Citation

Abstract
Two competing explanations for deviant employee responses to supervisor abuse are tested. A self-gain view is compared with a self-regulation impairment view. The self-gain view suggests that distributive justice (DJ) will weaken the abusive supervision–employee deviance relationship, as perceptions of fair rewards offset costs of abuse. Conversely, the self-regulation impairment view suggests that DJ will strengthen the relationship, as experiencing abuse drains self-resources needed to maintain appropriate behavior, and this effect intensifies when employees receive inconsistent information about their organizational membership (fair outcomes). Three field studies using different samples, measures, and designs support the self-regulation impairment view. Two studies found that the Abusive Supervision × DJ interaction was mediated by self-regulation impairment variables (ego depletion and intrusive thoughts). Implications for theory and research are discussed.

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