 questions in total. The first dimension is Utilitarian-orientation which refers to employees' emphasis on material interests, desire for compensation, benefits and other returns. The second dimension is Internal Preference which refers to employees' preferences for their work content, such as whether their work meets their own interests. Whether their work is valuable and interesting. The third dimension is Interpersonal Harmony which refers to how important employees think of the organization's interpersonal relationships and team atmospheres, such as approachable leaders, mutual respect among coworkers and equal interpersonal relationships. The fourth dimension is Innovation-oriented which refers to the degree of employees' emphasis on flexible and fresh work, such as whether the job is challenging. The fifth dimension is Long-term Development which refers to the importance that employees attach to their future development, such as whether employees have enough room for promotion in the current company.

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[5] Available upon request.

4.1.2 Abusive Supervision

In this paper, Tepper's (2000:189-190) abusive supervision instrument is adopted. So far, scholars mainly measure leaders' abusive supervision behaviors through the lens of employees' perception. Tepper's (2000:189-190) Abusive Supervision Scale is the most widely used in empirical research. We translated the scale into Chinese, and cross-checked with domestic academic papers. Specific questions include "My leader ridicules me", "My leader gives me the silent treatment", "My leader reminds me of my past mistakes and failures".

4.1.3 Turnover Intention

Throughout previous research on Turnover Intention, some scholars used a single-question measurement. The single question is whether they have the intention to quit. Some scholars used multiple questions to measure employees' turnover intention, of which Mobley et al.'s (1978: 412) 4-item scale is the most widely used. The four questions are "I basically did not think of quit" (inverse item), "I plan to make long-term career development in the organization" (inverse item), "I often get bored with my current job and want to change to a new organization" and "In the next six months, I will probably leave the organization".

4.1.4 Emotional Exhaustion

This study uses Maslach & Jackson's (1981: 102) 9-item scale to measure Emotional Exhaustion, which is widely used by scholars all over the world. We translated the scale into Chinese, cross-checked with domestic academic papers. Specific questions include "I feel emotionally drained from my work", " I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job", "I feel burned out from my work ".

4.1.5 LMX Relationship

In this study, Seandura & Graen's (1984) 7-item scale is adopted to measure LMX quality. Specific questions include "Regardless of how much formal authority your immediate supervisor has built into his or her position, what are the chances that he or she would be personally inclined to use power to help you solve problems in your work", "Do you usually know how satisfied your immediate supervisor is with what you do".

4.2 Data Collection

Before the formal questionnaire is distributed, we conducted a pilot study. We distributed initial questionnaire to 50 young employees and interviewed them to see if they understand all questions. After the interview, it turns out that a large number of highly-educated post-90's respondents cannot remember or simply don't know the establish year of their companies. Also, most companies have Secret Salary System, as such respondents are unwilling to disclose their salaries. Based on the pilot study and interview, we decided to remove earning and firm age information.

Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, questionnaires were distributed online from March 9, 2020 to March 30, 2020. Respondents are the post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds. Every respondent can get cash bonus once he or she finish answering the questionnaire. Finally, on the Questionnaire Star Platform, we confirmed respondents' IP addresses and answering time one by one in order to exclude questionnaires that were not answered seriously.

Questionnaires are purposely set a threshold, i.e., post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds. "High education" refers to people with a bachelor or above degree, and "post-90's employees" refers to employees born from 1990 to 1999. A total of 417 questionnaires were distributed, and all 417 questionnaires are returned. The returning rate is 100%. We carefully examined all of them and excluded outliers and invalid respondents. The remaining valid observations are 376, a 90.17% valid returning rate. The criteria for valid respondent are that all items have been answered seriously without missing information.

5. Empirical Analysis

5.1 Validation Tests

5.1.1 Common Method Bias Test

Since all information are collected from the same respondent, the problem of common method bias is of course an issue. When designing and distributing questionnaires, we try to minimize common method bias purposely. For example, we introduce reverse questions for self-cross-validation. The questionnaire is anonymous. In addition, we conducted Harman's Single Factor Test on the four main variables of Abusive Supervision, Emotional Exhaustion, LMX Quality and Turnover Intention. The results are shown in the table below. The maximum interpretation rate of the first common factor is merely 27.7%, which is less than the critical standard 40%. It shows that there is no significant common method bias problem.

Table 5.1 Common method Bias Test

Factor	Starting Eigenvalue			Extract Variance loading		
	Total	Variance %	Acc.Var %	Total	Variance %	Acc.Var %
1	9.703	27.724	27.724	9.703	27.724	27.724
2	4.684	13.382	41.106	4.684	13.382	41.106
3	2.899	8.284	49.390	2.899	8.284	49.390
4	1.956	5.587	54.977	1.956	5.587	54.977
5	1.269	3.625	58.601	1.269	3.625	58.601
6	1.194	3.411	62.012	1.194	3.411	62.012
7	1.028	2.938	64.950	1.028	2.938	64.950
8	.905	2.584	67.534			
9	.822	2.348	69.882			
10	.793	2.266	72.148			

Note: This table only shows the main factors

5.1.2 Reliability Test

In this study, Reliability Test was conducted to measure the internal consistency of construct operationalization. As we can see from Table 5.2 that Cronbach's Alpha of Abusive Supervision is 0.934, Emotional Exhaustion 0.896, LMX relation 0.804, and Turnover Intention reaches 0.778. All Cronbach's Alphas are greater than 0.7. Therefore, the four scales have good reliability.

Table 5.2 Reliability Test

	Abusive Supervision	Emotional Exhaustion	Leader-member Exchange	Turnover Intention
Items	15	9	7	4
Cronbach's Alpha	0.934	0.896	0.804	0.778

n=376

5.1.3 Validity Test

The four major variables are all measured with widely used instruments, and are also popular among Chinese scholars. Both face and content validities have been supported by numerous empirical researches.

We use Mplus tool for Confirmatory Factor Analyses to examine the discriminant validity between the four variables of Abusive Supervision, Emotional Exhaustion, LMX Relation and Turnover Intention. Due to too many items, we adopt packaging method (Wu & Wen, 2011). The results show that in the Four-factor Model, RMSEA is 0.076, less than 0.08; CFI is 0.952, more than 0.9; TLI is 0.937, more than 0.9. Single-factor model, Two-factor model and Three-factor model do not meet this standard. Therefore, the discriminant validity of Four-factor model is the best choice.

Table 5.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

	X^2	Df	RMSEA	TLI	CFI
Four-factor model	187.617	59	0.076	0.937	0.952
Three-factor model [a]	766.723	62	0.174	0.67	0.738
Three-factor model [b]	286.622	62	0.098	0.895	0.917
Two-factor model [c]	881.41	64	0.184	0.63	0.696
Single-factor model [d]	1111.288	65	0.207	0.533	0.611

n = 376

a. Combine Abusive Supervision and Emotional Exhaustion

b. Combine Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intention

c. Combine Abusive Supervision, Emotional Exhaustion, and Turnover Intention

d. All items belong to one potential factor

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

In terms of employee characteristics, 36% of respondents are between 20 and 24 years old; 58% of respondents are between 25 and 29 years old; 6% of respondents are 30 years old or elder. As for gender, 40% of respondents are male and 60% are female. There are 23% of respondents having a bachelor's degree and 77% of respondents earned a master or higher degree. In terms of marital status, 6% of respondents are married and 94% of respondents are unmarried, which are consistent with our target group. There are 26% of respondents having a tenure less than 1 year; 70% of respondents have worked from 1 to 3 years and the remaining respondents have worked longer than 3 years. With respect to their current leaders, 28% of respondents have a work relation for less than 1 year; and 70% of respondents have a period of 1 to 3 years duration. And the remaining respondents have worked with their supervisors for more than 3 years.

As for firm size, 20% of respondents work in small companies employing less than 100 employees, 31% respondents said their firms are medium-sized (between 100 and 500 employees), 8% are in large firms with 500 to 1000 workers, and 41% are working in giant firms that have more than 1000 employees. For firm's industry components, 42% of respondents come from the financial industry; 19% from the Internet industry and the remaining respondents come from other industries such as engineering, manufacturing, high-tech and retail industries.

As for employees' perception of potential job opportunities, we use a single question of "I can easily find a similar job". The results show that only 3% of respondents strongly disagreed, 19% of respondents disagreed, 39% of respondents were unsure, 29% of respondents agreed, and 9% of the respondents strongly agreed. Overall, less than one-third of respondents think that they can find similar jobs elsewhere.

Table 5.4 Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Characteristics

	Choice	Frequency	Ratio
Age	20-24	135	36%
	25-29	219	58%
	>29	22	6%

Gender	Male	150	40%
	Female	226	60%
Education	Bachelor	88	23%
	Master and above	288	77%
Marriage	Married	23	6%
	Single	353	94%
Tenure in the current company	1 year and below	98	26%
	1 year -3 year (Included)	264	70%
	3year-5 year (Included)	9	2%
	5 year and above	5	1%
Working years with current leaders	1 year and below	105	28%
	1 year -3 year (Included)	263	70%
	3year-5 year (Included)	5	1%
	5 year and above	3	1%
Enterprise Size	100 employees and below	74	20%
	100-500 employees（Included）	117	31%
	500-1000 employees（Included）	30	8%
	1000 employees and above	155	41%
Enterprise Category	Finance	159	42%
	Internet	73	19%
	Engineering Manufacturing	10	3%
	High-tech Industry	26	7%
	Retail Services	7	2%
	Others	101	27%
Potential Working Opportunity Perception	Very disagree "I can easily find a similar job"	11	3%
	Disagree "I can easily find a similar job"	73	19%
	Not sure "I can easily find a similar job"	147	39%
	Agree "I can easily find a similar job"	110	29%
	Very agree "I can easily find a similar job"	35	9%

n=376

Regarding the work values of highly-educated post-90's respondents, the average scores of Utilitarian Orientation, Interpersonal Harmony and Long-term Development are higher than 4 within 1-5 Likert Scale, indicating that the respondents' work values are very positive and similar. They attach great importance to work value, innovation, future career development and the relationships with colleagues and leaders. In this regard, neo-generation of employees carry over good traditions in workplace ethics.

Table 5.5 Descriptive Statistics of Employees' Work Values

	Min	Max	Mean	Std	Var
Utilitarian-orientation	2.00	5.00	4.13	0.57	0.32
Internal Preference	1.50	5.00	3.65	0.74	0.55
Interpersonal Harmony	2.00	5.00	4.29	0.56	0.31
Innovation- orientation	1.00	5.00	3.69	0.78	0.61
Long-term Development	2.00	5.00	4.40	0.57	0.33

n=376

For the four major variables of interest, the average score of Abusive Supervision is 1.41, indicating that most respondents did not perceive their leaders' abusive supervision behaviors. The average scores of LMX, emotional exhaustion and turnover intention are 3.14, 2.53 and 2.82, respectively.

Table 5.6 Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables

	Min	Max	Mean	Std	Var
AS	1	4	1.41	0.51	0.26
LMX	1	5	3.14	0.59	0.35
EE	1	5	2.53	0.70	0.48
TI	1	5	2.82	0.76	0.58

n=376

AS：Abusive Supervision
LMX: Leader-member Exchange
EE: Emotional Exhaustion
TI: Turnover Intention

5.4 Regression Analysis

In the selection of control variables, we consider subordinates' demographic attributes, companies' characteristics and employee's perception of potential job opportunities. Specifically, subordinates' age, gender, education, marital status and tenure are chosen to be controlled. Pay is indeed an important factor that affects their turnover intentions. However, as we mentioned early, many companies implement Secret Salary Policy, so that respondents are unwilling to disclose their compensation. Unfortunately, this important control variable is unavailable. In addition, firm size,

industry are also included in the regression model. Individual perception of other job opportunities is an important indicator for turnover intention, therefore it enters into the model. Since most respondents have very similar work values, their self-reports in this regard won't help much

5.3 Correlation Analysis

The table below lists Pearson Correlation Coefficient. There are significant correlations among Abusive Supervision, Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intention. As shown in the table below, there is a significant and positive correlation between Abusive Supervision and Emotional Exhaustion ($r = 0.263$, $p < 0.01$). Abusive Supervision and Turnover Intention are positively correlated ($r = 0.191$, $p < 0.01$). Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intention are also positively correlated ($r = 0.337$, $p < 0.01$). This provides preliminary support for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2.

Table 5.7 Correlation Analysis

	Age	Gender	Education	MS	WYCC	ES	PPWO	AS	EE	TI	LMX
Age	1										
Gender	-.217**	1									
Education	.011	.037	1								
MS	-.475**	.019	.069	1							
WYCC	.588**	-.111*	-.336**	-.382**	1						
ES	-.023	.008	.008	-.020	.085	1					
PPJO	.117*	-.023	.025	-.055	.058	.035	1				
AS	.069	-.154**	-.006	.023	.104*	-.077	.006	1			
EE	-.083	-.027	-.113*	.101	.036	.011	-.173**	.263**	1		
TI	-.107*	.069	-.085	.075	.040	-.019	.033	.191**	.337**	1	
LMX	.065	-.107*	-.032	-.100	.038	.021	.194**	-.300**	-.252**	-.277**	1

Note：n = 376， ＊＊p < 0.01， *p < 0. 05

Gender: 1 Male; 2 Female

Education: 1 Middle school; 2 Junior College; 3 Undergraduate; 4 Master and above

MS: Marital status, 1 Married; 2 Unmarried

WYCC: Working years in the current company

ES: firm size = lg (the number of employees)

PPJO: Perception of potential job opportunities

AS: Abusive Supervision

EE: Emotional Exhaustion

TI: Turnover Intention   LMX: Leader-member Exchange

EC: industry category, 1. Financial industry; 2. Internet industry; 3. Engineering manufacturing industry; 4. High-tech industry; 5. Retail service industry; 6. Others. Due to a large number of dummy variables used in enterprise's categories, they are not displayed in the table.

5.4.1 Mediating Effect

To verify Hypothesis 2 set, Hierarchical Regression Method is applied in this study (Baron & Kenny, 1986). From Table 5.8, we can see that Abusive Supervision has a significant effect on Turnover Intention (M4, $\beta = 0.275$, $p < 0.01$), so Hypothesis 1 is supported. In addition, Abusive Supervision has a significant positive effect on Emotional Exhaustion (M2, $\beta = 0.362$, $p < 0.01$), so Hypothesis 2a is also supported. Emotional Exhaustion has a significant positive effect on Turnover Intention (M5, $\beta = 0.363$, $p < 0.01$), that is to say Hypothesis 2b is supported. After adding the mediating variable (Emotional Exhaustion) to the hierarchical regression, the coefficient of Abusive Supervision on Turnover Intention becomes less significant (M6, $\beta = 0.155$, $p < 0.05$), and Emotional Exhaustion still has a significant effect on Turnover Intention (M6, $\beta = 0.332$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, Emotional Exhaustion plays a mediating role between Abusive Supervision and Turnover Intention. Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Table 5.8 Regression Results of the Mediating Effect

	Mediator: Emotional Exhaustion		DV: Turnover Intention			
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
IV						
Abusive Supervision		0.362**		0.275**		0.155*
		(0.069)		(0.076)		(0.075)
Mediator						
Emotional Exhaustion					0.363**	0.332**
					(0.054)	(0.055)
CV						
Age	-0.031	-0.031	-0.052*	-0.052*	-0.041	-0.041
	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.023)
Gender	-0.043	0.006	0.124	0.161*	0.140	0.159*
	(0.075)	(0.073)	(0.081)	(0.080)	(0.077)	(0.077)
Education	-0.100	0.093	-0.110	-0.126	-0.074	-0.086

	(0.096)	(0.093)	(0.104)	(0.103)	(0.099)	(0.098)
MS	0.275	0.223	0.211	0.171	0.111	0.097
	(0.170)	(0.164)	(0.184)	(0.181)	(0.174)	(0.173)
WYCC	0.056	0.035	0.082	0.065	0.061	0.053
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.040)	(0.040)
ES	0.002	0.022	-0.075*	-0.060	-0.076*	-0.068*
	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.033)
EC	0.054	-0.012	0.206	0.156	0.187	0.160
	(0.101)	(0.099)	(0.110)	(0.109)	(0.104)	(0.104)
PPJO	-0.125**	-0.123**	0.021	0.023	0.066	0.064
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.039)
R^2	0.067	0.133	0.086	0.118	0.189	0.198
$\triangle R^2$	0.067	0.066	0.086	0.032	0.103	0.080
F	2.170*	4.272**	2.854**	3.736**	6.484**	6.380**
$\triangle F$	2.170*	27.592**	2.854**	13.166**	45.814**	36.051**

n = 376， ＊＊ p < 0.01， *p < 0. 05

Gender: 1 Male; 2 Female

Education: 1 Middle school; 2 Junior College; 3 Undergraduate; 4 Master and above

MS: Marital status, 1 Married; 2 Unmarried

WYCC: Working years in the current company

ES: firm size = lg (the number of employees)

EC: industry category, 1. Financial industry; 2. Internet industry; 3. Engineering manufacturing industry; 4. High-tech industry; 5. Retail service industry; 6. Others.

Due to a large number of dummy variables used in enterprise categories, only one dummy variable is shown in the table.

PPJO: Perception of potential job opportunities

AS: Abusive Supervision

EE: Emotional Exhaustion

TI: Turnover Intention

LMX: Leader-member Exchange

5.4.2 Moderating Effect

In order to test the moderating effects of LMX, we standardized Abusive Supervision, Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intention. Then we multiplied Abusive Supervision and LMX to get Interaction 1. Also, we multiplied LMX and Emotional Exhaustion to get Interaction 2. Table 5.9 shows, the coefficient of the

interaction 1 is not significant (β=0.044, p>0.05). It means that LMX does not moderate the relationship between Abusive Supervision and Emotional Exhaustion. Hypothesis 3 is not supported.

Table 5.9 Regression Results of Front Moderating Effect

	DV：Emotional Exhaustion			
	M7	M8	M9	M10
Abusive Supervision		0.362**	0.291**	0.314**
		(0.069)	(0.072)	(0.075)
LMX			-0.189**	-0.189**
			(0.063)	(0.062)
AS*LMX				0.044
				(0.038)
CV				
Age	-0.031**	-0.031	-0.031	-0.031
	(0.795)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.022)
Gender	-0.031	0.006	-0.028	-0.025
	(0.075)	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.073)
Education	-0.100	-0.121	-0.129	-0.133
	(0.096)	(0.093)	(0.092)	(0.092)
MS	0.275	0.223	0.187	0.193
	(0.170)	(0.164)	(0.163)	(0.163)
WYCC	0.056	0.035	0.038	0.041
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.037)
ES	0.002	0.022	0.022	0.018
	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.031)
EC	0.054	-0.012	-0.029	-0.019
	(0.101)	(0.099)	(0.098)	(0.098)
PPJO	-0.125**	-0.123**	-0.099**	-0.095*
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.037)
R^2	0.067	0.133	0.154	0.158
$\triangle R^2$	0.067	0.066	0.021	0.003

F	2.170*	4.272**	4.711**	4.492**
△*F*	2.170*	27.592**	9.168**	1.352

n = 376， * * p < 0.01， *p < 0. 05

Gender: 1 Male; 2 Female

Education: 1 Middle school; 2 Junior College; 3 Undergraduate; 4 Master and above

MS: Marital status, 1 Married; 2 Unmarried

WYCC: Working years in the current company

ES: firm size = lg (the number of employees)

EC: industry category, 1. Financial industry; 2. Internet industry; 3. Engineering manufacturing industry; 4. High-tech industry; 5. Retail service industry; 6. Others.

Due to a large number of dummy variables used in enterprise categories, only one dummy variable is shown in the table.

PPJO: Perception of potential job opportunities

AS: Abusive Supervision

EE: Emotional Exhaustion

TI: Turnover Intention

LMX: Leader-member Exchange

Taking Turnover Intention as the dependent variable, the interaction 2 is significant and positive (β = 0.114, p <0.01). LMX positively moderates the relationship between Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intention with respect to highly-educated post-90's employees. In other words, the higher LMX quality, the more pronounced the positive relationship between employees' emotional exhaustion and their turnover intentions. Hypothesis 4 is supported.

Table 5.10 Regression Results of Back Moderating Effect

	DV：Turnover Intention			
	M11	M12	M13	M14
Emotional Exhaustion		0.363**	0.308**	0.316**
		(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.053)
LMX			-0.281**	-0.258**
			(0.063)	(0.063)
EE*LMX				0.114**
				(0.038)
CV				
Age	-0.052*	-0.041	-0.043	-0.040

	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.023)
Gender	0.124	0.140	0.100	0.087
	(0.081)	(0.077)	(0.075)	(0.074)
Education	-0.110	-0.074	-0.098	-0.091
	(0.104)	(0.099)	(0.096)	(0.095)
MS	0.211	0.111	0.057	0.012
	(0.184)	(0.174)	(0.170)	(0.169)
WYCC	0.082	0.061	0.062	0.059
	(0.042)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.038)
ES	-0.075*	-0.076*	-0.071*	-0.065*
	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.032)
EC	0.206	0.187	0.146	0.141
	(0.110)	(0.104)	(0.101)	(0.100)
PPJO	0.021	0.066	0.095*	0.102**
	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.038)
R^2	0.086	0.189	0.231	0.250
$\triangle R^2$	0.086	0.103	0.042	0.019
F	2.854**	6.484**	7.735**	8.004**
$\triangle F$	2.854**	45.814**	19.650**	9.287**

$n = 376$, $**p < 0.01$, $*p < 0.05$

Gender: 1 Male; 2 Female

Education: 1 Middle school; 2 Junior College; 3 Undergraduate; 4 Master and above

MS: Marital status, 1) Married; 2) Unmarried

WYCC: Working years in the current company

ES: firm size = lg (the number of employees)

EC: industry category, 1. Financial industry; 2. Internet industry; 3. Engineering manufacturing industry; 4. High-tech industry; 5. Retail service industry; 6. Others.

Due to a large number of dummy variables used in enterprise categories, only one dummy variable is shown in the table.

PPJO: Perception of potential job opportunities

AS: Abusive Supervision

EE: Emotional Exhaustion

TI: Turnover Intention

LMX: Leader-member Exchange

Taking Turnover Intention as the dependent variable, the interaction 1 is significant and positive ($\beta = 0.086$, $p < 0.05$). LMX positively moderates the relationship between Abusive Supervision and Turnover Intention of post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds. In other words, the higher LMX, the more pronounced the positive relationship between leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates' turnover intentions. Hypothesis 5 is supported by the data.

Table 5.11 Regression Results of Total Moderating Effect

	DV：Turnover Intention			
	M15	M16	M17	M18
Abusive Supervision		0.275**	0.156*	0.200*
		(0.076)	(0.078)	(0.080)
LMX			-0.321**	-0.319**
			(0.068)	(0.067)
AS*LMX				0.086*
				(0.041)
CV				
Age	-0.052*	-0.052*	-0.053*	-0.052*
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.024)
Gender	0.124	0.161*	0.103	0.109
	(0.081)	(0.080)	(0.079)	(0.079)
Education	-0.110	-0.126	-0.140	-0.146
	(0.104)	(0.103)	(0.100)	(0.099)
MS	0.211	0.171	0.110	0.121
	(0.184)	(0.181)	(0.177)	(0.176)
WYCC	0.082	0.065	0.070	0.076
	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.040)	(0.040)
ES	-0.075*	-0.060	-0.061	-0.069*
	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.034)
EC	0.206	0.156	0.128	0.147
	(0.110)	(0.109)	(0.106)	(0.106)
PPJO	0.021	0.023	0.062	0.070

	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)
R^2	0.086	0.118	0.170	0.180
$\triangle R^2$	0.086	0.032	0.052	0.010
F	2.854**	3.736**	5.274**	5.262**
$\triangle F$	2.854**	13.166**	22.398**	4.402*

n = 376，＊＊p < 0.01，＊p < 0. 05

Gender: 1 Male; 2 Female

Education: 1 Middle school; 2 Junior College; 3 Undergraduate; 4 Master and above

MS: Marital status, 1 Married; 2 Unmarried

WYCC: Working years in the current company

ES: firm size = lg (the number of employees)

EC: industry category, 1. Financial industry; 2. Internet industry; 3. Engineering manufacturing industry; 4. High-tech industry; 5. Retail service industry; 6. Others.

Due to a large number of dummy variables used in enterprise categories, only one dummy variable is shown in the table.

PPJO: Perception of potential job opportunities

AS: Abusive Supervision

EE: Emotional Exhaustion

TI: Turnover Intention

LMX: Leader-member Exchange

In order to show the moderating effect of LMX, we added and deducted a standard deviation from the mean based on the suggestion of Cohen et al. (2013). It can be clearly seen from Figure 5.12 that the positive relationship between Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intention is more pronounced under high-quality LMX. Also, the positive relationship between Abusive Supervision and Turnover Intention is more pronounced under high-quality LMX.
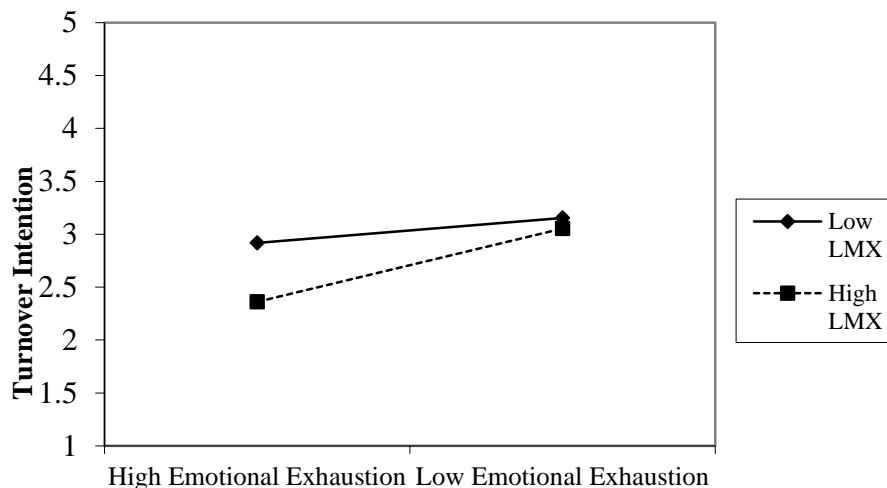
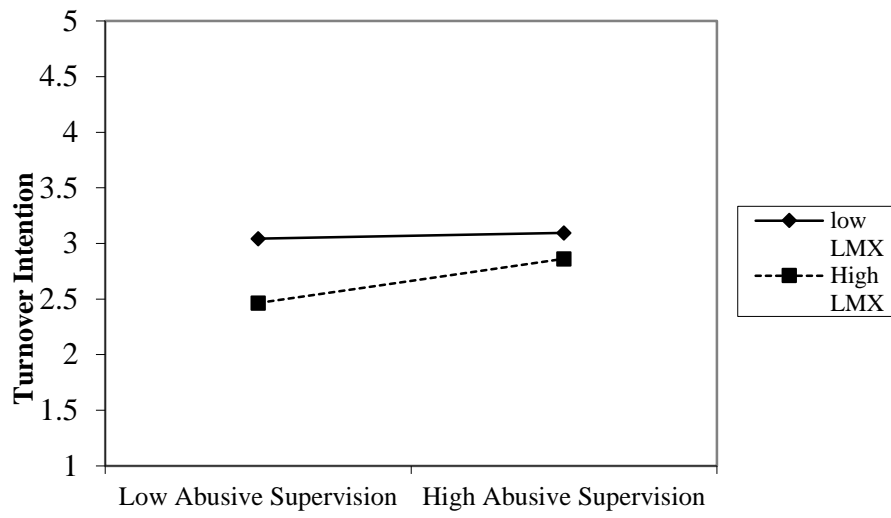Figure 5.12 Interaction Diagram of Back Moderating Effect

Figure 5.13 Interaction Diagram of Total Moderating Effect

6. Conclusions

6.1 Main Findings

By Interview Method and Questionnaire Survey Method, we collect 376 valid questionnaire respondents, and used Mplus and SPSS statistic programs to test our five hypotheses. The results are summarized in Table 6.1, within which only Hypothesis 3 is not supported.

Figure 6.1 Result of Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Result
Hypothesis 1: Other things being equal, leaders' abusive supervision is more likely to stimulate the turnover intentions of post-90's employees.	Support
Hypothesis 2: Emotional exhaustion will mediate leaders' abusive supervision and the turnover intentions of post-90's employees.	
Hypothesis 2a: Other things being equal, leaders' abusive supervision is more likely to stimulate the emotional exhaustion of post-90's employees.	Support
Hypothesis 2b: Other things being equal, the emotional exhaustion of post-90's employees is more likely to provoke their turnover intentions.	
Hypothesis 3: LMX will positively moderate the relationship between leaders' abusive supervision and the emotional exhaustion of post-90's employees.	Not Support
Hypothesis 4: LMX will positively moderate the relationship between the emotional exhaustion and the turnover intentions of post-90's employees.	Support
Hypothesis 5: LMX will positively moderate the relationship between leaders' abusive supervision and the turnover intentions of post-90's employees.	Support

1. Leaders' abusive supervision and the turnover intentions of highly educated post-90's employees

After controlling the employee's demographic features (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and tenure), their perception of potential job opportunities and industry, the result supports Hypothesis 1. That is to say, leaders' abusive supervision positively

affects the turnover intentions of post-90's employees.

According to Social Exchange Theory, facing leaders' abusive behaviors, subordinates will reconsider the interest exchange relationship with leaders and adjust their attitudes and behaviors. Subordinates will be depressed and reduce task performance and extra-role behaviors. If subordinates' negative emotions and behaviors accumulate to a certain extent, they will tend to quit.

Based on Social Information Processing Theory, different employees interpret external information differently. Old-generation employees tend to obey and endure leaders' ridicule, blaming and other abusive behaviors. However, this is no longer the case for post-90's employees. They simply don't buy "Abusive Supervision" and feel frustrated. Self-confidence and the increasing transparency of recruitment information, make post-90's employees easy to quit.

2. The mediating effect of Emotional Exhaustion

Our regression analysis results clearly show that subordinates' emotional exhaustion mediates leaders' abusive supervision behaviors and subordinates' turnover intentions. Based on Resource of Conservation Theory, leaders' abusive behaviors deprive subordinates of valuable resources, leading to their emotional exhaustion. Subordinates who lack resources tend to save existing resources and reduce resource investment, leading to their turnover intentions. Due to post-90's subordinates' superior living conditions, high comprehensive quality, new work values as well as the transparency of job opportunities, they are more likely to interpret leaders' ridicule and blame as abusive supervision, feel depressed and quit eventually.

3. The moderating effect of LMX

Our empirical results show that LMX quality moderate subordinates' emotional exhaustion and their turnover intentions. Also, LMX quality moderate leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates'' turnover intentions. In other words, the higher LMX quality, the more pronounced the relationship between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention, the more pronounced the relationship between abusive supervision and turnover intention. Hypothesis 4 and 5 is supported.

To quit the current job is an important decision for most employees, as such employees will make in-depth consideration of career development in many aspects. "In-group" subordinates have more expectations for leaders. If leaders' abuse and support coexist in the long term, "in-group" subordinates will feel strong cognitive dissonance. Subordinates begin to doubt leaders' support and they are not sure about

their future promotion opportunities in the organization. Post-90's employees with high educational backgrounds regard their career development very important. When they are unsure of their development opportunities in the organization, they will have the intention to quit. In contrast, "out-group" subordinates get less support and trust from their leaders, thus they have less expectations from their leaders and experience less cognitive dissonance. Even if they feel depressed, they are less likely to quit.

Our empirical results also show that LMX's moderating effect between leaders' abusive supervision and subordinates' emotional exhaustion is not supported. It is probably due to the characteristics and relatively short tenure of post-90's employees. Old-generation employees are said to be more tolerant, so they can reduce negative emotions by themselves when facing leaders' abusive supervision. However, due to the superior living conditions of post-90s employees, they are less patient. Regardless of their relationships with leaders being good or bad, they are more likely to feel exhausted when facing leaders' abusive supervision. post-90's employees just started their career from graduation, all is in developing process. But their working attitudes are strongly influenced by their education and growing environment. Their relationships with leaders are not well established yet. That is why high-quality relationships with leaders cannot reduce the negative effects of leaders' abusive supervision.

6.2 Management Implications

Based on our empirical findings, we would like to make the following recommendations to the management:

1. Leaders should by any mean reduce abusive supervision behaviors. Leaders should be aware of that abusive behaviors, such as ridicule, silent treatment and invading subordinates' privacy publicly, will negatively affect subordinates' emotions. For highly-educated post-90's employees, the negative emotion is more likely to cause their intention to quit. That is why the post-90's employees' turnover rate is notoriously high. Leaders should manage their tempers, pay attention to their attitudes and behaviors towards their subordinates, and reflect on whether they have the above behaviors. Obviously, this requires that managers need keen emotional intelligent. Firm leaders can use anonymous questionnaires or other consulting channels to investigate whether subordinates feel strong abusive supervision, such as Tepper's (2000: 189-190) 15-item scale. Related training content should also be added to leadership programs to help leaders avoid abusive supervision.

2. Given the fact that LMX is a routine in the workplace, for "in-group" subordinates, leaders should be alert about the possible negative effects of abusive supervision as well. Leaders usually give "in-group" subordinates support and trust. Meanwhile, leaders also have high expectations from the "in-group" subordinates, and naturally let leaders think that their subordinates would accept whatever they direct. This opens a door for leaders to ridicule the subordinates and remind the subordinates of their past mistakes. This very study show that the subordinates will not forget their leaders' abuse just because of the leaders' trust and support. On the contrary, leaders' abusive supervision behaviors will cause the subordinates' psychological discomfort and cognitive dissonance. Therefore, when leaders establish good relationships with subordinates, they should reflect on whether abusive behaviors occurred towards subordinates. Furthermore, the "in-group" subordinates have more opportunities to communicate with leaders, and they are more willing to point out leaders' management problems. Therefore, leaders should keep their minds open and listen to the "in-group" subordinates' advice seriously.

3. Enterprises should establish a supervisory system, an effective feedback mechanism and an employee-oriented corporate culture, in order to reduce abusive supervision, at least to minimize the negative impacts of abusive supervision should it appears. Previous literature and this study shad lights on managerial practices to systematically combat industrial incivility. Managerial system and corporate culture are important tools for organization's long-term development. Normative systems and feedback mechanisms are conducive to reducing leaders' abusive supervision and encouraging subordinates to give useful feedback. Employee-oriented culture is conducive to creating good organizational atmosphere and developing high-quality relationships between leaders and subordinates.

6.3 Research Limitations

1. Measurement issues. This study imported the instruments on Abusive Supervision, Emotional Exhaustion, LMX and Turnover Intention from foreign scholars. Although such scales are translated into local language, and widely used by Chinese scholars, we still think it necessary to develop a system to fully examine the goodness of fit with respect to these instruments. Ideally, we wish we could have solid constructs together with their operationalization to investigate abusive supervision in Chinese setting.

2. Cross-sectional Data. Due to the limitation of time and resources, we can only collect cross-sectional data at this time. Naturally, the nature of our sample data does not allow us deduce any causal relation from Abusive Supervision to Emotional Exhaustion to Turnover Intention. Nonetheless, the theoretical model of causality is explicit. Future research should make endeavor on longitudinal data collection, and design causal questions like "when your leader publicly ridicules you, you will ...".

3. Omitted Variables. Since many factors impact employees' turnover intentions, model specification must consider these control variables. Unfortunately, due to various reasons, some important information such as compensation and employee benefits aren't available in this study. Most respondents who have to abide secret pay policy are unwilling to disclose their income numbers. Future research should explore other data resources.

4. Treatment of LMX's Mechanism. Although LMX and abusive supervision are two different constructs, the relationship between the two is complicated. In particular, the impacts from these two are different because of subordinates' traits and cultural backgrounds. This study only provides one possible channel, i.e., positive moderator. Future research should explain the conditions under which a particular reaction prevails.

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