

The Dark Side of Leadership:
Some Unintended Consequences

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Background

Traditional coverage of leadership would have us identifying those circumstances, situations and leadership characteristics that are presumed to enhance individual, unit and organizational functioning. Questions typically would be concerned with unearthing the healthy attitudes, characteristics and behaviors we would want to select and develop our leaders on so as to ensure success of our organization. These are all meaningful questions and pursuits that are clearly alive in research on leadership. The assumption of this paper is contrary to the tradition in pointing out that leadership behaviors can be harmful at times.

That we should cover the dark side of leadership is not new, nor exclusive to the study of leadership or the Canadian Forces (CF). All of organizational behavior has witnessed a recent surge of concern for exploring the dark side or deviant aspects of people in organizations and appropriate frameworks have begun to emerge (e.g., O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin & Glew, 1996; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). The simple fact is that people behave in counterproductive or deviant ways in organizations whether or not the person or the organization wants to recognize the problem. Such is reflected in two recent CFs studies reporting that abuse of power is a significant issue identified by both civilian and military workforce populations (Morrow, 1999; Adams-Roy, 1999). This paper will engage this issue based on the understanding that abuse of power is part of a larger set of aggressive behaviors reported as occurring in the workplace and that there is

an identifiable set of consequences and processes that seem to flow from the exposure to such behavior at work.

The dark side of leadership has potentially several categories of counterproductive behaviors that could be the focus of our attention (e.g., Fox & Spector, 2003; Hogan, Curphy & Hogan, 1994; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). The focus in this paper will be on the possible consequences associated with a leader's display of aggressive behaviors towards subordinates. This corresponds to the categories of political deviance and personal aggression identified by Robinson and Bennett (1995). Moreover, the focus will be mainly on non-physical, sexual or racial forms of aggression towards others, a particularly important category that has received little attention relative to these other forms of abuse (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). Such a particular focus will allow us to trace the chain of events of mediating and moderating processes connecting the behaviors and the ultimate impact on targets of aggression (including their reactions). This means that we will devote only indirect attention to factors motivating such aggressions and instead focus on the consequences presumed to flow from the behaviors. There are several good reviews that summarize the literature on these motivating factors as applied to the workplace (e.g., Baron & Neuman, 1996; Martinko & Zellars, 1998; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Neuman & Baron, 1997; O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin & Glew, 1996). Our starting point is the identification of aggressive behaviors in leaders followed by an examination of their path of influence.

Accordingly, this paper outlines a model describing the potential for negative leadership behaviors and *how* such behavioral events can ultimately contribute to several unintended consequences. Moreover, several assumptions have been made in preparing

the paper. As per the contract, the paper takes a decisively academic tone and approach to the topic. This may provide CF researchers with the necessary behavioral science constructs needed for developing aspects of the model along more practical lines. The model draws upon a broad literature from the organizational sciences, psychology, health sciences and stress generally. Given the span of this model, the focus in this introductory paper will necessarily be one of breadth rather than depth. Key references and propositions for expansion will nonetheless be furnished throughout. For the purpose of this review we will rely on a broad, inclusive definition of aggressive behaviors. Specifically, following Tepper's (2000) definition of abusive supervision, aggressive behaviors by supervisors are understood to include "subordinate perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact" (Tepper, 2000, p.178). Finally, it should be noted that consistent with the literature, the terms abusive and aggressive behaviors will be used interchangeably.

Model Overview

The model in Figure 1 represents the substance of this paper. The concepts are organized according to whether they represent a short term versus long term process. Both processes, however, are connected and actually embedded in one another. The first part of the model represents the episodic phase of the consequences associated with leader aggressions. At the episodic phase, the focus is on the immediate experience and reaction associated with separate events. Taken together such events and their immediate consequences are thought to contribute to a longer-term phase of effects represented in

the next part of the model. This second phase represents a summary experience of events that are hypothesized to continue contributing to various longer-term and ongoing consequences. It is otherwise viewed as the history and the effects associated with the parties' encounters over time. Moreover, as shown by the feedback loop, it is further expected that this history has some bearing on the subjective experience of later episodes. Studies have focused at different points in this model.

Each component of this model will be explored in some detail by reviewing relevant theory and research as the paper develops. It is useful at this point to briefly walk through the major thrust within the model in order to orient this discussion. Starting with the first phase we see that an episode represents an event or set of events involving some aggressive action(s) displayed towards a subordinate or subordinates at some point in time. This event is thought to elicit some form of emotional reaction (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and simultaneous cognitive appraisal of the situation (Lazarus, 1991a). The processing of these cognitive appraisals and emotional reactions are then expected to contribute to some form of (non) reaction from the target of the aggression.

This episodic process is then expected to become part of the target's repertoire of past experiences with the superior. The episodes essentially accumulate to create the second phase of the superior-subordinate relationship represented in the model. This second phase draws out a summated view of the relationship that has developed between the parties over many episodes. Beginning with the leader-member relationship, we see that it can contribute to an ongoing sense of stress as well as generate affective states and cognitive processes that reflect back on this relationship. Hence, a leader-member relationship judged to be poor by a subordinate based on past experiences can be

characterized as potentially contributing to ongoing stress and strain as reflected by the mediated paths and outcomes that follow in the model.

Episodic Phase

Rational for an Episodic Focus

Within this segment of the model the episodic phase represents the idea that behavior is continually being influenced by the cognitive appraisal and emotions elicited by the events we encounter. A workplace event thus engages mental appraisal (Lazarus, 1991a; 1991b) and affective processes (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) as it is experienced by the individual. Based on a combination of these cognitive and affective processes a behavioral reaction is generated by the individual as a way of coping with or responding to the stimulus event (Lazarus, 1991). Taken together, these episodes contribute to the summary feelings we develop and hold about people and our organizations (e.g., phase two of the model). For example, if researchers ask how one is satisfied with their job, or how trustworthy the supervisor is, they would be getting a summary reaction that has been built up over many eventful encounters. The view of Affective Events Theory (AET; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) is that this summary judgment is but one type of information and incomplete information about how individuals experience and respond to events within organizations.

Affective experiences generally, daily moods and emotions specifically, are expected to have important influences on the behaviors we observe (Lord, Klimoski & Kanfer, 2002). Yet our research has traditionally focused on gathering information on the second phase of this model wherein the summary feelings and judgments are the level

of analysis (Weiss, 2002b). For example, a typical finding might be that considerate leadership (summary evaluation of the supervisor) correlates positively with job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviors (summary evaluation of the job and behaviors displayed over time), including perhaps an additional account of variables such as individual differences and organizational climate. Though useful, this information does not provide us with a full predictive account of how daily emotions and mood can influence important behaviors during a particular time frame. Of interest at the episodic level is how an individual reacts emotionally and behaviorally to a set of behaviors demonstrated toward them by a superior at a particular time. This does not preclude the influence of previous summary feelings, experience and thought processes that are invoked in the interpretation of and reaction to the event. It only suggests that one may be able to observe discrete behavioral effects associated with predictable changes in the patterns of emotions and mood one experiences at work over and above that typically accounted for by summary measures of constructs (Weiss, 2002a).

An example at this point of an episode should be useful. Consider a subordinate who upon arriving at work in an irritable mood finds out from a coworker that his superior was again complaining in front of other staff that the subordinate had not filed some reports in the expected way (event). This then generates a sense of anger within the subordinate for being openly criticized in front of coworkers. He may evaluate the situation in *many* different ways depending on circumstances. For example, two sample thoughts could be: a) It is just the boss's way – there is no need for real concern, he does it to everyone because he is stressed out, or b) he is after my job and will do anything to make me look bad – this is the last straw. Several very different behaviors might emerge

from these thought patterns and the emotional reaction of anger depending on the person's dispositions, history, work context and the people involved. Moreover, as one could expect several more patterns could emerge if we were to substitute different emotional reactions (e.g., fear, anxiety & annoyance) in the place of anger and allow for several other thought processes.

This example is only a simple demonstration of the complexity and predictive power we overlook at times in our failure to understand behavior within its immediate circumstance. Indeed, the subordinate's emotions and mood on this day, in addition to his cognitive appraisal of the situation seem as likely to have an impact on his behavioral reaction (e.g., do nothing, confront the boss in front of others, secretly sabotage his work) as do more general constructs such as his job satisfaction, trust in the supervisor and appreciation of the work context. Hence, the reasoning for a two stage model is based on the need to appreciate that the consequences associated with the dark side of leadership reside both in the circumstances of the moment as much as the relationships and related factors that have build up between the parties over time.

Work Events (superiors' aggressive acts)

In this segment of the model aggressive leader behaviors are viewed as discrete events. At identifiable points in time one displays a behavior or set of behaviors towards another that can constitute an event and thus help define the "episode" in question.

Leadership theory, in the traditional sense, will be reviewed in the second phase of model wherein these events, once experienced and interpreted, contribute to the perceptions that

make up subordinate evaluations of leadership. Our focus here is on the *nature* of the behaviors that form these events.

Aggressive actions by superiors have been addressed by several scholars and under several headings (e.g. Ashforth, 1994; Ashforth, 1997; Cox 1991; Harvey, 1996; Tepper, 2000), as have aggressive behaviors displayed in the workplace by various others (see Keashly & Jagatic, 2002 for a review). The aggressive behaviors studied across sources are in fact quite similar, with most studies simply changing the source of the abuse as the operational definition. What seems to vary most among studies is the portion of the aggression domain focused on by the researchers (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). Studies range from those examining a very limited set of behaviors such as workplace incivilities (e.g., Cortina, Magley, Williams & Langhout, 2001) to others with a focus on a set of behaviors that represent a wider intensity (Tepper, 2000). Keashly (1998) did a relatively comprehensive review of the literature and identified a number of behaviors reflected across disciplines, research traditions and titles that is useful for our purposes. What she found was a range of behaviors that could be classified according to a scheme offered by Buss (1961). Table 1 presents these behaviors as reported by Keashly (1998). It is noteworthy that the abuse of power measure used in the CF research on harassment (e.g., Morrow 1999; Adams-Roy, 1999) fits within the framework of behaviors offered by Keashly (1998).

A consistent finding in a review of studies examining the effects associated with the entire range of aggressive behaviors is that they are almost always predictive of various psychological, behavioral and organizational strains (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). Whether people are exposed to recurrent subtle forms of these behaviors (e.g.,

incivilities) or acute, intense forms (being screamed or yelled at) it would appear that negative personal and organizational consequences may ultimately follow. Perhaps the most dangerous part of this is the tendency to underestimate the effects that such behaviors may have on people and organizations. Due to their subtle nature at times the behaviors may be overlooked as simply annoyances that we should accept as an ordinary part of organizational life. The perspective offered by this model is that the occurrence of these behaviors creates the events that we react to and use to form impressions about others in the organization; any noticeable effects might therefore be delayed. For example, it may take *accumulated* events of subtle aggressions to have a noticeable impact on individuals equal to the more intense forms of aggression which have a greater likelihood of invoking immediate reactions. In either circumstance, the events serve to influence one's experience and impression formation of leadership as reflected and discussed in the next phase of the model.

These behaviors might also be conceptualized within the "thermodynamic" model referred to by some organizational justice theorists attempting to explain the processes leading up to retaliatory behavior (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Bies, Tripp and Kramer, 1997; Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Though they review a broader set of events, many aggressive events referred to herein clearly fall within several of their categories of injustices. Specifically, aggressions of this sort are thought to be seen as injustices because they damage one's sense of civic order or identity (Bies & Tripp, 1996). These two overarching categories and the subcategories are displayed in Table 2. As can be seen, there is clearly a convergence of the literatures, with one more focused on behaviors

and the other on categories of experiences. We will see in other portions of this model that these literatures converge further on certain points critical to our analysis.

Before moving on, it is critical to recognize that other events related to the actual aggressive actions are important within this model. As Spaccarelli's (1994) observes in his model of child sexual harassment, an observation likely transferable to workplace abuse (e.g., Keashly 1998), events related to the (non) disclosure of abusive treatment and other related events can trigger the same type of reactions as the abuse itself. For example, one can imagine the difficulties associated with trying to denounce a superior for their actions. It is certainly intimidating and is something people often avoid (e.g., see Adams-Roy, 1999; Morrow, 1999). It is also true that related events that trigger thoughts about previous aggressions may operate in much the same way as the events themselves. Acting as a surrogate to the actual event, related events may awaken the emotions and thought patterns in question (Harvey & Keashly, 2003). For example, seeing an abusive boss in a bad mood may revive memories of being debased in public the last time you saw your boss in this mood. The resulting tendency may then be to avoid the superior at all cost. These issues will be elaborated upon in other parts of the model. The notion to be retained from this segment of the model is that continued negative effects (i.e. surrogate events) can be derived from the memories of the events and not just the events themselves. This is consistent with what we know about trauma and intrusive thoughts and seems likely to extend to stressors such as harassment more generally (e.g., Barling, 1996; Baum, 1990; Harvey & Keashly, 2003). Moreover, it seems likely that to the extent that these events are discounted as trivial and thus ridicule potential reporting may only exacerbate the problem.

Cognitive appraisals

There is widespread acceptance in organizational behavior of the ideas associated with cognitive appraisal of threat in general and the model proposed by Lazarus in particular (Lazarus, 1991a; Lazarus, 1991b; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The model is traditionally based on primary and secondary appraisal processes wherein an individual exposed to an environmental stressor assesses the situation as part of determining how to act. Primary appraisal consist of an evaluation determining whether an event or environment posses potential stress to oneself. If an event is judged to be stressful, it could be because it involves a potential harm/loss, threat or even a challenge that will require some coping adaptation. The secondary appraisal process is the individual's evaluation of the coping mechanisms they should and can use to best deal with the situation. It is from these adaptive judgments, combined with other situational and personal factors that behavior is thought to be determined. Many researchers using such information processing models have made the explicit or implicit assumption that cognitive appraisal is central to the experience of emotions and behavioral reactions (Roseman, Spindel & Jose, 1990), a point we will modify in this model.

There also seems to be growing acceptance of the cognitive appraisal process as a foundation for studying the effects of aggression in the workplace from the victim's perspective. Several studies on aggressive and abusive interactions in the workplace can be understood accordingly, though they rarely ever directly test the proposition (Keahsly & Harvey, 2003). One study provided a direct test and found support for its application

in assessing the impact on well-being of the threat of being the target of antisocial behavior at work (Sinclair, Martin & Croll, 2002). Otherwise, it seems implicitly assumed that the model is transferable to individual's assessment of threats and aggressions at work.

Indeed, it is clear from many other studies in psychology that individuals evaluate situations and react in ways that are generally consistent with those outlined by information processing and cognitive appraisal models (e.g., Lazarus, 1991a). This model does not call into question the wealth of knowledge built up in this area over time but proposes to build upon it. The real question in the proposed model is not so much whether cognitive appraisal of events are important determinants of actions, but rather whether "affect" is an equal partner in determining behavior or simply an epiphenomena of the cognitive judgment one makes during the assessment. The perspective taken here is that emotions need to be seen as taking a central and sometimes independent role (Weiss 2002a; Weiss 2002b)

Emotional (Affective) Reactions

This model draws on the AET theory as proposed and elaborated upon by Weiss and his colleagues (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996; Weiss, Nicholas & Daus, 1999; Weiss 2002a; Weiss 2002b). An important aspect of AET is the criticism of our tendency in the field to treat certain constructs such as job satisfaction as representative of affect at work. Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) lay out a very compelling case on how such constructs are contaminated with more than affective reactions to work (i.e., beliefs, judgements) and that we need to better understand and measure the true meaning of affective experience at

work in order to predict its role. Indeed, the role of emotions is conspicuously missing from the study of organizational behavior and their inclusion is likely to lead to the next major developments in the field (Lord et al., 2002). Readers interested in this segment of the model are encouraged to consult the primary source for a full account of the potential applications of AET towards aspects of this model or workplace affective reactions more generally (e.g., Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). The focus in this paper will be limited to those aspects that serve our purpose for understanding the implications of AET to this model.

Consistent with AET the episodic phase represents the events as emotion-provoking. The events are likely to draw emotional reactions from the individual targeted and influence behaviors and attitudes that ensue. As explained by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996; p.11), “Things happen to people in work settings and they react emotionally to these events. These affective experiences have direct influences on behaviors and attitudes and the nature of these effects has not been explored”. The strength of AET lies in the ties it specifies between events and the likely emotional and behavioral reactions that are engendered at the time of experiencing an event, in addition to its later connections to summary evaluations of situations and people.

In order to make understandable the connection of emotions to leadership and this model, we need to recall our discussion of aggressive events. When aggressions occur, it is likely that they are seen as a violation of our expectations of appropriate treatment (Bies, Tripp & Kramer, 1997) or a breach of our psychological contract of employment (Rousseau, 1995). Moreover, one realizes that there is likely an inter-play between emotions and cognitive appraisal generated within the target that will influence their

ultimate reaction to the situation (Lazarus, 1991a; Lord & Harvey, 2002). As we have seen, a classic view of the two processes tends to downplay the causal role of emotions to that of cognitive appraisal (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Roseman et al., 1990). Another view is that emotions can play a simultaneous causal role in influencing behavior or even be the sole generator of many behaviors (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Consider for instance that this expectation of proper treatment by others may be so ingrained in us that little thought is needed to evaluate that someone yelling at you is a threat to yourself and expectations of civility. To the degree that the action is perceived to frustrate your personal goals and the action-threat emotional connection is strong, the emotional reaction may be powerful, vivid and devoid of any serious cognitive appraisal of the situation (Lord & Harvey 2002; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996; Weiss, 2002a). To the degree that one is overwhelmed by the emotion, the behavior that follows may be influenced by insufficient appraisal of the situation and the resultant coping behavior may be personally and organizationally deficient.

The implications of this are clear when such affect-driven behaviors are contrary to those condoned or expected by the organization. We need only recall the image of the subordinate who is angered by an occurrence in the workplace, i.e., a criticism by the superior. He may ultimately lash out in many inappropriate and even dangerous ways when this seemingly inoffensive event sets him off (e.g., Martinko & Zellars, 1998). As we will see, these types of effects are real, likely and to a certain extent dependent on the processes that follow in the model. Indeed, why one individual lashes out and another does nothing may have more to do with individual differences, emotions generated by the event and the history of the actors than the triggering event per se or one's overall

evaluation of the job. As Weiss (2002b, p.185) explains it, “being in an affective state has enormous implications for what a person does on the job and many, if not most, relationships between affect and work behaviors are not mediated by an overall evaluation of the job or job facet”.

Though not explicitly their focus, many organizational justice studies of retaliatory behavior support Weiss’ (2002b) observation. Organizational justice theorists have often focused on or implicitly assumed that anger and related negative emotions are a mediating process between the stimulating event and one’s later retaliations (e.g., Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Bies & Tripp, 1996). Accordingly, injustices lead to angry reactions which can then lead to retaliatory behaviors. Though the relationships are more complex because they involve the interaction of several justice construct in this prediction, the angry or related emotional reactions is still key to transmitting such an effect. Particularly the studies examining reactions to specific events seem to clearly indicate that there is great promise in pursuing an understanding of the emotional—behavior connections within the leader-subordinate context.

What research is yet mute on are the many other likely emotions that need to be explored in relation to experiencing aggressions at work. Fear related to violence and aggression is one such reaction that has received some attention (Harvey, 1996; LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Schat & Kelloway, 2000); though the results have been mixed. This is likely due to limited attention that is being paid to the varied operationalization of fear (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). Otherwise it appears that emotional reactions have simply not been a research concern of most researchers examining violence and aggressions in the workplace. Many studies have been exclusively focused on establishing the existence

of statistically significant correlations between aggression with several personal and organizational outcome measures (Harvey & Keashly, 2003).

Proximal Behavior Reactions

The immediate or proximal behavioral reactions to aggressive treatment that we know of from the literature are mostly based on work in the area of organizational justice as well as some studies on coping with abusive supervision. As we have seen, a central thesis of organizational justice research has been that aggressive behaviors are experienced as injustices and are likely to lead to retaliatory behaviors, mediated it would seem by negative emotions such as anger (e.g., Aquino, Tripp & Bies, 2001; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Bies & Tripp, 1996). There is accumulating evidence to support this view of retaliatory behaviors. Those who are exposed to injustices (often aggressions) by others are more prone to using retaliatory tactics in an apparent attempt to even the score. Some scholars focusing on incivilities in the workplace have hypothesized that this may then be the starting point of an upward spiral of increasingly hostile responses from both parties (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Research also suggests there may be a status effect. Targets of aggression are less likely to openly retaliate against powerful others (Aquino et al., 2001). Therefore, it seems that they may use alternate reactions in coping with aggression from higher status abusers.

Other reactions have not been investigated as often, though it would appear that such responses are highly likely (Aquino et al., 2001; Bies et al., 1997). Bies et al. (1997) point out that various forms of venting (e.g., complaining to others), rumination and avoidance may be some common examples of other reactions. Many of these added

reactions await research. However, research by several authors would suggest that avoidance through fear (rather than anger) is a possible (non) reaction (e.g., Ryan and Oestreich, 1991; Harvey, 1996; Morrow 1999; Adams-Roy, 1999). Avoidance is presumably a strategy of attempting to circumvent any further aggressions. While the construct of fear as a mediator has generated mixed results (Keashly & Harvey, 2003), sources do seem to converge on the idea that attempts to avoid the aggressor are common.

It is apparent from this discussion that a lot remains to be accomplished in research that links aggressive acts to the various potential reactions. The importance of emotions seems clear (Lord et al., 2002), though more research is needed to make evident the connections between different emotional reactions and the range of behaviors they might generate. Also clear is that retaliation is not seemingly sufficient to serve as catharsis. Studies on anger suggest that negative effects are likely to persist even if someone successfully acts out their anger towards another's transgressions (Smith, 2003). It would appear that if satisfactory resolution is not exacted fully through revenge that the remnant of the experience can continue to affect individuals. This effect as we will see in the next phase of the model is contained within continued appraisal of the situation.

Context

It is important to note that the episodes are hypothesized as occurring within an environment or context that we should view as potentially moderating the impact and interpretation of the episode. This is true for any organization interpreting the model, and the CF in particular. As Keashly and Harvey (2003) find in their review of abusive

behaviors in the workplace, the organization can communicate a certain tolerance of such behaviors in the organization as part of its climate and culture. An organization concerned with such abuses must seriously question whether its culture might be implicitly communicating a certain tolerance for otherwise undesirable practices. Manifestly, military culture is unique in its hierarchical structure and the development of its personnel on various facets that include intense emotional and behavioral experiences. Importantly this culture may come to be accepted by both the superior and subordinate such that what is acceptable in one organization may not be acceptable in another. This brings us to the targets of aggression and how they might interpret the context.

Whether these experiences are seen as in-role or out-of-role is likely to have an implication. In-role refers to aggressions that are judged to be legitimate by the subordinate (or others) due to circumstances, whereas out-of-role suggests that the behavior is not appropriate in the current situation and role filled by the aggressor. To the extent that the CF views that it has (*or is perceived to have*) in-role leader aggressions judged acceptable/tolerable under certain circumstances (e.g., training, during an engagement) and not tolerable under other circumstances (e.g., out-of-role, during a period of R & R), it could find that there are difficulties in separating the two by members who can justify its use by definition. Though speculative, this might be *one* reason for differences in reported abuses of power between those in training and the regular personnel reported by Adams-Roy (1999). This intertwines with a broader set of issues such as hazing and bullying in the military that have been part of military cultures for some time (Ostvik & Rudmin, 2001). Moreover, the role of attributions is clearly an important part of how people make sense of aggressions that could use some clarifying

research (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). Overall, it is clear that culture and context have an important role to play in any model and that data is needed to inform our understanding.

Phase Two

Leadership: LMX

This phase of the model begins by conceptualizing leadership as a relationship based on interpersonal exchanges and shared events between the leader and individual followers. It draws upon the LMX view of leadership wherein dyadic leader and subordinate relationship is the focus of analysis (e.g., Dansereau, Cashman & Graen, 1973; Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1975; Graen & Schiemann, 1978). Whereas most other models of leadership analyze leadership behaviors and contingencies and attempt to relate this to a typically collective level of influence, LMX focuses explicitly on the distinct relationships fostered by the leader with individual members (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). The quality of this relationship is then thought to be predictive of various personal and organizational outcomes. Behaviors of the leader are important to the extent they contribute to this LMX quality. This approach allows us to make the likely assumption that not all supervisor-supervisee relationships in a work unit are the same. In other words, the unintended consequences of leadership need not be experienced equally by all members of a unit because the focus is on dyads and the relationship that the two parties have come to know. A further strength of this theory is that this dyadic level of analysis can be complemented by the examination of effects at higher (additive), multiple levels of analysis (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The model is particularly useful in its ability to recognize that relationships between supervisors and supervisees can serve to influence, by subtle increments, the affective state of the follower (Lord, Brown & Freiberg, 1999). In one explanation of the influence, Pugh (2002) suggests that this sway occurs through the process of “emotional contagion”, wherein subtle learning occurs in subordinates taking on the emotions transmitted to them implicitly by the leader. Such findings from the emotional area fit well with the individualized notion of leadership we see built in to the LMX approach. Indeed, it is consistent with the idea the superior-subordinate interpersonal events (i.e., episodes) serve as a platform for establishing an overall sense of the leadership quality (i.e., LMX). Likewise, it gives credence to the idea that AET theory can be seen as an affective precursor to summary evaluations of LMX. Regardless of the specific mechanisms, what several theorists are suggesting is that there is a powerful dyadic interplay that defines relationships and ultimately emotions over time.

The central feature of the LMX perspective on leadership is the notion that the built up quality of dyadic exchanges between the superior and subordinate predicts various individual and organizational outcomes. Those subordinates who develop high quality relationships with the superior (characterized by mutual support and trust; Graen, 1976) stand to contribute more in the form of performance and display favorable psychological reactions (e.g., job satisfaction, commitment) to the organization and their jobs (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Indeed, meta-analytic results by Gerstner and Day (1997) find support for this basic proposition. The predictions underlying this type of research have almost exclusively focused on the potential for positive LMX producing favorable outcomes.

The potential for producing negative outcomes when LMX is poor is not to be neglected (Townsend, Phillips & Elkins, 2000). The logic is not much different under negative conditions save that we could expect that experiencing negative events from a superior (aggressions) will cumulatively lead to more negative LMX evaluations. Specifically, we might anticipate that expectations parties bring to the relationship play an important role (Liden, Wayne & Stilwell, 1993). Whether these expectations are then fulfilled will have behavioral and attitudinal implications, positive or negative. In fact, that is what is suggested in the few studies examining poor LMX relationships. For example, when such expectations are represented as contributing to poor LMX what research has shown is that we might find a greater occurrence of employee retaliation against the organization (Townsend, et al., 2000).

Cognitive processes

Several cognitive processes are potentially applicable to this section of the model, which is primarily inspired by the concept of reappraisal suggested by Lazarus (1991a). Reappraisal recognizes that the appraisal process is on-going. It makes clear that post-event evaluation and emotional reactions are likely to continue as a means by the individual of trying to come to terms with the occurrences experienced. Individuals may be reliving events as a way of redefining or finding meaning in what occurred to them (Harvey & Keashly, 2003). Or they may be thinking about how to deal with similar events in the future. These processes presuppose that coping behaviors or reactions displayed during the episodic phase have not fully resolved the issues associated with experiencing negative events and thus they continue to affect the individual via

psychological mechanisms (Harvey & Keashly, 2003). We review two of these key mechanisms here, ruminations (intrusive thoughts) and worry. It is important to note that these processes are expected to contribute to the medium and long term outcomes proposed in the model as well as influence the frame of mind one has for interpreting future events (episodes).

Ruminations are repeated, sometimes intrusive thoughts about events that have occurred in the past. Their automatic and intrusive features are what make them different than typical memories (Gold & Wegner, 1995). Worry is also a cognitive activity often associated with events but is distinct from ruminations in its focus on future occurrences of events and thus has a more problem solving thrust (Gold & Wegner, 1995). Borkovec (1994) deliberately defines it as “a chain of thoughts and images, negatively affect-laden and relatively uncontrollable; it represents an attempt to engage in mental problem-solving on an issue whose outcome is uncertain but contains the possibility of one or more negative outcomes; consequently, worry relates closely to fear processes”. Both processes are expected to be highly active within individuals who are exposed to aggressions at work (Harvey & Keashly, 2003)

Ruminations in general or intrusive thoughts in particular have normally be associated with trauma, wherein the events generating the troublesome memory rehearsals are serious and acute; such as might be the case with exposure to war or a disaster (e.g., Baum, 1990). The symptom or intrusive thoughts are often associated with the diagnosis of PTSD (Baum, 1990). Research however has supported that the idea that ruminative thinking can be generated within individuals with less significant negative events (Harvey & Keashly, 2003; Horowitz, 1986). In fact, it is easy enough to induce

intrusive thoughts experimentally (Lepore, Ragan & Jones, 2000). Accordingly, researchers in the area of injustice and retaliation (Bies et al., 1997) and aggressive behavior more generally (Barling, 1996; Glomb, Steel & Arvey, 2002; Harvey & Keashly, 2003) are proposing that ruminative thinking seems to be a common enough process associated with those exposed to hostility from others that we should begin examining its occurrences and potential effects. Harvey and Keashly (2003) have outlined how ruminations are hypothesized to contribute to ongoing stress and subjective well-being of individuals. The process essentially mirrors that outlined in the episodic model wherein now the ruminations are substituted for the aggressive event and the outcomes are associated with a range of potential outcomes as described in the final section.

It seems clear that several scholars are increasingly noting that ruminations of some intensity occur for those submitted to the hostilities of others in the workplace and that it has a role to play in subjective well-being. What research has yet to uncover is the specific role that rumination occupies in a causal chain and whether it is affected by other important moderating variables such as individual differences and social support. For example, Tepper, Duffy and Shaw (2001) found that the personality dimension of conscientiousness and agreeableness moderated the impact that abusive supervision had on subordinates' dysfunctional resistance towards the supervisor. Though the thought processes were not measured in their study, it does suggest that subordinates' personality can play an important role in how they interpret, react and continue to think about the abusive events.

Worry is expected to have similar significance for those submitted to hostile relationships with their superior; though the construct has received less direct attention with respect to aggressions at work. It may in fact have a practical purpose to the extent that it leads to or prompts viable solutions for dealing with the aggressions. The contrary seems also likely wherein chronic unresolved worry may over time begin to wear on individuals. This is consistent with research on the perceived threat associated with aggression and violence (LeBlanc and Kelloway, 2002). The idea is that persistent worry or belief in future threatening events might be as detrimental as the events themselves on a person's health and other work-related outcomes. We will recall in the definition that worry is closely associated with the emotion of fear (Borkovec, 1994) and that research on fear and aggression has generally been mixed (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). An examination of how fear has been measured across studies suggests that it may have been an elusive variable to capture because of the variance in definitions and measures (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). It is this author's contention that some progress can be made by simultaneous attempts to measure the construct of worry that is presupposed to relate closely to fear and thus impact behavior accordingly. Indeed, as others have shown in related areas, developing a measure of worry in the workplace is achievable and predictive of related conceptual systems (Stober & Seidenstucker, 1997).

What we need to retain from this section is that there is much to be understood about the psychological processes that are implicated in the events subordinates experience if we are to have a full understanding of how such events ultimately contribute to the detrimental outcomes of interest. We should recall the notion of subtleness of aggressive behaviors that was referred to when discussing the nature of

aggressions. It may not be the event per se that causes the greatest harm, but rather the accumulated effects (ruminating about the past and worrying about the next aggression) played out mentally through time. Add to this the idea that there may be a bias of not reporting such behaviors because they are seen or are feared to be seen as relatively trivial when compared to other forms of harassment. Clearly, intrusive thinking has a way of prolonging the effects of stress (Lepore et al., 2000).

Affective Processes

As is now clear, the affective system is expected to be working in tandem with the cognitive processes just reviewed. Before examining this relationship, it is useful at this point to differentiate between two related aspects of affective being; emotions and mood. Mood and emotions have been differentiated in definition, though in practice it may be difficult to disentangle one from the other. Duration of the feeling is one dimension on which they often differ. Mood is typically associated to a prolonged presence whereas emotions tend to be more punctuated (Weiss, 2002a). Though this is not a consistent difference between the two constructs, it is one guiding post. More useful according to Weiss (2002a) is the connection of the construct with an event or object, a concept he refers to as diffuseness. Whereas emotions are often connected with identifiable events or people (e.g., I am afraid of my bosses' reaction), moods are more diffuse or difficult to associate with any particular event or person.

Affect in the second stage of the model reflects this continued interplay between *reappraisals* and the *mood* we bring with us (for whatever reason) and the *emotions* (e.g., anxiety) that are generated as we reflect upon our environment (e.g., My boss is coming

in today). The prediction is that these constructs serve as proxy stressors (if negative) to affect ongoing wellness. They are also likely to color how we experience and interpret episodes (history effect) in the future. Individuals plagued with mentally reliving unpleasant and recurrent memories, future worries and the associated emotions are likely to be negatively affected in the long term if the effects are consistent with what we find in stress and coping research generally (e.g., Baum, 1990). An important role of longitudinal research will be to document these affective elements. Moreover, a significant challenge of research on aggression at work will be to examine both state and trait aspects of affect in order to separate individual and environmental influences. As found in recent research, there are important personality influences on the experience of aggression and its impact on the individual (e.g., Jockin, Arvey & McGue, 2001; Tepper et al., 2001).

Medium and Long Term Outcomes

The outcomes studied within the second phase of the model are medium to long term effects that are expected to unfold over time. They may be the result of ongoing hostilities at work or simply the fallout associated with the ruminations and worry caused by unresolved issues. The outcomes are often organized into the categories of behavioral, psychological and organizational effects similar to that used in research on workplace stress (e.g., Jex & Beehr, 1991). A broad listing of studies and the outcomes associated with abuses and aggressions experienced at work is provided in Keashly and Harvey (2003). The story told by that review is clear; the expected outcomes ranging from the personal to organizational are consistently negative. A critical feature that is of

no trivial concern in this paper is that the greatest impact seems to come when these aggressive behaviors are displayed by superiors (Keashly & Harvey, 2003).

Connections of the outcomes to the affective and cognitive mediating processes outlined in this model are largely theoretical when applied to the context of work, but they are very well articulated and supported in the basic and clinical psychology literature they are drawn from. Hence, it is important to note that most research to date has made reference to the outcomes based on simple empirical relationships between the events and the outcomes reported here. In this section I will focus on a few recent and illustrative studies with the understanding that the reader interested in a fuller list of studies can refer to some recent reviews (Keashly & Jagatic, 2002; Keashly & Harvey, 2003; Fox & Spector, 2003).

A study by Tepper (2000) is representative of the type of findings reported across several studies on the consequences associated with aggressive and abusive supervision. He found that individuals exposed to abusive supervision were more likely to quit their jobs, showed higher continuance commitment if they stayed, generally felt lower life and job satisfaction and experienced low affective and normative commitment. The abused were also more likely to report higher work-family conflict and psychological distress. Tepper's study also included some improvements over past research in showing that organizational justice and perceived job mobility are two factors that can mediate and moderate respectively some of the negative effects typically associated with abusive supervision. Beyond these findings there are those studies pointing to problems associated with psychological and physical health, dysfunctional behaviors and performance.

That we should concern ourselves with the psychological and physical health problems that might result from poor working relationships has its support in research. A meta-analysis by Herbert and Cohen (1993) suggests that stress due to interpersonal events is an important predictor of diminished immune system functions. To the degree that aggressions experienced at work contribute to these individual events would suggest a potential health concern. This is difficult to demonstrate in the short term given that the onset period required is greater than any data we currently have. However, some data by Spector and his colleagues (e.g., Spector, Dwyer & Jex, 1988) suggests that there is a relationship between those subject to interpersonal conflicts at work and the number of physical symptoms and doctor visits reported. Though this is speculative at best, it would seem likely that future research may find important relationships between aggressive work environments and physical ailments, particularly if the exposure is long term and of a chronic nature.

There is also the category of personal dysfunctions outside the workplace that can emerge or take vigor as part of exposure to workplace aggressions. Several studies have now made repeated connections between general abuses experienced in the workplace and problem drinking (Richman, Rospenda, Flaherty & Freels, 2001; Richman, Flaherty & Rospenda, 1996; Rospenda, 2002). This is consistent with several hypotheses associated with problem drinking, including the concept of evasive drinking. The relationship is likely more complex and certainly involves a host of variables in need of simultaneous consideration. Moreover, there is the question of the potential spillover that these personal dysfunctions might bring to other domains such as work and family.

The potential impact of aggressions on performance is an important issue to consider. Though there are no studies with good measure of performance to base our discussion on there are some interesting findings if we broaden our definition of performance markers. If we consider counterproductive behaviors, for instance, we will recall the discussion in the first phase of the model wherein people are found to often retaliate when confronted by aggressive actions of others. This has also been found in response to poor LMX relations generally (Townsend et al., 2000). There is also the literature that was reviewed previously suggesting that avoidance is a response often used for dealing with powerful others. This begs the question of whether people are performing at their peak if they must side-step or circumvent their normal activities in accommodating this avoidance tactic. Clearly there is evidence indirectly pointing to a decrement in performance.

Another study unique in its focus on OCBs is foretelling of another aspect of performance (Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002). The authors of this study found that Air National Guard members that worked under abusive leadership were less likely to demonstrate OCBs at work. This negative effect was even more pronounced for those who defined OCBs as extra-role behaviors rather than as in-role behaviors. To the degree that these results generalize, the implications are clear and not as negligible as they might first seem. There are many situations wherein you would hope individuals feel desirous of going beyond the call of duty in order to help preserve a unit's success. This could include the courage needed but not required of individuals to accomplish tasks or responsibilities not normally foreseen in their work. Clearly this is a trait of importance to the CF and the implications are important if the effects generalize to its units.

Barling (1996) also raises an interesting possibility when he suggests that cognitive distractions can be an important outcome of aggressions. Though it is speculative to be included as an outcome at this stage, the implications are important enough that they deserve mention. Consistent with the idea of ruminations and worry, cognitive distractions that result from a preoccupation with the events could suggest that not only might individuals be more prone to poor performance but also to costly errors and accidents in certain types of work. This idea of cognitive distractions has been examined in other stress contexts (e.g., Barling & Macewen, 1992) but has yet to be empirically verified within the context of aggression, performance and safety. It is clear that cognitive distractions are a likely extension or result of the other cognitive processes reviewed. What needs to be looked at now is whether such distractions can lead to dangerous conditions.

Implications for Research and Practice

This model draws out important implications for both research and practice. Based on research to date in the CF it is clear that abusive/aggressive supervision as defined in this paper is being reported by subordinates (e.g., Adams-Roy, 1999; Morrow, 1999). The prevalence of this experience is one area in which research could be focused so as to establish a baseline for assessing changes. This is particularly relevant if the decision is to revise the definition of what constitutes abusive/aggressive supervision.

Although the occurrence of abusive of power is clearly documented and prevalence studies could help better establish the extent of a problem, the definition of aggressive supervision requires attention within the CF context. This could be easily

accomplished through a series of focus groups and perhaps follow-up surveys aimed at identifying behaviors commonly seen within the CF context(s) that are interpreted and experienced as abusive. Such contextualized findings would better inform research, but it would be most beneficial for leadership training in the CF. Training leaders on what to *not* to do would be an interesting and important supplement to traditional leadership training. Many workplaces need to recognize that harassment goes beyond the definitions associated with protected group status (e.g., sexual, racial) and that the effects are often contrary to what the organization is hoping to accomplish.

Legitimizing the relevance of these aggressive behaviors within the military context is also important. Research examining the impact that aggressive behaviors might have on the performance and health of individual personnel and units is needed for this to be accomplished. Literature based on civilian samples suggests that aggressive behaviors may not always be experienced with the same level of negativity depending on the source of the abuse (Keashly & Harvey, 2003). Hence, the behaviors need to be examined relative to the CF context and the source of the transgressions for conclusions to be accepted.

The model presented is general enough to accommodate conceptualizations of different events. This might include interpersonal relationships with others such as peers and other element of the environment that are known to affect the outcomes of interest. Showing an independent and decisive effect of the aggressive behaviors over and above that which can be typically accounted for by other variables would be one important way of legitimizing the relevance of these leadership issues. Such “competing” causal tests have shown in other settings that abusive behaviors are a distinct, important predictor of

organizational attitudes after having accounted for several other workplace stressors (Keashly, Harvey & Hunter, 1997).

The model also has bearing on a wider concern to the CF as relates to quality of life. The cognitive and emotional mediating processes cited herein have much larger implication than within leadership model alone. They are frequently cited in other spheres of research on stress and well-being and therefore may provide a bridge for connecting leadership styles to other environmental elements impacting quality of life.

The idea of focusing more research at the episodic level is not as “academic” as might first appear. In a context such as the CF when personnel may be under great amounts of stress at certain times, it seems paramount that concepts advanced in AET be considered within models examining the stress and its effects. Indeed, it is under such circumstances that we might see the true effects predicted by AET generally and the model presented here specifically. We could expect heightened emotions to play themselves out under high stress situations. It may take very little from a leader, for example, to anger and trigger retaliatory behavior from a subordinate when the latter is under great pressure at the time. Research focused at this level in organizations has begun to emerge and might be a promising approach for the CF to consider within certain circumstances (e.g., Weiss et al., 1999).

The importance of issues such as trust and cohesion are critical to the CF. The findings are generally supportive in suggesting that this begins with good leadership. What the LMX theory of leadership brings at its core is an explanation of how trust between members is created and ultimately plays itself out in behaviors. However, the LMX can be extended to include the measure of other relationships and thus touch upon

issues of trust and cohesiveness in units. It therefore seems important that measures of LMX be included in future research as an initial sampling of its predictive power.

The final area relates to that of cognitive distractions as referred to by Barling (1996). If the processes in this model are found to be operational as stipulated, there are likely some concerns to be had with individuals being distracted from the tasks they must perform. To the extent that they are fearful or avoidant of their superior may lead to concerns with health, safety and performance generally. An individual distracted from their work may pose serious dangers themselves and others. Research would need to verify the potential for such distractions and the effects that follow.

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Table 1 Behaviors reported in workplace abuse/aggression research

Nonverbal:

Aggressive eye contact
-glared at, “meaningful” glances.

Ignore; silent treatment

Intimidating physical gestures
-finger pointing, slamming things down, throwing objects

Inappropriate or excessive use of memos, emails

Verbal (direct):

Yelling, screaming

Cursing at person

Angry outbursts; “tantrums”

Being nasty, rude, or hostile

Accusations of wrongdoing, blame for errors

Putdowns, insults, belittling comments, name calling
-often in front of other

Threat of job loss or change

Discount or dismiss thoughts or feelings

Personal criticism of features irrelevant to job
-appearance, family, friends

Excessive or harsh criticism of work abilities

Verbal (indirect):

Untrue rumors or gossip

Breach confidentiality
-shared private info about person or other workers

Assigned meaningless or “dirty” tasks as punishment

Unreasonable demands for work

Withholding or denial of opportunities or resources

Credit for work taken

Source: Keashly (1998).

Table 2: Categories and Subcategories of Injustices

A damaged sense of “civic order”

- Rule violation
 - Violation of formal rules
 - Changing the rules “after the fact”
 - Breach of contract
- Honor violation
 - Shirking of job responsibilities
 - Broken promises
 - Lying
 - Stealing of ideas
 - Disclosure of confidences and secrets
- Abusive authority
 - Intolerable boss

A damaged “identity”

- Public criticism
- Accused wrongly or unfairly
- Insult to self or collective

Source: Bies & Tripp (1996)