

**CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY, ISLAMABAD**



**Impact of Abusive Supervision on Project  
Success: Mediating Role of Knowledge Hiding  
and Moderating Role of Machiavellianism**

by

**Shahzadi Mariam Zahid**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the  
degree of Master of Science

in the

**Faculty of Management & Social Sciences  
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*Dedicated to my parents for their never ending support and unconditional love*



## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

### **Impact of Abusive Supervision on Project Success: Mediating Role of Knowledge Hiding and Moderating Role of Machiavellianism**

by

Shahzadi Mariam Zahid

(MPM173018)

### THESIS EXAMINING COMMITTEE

S. No.	Examiner	Name	Organization
(a)	External Examiner	Dr. Khurram Shahzad	RIU, Islamabad
(b)	Internal Examiner	Dr. S.M.M. Raza Naqvi	CUST, Islamabad
(c)	Supervisor	Dr. Sana Aroos Khattak	CUST, Islamabad

---

Dr. Sana Aroos Khattak

Thesis Supervisor

September, 2019

---

Dr. Sajid Bashir

Head

Dept. of Management Sciences

September, 2019

---

Dr. Arshad Hassan

Dean

Faculty of Management & Social Sciences

September, 2019

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(MPM173018)

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(MPM173018)

## *Acknowledgements*

Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you deny. (Surah Ar-Rehman) First, to my creator, the most gracious, the most beneficent, ALLAH S.W.T, I owe it all to you, Thank you!

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**Shahzadi Mariam Zahid**

(MPM173018)

## *Abstract*

Abusive supervision is considered as the dark side of leadership that badly affects the organization and its employees. The current study is based on the conservation of resource theory and is focused on increasing our learning about the impact of abusive supervision on project success. For this purpose, knowledge hiding is used as a mediator to study the relationship between abusive supervision and project success whereas Machiavellianism trait of employee is used as a moderator to test the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding such that it strengthens the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed from which 250 complete responses were received and data analysis was conducted based on those 250 responses. The data was collected from projectized organizations of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The results of this study found that abusive supervision has a negative impact on project success, knowledge hiding mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and project success, and Machiavellianism moderates the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding such that if an individual will have high Machiavellian personality trait it will result in abusive supervision and will cause knowledge hiding. Implications, limitations and future work directions are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Abusive Supervision, Project Success, Knowledge hiding, Machiavellianism, Project based organizations.

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# Abbreviations

<b>AS</b>	Abusive Supervision
<b>DV</b>	Dependent Variable
<b>H</b>	Hypothesis
<b>IV</b>	Independent Variable
<b>KH</b>	Knowledge Hiding
<b>M</b>	Machiavellianism
<b>PBO</b>	Project Based Organizations
<b>PS</b>	Project Success

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Project is a temporary undertaking which is intended to achieve any particular goal or objective. Projects are temporary in nature (Perminova, Gustafsson, & Wikström, 2008). They have a specified beginning and ending also they have defined scope and resources available for completion of project (Mir & Pinnington, 2014). Every project is unique and different. Every project has a leader or a supervisor who supervises, directs workers and is responsible for the accomplishment of goals (Pohl & Galletta, 2017). The support of supervisor is very important for employees to perform their duties and also a positive work atmosphere can support and can enhance the employee's work performance (Chauvet, Collier, & Fuster, 2017).

Inside the boundaries of the work organization, an employee may search for help when required from his or her supervisors or colleagues (Carter, Laurs, Chant, & Wolfgramm-Foliaki, 2018). The main functions of supervisor include: managing the employees, learning from execution of task, supporting the staff members and most importantly a supervisor should act as a bridge and it should create a link between the staff members and organization (Bostock, Patrizo, Godfrey, Munro, & Forrester, 2019). The supervisor is responsible for maintaining appropriate confidentiality of all records related to employees (Britton & Cicoria, 2019). In

any organization the role of supervisor can be positive or negative. Negative role of supervisor leads to abusive supervision ([Simonin, 1997](#)).

Abusive supervision in projects context is considered as a negative behavior and is considered as the dark side of leadership and is explained as the degree to which supervisors are engaged in non-verbal and verbal abuse excluding physical contact ([Robertson, Dionisi & Barling, 2018](#)). Abusive supervision is conceptualized as continued example of abuse all the time over an extended time period. It is an emotional evaluation and recognition subordinates make based on their perceptions of their bosses' conduct. In contrast to different constraints in a similar area, abusive supervision includes moving towards various levels of abuse and alludes to continued display of nonphysical abuse ([Agarwal, 2018](#)). Most of the time employees consider their bosses as the fundamental basis of abusive supervision ([Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007](#)), however literature still remains uncertain with regards to the procedure by which supervisors abusive behavior is at first activated ([Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013](#)).

Moreover, a hypothetical structure is missing that clarifies in what way and under what circumstances bosses might be seen as abusive by their workers ([Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2017](#); [Tepper, 2007](#)). When supervisors are frustrated, they are more certainly going to get involved in abusive behaviors as a method for managing those negative feeling and will be more inclined to act in such a way that the employees see and describe as abusive. Research has recommended that the character attributes of the supervisor can affect the workers thinking of the behavior of supervisor as abusive ([Martinko et al., 2013](#)).

There are numerous dimensions of personality of a supervisor that may increase or decrease the chances of an employee perceiving him or her as abusive ([Eissa & Lester, 2017](#)). Most of the studies have disclosed that the outcome of abusive supervision can be workers' negative mental conditions and practices among workers, for example, mental pain, tension, enthusiastic fatigue, hostility/ abnormality, obstruction, and turnover ([Liu, Zhang, Liao, Hao, & Mao, 2016](#)). The main negative outcome of abusive supervision is knowledge hiding ([Forrester, Darden, Dimotakis, Simon, & Tepper, 2016](#)).

Knowledge is a very important resource of organization that provides a defendable competitive and powerful economy. Knowledge hiding refers to an individual's deliberate conduct that aims to shroud, retain or hold information that the other person want or is looking for (Zweig & Trougakos, 2012). Knowledge hiding aims at concealing some information (for example rules/patterns) considered sensitive, that could be inferred from the information which is going to be published (Abul, Atzori, Bonchi, & Giannotti, 2007).

There are a few outcomes of knowledge hiding (Serenko & Bontis, 2016) but as a type of counter productive work behavior knowledge hiding has been seen to build turnover expectations, decrease creativity and increase Knowledge hiding (Bogilovi, erne, & Skerlavaj, 2017; Mangold, 2017). According to Arshad and Ismail (2018), knowledge hiding depends on situation; the motivation to hide knowledge is dependent on the surroundings of the individual. When employees work with each other under the same roof, the way they talk to each other, the way they treat one another will affect their conduct and personality. The impact of knowledge hiding will result in the success or failure of project (Connelly & Zweig, 2015).

Projects are expected to accomplish three parameters known as time, cost and performance. These parameters help to distinguish between project based activities and daily routine tasks. However there are uncertainties in project. Sometimes these uncertainties are controllable and sometimes uncontrollable. Such uncertainties causes delay and must be avoided. Project success is explained as achieving the objectives of the project within schedule, cost and budget. Seven major criteria were used to quantify project success, including specialized execution, viability of execution, administrative and hierarchical implications (counting consumer loyalty), mindfulness, and makers limit and business execution (Shenhar, Dvir, Levy, & Maltz, 2001).

Thomas, Jacques, Adams, and Kihneman-Wooten (2008) expressed that estimating project success is not direct. Samples proliferate that there are times when the actual goals of the task are not achieved, but still the customer was extremely happy with the outcome. On the other hand, there are different samples when the

basic project goals were achieved, yet the customer was very unsatisfied with the outcomes. [Vaskimo \(2011\)](#) discovered that the methodology of project management adds to project success. Similarly, [Joslin and Müller \(2016\)](#) found out that the supplementation, fulfillment and utilization of the kinds of a project management methodology are basic to project success.

Machiavellianism also known as Mach is a character attribute that catches one's inclination to "doubt others, engage in irrelevant control, look for power over others, and look for status for oneself" ([Dahling, Whitaker, & Levy, 2009](#)). Those high in Machiavellianism will in general doubt others since they themselves tend to control others and in this way accept that the other person will endeavor to control them. One's wish for authority catches the "need to work out strength over relational circumstances to limit the degree to which others have control" ([Dahling et al., 2009](#)). Since the individuals that are high in Mach consider others to be terrifying, they endeavor to have authority on the other person and confine the ability of other individuals by being overbearing in social surroundings ([Jones & Paulhus, 2009](#)).

High Mach scorers show manipulative practices towards others in order to achieve their very own advantages ([Paulhus & Williams, 2002](#)). High Machs are anyway observed to be genuinely disconnected in their cooperation's with others, with a relational direction which is depicted as subjective as contradicted to enthusiastic, and with minimal inclination to concentrate on individual differences ([Lee & Ashton, 2005](#)).

Individuals having a Machiavellian personality consist of a strong desire for power that is characterized as "a craving to gather outside markers of accomplishment" ([Dahling et al., 2009](#)). They fundamentally observe occasions as being remotely managed and in this manner seek after objectives that are irrelevant (e.g., objectives that assure riches, influence, and power), instead of interior and more importantly, satisfying. Moreover, meta-analysis shows that representatives high in Machiavellianism are probably going to participate in unethical and counter-productive work behaviors ([McHoskey, 2001](#)).

## 1.2 Gap Analysis

[Kanwal \(2017\)](#) recommended that further researches should be conducted on different behaviors and traits of leader such as abusive supervision. [Aga \(2016\)](#) inspired researchers to conduct further researches on different leadership behaviors and their link with project success. This created the need to conduct research on abusive supervision and its effect on project success.

[Connelly, Zweig, Webster, and Trougakos \(2012\)](#) concluded in their research that Knowledge hiding should be studied with abusive supervision. This created a new linkage. Due to this past literature a mediating relationship of knowledge hiding was created between abusive supervision and project success. It was thought that knowledge hiding will create a link between these two variables. Furthermore, [Valentine and Fleischman \(2018\)](#) recommended that future research should access the link between Machiavellianism and Abusive supervision since little is known about this relationship. All these gaps created this new linkage. Very little literature is available with these linkages. Few researches have studied the effect of abusive supervision on project success with mediating effect of knowledge hiding and moderating effect of Machiavellianism. The role of abusive supervision has been widely studied in the context of pure HR but the study of abusive supervision in project based organization has been missing ([Haar, de Fluiter, & Brougham, 2016](#)). This study is going to fill this gap.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

In previous literature, Abusive supervision in projects is perceived as the dark side of leadership. Individuals involved in this type of behavior are commonly observed as demonstrating reciprocator behaviors which result in ending of the relationship between supervisor and employee. It involves a huge amount of risk being an immediate danger to self-identity and it forces the employees to take defensive action such as quitting the job. Employees take abusive supervision as a deterrent towards accomplishment of future goals. The existing study is

conducted to inspect the relation among abusive supervision and project success. Without provision of important information in time organizations fail to take corrective measures as and when required. Therefore, there is a need to study the cost associated with silent behaviors of employees due to their perceptions of unfairness. Therefore, in this research knowledge hiding is used as a mediator to observe the mediating role of knowledge hiding among abusive supervision and project success. Machiavellianism is taken as a moderator among the relationship of abusive supervision and knowledge hiding in order to examine its strengthening effect between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.

## 1.4 Research Questions

On the basis of the overhead mentioned issues, this research will try to find the answers of the following question:

### **Research Question 1**

What is the relationship between Abusive Supervision and Project Success?

### **Research Question 2**

Does Knowledge Hiding mediate the relationship between Abusive Supervision and Project Success?

### **Research Question 3**

Does Machiavellianism moderate the relationship between Abusive Supervision and Knowledge Hiding?

## 1.5 Objective of the study

The basic objective of this study is to examine the model so that the influence of Abusive supervision on project success can be studied. Furthermore, this research will also observe the mediating role of knowledge hiding among abusive supervision and project success. Machiavellianism is proposed as a significant moderator to

strengthen the link among abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. The link between Independent, Dependent, Mediator and Moderator is displayed in the theoretical framework presented in the research.

Main objectives of this research include:

### **Research Objective 1**

To study the relationship between Abusive Supervision and Project Success.

### **Research Objective 2**

To study the mediating role of Knowledge Hiding among Abusive Supervision and Project Success.

### **Research Objective 3**

To study the moderating role of Machiavellianism among Abusive Supervision and Knowledge Hiding.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This learning will include more value to the project management literature. This research focuses on the supervisor's abusive behavior in projects. This study will reveal new aspects of abusive supervision in projects. It will help organizations to realize the harmful effect of such supervision on the performance of employee. Abusive Supervision in projects is growing rapidly in almost every organization and it is affecting the capabilities and performance of employees. Due to a lot of work pressure supervisors become aggressive and rude which causes negative outcomes. The focal point of this study is to examine the effect of abusive supervision on project success. This research will provide assistance to the organization's management in realizing the harmful effect of this type of supervision and will help them to encourage communication between employees and supervisors. Very little literature is present that tests the relationship between abusive supervision and project success with the mediating role of knowledge hiding. This can be denoted as a theoretical contribution in literature. Furthermore, this study will inspect the

moderating function of Machiavellianism trait of employees among abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Again comparatively very less literature is available to examine this link. So this study fulfills the existing gap in literature.

## 1.7 Theory

A few point of views have been displayed that are used worldwide to underpin the link among abusive supervision and project success. Few such theories incorporate social exchange theory and conservation of resource theory. These theories cover all the variables of this study.

### 1.7.1 Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory

COR Theory is mainly a stress related theory (Hobfoll, 1989) that clarifies the implications of stress and its management throughout life. In this theory the word asset refers to each one of those items, qualities, conditions or anything that is valued to the people. Such resources are valued on the grounds that they are the ways, which help people to achieve more prominent accomplishments (Hobfoll, 1988). These profitable assets can likewise make individuals feel focused when they feel that their assets are threatened, are forgotten or have progressed toward becoming unstable or when the people imagine that their endeavors are not satisfactory to secure their assets. Consequently, people battle to get, hold, secure, and encourage those things that they value. The rundown of assets that are esteemed is incredibly long and is unending.

Abusive supervision in projects context depletes our resources according to COR theory. According to COR theory, by definition abused employees are inclined to have constrained support of the manager. It is said that the support of the manager is a standout amongst the most helpful and critical social assets in a work environment, absence of help of a supervisor can be a basic obstruction in motivating employees to take part in willful jobs, for example, knowledge sharing (Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007). Specifically, knowledge sharing could be a

hazardous conduct that may diminish the competitive advantage of information suppliers, without the help of the supervisor it is hard to execute knowledge sharing (Wang & Noe, 2010).

COR theory can be applied to this proposed research model in a way that abusive supervision shows a supervisor's conduct that makes an unfair environment in the organization where employees under them are treated unethically. Subsequently, under such conditions, employees adopt a reciprocal behavior and start to hide knowledge. Machiavellianism is a personality trait of the employee that strengthens the moderating relationship of Machiavellianism among abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Due to this personality trait the employee's incline towards hiding their knowledge considering it as a valuable asset. This in turn will have a negative effect on project success.

If COR theory is related with the proposed research model, abusive supervision in projects shows a leader's conduct that makes an unfair environment in the organization where employees under their supervision are dealt unethically. Consequently, under such conditions, knowledge hiding among employees will increase because of the supervisor's abusive behavior. In this research abusive supervision is considered as a stress factor that absorbs the employee's psychological assets by irritating and frustrating them. Because of this continuous loss of resource the employee feels stress in the workplace. Due to this, the employees will hide information from other colleagues and fellow workers. If the Machiavellian personality trait is found in employees, it further encourages them to adopt reciprocal behavior and to hide knowledge from other employees in order to earn competitive advantage over other employees.

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Relationship between Abusive Supervision and Project Success

Many researchers and writers have defined project success as time, cost and quality limitations where project supervisors have to aim for fulfillment of three criteria to achieve project success (Wateridge, 1998). Serenko and Bontis (2016) recommend that towards the completion of the project success is determined by whether the scope is completed within the time and cost limitations and the output of the project is conveyed. In the past researches the calculation or the measurement of project success consisted of three things: time, cost and quality. It is also known “triangle iron”. With the passage of time current researchers added other measures as well such as stakeholder satisfaction, environmental impact, efficient use of resources, and many other measures to the three main criteria based on their research areas (Ahmadabadi & Heravi, 2019). Project success is very important in project organization but the achievement of the project is viewed differently by everyone since it has no basic definition (Bakker et al., 2010). Project’s failure and success also depends upon project manager or supervisor of the project (Belout & Gouvreau, 2004).

During the 80’s, in the 20th century, conventional criteria was observed by the researchers for assessing projects, for example, time, cost and quality while, during

the 90's, researchers began to lead various examinations presenting that the success of a project is a multi-dimensional criteria, just as various people have various techniques for assessing project success (Fortune, 2006; Prabhakar, 2008). Project success standards have been estimated in different ways. Despite the fact that the traditional estimation of project success concentrated on tangibles, the thinking of the present study is that, eventually, project success is best determined by the partners, mainly the fundamental support (Turner & Müller, 2005).

Project success relies upon whether the task result meets the imperative objectives of the contributing organization. Thomas et al. (2008) express that estimating project success is not clear. There are examples where the objectives of the task were not met; however the customer was extremely satisfied. Also there are different models where the project objectives were met, but still the customers were very discontent with the outcomes". Munns and Bjeirmi (1996) likewise note that a project can be successful in spite of poor project management performance. The Project Management Institute (PMI) characterizes project success as adjusting the contending requests for quality of task, degree, schedule, and price, just as gathering the shifting worries and desires for the undertaking partners (PMI, 2008).

The 'iron triangle' of schedule, amount and standard overwhelmed the idea of the criteria of the success of project during the 1960's to 1980's, numerous other standards were incorporated in recent times (Ika, 2015). These incorporate giving advantage to the company, satisfaction of the customer, favorable position to partners, advantage to extend work force, important goals of the company, and success of the business. Khang and Moe (2008) stated that in the project management literature there is no agreement on the standards of project success. The standards putforward by the researcher' sinclude significance, productivity, adequacy, effect, and maintainability (Day & Bedeian, 1991).

Significance alludes to the degree to which the task matches the needs of the objective gathering, the beneficiary and the contributor. Productivity alludes to the degree to which the project utilizes the minimum expensive resources to accomplish the ideal outcomes. Adequacy alludes to the degree to which the

task meets its goals. Effect alludes to the planned and unplanned, direct and indirect and positive and negative changes created by the project. Maintainability alludes to whether the advantages of the task are probably going to proceed after benefactor financing has been pulled back (Aga, 2016).

Abusive supervision refers to the involvement of supervisors in verbal and non-verbal abuse. Abusive supervision leads to negative behaviors by employees as a response to supervisor's abuse (Tepper, 2000). Bassman and London (1993) found that abusive managerial behavior moves the organization and its people in broken and dangerous headings. Supervisors who are involved in abusive supervision may be high in fearlessness and some managerial capacities however misinformed similarly as what the organization and employees need or want. Supervisors who misuse may not consider their behavior to be as abusive but rather their employees do. The employees may depict the supervisor as annoying, controlling, unfriendly, impolite, hostile, rude, forceful, or some combination.

An individual who suffers from abusive supervision will hesitate to communicate with the supervisor and will be reluctant while talking to him/ her. When the interactions decrease less work will be given to employees and it will affect project success. Employees when feel abused stop interacting with the supervisor and start taking less interest in working towards achievement of goals of the organization. Such incidents lead to the reduced participation of employees in the project (Gouldner, 1964). Haar et al. (2016) found that abusive supervision has a huge effect on employee performance which can lead to the failure of the project because abusive supervision leads to high turnover intentions and decreased organization loyalty. Pradhan and Jena (2017) further confirm that abusive supervision can strongly influence the project success. When the employees feel abused they quit that workplace. Their enthusiasm and work motivation becomes zero. They are no longer interested in working in the same place and the project success is affected badly due to this supervisor behavior.

Hodson, Hogg, and MacInnis (2009) in their research determined that there are four results of abusive supervision. First result is project nervousness; it refers to terrible enthusiastic arousal happening due to the upsetting project demands.

The next result is mental success; it alludes to experiencing positive feelings when working with the supervisor. The next result is project fulfillment; it alludes to fulfillment in association to the theory project. The last and ultimate result is confidence; it refers to positive sentiments (for example pride) about oneself. Freeman and Beale (1992) observed in their study that abusive supervision is associated with negative results of the project which can badly affect the success of the project.

Rodwell and his colleagues (2014) determined abusive supervision to be of two sorts: individual or task related. Specifically, they discovered individual abusive supervision to be related with harmful individual and health related results, (for example, mental strain), while abusive supervision related to task (assignment of demeaning tasks, over the top checking) was observed to be related with negative work orientated results, for example, willingness to quit the organization. Negative work outcomes can affect the success of project. Without skillful workforce a project cannot be successful (Levinson, 1965).

*H<sub>1</sub>: Abusive supervision is negatively associated with project success*

## 2.2 Relationship between Abusive Supervision and Knowledge Hiding

The dangerous side of supervisory conduct has obtained a lot of interest in the literature within the last decade (Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper, 2007). The focal point of numerous investigations has been on impression of abusive supervision, which is formally characterized as a subordinate's emotional evaluation of the administrator's commitment in continued aggressive verbal and nonverbal practices, barring physical interaction (Tepper, 2000). Abusive supervision depicts practices, for example, public ridicule, misled blame, and the silent treatment (Tepper, 2000). Restubog, Scott, and Zagenczyk (2011) noticed that abusive supervision goes about as a stressor that can create negative considerations and emotions that

duty or surpass an employee's asset. A few research studies have upheld this assertion, appearing abusive supervision is related with mental pain and stress-related results, for example, increased frustration, helplessness (Ashforth, 1997), physical health complaints (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002), and lessened dimensions of confidence (Burton & Hoobler, 2006).

Tepper et al. (2009) found that the individuals suffering from abusive supervision will tend to leave the job because they have less control over others as compared to the supervisor and constant acts of abuse may welcome disciplinary responses or inspire further descending threatening vibe. Employees suffering from abusive supervision may respond in the following ways (1) compromise practices that are intended to reestablish the relationship, (2) pardoning their anger and want to retaliate with the leader, or (3) avoiding the abusive supervisor (Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006).

Past research on abusive supervision has derived two separate sorts of thought processes may be connected with abusive supervision: performance advancement and damage commencement (Tepper, 2007). On one hand, supervisors may abuse their employees to improve the performance of employees and then again supervisors may practice abusive supervision to purposefully damage employees. A restricted yet developing group of abusive supervision research has demonstrated that introduction to abusive supervision brings around employee's reluctance to "go the additional mile" to accomplish practices that give benefit to their administrations (Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002), this may include progressing innovative opinions and arrangements that improve organizational effectiveness.

Abusive supervision may reduce employee's intrinsic motivation which refers to how much an individual attempts an action for his/her delight and enthusiasm for the activity itself, rather than because of outside pressure, stress and rewards (Deci, 1972). Abusive supervision additionally guides employees to question whether companies regard their commitments and whether their employments are important to their very own and organizations advancement (Rafferty & Restubog, 2011). Research has shown that abusive supervision results in employee's being disappointed with their job and aiming to leave the job (Tepper, 2000).

Abusive supervision is going to diminish employee's enjoyment in their occupations causing reduced motivation towards their employments. Additionally, abusive supervision is seen as a huge basis of mental suffering (Restubog et al., 2011). Abused workers often experience sadness, discouragement, tension, and passionate weariness, and they tend to estrange themselves from their employments (Aryee et al., 2007; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004). In such a troubled mental condition, abused individuals may have minimal possibility of growing enthusiasm for their work, so their motivation should decrease generously (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

Knowledge hiding might be characterized as a conscious choice to retain information and data that is asked by others (Connelly et al., 2012). In these practices, individuals deliberately conceal data from their colleagues when they demand it. Knowledge hiding practices might be slight in character, for instance, disregarding a little demand, or crucial, for example, covering up significant or key data (Serenko & Bontis, 2016). Despite the fact that rationalized knowledge hiding may some of the time have a reason, for example, keeping things confidential or concealing private data (Connelly et al., 2012), it is impossible that individuals take part in thinking of knowledge hiding practices because of abusive supervision. Knowledge hiding isn't really planned to straightforwardly hurt further administrative employees; typically it is an inactive response to a given circumstance, for example, abusive supervision.

Employee's deceived by supervisory abuse don't show their frustration and anger to the person who is responsible for it (for example the boss) rather they shift their response to the easy sufferers or targets (for example colleagues). At the point when individuals see that the supervisor is not treating them well, they may look for retaliation by retaining information from harmless and obvious targets (colleagues) (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Workers don't show their response in the direction of the managers as a result of the level of power and authority they practice above benefits and incentives (Wang & Noe, 2010).

It is considered that abusive supervision can hurt the health of employees both physical and mental, badly damage work fulfillment and commitment and can

reduce the service performance of employee (Wu, Yim, Kwan, & Zhang, 2012; Leung, Wu, Chen, & Young, 2011). Ferris, Brown, Berry, and Lian (2008) identified that abusive supervision is completely connected with knowledge hiding among individuals. In accordance with these discoveries, we anticipate that abusive supervision may influence knowledge hiding (a particular relational conduct in working environment); (Connelly et al., 2012). As Abusive supervision is a troublesome relational experience, an abused employee will see the individuals who abused him/her as relational damage. This thinking will give rise to negative reciprocal belief. And afterward, it is satisfactory that the avoided worker in turn takes part in the equivalent relational abuse (for example, Knowledge hiding, or relational inefficient practices).

Abusive supervision is positively associated with worker's knowledge hiding behaviors. The positive link demonstrates that abusive supervisory practices toward employees engage them to take interest in reciprocal practices, for example, knowledge hiding. These practices are not confined to a particular work gathering or test; relatively, anywhere individuals experience negative behaviors, oppressive speech or rude handling, they will react in the form of striking back or unhelpfulness. Individuals see their information skills to be important and the sentiment of being abused or not given due regard will slant them toward knowledge hiding practices (Kim, Lee, & Yun, 2016).

Organizations have no power over the scholarly resources of their workers and they can't compel them to impart their insight to others without their consent (Kelloway & Barling, 2000). Without knowledge transfer and effective flow of data in organization, it's very unimaginable for organization to contend effectively in the market (Hislop, 2002). Just paying employee for knowledge sharing doesn't ensure powerful exchange of knowledge (Swap, Leonard, Shields, & Abrams, 2001; Bock, Zmud, Kim, Lee, et al., 2005). However, a few researchers have distinguished various components that encourage and energize knowledge sharing yet at the identical period the idea of knowledge hiding needs consideration of researchers and experts (Webster et al., 2008; Greenberg, Brinsfield, & Edwards, 2007).

*H<sub>2</sub>: Abusive supervision is positively associated with Knowledge Hiding*

## 2.3 Relationship between Knowledge Hiding and Project Success

Regardless of the necessity for knowledge sharing, it was inferred that knowledge hiding is predominant in numerous administrations and impedes transfer of information (Connelly et al., 2012). Contrasted with the undesirable impact of knowledge hiding on associations as well as its workers, the forerunners of knowledge hiding is not broadly analyzed. Knowledge as an asset increases with its use (Probst, Romhardt, & Raub, 2000) yet broad human inclination is to trust information as a confined asset that should be kept hidden (Škerlavaj, Connelly, Cerne, & Dysvik, 2018). Knowledge hiding in organizations as gotten much consideration from experts but requires critical scholarly consideration (Cerne, Nerstad, Dysvik, & Škerlavaj, 2014; Greenberg et al., 2007), as knowledge hiding is harming organizations as it makes negative spirals of striking back (Cerne et al., 2014). Hence, there is the most extreme need to get, control and foresee those components that add to knowledge hiding in the working environment.

Knowledge hiding is portrayed as a purposeful effort by an individual to hold or hide information that has been requested by someone else. There are different circumstances in which a particular appeal for information is made by one individual of the organization to the other. For instance, an individual may approach a colleague for a duplicate of a report; the colleague may then answer that this report is secret and that he/she cannot unveil it. In this example, the asked knowledge isn't inevitable, despite the fact that no fraud is included. Another case of knowledge hiding would be a circumstance where the colleague gives a few, however not all, of the asked information; in this case, fraud might be included (Takala & Urpilainen, 1999).

Knowledge hiding does exclude situations where an individual neglects to share information accidentally, or simply ignores it. On the other hand, if s/he gets an appeal for information and takes part in a conduct intended to cover the information (e.g., imagining s/he doesn't have this information), this is a case of knowledge hiding. Knowledge hiding isn't simply an absence of knowledge sharing as withholding can happen likewise when people don't have information or on the other hand don't perceive a chance to share it (Connelly et al., 2012).

Knowledge hiding includes that an employee will provide only minimum level of effort while giving information to the organization (Lin & Huang, 2010). Moreover, knowledge hiding may hinder the joint efforts in an association, the evolution of novel thoughts, or the application of different rules or processes, and in this way, it will negatively affect the project team and the achievements of organization. In spite of the fact that knowledge hiding may have positive expectations or results in certain specific circumstances (for example it might be proposed to secure the other member's emotions; (Connelly et al., 2012), it is typically a negative point of view on an employee's information input in work settings generally.

However, knowledge hiding is not opposite to knowledge sharing (Ford & Staples, 2008). They are associated yet different concepts. Knowledge hiding may have an alternate psychological developing mechanism. (Connelly et al., 2012) have recognized a few predecessors of knowledge hiding (for example impression of doubt, difficulty of information, task-relatedness of information, and information distribution atmosphere). An employee will be more progressively inclined towards knowledge hiding when he/she will feel that the data he/she utilized in work setting is his / her own property.

These difficulties in knowledge sharing originated by knowledge hiding extend the accomplishment period of the task and decrease the quickness to sell it. Serenko and Bontis (2016) affirm that a positive hierarchical society (for example standard of sharing information, nearness of social belief, reasonableness, equity, and so on) decreases the knowledge hiding behavior, workers in such a culture will in general feel an ethical commitment in the direction of their association and colleagues. Additionally, they too distinguished work instability as a reason that empowered

knowledge hiding between individuals. At the point when representatives feel their business to be on the square, particularly in a information escalated industry, they will in general incline to conceal their knowledge to increase their place above others and consequently hope to pick up a competitive edge over individual employee's (Serenko & Bontis, 2016).

Knowledge hiding refers that the employees fail to give in their knowledge and thus effect the success of the project causing it to be a failure. In other words, it is very obvious that knowledge hiding should not exist in an organization where many employees are working on the same project as it can cause negative impact on project success. Recent researchers have identified knowledge sharing to be a significant element in confirming the success of a project whereas knowledge hiding causes the failure of project and also creates a bad image of the organization (Mueller, 2014; Stephens & Carmeli, 2016).

Knowledge hiding is risky on the grounds that it possibly blocks organizations from understanding the advantages linked with knowledge sharing, including individual and group innovativeness (Dong et al., 2017). Knowledge hiding weakens authoritative execution and innovativeness in light of its negative impacts on project success, unit process capacities and communication viability (Evans, Hendron, & Oldroyd, 2014).

Contrasted with knowledge sharing, knowledge hiding is normally skipped by project supervisors. This may likewise be a purpose behind the failure of projects and information management within teams. As per the results, knowledge hiding damages project success. Thus, when using administrative procedures to refine knowledge sharing, project supervisors should likewise focus on their adequacy in managing or reducing knowledge hiding (Zhang & Min, 2019). As indicated by (Peng, 2013), employees who have solid approaches of their own information are inclined towards knowledge hiding.

Knowledge hiding infers that employees neglect to pool in their insight and in this manner impact the success of project. On the contrary, lack of communication and knowledge hiding are the main reason of failure of project. Past researches have demonstrated knowledge hiding to be a very significant issue in the failure

of project (Mueller, 2014; Stephens & Carmeli, 2016). Knowledge hiding behavior can lead to a complete disappointment in a project, and accordingly badly influence the organization in relations of schedule, budget and different assets and can bring it to a complete failure (Jha & Varkkey, 2018).

*H<sub>3</sub>: Knowledge Hiding is negatively associated with project success*

## 2.4 Knowledge Hiding as Mediator

Connelly et al. (2012) defined Knowledge hiding as a conscious decision to hold back information and states that knowledge hiding is to cover data from other individuals despite their continued request for sharing the data. As obviously such information was mentioned by somebody in the organization and the Knowledge holder attempted not to impart that Knowledge to other people (Connelly & Zweig, 2015). However, the idea of knowledge hiding is blended with other broken ideas of Knowledge management discipline, however the part of purposeful exertion and planned endeavor by Knowledge holder also, solicitation of Knowledge searcher separates it from other related ideas. In information accumulating individuals likewise gather Knowledge yet it doesn't propose that they won't share even at the request of others (Disterer, 2001). It is comprehended that individuals who are not effectively occupied with information sharing have low inspiration towards sharing of data and information with others (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

The outcomes of knowledge hiding are intense and annoying and it can results in various negative results (Peng, 2013; Schulz & Grimes, 2002). Firstly, knowledge hiding outcomes in wasting organizational assets since it impacts the flow of data in organizations (Sanchez, and Mahoney, 1996). Organizational members invest their energy looking for such information which is already accessible but its stream is blocked. Furthermore, when employees retain information it results in lessening inspiration of other members of the organization and diminish their dedication towards organization and hierarchical individuals (erne, Nerstad, Dysvik, & Skerlavaj, 2014).

Third, knowledge hidiers not just impact the hierarchical process however as they are not sharing significant and quality data, organizational outputs are likewise influenced which spillover to the clients and different partners (Hui & Jha, 2000). Fourth, knowledge hiding impacts the development and inventive capacities of organizations by promoting knowledge hiding cultures in organizations (Breschi & Lissoni, 2001), on the grounds that other organizational members additionally learn from the knowledge hidiers and block the flow of data, which brings about decline in organizational performance (Cerne, Nerstad, & Škerlavaj, 2012; Von Krogh, Ichijo, Nonaka, et al., 2000).

Fifth, knowledge hiding prompts a disappointing situation that leads to very high proportion of worker turnover, which is loss of important assets for organization (Kacmar, Andrews, Van Rooy, Droege & Hoobler, 2003). Alongside all these knowledge hiding likewise has various other negative results which impact hierarchical effectiveness. Analysts have additionally investigated various forerunners of knowledge hiding in organization. Employees may hide knowledge from others because of their personality factors which give them a feeling of insecurity and they feel threatened which can lead to knowledge hiding in organizations (Hargreaves, 2003).

There are likewise other encouraging relevant components that advance knowledge hiding in organization (Connelly, Ford, Turel, Gallupe, & Zweig, 2014). Job uncertainty was likewise examined as a significant indicator of knowledge hiding. In this period of competition, employees compete with their partners, boss and even subordinate and they feel insecure in offering accurate information to them because of less soundness at their very own job (Ford & Staples, 2010). A few researchers have studied that knowledge hiding is an intra-organizational level and is deadly for the strength of organization and its individuals.

Since such practices from certain specialists elevates a culture because of the social learning capacity of human and such disguising setting influence all the members of the organization equally (Wilson, 2002). The management of the organization is in steady quest for knowledge sharing atmosphere and eliminate practices that are counter-gainful like knowledge hiding of employees at intra hierarchical dimension.

In past researches the link between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding behaviors was described through displaced aggression theory (Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939). Displaced aggression theory says that the individuals that suffer abusive supervision do not show their frustration or anger towards the supervisor instead they direct their response toward the peers or colleagues. When individual's see that their supervisors are not treating them well, they may retaliate by hiding the information from colleagues (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997).

Due to the power, authority and control that the supervisor has the employees do not show that anger towards them (Wang & Noe, 2010). Abusive supervision has been seen to effect different aspects of the work domain, such as decreased job satisfaction (Tepper, 2007), knowledge hiding and increased workplace deviance (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Thau, Bennett, Mitchell, & Marrs, 2009).

Individuals may choose whether to get involved in knowledge hiding behavior or not based on how the supervisor behaves with them. Supervisor's behavior is probably going to be important in deciding the knowledge hiding behaviors of employees (Wang & Noe, 2010). Past research has shown that the behavior of supervisor is positively connected with knowledge hiding behavior among employees (Lin & Huang, 2010). Abusive supervision carries negative frames of mind and knowledge hiding behavior (Aryee et al., 2007). These results propose that abusive supervision has a positive influence on employee's knowledge hiding behaviors.

According to Michele, Andrews, and Van Rooy (2006) depending upon how the employees see they are being dealt with or on the requirement for correspondence, they may change their point of view or conducts. Abusive supervisors are the one who don't treat individuals well, and rather freely condemn them, yell at them, threaten them, utilize forceful eye to eye connection, retain required data, mock their employees, or potentially give them the quiet therapy (Keashly, 1997; Tepper, 2000).

Project success is usually calculated in terms of schedule, budget, quality, and stakeholder requirements. All this cannot be achieved when the employees are hiding knowledge from team members and other colleagues (Suppiah & Singh Sandhu,

2011). Sharing of knowledge has become a basic requirement for the success of project whereas hiding knowledge from other employees or co-workers can lead to the failure of project and is also harmful for the project success. There are some sources of knowledge in every project like team members or project achievements and when these sources do not provide adequate information to the employees, it can become harmful and can even lead to failure of project (Park & Lee, 2014).

Failure of a project is strongly associated with knowledge hiding. In a negative workplace, employees are bound to hide their knowledge, leading to less cooperation and accordingly lower or zero chances of success of project and the success of the association at large (Luca & Tarricone, 2001). Connelly and Zweig (2015) found that knowledge hiding is a negative personality characteristic that affects all the team members and the association. Also knowledge hiding influences the accomplishment of a single worker as well as the complete success of project.

Employees who have experienced knowledge hiding are more liable to fight back by hiding their knowledge also, thereby making an endless loop that again limits and stops the formation of new information inside an organization. This can turn into a huge failure for the organization and the members involved in such a project (Connelly et al., 2012). Geofroy and Evans (2017) suggested in a current research that an association can completely stop the knowledge-hiding behavior between individuals by creating an atmosphere of belief.

Serenko and Bontis (2016) recommend that an encouraging organizational environment (i.e. standard of knowledge sharing, trust among employees, justice, etc.) decreases the information concealing behavior, as individuals in such an environment will in general feel an ethical commitment toward their association and colleagues. Moreover, they likewise recognized job uncertainty as being one of the factors that led to knowledge hiding behavior between individuals. When individuals feel that their jobs are in danger, they move towards the behavior to hide their information to increase their place and their value above others and in that way feel that they can achieve a competitive advantage over the other fellow individuals (Serenko & Bontis, 2016).

Knowledge hiding increases the struggles to obtain the information and increases the problems of the organization (Boh, 2007). Knowledge hiding creates more problems and reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of employees to make the project successful (Yang, Chen, & Wang, 2012). Project team members get disconnected with one other due to this knowledge hiding behavior and they don't interact with one another (Singh & Widyaratne, 2012). Miscommunication plays a significant role in knowledge hiding and it leads to the failure of project (Chen, Li, Clark, & Dietrich, 2013). The success and failure of project is associated with knowledge sharing. When employees start hiding the information, their relationship with each other will become weak (Alashwal, Rahman, & Beksin, 2011).

*H<sub>4</sub>: Knowledge hiding plays a mediating role between abusive supervision and Project success*

## 2.5 Machiavellianism as Moderator

Wastell and Booth (2003) recommended that a "Machiavellian is an individual who is detached to his or her feelings". Wastell and Booth (2003) suggested that Machiavellians have an inability to associate with others sincerely and, because of this insufficiency, treat individuals as objects or means to end. They additionally found that Machiavellianism was positively linked with a failure to distinguish sentiments. Christie and Geis (1970) explained Machiavellian character type as somebody who tries to control others to accomplish his or her very own desired end. Machiavellianism is described by the control and abuse of others, cunning, cold affect, and an absence of honesty or on the other hand moral concern (Hodson et al., 2009). Machiavellians score low in ethics and modesty (Lee & Ashton, 2005), increasing personal interests through double dealing and dismissal for other people. Machiavellianism includes relational procedures that encourage the use of dishonesty, power over others and abuse, and the Machiavellian employee can be described as skeptical, oppressive, unapproachable and realistic (McHoskey, Worzel, & Szyarto, 1998). Christie (1971) indicates that individuals having Machiavellian

personality are the actual managers described through: (1) lack of individual affect in personal associations, (2) absence of worry with conventional ethics and (3) low moral responsibility. Individuals having increased mark in Machiavellianism are more inclined to abuse others and to watch them being detached from others that is they see persons "as means to an end" (Wastell & Booth, 2003).

Machiavellianism is a part of individual character linked to job related decisions, as well as the methodology one takes toward his jobs and interactions with the employees (Holland, 1973). Character attributes may prompt individual achievement or disappointment in the working environment (Mynatt, Omundson, Schroeder, & Stevens, 1997) contingent upon the "fit" of individual characteristics and the conduct necessities of the occupation. Individuals having Machiavellian personality are portrayed as less spiritually connected with others, having barely any relational connections, and bound to dismiss moral standards so as to achieve individual objectives (Christie & Geis, 1970). Additionally, the psychology literature proposes that Machiavellian traits are moderately steady, they develop before maturity, and usually don't change much during maturity (Guterman, 1970; Christie & Geis, 1970).

One characteristic that is contended to be a part of the "dark triad of personality" is one's level of Machiavellianism (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Dahling et al. (2009) issued a review in a current research demonstrating that Machiavellianism is identified with various hierarchical conduct and management topics, for example, administration, counterproductive work conduct, use of impact strategies that change associations, work disappointment, and (sloppiness) citizenship practices. For example, Machiavellians were observed to be unhelpful and rude as supervisors (Drory & Gluskinos, 1980), display very slight respect for colleagues and concentrate just on expanding their very own benefits (Sakalaki, Richardson, & Thépaut, 2007), are more prone to take and disregard belief (paulus, 2002), and exhibit less supportive behavior (Becker & Dan O'Hair, 2007). These discoveries recommend that Machiavellianism is a form of importance for the board researchers and specialists alike, and associations ought to be attentive about enlisting Machiavellian workers.

The relationship between Machiavellianism and abusive supervision appears to be fairly self-evident, given that Machiavellianism describes the individuals who will in general control and misuse others so as to augment their own personal benefits (Kiazad, Restubog, & Zagenczyk, 2010). Anderson and Bushman (2002) explained the direct link between abusive supervision and Machiavellianism. It is stated that specific attributes incline people to get involved in abusive supervision (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Garcia, Restubog, & Denson, 2010) by impelling the availability of hostile thoughts, which consequently bias performance in the direction of hostility (Anderson & Bushman, 2002).

It is recommended that Machiavellianism enhances the availability to hostile beliefs and biases leader's conduct with the end goal that they show greater threatening vibe toward others. Dahling et al. (2009) discovered that high Machiavellian individuals are increasingly inclined to take part in counterproductive work practices, which incorporates unsafe acts associated to abuse. Supervisors with increased levels of Machiavellianism are more likely to be bound to act in a way that their employees translate and report as abusive.

Previous research has found that Machiavellianism is linked to employees feeling of abusive supervision (Zagenczyk, Restubog, & Kiewitz, 2014). Kiazad et al. (2010) discovered that Machiavellianism is positively linked to abusive supervision. Very few studies have concentrated legitimately on abusive supervision. For example, Kiazad et al. (2010) discovered Machiavellianism to be directly connected with employees feeling of abusive supervision.

Laurijssen, Wisse, and Sanders (2016) further found the positive link between abusive supervision and Machiavellianism. Different researches have connected high Machiavellianism to an inclination to take part in counterproductive work behaviors, which incorporates unsafe relational acts like abusive behavior (Dahling et al., 2009), and workplace harassment (Pilch & Turska, 2015). In view of the accessible research data, we therefore anticipate Machiavellianism to be positively linked with abusive supervision.

One personality characteristic that may incline people to hide knowledge is Machiavellianism (O'Neill & Adya, 2007). Machiavellianism may lead individuals to

increased knowledge hiding. Individuals who have large amounts of this quality are self-interested and are inclined to succeed at all expenses (Fehr, Samsom, & Paulhus, 1992). As a result of their key orientation, high Machiavellians are probably going to hide knowledge if it serves their interests. Moreover, perception of another person's dimension of Machiavellianism may influence whether somebody will take part in knowledge hiding with this individual.

Literature on knowledge hiding has contended that such conduct hurts the organization and also, the knowledge hider him/herself (e.g., very little amount of cash accessible for cash related rewards because of decreased work unit execution)(Evans et al., 2015). High Machiavellian individuals ought to accordingly maintain a strategic distance from such conduct as they eventually would likewise endure themselves from its negative results. However, it is found that knowledge hiding is strongly positively related to Machiavellianism (Belschak, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2018). While knowledge hiding may hurt the organization in the distant future, but in the present, it furnishes high-Machiavellian individuals with a source of authority and power (French & Raven, 1959) and position, thus giving them the chance to outflank others and accomplish other outer rewards (e.g., a reward or advancement)(Webster et al., 2008).

Workers should feel committed to take part in positive practices other than their sets of responsibilities when the association gives positive treatment (Organ, 1988). However, some studies demonstrates that high Mach workers may react diversely under such conditions. For instance, high Mach people will in general overlook the constructive correspondence standard (Gunnthorsdottir, McCabe, & Smith, 2002), which proposes that they will be more averse to help the organization in reaction to ideal treatment.

Support for this recommendation can be gotten from research that demonstrates that Machiavellianism is contrarily identified with different prosocial practices among undergrads, for example, sharing lectures and notes (McHoskey, 1999). Besides, high Mach representatives will in general be relationally unfriendly (Wiggins & Broughton, 1985) and will lack empathy for other people (Paal & Bereczkei, 2007), which recommends that they will be less adept to help other people or the

organization and will be more involved in knowledge hiding behaviors (Zagenczyk et al., 2014).

Hegarty and Sims (1978) found Machiavellianism as an important personality variable which plays an important role in ethics studies. The findings of their research suggest that the individuals who are involved in Machiavellian behavior are most likely to get involved in knowledge hiding behavior. Domelsmith and Dietch (1978) further in their research found out that Machiavellianism is altogether related with the reluctance to self-disclose. Machiavellianism is positively related with knowledge hiding (Liu, 2008).

*H<sub>5</sub>: Machiavellianism moderates the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding*

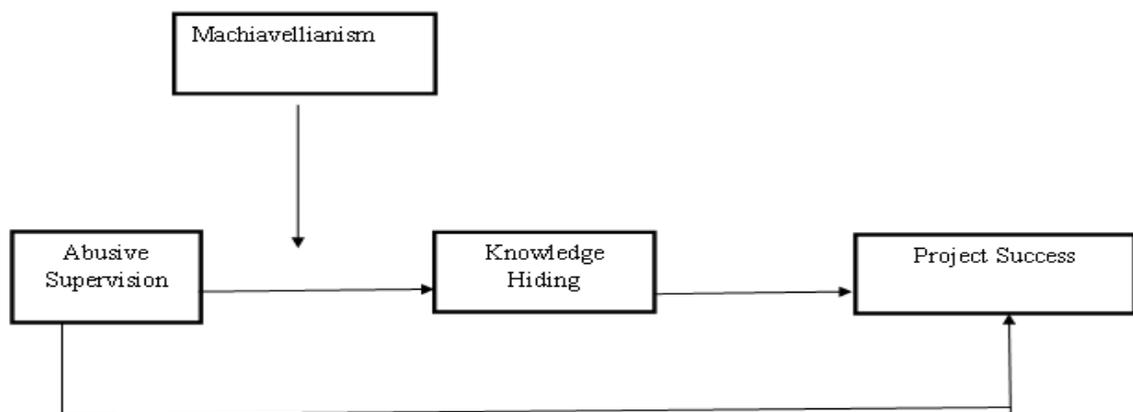


FIGURE 2.1: Impact of Abusive Supervision on Project Success with Mediating Role of Knowledge hiding and Moderating Role of Machiavellianism.

## 2.6 Summary of Hypothesis

*H<sub>1</sub>: Abusive supervision is negatively related with project success.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Abusive supervision is positively associated with Knowledge Hiding.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: Knowledge Hiding is negatively linked with project success.*

*H<sub>4</sub>: Knowledge hiding plays a mediating role among abusive supervision and Project success.*

*H<sub>5</sub>: Machiavellianism moderates the relationship among abusive supervision and*

*knowledge hiding.*

# Chapter 3

## Research Methodology

The following chapter contains details about all the methods and procedure used in this research to get the desired results. It is used to examine the link between abusive supervision and project success with mediating role of knowledge hiding and moderating role of Machiavellianism. This chapter is composed of research design, Population and sample, Sample and Sampling Technique, Sample characteristics, instrumentation, statistical tool, pilot testing, reliability analysis of scales used and data analysis techniques.

### 3.1 Research Design

Research design is defined as a scheme of the researcher that shows the methods and procedures used for collecting and analyzing information ([Zikmund, 2013](#)). Research design consists of type of study, time lag and unit of analysis.

#### 3.1.1 Type of Study

This research is focused on the effect of abusive supervision on project success. It was calculated on the basis of self-reported perception. It is the most commonly used assessment instrument to quantify feelings and depend on members' self-reported (perceived) involvement of feelings, instead of social or physiological

enthusiastic data. The target population for this study include employees working in different project based organizations of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Initially 400 questionnaires were distributed among the target respondents but only 250 genuine responses were collected. Respondent's response rate was 62%. In these 250 questionnaires, 52 questionnaires were filled online and the rest 198 were filled from organizations.

## 3.2 Time Lag

The information used in this study was collected in one month from different project based organizations of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Data was collected in three time lags. This requires a lot of time as the data was collected three times.

**Time lag 1- T1:** In the first time lag, 400 questionnaires were distributed from which 368 responses came back. In this time lag, independent variable (Abusive Supervision) and moderator (Machiavellianism) was measured. From these 368 responses only 360 responses were completely filled.

**Time lag 2- T2:** In the second time lag, 360 questionnaires were distributed from which 294 responses came back. In this second time lag knowledge hiding was measured. From these 294 responses only 290 responses were completely filled.

**Time lag 3-T3:** At T3, the dependent variable was measured. In the third and last time lag, 290 questionnaires were distributed from which only 260 responses came back. In this time lag, project success was measured. From these 260 responses 10 responses were not completely filled. Data was missing; therefore data analysis was conducted on 250 completely filled responses.

The same questionnaires were distributed among respondents every time. This practice helped in reducing the error. 400 questionnaires were circulated in total out of which only 250 answers were completely filled and were used in data analysis.

### **3.3 Unit of Analysis**

Unit of study varies from a specific, dyad, cluster, industry, organization etc. The effect of abusive supervision on project success is studied therefore the unit of analysis would be the workers of different project based organizations from Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

### **3.4 Population and Sample**

This research emphasizes on organizations. The impact of abusive supervision in organizations was tested. The sample was taken from the employees working in different organizations. Total 400 questionnaires were distributed from which 250 completely filled responses came back. These 250 questionnaires include both online and random sampling data. The technique used for data collection was convenience sampling technique. This technique is simple and helps to gather information from large number of people at the same time. In this study this technique is used because of limited time and resources. The location of survey was projectized organizations of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Data was collected for mainly four variables i.e Abusive Supervision, Project Success, Knowledge Hiding and Machiavellianism. The respondent's response rate was 62% for both random sampling and online data collection.

### **3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Data from whole population could not be collected due to time and resource limitations. Therefore sampling was used. It is a common procedure for data collection. Sample basically is a representative of the entire population. Convenience sampling technique was used due to time limitations. This is the most appropriate technique used in this research because with the help of this technique data can be collected from different individuals and organizations randomly.

## 3.6 Sample Characteristics

In this research, the demographics used are: Age, Gender, Qualification and Experience.

### 3.6.1 Gender

Gender differentiates between male and female in a given sample. Males and Females were given equal priority in this study but still it has been seen that the ratio of males are greater than females.

TABLE 3.1: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	173	69.2	69.2
Female	77	30.8	100.0
Total	250	100.0	

Table 3.1 shows the gender distribution of the sample in which 69.2% were males and 30.8% were female. The percentage of male respondents was high as compared to female respondents.

### 3.6.2 Age

In this research, range was used to collect data about the age of defendants for their convenience because sometimes individuals do not want to disclose their exact age.

Table 3.2 shows the age distribution sample. 42.4% respondents were having age between the ranges of 18-25 years. The age of 22.0% respondents were between the ranges of 26-33 years. 13.6% respondents were having age between the ranges of 34-41 years. 10.8% respondents were having age between the ranges of 42-49 years. 11.2 % respondents were having age between the ranges of 50 and above years. In this study the age of maximum number of respondents lie between 18-25 years.

TABLE 3.2: Age Distribution

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-25	106	42.4	42.4
26-33	55	22.0	64.4
34-41	34	13.6	78.0
42-49	27	10.8	88.8
50 and Above	28	11.2	100.0
<b>Total</b>	250	100.0	

### 3.6.3 Qualification

Qualification is considered as one of the most important element that contributes towards the progress of the country.

TABLE 3.3: Qualification Distribution

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Intermediate	17	6.8	6.8
Bachelor	76	30.4	37.2
Master	94	37.6	74.8
MS/M.Phil	59	23.6	98.4
PHD	4	1.6	100.0
<b>Total</b>	250	100.0	

Table 3.3 represents the qualification distribution of the sample. 6.8% individuals were having intermediate degrees, 30.4% respondents were bachelor qualified, 37.6% individuals were having master's degrees, 23.6% individuals were having MS/M.Phil degrees and 1.6% individuals were PHD qualified. The maximum number of respondents were having a Master's degree.

### 3.6.4 Experience

For experience also a range of different time periods was developed so that every respondent can easily indicate the range of their experience in a specific field.

TABLE 3.4: Frequency of Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>1-5</b>	173	69.2	69.2
<b>6-13</b>	59	23.6	92.8
<b>14-21</b>	12	4.8	97.6
<b>22-29</b>	4	1.6	99.2
<b>30 and Above</b>	2	0.8	100.0
<b>Total</b>	250	100	

Table 3.4 shows the experience circulation of the sample. 69.2% respondents were having experience ranging from 1-5 years, 23.6% respondents consisted of experience ranging from 6-13 years, 4.8% respondents consisted of experience ranging from 14-21 years, 1.6% respondents consisted of experience ranging from 22-29 years while only 0.8% respondents were having experience ranging from 30 and above years. The maximum number of respondents were having experience ranging between 5 and less years.

## 3.7 Instrumentation

### 3.7.1 Measures

The items included in this questionnaire are abusive supervision, project success, knowledge hiding and Machiavellianism. Responses of objects in the survey were filled by means of a 5 point likert scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly

agree). The questionnaire also includes demographics like Gender, Age, Qualification and Experience.

### 3.7.1.1 Abusive Supervision

Abusive Supervision was restrained using a 7 items scale established by (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). The replies were gained through 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= Strongly Agree. Sample items included: “My supervisor makes negative comments about me to others”; “My immediate supervisor ignores me or gives me the silent treatment”; “My immediate supervisor tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid”; “My supervisor ridicules me”; “Blames me to save himself/herself from embarrassment”; “Puts me down in front of others”; “Tells me I’m incompetent”. The reliability of this instrument was 0.86.

### 3.7.1.2 Project Success

Project Success was restrained by means of a 12 items scale recently used by Aga and Valejo (2018). The scale extended from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The model element is “The project was completed on time”; “The project was completed according to the budget allocated”; “The outcomes of the project are used by its intended end users”; “The outcomes of the project are likely to be sustained”; “The outcomes of the project have directly benefited the intended end users, either through increasing efficiency or effectiveness”. “Given the problem for which it was developed, the project seems to do the best job of solving that problem”; “I was satisfied with the process by which the project was implemented”; “Project team members were satisfied with the process by which the project was implemented”; “The project has directly led to improved performance for the end users / target beneficiaries”; “The project has made a visible positive impact on the target beneficiaries”; “Project specifications were met by the time of handover to the target beneficiaries”; “The target beneficiaries were satisfied with the outcomes of the project”. The reliability of this instrument was 0.78.

### 3.7.1.3 Knowledge Hiding

Knowledge Hiding was dignified using a 12 items scale developed by (Connelly et al., 2012). The scale stretched from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Sample items included: “I agreed to help him/her but never really intended to”; “I agreed to help him/her but instead gave him/her information different from what s/he wanted”; “I told him/her that I would help him/her out later but stalled as much as possible”; “I offered him/her some other information instead of what he/she really wanted”; “I pretended that I did not know the information”; “I said that I did not know, even though I did”. “I pretended I did not know what s/he was talking about”; “I said that I was not very knowledgeable about the topic”; “I explained that I would like to tell him/her, but was not supposed to”; “I explained that the information is confidential and only available to people on a particular project”; “I told him/her that my boss would not let anyone share this knowledge”; “I said that I would not answer his/her questions”. The reliability of this instrument was 0.86.

### 3.7.1.4 Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism was measured using a 16 items scale developed by (Dahcing, Whitcker & Levy, 2012). The likert scale ranged from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Sample items include: “I believe that lying is necessary to maintain a competitive advantage over others.”; “The only good reason to talk to others is to get information that I can use to my benefit”. “I am willing to be unethical if I believe it will help me succeed”; “I am willing to sabotage the efforts of other people if they threaten my own goals”; “I would cheat if there was a low chance of getting caught”; “I like to give the orders in interpersonal situations”; “I enjoy having control over other people”; “I enjoy being able to control the situation”; “Status is a good sign of success in life”; “Accumulating wealth is an important goal for me”; “I want to be rich and powerful someday”; “People are only motivated by personal gain”; “I dislike committing to groups because I don’t trust others”; “Team members backstab each other all the time to

get ahead”; “If I show any weakness at work, other people will take advantage of it”; “Other people are always planning ways to take advantage of the situation at my expense”. The reliability of this instrument was 0.85.

TABLE 3.5: Instruments.

No	Variables	Source	Items
1	Abusive Supervision (IV)	(Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007)	7
2	Knowledge Hiding (Med)	(Connelly et al., 2012)	12
3	Project Success (DV)	(Aga & Vallejo, 2016)	12
4	Machiavellianism (Mod)	(Dahling, Whitaker & Levy, 2008)	16

Scale reliability and validity is considered as the most important element of data analysis. For this research, scale reliability and validity was tested using AMOS by doing CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis), TLI (Tucker Lewis Index), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index and RMSEA (Root Mean Square error of approximation). While conducting CFA there were certain values that were exceeding or were below the threshold limits of CFA. Due to this, it was thought that there was a need to modify the model in order to meet the threshold requirements. Therefore for this purpose, certain items were co-varied and from the initial model a modified model was generated that met the threshold requirements.

TABLE 3.6: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

	$\chi^2$	Df	CMIN	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Initial Model	1430.829***	623	2.297	.788	.724	.734	.072
Modified Model	1290.273***	933	1.383	.830	.898	.912	.039

\* $P > 0$

In table 3.6, the value of GFI is 0.830 which is greater than 0.8, this displays outstanding model fit. The significance of TLI is 0.898 and the value of CFI is 0.912, this again displays that the fitness of model. The significance of RMSEA should be smaller than 0.6 and in this model the value of RMSEA is 0.39 that spectacles the fitness of model. The results of the model justify that model fitness.

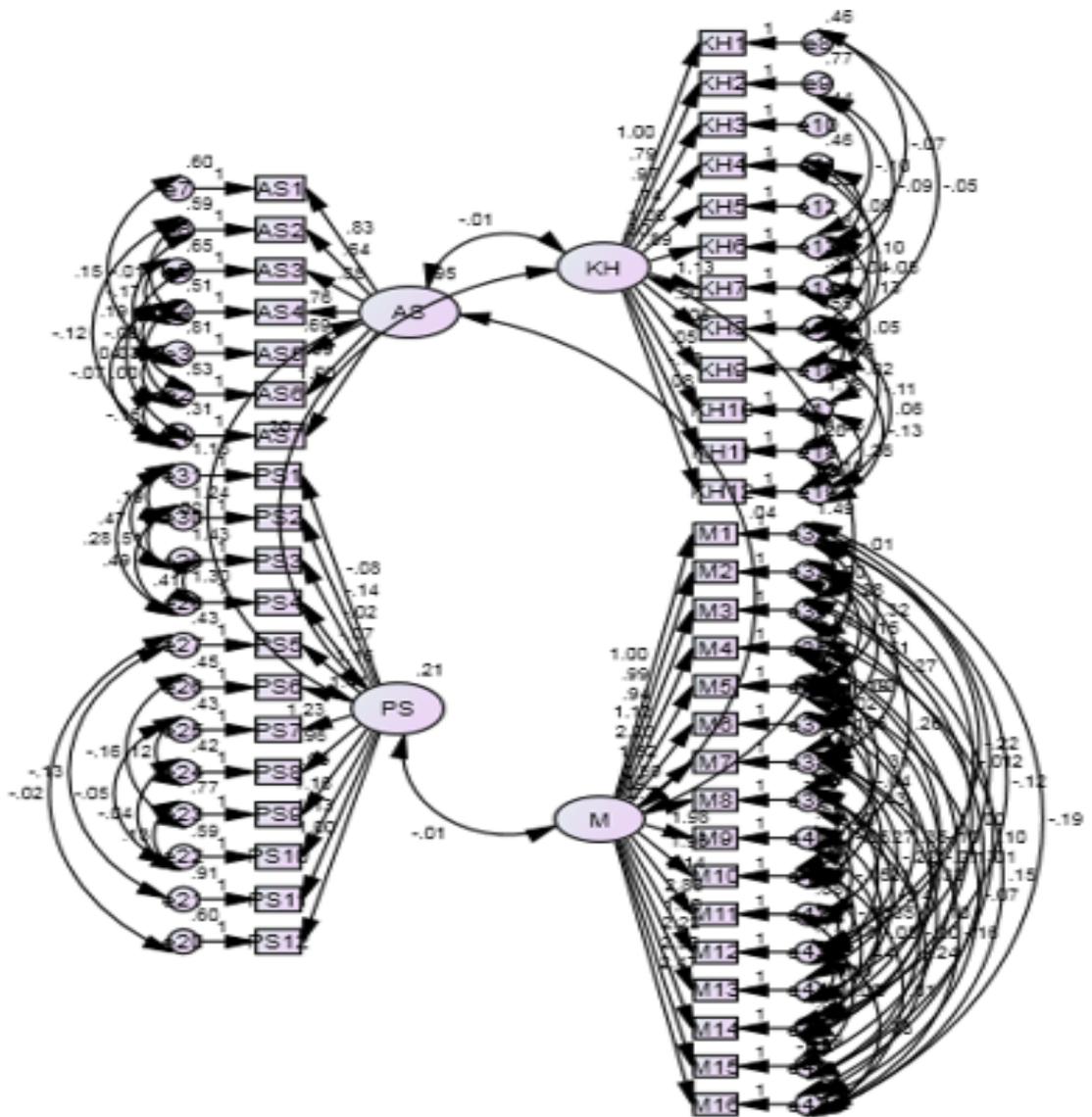


FIGURE 3.1: CFA for Complete Model

### 3.8 Pilot Testing

Pilot testing of 40 questionnaires was carried out in order to test the rationality and consistency of the data. By doing this, it was found out that the data was in line with the hypothesis and there was no issue in data and the scale was reliable.

### 3.9 Reliability Analysis of Scales Used

Reliability is discussed to a procedure of giving same predictable outcomes again and again when the particular thing is being tried over number of time, same is for the measures. Reliability of scale delineates the capacity of the scale to give reliable outcomes when it is being tried for number of times. I have conducted reliability test through Cronbach alpha. Critical range for Cronbach alpha is 0 to 1 (Cronbach, 1951). Increasing the estimation of cronbach alpha, the dependability of the measure to gauge the build it is intended to quantify is likewise higher. Measure is considered trustworthy when the estimation of alpha is above 0.7 and it is less reliable in estimating the chosen set of data when the value is below 0.7.

TABLE 3.7: Scale Reliability and Validity Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Abusive Supervision	0.865	7
Knowledge Hiding	0.787	12
Project Success	0.853	12
Machiavellianism	0.867	16

Table 3.7 represents the reliability and validity tests of complete data. The values of Cronbach's alpha for every variable is above 0.7. The assessment of Cronbach's alpha for Abusive Supervision is 0.865, the value of Cronbach's alpha for Knowledge Hiding is 0.787, Project success was valued at 0.853 and Machiavellianism

was valued at 0.867. All these values are above 0.7 and these values represent that these scales are highly consistent to be used in this study.

### **3.10 Data Analysis Techniques**

The analysis was performed on 250 usable respondents. After collection of data the data was analyzed on AMOS and SPSS version 21. First of all, all the questionnaires that were completely filled were used for analysis. Each variable of the questionnaire was coded. Frequency tables were made for the sample characteristics. Reliability and validity of the variables was tested with the help of Cronbach's alpha. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to justify the model. Correlation and Single linear regression analysis of variables was conducted to regulate the relationship between the variables under study. Preacher and Hayes model was used for the mediation and moderation to determine the presence of mediator and moderator between dependent and independent variable. By means of preacher and Hayes method and correlation the hypothesis was tested for acceptance and rejection.

# Chapter 4

## Results

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics include the total number of respondents (N), Minimum and maximum values and mean and standard deviation of all the variables. The mean values of all the variables show the average value of the responses while the standard deviation shows the variation of responses from mean.

TABLE 4.1: Descriptive Statistics

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Abusive Supervision</b>	250	1.57	4.57	3.02	.794
<b>Project Success</b>	250	1.58	4.50	3.25	.593
<b>Knowledge Hiding</b>	250	1.33	4.50	3.35	.642
<b>Machiavellianism</b>	250	1.44	4.50	2.96	.670

Table 4.1 shows the sample size of each variable which is 250. All the variables were measured on a 5 point likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The mean value of Abusive Supervision was 3.02 and the value

of standard deviation was .794. The mean value of Project Success was 3.25 and the assessment of standard deviation was .593. The mean value of Knowledge Hiding was 3.35 and the value of standard deviation was .642. The mean value of Machiavellianism was 2.96 and the value of standard deviation was .670.

## 4.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is accompanied to check the link between variables. In this research correlation analysis is steered to check the link among abusive supervision and project success, mediating role of knowledge hiding and moderating role of Machiavellianism. Pearson's Correlation analysis tells about the strength and nature of the link between variables. The value of Pearson's correlation depicts the nature of correlation. If the value is between the range of 0.1-0.3 it shows weak correlation, if the values are between the range of 0.3-0.5 it shows moderate correlation and if the values are above 0.5 it shows high correlation.

TABLE 4.2: Correlation Analysis

S.No	Variables	1	2	3	4
1	Abusive Supervision	1			
2	Project success	-.261**	1		
3	Knowledge Hiding	.248**	-.300**	1	
4	Machiavellianism	.344**	-.308**	.249**	1

\* $P < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$  N=250 \*\*Correlation is significant at the level 0.01(2-tailed)

Table 4.2 illustrates the correlation among variables. Abusive Supervision is negatively correlated with project success ( $r = -.261^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and positively correlated with knowledge hiding ( $r = .248^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Machiavellianism ( $r = .344^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Project success is negatively correlated with knowledge hiding ( $r = -.300^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and also negatively associated with Machiavellianism ( $r =$

-.308\*\*,  $p < 0.01$ ). Knowledge hiding was positively correlated with Machiavellianism ( $r = .249$ \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ ). This shows that the variables are strongly correlated with one another.

### 4.3 Control Variables

For control variables, one way ANOVA test was conducted for each variable separately in SPSS. The main persistence of conducting this test is to identify whether the demographic variables have any impact on the dependent variable that are project success and knowledge hiding. If any demographic variable has any impact on the dependent variable then that impact needs to be controlled.

TABLE 4.3: Control Variables

Variables	Project Success		Knowledge Hiding	
	F Value	Sig.	F Value	Sig.
Gender	0.004	.951	0.689	.407
Age	0.916	.455	1.141	.338
Qualification	1.135	.341	0.850	.495
Experience	0.947	.437	1.802	.129

Table 4.3 show that there is no need of changing any demographic variable. The demographic variables do not affect the dependent variable i. e Project success. The results show insignificant difference in project success across gender ( $F = 0.004$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), age ( $F = 0.916$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), qualification ( $F = 1.135$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and experience ( $F = 0.947$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). On the other hand using knowledge hiding as dependent variable, the results show that there is again no need of changing any demographic variable. The demographic variables do not distress the dependent variable. The

results show insignificant difference in project success across gender ( $F= 0.689, p> 0.05$ ), age ( $F= 1.141, p> 0.05$ ), qualification ( $F= 0.850, p> 0.05$ ) and experience ( $F= 1.802, p> 0.05$ ).

## 4.4 Regression Analysis

To analyze the links between variables correlation analysis was conducted but we can not only rely on correlation analysis because it does not tell us about the causal link between variables. For this purpose regression analysis is accompanied to validate the link among variables. Two types of regression exists namely simple and multiple regression. Simple regression is conducted when there are two variables whereas multiple regression is conducted when there are more than two variables. Multiple regression is conducted in case of mediation and moderation.

### 4.4.1 Simple Regression

TABLE 4.4: Simple Regression

Project Success			
Predictor	$\beta$	$R^2$	Sig
Abusive Supervision	-.195	.068	.000

*\*P < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < .001* N=250 Un-standardized regression coefficient reported

Hypothesis 1 states that abusive supervision is negatively associated with project success. The value of  $\beta$  coefficient is  $-.195$ ,  $R^2 = .061$  and the value of  $p$  is  $.000$  which is extremely significant. The negative value of  $\beta$  coefficient justifies the negative relation between abusive supervision and project success. The value of  $\beta$  coefficient shows the rate of change demonstrating that 1 unit transform in Abusive Supervision leads to  $-0.195$  unit modify in Project success. The value of  $R^2$  shows that abusive supervision brings about 68% variation in Project success.

TABLE 4.5: Simple Regression

<b>Knowledge Hiding</b>			
<b>Predictor</b>	$\beta$	$R^2$	<b>Sig</b>
<b>Abusive Supervision</b>	.200	.061	.000

*\*P < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < .001* N=250 Un-standardized regression coefficient reported

Hypothesis 2 states that abusive supervision is positively linked with knowledge hiding. The outcome shows an important and positive relation among the two variables. The value of  $\beta$  coefficient is .200,  $R^2 = .601$  and the value of  $P = .000$  which is significant. The significance of  $\beta$  coefficient shows the rate of change demonstrating that 1 unit modification in Abusive Supervision points to .200 unit alteration in Knowledge Hiding. The value of  $R^2$  shows that abusive supervision brings about 61% variation in Knowledge Hiding.

TABLE 4.6: Simple Regression

<b>Project Success</b>			
<b>Predictor</b>	$\beta$	$R^2$	<b>Sig</b>
<b>Knowledge Hiding</b>	-.277	.090	.000

*\*P < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < .001* N=250 Un-standardized regression coefficient reported

Hypothesis 3 states that knowledge hiding is negatively related with project success. The value of  $\beta$  coefficient is -.277,  $R^2 = .090$  and the value of  $p=.000$  which is significant. The value of  $\beta$  coefficient shows the rate of change demonstrating that 1 unit change in knowledge hiding leads to -.277 unit change in Project success. The value of  $R^2$  shows that knowledge hiding brings about 90% variation in Project Success.

#### 4.4.2 Multiple Regression

Multiple regression is conducted when there are more than two variables. For this research, mediation and moderation analysis were conducted using Preacher and Hayes Process Macros. Mediation analysis was carried out to test the role of knowledge hiding as a mediator among Abusive Supervision and Project success. Model 4 of Preacher and Hayes process macros were used to assess the mediation. Moderation was conducted to test the moderating role of Machiavellianism among Abusive Supervision and Knowledge Hiding. For this purpose, Preacher and Hayes model 1 was used to test moderation.

TABLE 4.7: Mediation Analysis

IV	Effect of IV on M (a path)	Effect of M on DV (b path)	Indirect Effect of IV on DV (c' path)	Direct Effect of IV on DV (c path)	Total Effect of IV on DV (c path)	Bootstrapping Results for Indirect Effect	LL95%CI	UL95%CI
<b>Abusive Supervision</b>	$\beta$ .2004	$\beta$ -.2316	$\beta$ -.0464	$\beta$ -.1490	$\beta$ -3.2495		-.0865	-.0209

*Note.* Un-standardized regression coefficient indicated. Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL =lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit. N=250, \*P < .05; \*\*P < .01

Hypothesis 4 stated that knowledge hiding plays a mediating role among abusive supervision and project success. To test this hypothesis model 4 of Preacher and Hayes process macros was used. Bootstrap sample size was 5000. Confidence interval was 95, N = 250, Control variables included gender, age, qualification, experience.

Table 4.7 shows that the indirect effect of abusive supervision on project success has the lower and upper level confidence interval and upper level confidence interval of -0.0865 and -0.0209. Both ULCI and LLCI have negative signs which show that negative but significant existence of mediation between abusive supervision and

knowledge hiding. Hence we conclude that mediation is happening between the variables.

In order to test hypothesis 5 moderation analysis was conducted. This was done through Preacher and Hayes Process macros model 1.

TABLE 4.8: Moderation Analysis

		$\beta$	<i>se</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Abusive Supervision*</b>	→ <b>knowledge</b>	.127	.034	3.416	.000
<b>Machiavellianism</b>	<b>Hiding</b>				
<b>(Int_term)</b>					
		<b>LL 95% CI</b>	<b>UL 95% CI</b>		
<b>Bootstrap results for indirect effect</b>		.184		.057	

*Note.* Un-standardized regression coefficient indicated. Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL =lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit. N=250, \*  $P < .05$ ; \*\*  $P < .01$

Hypothesis 5 states that Machiavellianism plays a moderating role between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Table 4.8 shows that the interaction term of abusive supervision and Machiavellianism moderates the relationship between abusive supervision and project success such that it strengthens the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding and has the value of upper limit confidence interval and lower limit confidence interval as .184 and .057. Both the values have same positive signs therefore moderation exists between the variables. The interaction term showed a positive and significant relationship. The regression coefficient  $\beta = .127$ ,  $p < 0.5$  means that moderation exists between variables and Machiavellianism has a strong positive relationship among abusive supervision and Knowledge hiding.

Figure 4.1 shows a simple slope of moderating effect of Machiavellianism. As displayed in the figure the slope of the relationship between abusive supervision and project success was stronger for supervisors who are high in Machiavellianism. The dotted lines symbolize high Machiavellianism whereas the bold lines characterize low Machiavellianism.

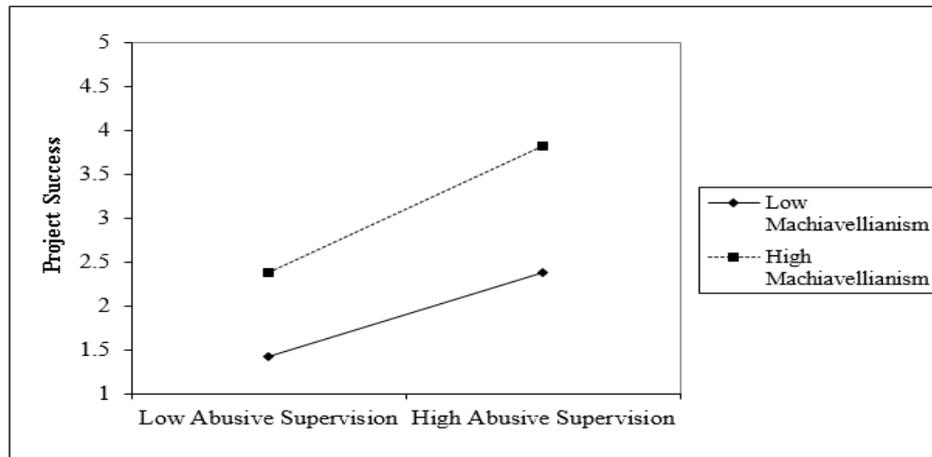


FIGURE 4.1: Interaction Graph

## 4.5 Summary of Accepted/ Rejected Hypothesis

TABLE 4.9: Summary about Accepted/ Rejected hypothesis

Hypothesis	Statements	Results
$H_1$	Abusive supervision is negatively associated with project success	<b>Accepted</b>
$H_2$	Abusive supervision is positively associated with Knowledge Hiding.	<b>Accepted</b>
$H_3$	Knowledge Hiding is negatively associated with project success	<b>Accepted</b>
$H_4$	Knowledge hiding plays a mediating role between abusive supervision and Project success	<b>Accepted</b>
$H_5$	Machiavellianism moderates the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding	<b>Accepted</b>

# Chapter 5

## Discussion and Conclusion

This portion of the study deals with the detailed discussion regarding the acceptance, rejection of hypothesis, practical and theoretical implications, restrictions of the study, future research directions and conclusion.

### 5.1 Discussion

The main reason for conducting this research was to look at the link among abusive supervision and project success. The research also included the mediating role of knowledge hiding and the moderating role of Machiavellianism. This research was conducted in project based organizations of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The outcome concluded that abusive supervision is negatively linked with project success. Knowledge hiding is mediating the relation between abusive supervision and project success. The outcomes of this research also display a positive moderating role of Machiavellianism between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.

H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5 were accepted developing a strong relationship between all the variables. This shows that abusive supervision has a negative effect on project success; knowledge hiding has a positive effect on abusive supervision and a negative effect on project success whereas Machiavellianism has a positive effect on both abusive supervision and knowledge hiding such that it strengthens the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.

### 5.1.1 Hypothesis $H_1$ : Abusive supervision is negatively associated with project success.

Hypothesis 1 acknowledged that abusive supervision is negatively associated with project success. The outcomes of data collection and analysis supported this hypothesis. The outcomes display that abusive Supervision is negatively but significantly linked with project success. The negative sign in the analysis shows the negative relation between the variables. The supervisor's negative behavior can badly affect the success of the project because the attitude of the supervisor can demotivate employees, it can discourage them and this in turn is going to affect the performance of the project.

Tepper et al. (2004) explained abusive supervision as the employees vision of the quantity to which bosses get involved in the continued demonstration of aggressive nonverbal and verbal practices, eliminating material interaction. This definition portrays abusive supervision as an emotional evaluation. Supervisor's abusive behavior can effect employee's performance badly and can shatter his/her confidence. Due to supervisor's abusive behavior the employee will avoid interaction with the supervisor and will not perform the task given to him with interest and eventually the project will move towards failure and dissatisfying outcomes.

Warr (2011) found that delayed abuse of employees through emotional as well as mental abusive supervision is negatively related with project success. Employees who are suffering from abusive supervision may feel that they are not being treated well. Supervisor's behavior may have a negative impact on the employee as well as on project success. Suffering from abusive supervision the employees may not perform their best and may lose motivation and interest in the job and will move towards quitting the job. This will lead the project towards failure.

Haar et al. (2016) concluded in their research that abusive supervision has a huge influence on failure of the project because abusive supervision leads to high turnover intentions and decreased project success. Pradhan and Jena (2017) further confirm that abusive supervision can negatively influence the project success.

The outcomes of this learning show that this research is in line with the previous literature and the results support the hypothesis.

Therefore, these above arguments provide strong justifications for hypothesis 1 acceptance that abusive supervision is negatively and considerably connected with project success. When there will be abusive supervision, project success will move towards a decline.

### **5.1.2 Hypothesis $H_2$ : Abusive supervision is positively associated with knowledge hiding**

The second hypothesis depicts a positive relation among abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. The results justify this hypothesis strongly. The results of this hypothesis demonstrate that abusive supervision is positively related with knowledge hiding. This shows the reciprocal behavior of the employees. When the employees get abused by the supervisor, they behave in the same negative way and this leads to knowledge hiding behavior among individuals which can badly harm the success of the project as well as the image of the organization. The supervisor's abusive behavior will force the employees to engage in knowledge hiding.

[Connelly and Zweig \(2015\)](#) explained knowledge hiding as a conscious choice to retain knowledge and data that is requested by others. [Khalid, Bashir, Khan, and Abbas \(2018\)](#) found that abusive supervision is positively connected with knowledge hiding. The positive relation between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding shows that supervisor's abusive behavior forces the employees to behave in a certain way and to adopt reciprocal conducts such as knowledge hiding. Whenever employees face abusive behavior they respond in the same negative manner. Result of the current research is aligned with the results of these previous researches.

Mostly employees do not hide the knowledge in order to tease others or to hurt the performance of the organization. Some employees hide knowledge in reaction to supervisor's abusive behavior. Employees consider their knowledge as a valuable

asset and when they experience supervisor's abusive behavior they tend to hide that knowledge and they adopt a reciprocal negative behavior.

These arguments lead to the acceptance of hypothesis 2. When the employees face supervisor's abuse they get demotivated and tend to hide their knowledge. Employee's behavior is dependent on supervisor's behavior, both the behaviors reciprocate each other. The behavior of the supervisor causes the employee to behave in the same manner.

### **5.1.3 Hypothesis $H_3$ : Knowledge Hiding is negatively associated with project success**

Hypothesis 3 shows a negative link between knowledge hiding and project success. The outcomes of this study justify this hypothesis strongly. According to the results knowledge hiding is negatively and significantly affecting project success. Since knowledge hiding is a negative behavior, it will have a negative effect on project success. Knowledge hiding behavior is adopted when the employees feel that they are not being treated well. This behavior of an employee can harm the success of project. In a project, when information does not flow properly there are chances for it to fail.

[Evans et al. \(2014\)](#) found that Knowledge hiding weakens the performance of organization and creativity of employees and has a negative effect on project success. This shows that knowledge hiding behavior of employee can bring the project to a complete letdown and can ruin the project. Past researches have demonstrated knowledge hiding to be a very significant issue in the failure of project ([Mueller, 2014](#); [Stephens & Carmeli, 2016](#)). Similarly, [Jha and Varkkey \(2018\)](#) concluded in their research that knowledge hiding behavior can lead to a complete disappointment in a project, and accordingly badly influence the organization and can bring it to a complete failure.

The outcomes of this research are linked with the works of past researchers. The previous literature also suggests that the knowledge hiding behavior of employee will lead to the failure of project. If employees tend to hide knowledge it will have

a negative effect on the success of the project. Therefore these findings lead to the acceptance of hypothesis 3. This proves that knowledge hiding is negatively linked with project success. If the employees adopt knowledge hiding behavior the project will be unsuccessful.

#### **5.1.4 Hypothesis $H_4$ : Knowledge hiding plays a mediating role between abusive supervision and project success.**

Hypothesis 4 states that knowledge hiding plays a mediating role among abusive supervision and project success. The outcomes justify this hypothesis strongly. Knowledge hiding basically links both abusive supervision and project success together. It creates a path between the two. Since it is a reciprocal relationship, therefore it can be stated that whenever there will be abusive supervision, knowledge hiding will occur. Abusive behavior of the supervisor forces the employee to hide knowledge in revenge. This will bring the project to a complete failure. This indicates a strong mediating role of knowledge hiding among abusive supervision and project success.

This hypothesis was accepted because the outcomes demonstrate an important relation of knowledge hiding as a mediator between abusive supervision and project success. Wang and Noe (2010) stated that supervisor's behavior is probably going to be influential in deciding the knowledge hiding behaviors of employees. If the supervisor is abusive, the employees are also going to react in a similar negative way. If the knowledge is not transferred among the individuals it can influence the success of the project. Knowledge hiding has a negative effect on project success.

Past research has shown that the behavior of supervisor is positively connected with knowledge hiding behavior among employees (Lin & Huang, 2010). According to this also abusive supervision is positively linked with knowledge hiding. Employees will get disconnected with one other due to this knowledge hiding behavior and

they will avoid interaction with one another (Singh & Widyaratne, 2012). Knowledge hiding behavior affects the efficiency and effectiveness of employees to make project successful.

Therefore, the results provide justification for the acceptance of hypothesis that knowledge hiding acts as a mediator between abusive supervision and project success. Since this research is also in line with the past existing literature therefore hypothesis 4 was accepted. As when there will be abusive supervision employees will react in a certain negative way such as knowledge hiding and this behavior will result in decreased project success.

### **5.1.5 Hypothesis $H_5$ : Moderating role of Machiavellianism between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.**

In hypothesis 5, moderating role of Machiavellianism between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding was studied. The analysis showed significant positive relation of Machiavellianism among abusive supervision and knowledge hiding such that it strengthens the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. A Machiavellian individual is the one works for his own benefits, enjoys controlling others and having authority and power. Such Machiavellian individuals indulge in abusive supervision. They enjoy controlling others and they adopt abusive behaviors. This leads to knowledge hiding among employees. Machiavellian individuals in turn do not share knowledge with others because they want to be superior to others. This shows a significant moderating role of Machiavellianism between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.

A Machiavellian individual is defined as someone who tries to control others to accomplish their own interests. Anderson and Bushman (2002) explained the direct link between abusive supervision and Machiavellianism. It is stated that Machiavellianism increases biasness and aggressive thoughts which provokes the supervisor to adopt abusive behavior which in turn increases knowledge hiding.

Dahling et al. (2009) found that people high in Machiavellianism are strongly inclined towards counterproductive work attitudes, which incorporate unsafe acts

associated to abuse. Supervisors having high Machiavellian trait are more likely to act in a manner that their workers describe as abusive. [Kiazad et al. \(2010\)](#) established that Machiavellianism is positively linked to abusive supervision. [Laurijssen et al. \(2016\)](#) further found the positive suggestion between abusive supervision and Machiavellianism. Therefore it is proved that our research is also inclined with the previous literature.

[O'Neill and Adya \(2007\)](#) in their research found that one personality characteristic that may incline people to hide knowledge is Machiavellianism. This personality trait leads individuals towards knowledge hiding behavior. [Belschak et al. \(2018\)](#) further found that knowledge hiding is strongly and positively linked to Machiavellianism. The outcomes of this research are inclined with the outcomes of past literature.

Therefore, the outcomes give strong justification for the approval of the above stated hypothesis. It is proved that Machiavellianism acts as a moderator among abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Since the results of this research is also in line with the previous existing literature therefore hypothesis 5 was accepted. It is proved that an individual having Machiavellian personality trait will incline the supervisor towards abusive supervision and this in turn will cause knowledge hiding behavior in the organization.

## 5.2 Research Implications

### 5.2.1 Theoretical Implications

The current research adds to the current literature in both theoretical and practical ways. The main reason for conducting this research was to study the effect of abusive supervision on project success with mediating role of knowledge hiding among abusive supervision and project success and moderating role of Machiavellianism between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Very few literature was available on the links between variables like knowledge hiding and project

success, knowledge hiding and abusive supervision, Machiavellianism and abusive supervision and Machiavellianism and knowledge hiding.

In this research a new relation was hypothesized and tested with other variables. Previous research does not include knowledge hiding as a mediator between abusive supervision and project success. Also, in the past literature Machiavellianism is used as a moderator connecting abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. The hypothesis was developed that knowledge hiding will mediate the connection between abusive supervision and project success. In this way abusive supervision leads to knowledge hiding behavior of employees which in turn leads to a decline in project success.

This study has added significantly to the information by demonstrating the role of Machiavellianism between abusive supervision and project success. All the variables are linked to each other. Abusive supervision causes negative effect on project success. Knowledge hiding plays a vital part in the link between abusive supervision and project success. Leader's abusive behavior causes the employees to adopt reciprocal behavior. Abusive behavior of the supervisor provokes the employees to hide knowledge in return either from fear of abuse or as a reciprocate behavior. This knowledge hiding behavior leads to a decline in project success. On the other hand Machiavellianism is a personality trait that strengthens the link between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. An individual having a Machiavellian personality will abuse others to show power and control and will try to hide knowledge in order to gain superiority over others.

### **5.2.2 Practical Implications**

This project is beneficial in projectized organizations as well as private sector organizations. It is believed that supervisor's abuse is harmful for the organization and it affects the organization very badly. The project environment is very dynamic, it changes very rapidly. Every project has certain limitations, time and resource constraints within which the project needs to be completed. Since projects are time

bound they cannot afford knowledge hiding. This study will help organizations in knowing the harmful effects of abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.

With the help of this study organizations should conduct meetings discussing the causes and solution of this issue. They should monitor the supervisor's behavior themselves. They can also conduct meetings with the employees on weekly or monthly basis to resolve this issue. With the help of this study organizations can adopt corrective measures to eliminate this behavior and to create a positive work environment.

When abusive supervision will increase the employees will avoid work, turnover will increase and the project will move towards failure. It is very necessary for the organization to monitor the supervisors as well, their behavior can badly effect an employee as well as the success of the project. When the supervisor will know that he is not the only one monitoring the employees and the management is also looking after them, then abusive supervision will reduce as well as employee turnover.

Relationship between supervisors and employees should be enhanced by issues that organization is facing and sharing ideas with the help of which the organization can succeed. Since abusive supervision has a negative force on the association, it needs to be eliminated and controlled by setting certain standards in the organization which every supervisor and employee must follow. Supervisors should act as a role model for the employees and should create ease for their employees.

### **5.3 Limitations of Research**

Like there are restrictions in every study, this research also has certain restrictions. This limitation is mainly of the time and resources. Due to limitation of time and shortage of resources the information was only gathered from the projectized organizations of Islamabad and Rawalpindi and it could not cover other organizations. In data collection a lot of difficulties were faced. Some employees were not willing to fill the questionnaire. Therefore this study has covered only a limited population.

The second limitation was of sample size. Since the time was very short therefore data from only 250 respondents was collected and analyzed. All the responses were cross-sectional in nature. Due to time constraint only one mediator and moderator was tested with abusive supervision. The data was collected using the convenience sampling method therefore the results may not be widely prompted. The data was collected through surveys while detailed interviews could have been useful for the study.

Another restraint of this research is the lack of cultural perception about abusive supervision. Abusive supervision occurs more commonly in countries like Pakistan, India etc due to high power distance. Conversely, countries like New Zealand and Denmark have little power distance in comparison to Pakistan. The individuals living in those countries may respond less intensively to abusive supervision. Another limitation was the lack of awareness about research among individuals.

## **5.4 Future work directions**

Several research directions could be drawn from the current study. In this research the effect of abusive supervision on project success was studied using mediating role of knowledge hiding and moderating role of Machiavellianism. The present study was done in project based organizations, this actually gives the direction to conduct research in other sectors also (public and private organizations). Moreover the present research deals with a smaller sample size however a larger sample size can be used to generalize the findings of the current research.

Moreover the impact of abusive supervision on project success could also be used with other mediating variables. Future researchers can also focus on the moderating variable. Any other personality trait or variable could be used instead of Machiavellianism to study the relation between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Similarly, different moderators can be used to test the mediation between abusive supervision and project success. Future studies can also add cultural effects on the relationship between the above variables. Future researchers

can explore that either this relationship is applicable in cross cultural context or not. This will increase the generalizability of the study.

Researchers should transfer their attention from the outcomes of abusive supervision to the causes of abusive supervision. They should look for the attributes and the characteristics that influence the supervisor to adopt abusive behavior. This will demonstrate as an extremely fruitful effort. The industry impact of abusive supervision should also be tested by the future researchers as it may assist them identify those sections of society where the understanding of abusive supervision is needed most. Lastly, future researchers should focus on longitudinal studies rather than cross cultural studies. This will help them testify the pattern of abusive supervision in an organization.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

This research has attempted to consider the link among abusive supervision and project success in project based organizations of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Analysis was composed through a questionnaire survey to measure the extent to which abusive supervision impacts project success with mediating role of knowledge hiding and moderating role of Machiavellianism.

Altogether 400 questionnaires were circulated but only 250 responses were used for data analysis because they had the most appropriate results and were completely filled. The statistical tests of the model indicate that the validity and reliability of the model was highly significant and the fit of the model was also suitable. The proposed hypothesis was also supported by the conservation of resource theory. The data analysis results in the acceptance of all the hypothesis. This study contributes to the existing literature as very few research was available with these linkages. Moreover this study contributes to the existing literature in a way that it includes a different moderator (Machiavellianism) among abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.

The Conservation of resource theory is used in the current study to check the dark side of leadership i.e abusive supervision and its effect on project success.

The findings of data analysis suggested that abusive supervision has a negative impact on project success and it results in knowledge hiding behavior of employees. Knowledge hiding has a strong positive impact on abusive supervision and negative impact on project success. Moreover Machiavellianism adds to this relationship. Machiavellianism has a strong positive impact on abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Organizations can use this data in order to minimize the abusive behavior of supervisors and its impact on project success.

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# Appendix

## Survey Questionnaire

**Dear respondent,**

I am a student of MS Project Management at Capital University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad. I am conducting a research on impact of Abusive supervision on project success with mediating role of knowledge hiding and moderating role of Machiavellianism. You can help me by completing the questionnaire, which I think you will find quite interesting. I appreciate your participation in my study and I assure that your responses will be held confidential and will only be used for education purposes.

Regards,

Shahzadi Mariam Zahid

Capital University of Science & Technology (CUST), Islamabad.

**Section 1****Demographics**

	1	2			
<b>Gender</b>	Male	Female			
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Age</b>	18-25	26-33	34-41	42-49	50 and Above
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Qualification</b>	Matric	Bachelor	Master	MS/M.Phil	PhD
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Experience</b>	5 and Less	6-13	14-21	22-29	30 and Above

**Section 2****Abusive Supervision**

Please insert a check mark in the appropriate column to indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

**1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neither Agree/nor Disagree 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree**

1	My supervisor makes negative comments about me to others.	1	2	3	4	5
2	My immediate supervisor ignores me or gives me the silent treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
3	My immediate supervisor tells me my thoughts or feeling are stupid.	1	2	3	4	5
4	My supervisor Ridicules me	1	2	3	4	5
5	Blames me to save himself/herself from embarrassment.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Puts me down in front of others	1	2	3	4	5

7	Tells me I'm incompetent	1	2	3	4	5
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### Section 3

#### Project Success

1	The project was completed on time	1	2	3	4	5
2	The project was completed according to the budget allocated	1	2	3	4	5
3	The outcomes of the project are used by its intended end users.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The outcomes of the project are likely to be sustained.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The outcomes of the project have directly benefited the intended end users, either through increasing efficiency or effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5
6	Given the problem for which it was developed, the project seems to do the best job of solving that problem	1	2	3	4	5
7	I was satisfied with the process by which the project was implemented.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Project team members were satisfied with the process by which the project was implemented	1	2	3	4	5
9	The project has directly led to improved performance for the end users / target beneficiaries.	1	2	3	4	5
10	The project has made a visible positive impact on the target beneficiaries	1	2	3	4	5
11	Project specifications were met by the time of handover to the target beneficiaries	1	2	3	4	5
12	The target beneficiaries were satisfied with the outcomes of the project	1	2	3	4	5

**Section 4****Knowledge Hiding**

1	I agreed to help him/her but never really intended to	1	2	3	4	5
2	I agreed to help him/her but instead gave him/her information different from what s/he wanted	1	2	3	4	5
3	I told him/her that I would help him/her out later but stalled as much as possible	1	2	3	4	5
4	I offered him/her some other information instead of what he/she really wanted	1	2	3	4	5
5	I pretended that I did not know the information	1	2	3	4	5
6	I said that I did not know, even though I did to	1	2	3	4	5
7	I pretended I did not know what s/he was talking about	1	2	3	4	5
8	I said that I was not very knowledgeable about the topic	1	2	3	4	5
9	I explained that I would like to tell him/her, but was not supposed to	1	2	3	4	5
10	I explained that the information is confidential and only available to people on a particular project	1	2	3	4	5
11	I told him/her that my boss would not let anyone share this knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
12	I said that I would not answer his/her questions	1	2	3	4	5

**Section 5 Machiavellianism**

1	I believe that lying is necessary to maintain a competitive advantage over others.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The only good reason to talk to others is to get information that I can use to my benefit.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am willing to be unethical if I believe it will help me succeed	1	2	3	4	5

4	I am willing to sabotage the efforts of other people if they threaten my own goals	1	2	3	4	5
5	I would cheat if there was a low chance of getting caught.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I like to give the orders in interpersonal situations.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I enjoy having control over other people.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I enjoy being able to control the situation.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Status is a good sign of success in life.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Accumulating wealth is an important goal for me	1	2	3	4	5
11	I want to be rich and powerful someday	1	2	3	4	5
12	People are only motivated by personal gain	1	2	3	4	5
13	I dislike committing to groups because I don't trust others.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Team members backstab each other all the time to get ahead.	1	2	3	4	5
15	If I show any weakness at work, other people will take advantage of it.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Other people are always planning ways to take advantage of the situation at my expense	1	2	3	4	5

**Thank you for your time and cooperation**