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Shawn T. McClean

Stephen H. Courtright

Junhyok Yim

Troy A. Smith

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Shawn T. McClean,[1] Stephen H. Courtright,[2]
Junhyok Yim,[3] and Troy A. Smith [4]

1 Department of Management and Marketing, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming
2 Department of Management and Entrepreneurship, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
3 Department of Management, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas
4 Department of Management, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska

Correspondence — Shawn T. McClean, Department of Management and Marketing, University of Wyoming, 1000 E University Ave., Laramie, WY 82071; *email* smcclea1@uwyo.edu

ORCID
Shawn T. McClean https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7681-7610
Junhyok Yim https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8126-9110
Troy A. Smith https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8173-8511

Abstract
Although extant research has shown that abusive supervision is a destructive and immoral form of leader behavior, theory provides conflicting perspectives on how supervisors respond to their own abusive behavior. We therefore draw upon and integrate moral cleansing theory and impression management and construction theory to explore whether and when supervisors engage in genuine reparations or impression management following episodes of abusive behavior. Results taken from a

3-week, experience sampling study of supervisors suggest support for the impression management path; following episodes of abusive behavior, supervisors higher on symbolized moral identity become more concerned with their image, and thus engage in increased ingratiation, self-promotion, and exemplification toward their subordinates. In contrast, we found no support for the genuine, moral cleansing path. This study thus extends knowledge regarding supervisors' responses to their own abusive behavior, challenging the existing notion that such responses are genuine and focused on addressing the moral implications of the behavior.

Keywords: abusive supervision, impression management, moral cleansing, multilevel

1 Introduction

Since the introduction of abusive supervision, scholars have been largely concerned with uncovering its consequences for subordinates and organizations (see Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2017). Defined as the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors toward subordinates (Tepper, 2000), scholars have suggested that abusive supervision is a "significant social problem" (Tepper, 2007, p. 262) that must be addressed. In this vein, and in recognition that sustained abusive behavior is the product of numerous abusive episodes over time, scholars have recently worked to better understand these episodes (Barnes, Lucianetti, Bhave, & Christian, 2015; Courtright, Gardner, Smith, McCormick, & Colbert, 2016; Foulk, Lanaj, Tu, Erez, & Archambeau, 2018). Although valuable, such studies have largely neglected the possibility that supervisors, too—as the most proximal actors to the abusive behavior (McClean, Barnes, Courtright, & Johnson, 2019)—may be affected by their abusive behavior. As a result, these supervisors may try to compensate for the harm caused by their prior abusive acts.

However, there are conflicting views regarding supervisors' responses to their own abusive behavior. On one hand, a moral cleansing perspective (Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, & Lerner, 2000; Zhong & Liljenquist, 2006) suggests that abusive behavior implicates the "moral" self, leading supervisors to respond with genuine reparative behaviors (Liao, Yam, Johnson, Liu, & Song, 2018; Tetlock et al., 2000). On the other hand, the focus on genuine reparations is incomplete to the extent that it neglects a long-held view from the leadership literature that supervisors often engage in behaviors for the purpose

of "image building" or appearing morally worthy (Gardner & Avolio, 1998). This suggests that abusive behavior implicates the "social" self, leading supervisors to engage in behaviors aimed at shoring up their image. These two perspectives—that supervisors, in response to their own abusive behavior, engage in behaviors to "be" moral versus to "appear" to be moral—are at odds, and point to a lack of consensus in the abusive supervision literature regarding how a supervisor would respond to his/her own abusive behavior.

To reconcile these discrepant lines of thinking and generate consensus within the literature, we return to the moral roots of both perspectives. Scholars have long noted that there exists an ideal self, against which individuals cognitively judge their conduct (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Blasi, 1984). Although all individuals have some personal benchmark or ideal self, the content of each person's ideal self varies. For example, social psychologists (e.g., Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975) have long implied that for some individuals, the ideal self includes "being" moral, whereas for others the ideal self includes being "perceived" as moral (Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009). In this way, behavioral responses to moral situations are cognitively evaluated against the relevance of the situation to the individual's ideal self. To date, however, the abusive supervision literature has implicitly examined only the first of these personal ideals (e.g., Liao et al., 2018), underspecifying the potential responses of supervisors to their own abusive behavior. Specifically, Liao et al. (2018) examined self-focused reactions (i.e., moral credit deficits and guilt) to supervisors' own abusive behavior, neglecting the social implications of abusive behavior for the supervisor. In contrast, we seek to concurrently examine both possibilities to help reconcile these two discrepant lines of thinking and to extend recent research by considering a less genuine response by supervisors to their own abusive behavior.

To meet this aim, we draw on and integrate moral cleansing theory (Tetlock et al., 2000) with impression management and construction theory (IMCT; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Specifically, moral cleansing theory argues that the extent to which a supervisor's "personal" ideal of being moral is threatened after an abusive episode will drive him/her to engage in moral amends behaviors to repair his/her personal ideal of being moral (Liao et al., 2018). Conversely, IMCT suggests that the extent to which a supervisor's "social" image
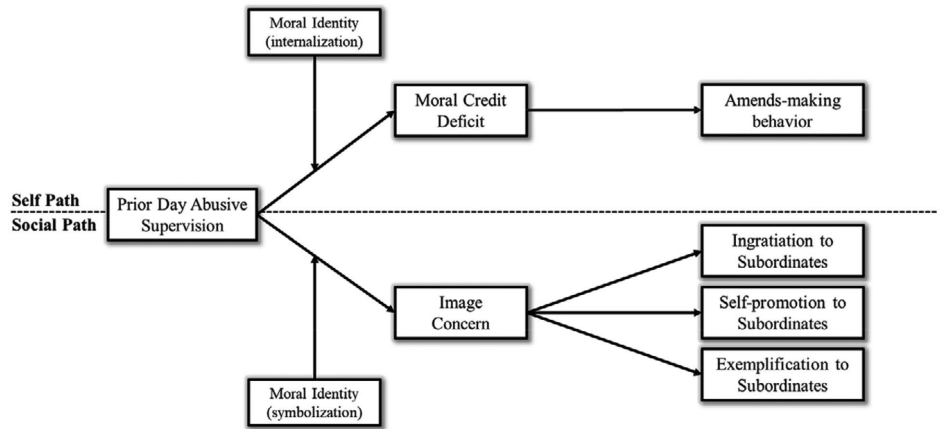
Figure 1 Proposed research model

of being seen as moral is threatened following an abusive episode will lead him/her to engage in impression management behaviors to repair his/her social image of being seen as moral. In this way, IMCT aligns with research suggesting that supervisors engage in impression management to reinforce their social image (e.g., Conger, 1990; Gardner & Avolio, 1998). However, because the content of the ideal self drives individuals to emphasize being or being seen as moral, we draw upon moral identity theory, which stipulates that individuals vary on the degree to which they personally value being moral (i.e., internalized moral identity) and being perceived as moral (i.e., symbolized moral identity; Aquino & Reed, 2002). These forms of moral identity should dictate whether the supervisor engages in genuine or image-repairing behaviors following abusive behavior. To test this model (**Figure 1**), we utilize a 3-week, experience sampling study of supervisors.

Our study makes at least three key contributions. First, we extend our understanding of how supervisors respond to their own abusive acts beyond the literature's current theoretical understanding (e.g., Liao et al., 2018; Lin, Ma, & Johnson, 2016). In particular, prior research has limited itself to arguing that abusive supervisors engage in reparatory consideration behaviors as a result of guilt or a loss of personal moral credits attached to the abusive episode (Liao et al., 2018). Although this perspective is certainly valuable to understand, this approach assumes that supervisors only strive to attain self-based ideals

(i.e., seek to be moral in their own eyes). However, recent research indicates that the ideals individuals strive for are multifaceted (Zipay, Mitchell, Baer, Sessions, & Bies, 2020), including ideals that are more focused on social-related ends. Therefore, by drawing on IMCT, we shift the narrative of this phenomenon to propose that supervisors also strive to attain "socially based ideals" (i.e., seek for others to see them as moral) following an abusive episode with their subordinates.

Second, through the above approach, we introduce an alternative theoretical process and set of outcomes related to how episodic abusive supervision episodes impact supervisors themselves. In particular, and by integrating theorizing on impression management (Leary & Kowalski, 1990) with the prevailing moral cleansing view, we identify two discrepant and competing explanations for how supervisors might respond to their own abusive behavior. Specifically, we explore how prior day abusive episodes create daily image concerns for the abusive supervisor, which spur subsequent disingenuous leader behaviors (i.e., impression management tactics); this contrasts with moral cleansing theory, which suggests a more genuine supervisor response. By way of moral identity theory, we reconcile these disparate theoretical explanations for supervisor behavior following abusive episodes, thus creating consensus regarding how supervisors respond to their own abusive behavior.

Third, in response to calls to examine antecedents of impression management (Bolino, Long, & Turnley, 2016), we suggest supervisors may impression manage after abusing their subordinates. In this way, our work extends the nomological network of impression management by identifying antecedents of such behaviors (i.e., daily image concern and, indirectly, past abusive behavior), as well as a critical boundary condition (i.e., symbolized moral identity) of how past behavior influences image perceptions and, in turn, impression management.

Finally, our findings are important to practitioners. For example, our study points to an important training and development opportunity for organizations—specifically, the need to train supervisors on the implications of abusive behavior, as well as helping them to engage in self-reflection (Lanaj, Foulk, & Erez, 2019). Further, by identifying symbolized moral identity, in particular, as a boundary condition around image-focused responses to abusive behavior, we identify an

important selection criterion for organizational supervisors. Finally, by exposing impression management as an outcome of abusive episodes, we caution managers regarding the potential for impression management behaviors to appear insincere to subordinates and thereby threaten supervisors' efforts to reconcile employees following an abusive episode.

2 Theory and Hypotheses

Certain supervisory behaviors are, by nature, deemed unethical or undesirable, with abusive supervision garnering increased attention as such in recent years (Greenbaum, Hill, Mawritz, & Quade, 2017; Liu, Liao, & Loi, 2012; Mackey et al., 2017; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Tepper, 2000, 2007). Even when supervisors engage in abusive behaviors for instrumental reasons (Tepper, Moss, & Duffy, 2011), the effects tend to still be negative and the behavior is largely deemed counternormative (Mackey et al., 2017; Walter, Lam, Van Der Vegt, Huang, & Miao, 2015). Thus, abusive behavior largely represents a failure to meet standards of acceptable leader behavior and is a deviant form of leader behavior (Mackey et al., 2017) in which supervisors violate norms regarding interpersonal treatment of subordinates (Walter et al., 2015). However, even when such negative behaviors emerge one day due to ostensibly uncontrollable reasons or self-regulatory failures (e.g., Courtright et al., 2016; Lin et al., 2016), the next day offers the supervisors the opportunity to respond to their own behavior; indeed, recent work has highlighted the fact that supervisors may ruminate on their behavior after leaving work (Yuan, Barnes, & Li, 2018). The question is, how do they respond to their own prior abusive episodes?

In that vein, noting a general lack of evidence linking judgments of immoral behavior to subsequent moral conduct, Blasi (1984) posited that there exists an ideal self that serves as a cognitive benchmark against which personal conduct is evaluated. In this way, action follows from cognitively based moral judgments to the extent that the moral judgment is deemed relevant to the individual's ideal self (Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009). Although the tendency to cognitively evaluate one's conduct against the yardstick of the ideal self is universal, the content of the ideal self can vary across individuals (Aquino

& Reed, 2002). Thus, the ideal moral self may contain differing elements, each driven by the aspirations of the individual. With regard to morality, the ideal self for some supervisors revolves around adhering to a strict personal moral compass (hereafter we refer to this as the "moral self"). For other supervisors, the ideal self is one that strives to be viewed by others as moral (i.e., a socially constructed ideal of one's morality, hereafter labeled the "social self"). Importantly, an individual's ideal self may endorse either, both, or neither of these possibilities (Blasi, 1984). In this way, the content of the ideal self reflects the extent to which conduct is deemed relevant to the self; when a moral judgement is made, whether and to what element of the ideal self that judgment is relevant (i.e., to the moral self or social self) dictates the action that follows (Blasi, 1984).

This tension between the moral self and social components of individuals' ideal selves has long been endorsed by social psychologists (Carver & Scheier, 2001; Fenigstein et al., 1975). Indeed, as Carver and Scheier (2001) note, "people differ reliably from each other in the extent to which they value personal versus social aspects of their identity" (p. 112). Aquino and Reed (2002) directly build on this notion in their explication of moral identity theory, highlighting that the two dimensions of moral identity (internationalization and symbolization) "tap these distinct aspects of self" (p. 1436). Specifically, they argue that moral identity—or the extent to which individuals emphasize moral traits as relevant to their ideal self—acts as a cognitive filter through which individuals process moral information, highlighting the existence of these two unique forms of moral identity. First, a highly internalized moral identity reflects the degree to which moral conduct is central to the individual's self-concept, or is personally important for the individual. In contrast, a highly symbolized moral identity represents the extent to which individuals find it important to convey their sense of morality to others. Viewed in this light, a common behavior (e.g., abusive behavior) could implicate either the moral self or the social self, depending on the content of the supervisor's ideal self (i.e., internalized or symbolized moral identity, respectively).

In light of the foregoing, there exist two distinct possibilities for how supervisors may respond to their own abusive behavior—each driven by the content of the ideal self. Specifically, to the extent that

the ideal self includes "being" moral, the moral self would be implicated by episodes of abusive behavior, thus leading to genuine reparative behaviors geared toward repairing the violation of one's personal ideal. Indeed, this represents the prevailing explanation in extant research (e.g., Liao et al., 2018). In contrast, to the extent that the ideal self includes being "seen" as moral, the social self would be implicated by episodes of abusive behavior, thus leading to efforts to appear morally righteous (Gardner & Avolio, 1998). Broadly, these two possibilities align with moral cleansing theory (Tetlock et al., 2000) and IMCT (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), respectively. We discuss each of these explanatory paths—which we term the "self" and "social" paths, respectively, based on the primary concerns and evaluations associated with each—in light of moral identity theory, below.

2.1 Self path

The first potential theoretical path through which prior day abusive behavior might be evaluated and responded to by the perpetrator is moral cleansing theory. Proposed by Tetlock et al. (2000) as a mechanism by which individuals reaffirm their sacred values, moral cleansing theory posits that unethical acts (or even the very thought of committing unethical acts) threaten the individual's sense of moral self-worth and value. Moral cleansing theory, and related theory on individual responses to moral and immoral behavior (e.g., Klotz & Bolino, 2013; Mullen & Monin, 2016; Yam, Klotz, He, & Reynolds, 2017), is predicated upon the notion that individuals maintain a cognitive balance of moral credits. In this way, although moral acts serve to "deposit" credits in a figurative mental account (Lin et al., 2016), immoral acts operate in the opposite manner and lead to a negative balance of credits (Liao et al., 2018).

Indeed, this predominantly internal accounting process has been suggested in response to unethical acts such as counterproductive work behaviors (Yuan et al., 2018) and abusive behavior (Liao et al., 2018). In these cases, within person, episodic variation on unethical behavior represents a departure from the individual's baseline level of moral conduct. In line with prior work (e.g., Liao et al., 2018), we frame abusive behavior as an unethical act that depletes

the supervisor's perceived balance of moral credits. However, the notion that abusive episodes will be universally interpreted as having moral implications is not tenable; rather, the content of the ideal self should dictate whether the moral self is implicated by abusive behavior.

According to moral identity theory, the effect of prior day abusive behavior on daily moral credit deficit is likely to be contingent upon the supervisor's internalized moral identity. Moral identity, particularly an internalized moral identity, reflects the degree to which the individual views his/her actions through a moral lens, considers the moral implications of his/her behavior, and values moral conduct (Aquino & Reed, 2002). In this way, internalized moral identity reflects the extent to which the supervisor's ideal self personally values being moral (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Blasi, 1984). As such, individuals higher on internalized moral identity are more likely to perceive a deficit of moral credits when they engage in abusive behavior. Indeed, Sachdeva, Iliev, and Medin (2009) experimentally found that participants whose internalized moral identity was threatened by their own immoral activity were more willing to engage in moral cleansing-related behaviors as a means of restoring their moral self-worth. We therefore predict that internalized moral identity interacts with episodes of prior day abusive behavior, strengthening the likelihood that perpetrators of immoral behavior experience a deficit of moral credits as a result.

Hypothesis 1: Prior day abusive behavior interacts with internalized moral identity to predict perceived daily moral credit deficit, such that the relationship is more positive at higher levels of internalized moral identity than at lower levels of internalized moral identity.

In addition to dictating how individuals appraise their past unethical acts, moral cleansing theory offers guidance for how individuals respond behaviorally; specifically, a perceived deficit of moral credits should lead individuals to seek to rebalance the moral scales (Tetlock et al., 2000; Zhong & Liljenquist, 2006) in a manner that regains some degree of moral credit (Klotz & Bolino, 2013). Because a

deficit of moral credits represents a departure from individuals' baseline state and is thus a deviation from their personal moral self-concept (Liao et al., 2018; Mullen & Monin, 2016), any efforts to regain that moral balance are naturally an attempt to regain alignment with their "true selves." In this way, to the extent that supervisors perceive a deficit of moral credits following an episode of abusive behavior, they are likely to engage in genuine reparatory behaviors (see also Liao et al., 2018).

Walker (2006) posited that genuine reparative behaviors following wrongdoing involve "accountability and responsibility taking from those who are responsible for harm, ideally toward those who have suffered the harm" (p. 208). In line with this reasoning, scholars have recently investigated amends-making behavior, or behavior aimed at correcting a damaged moral self-concept by recognizing and admitting that past actions were wrong, apologizing for those actions, and engaging in behaviors aimed at making the victim whole again (Gromet & Okimoto, 2014).We thus identify daily amends-making as a behavioral strategy that supervisors may employ to genuinely address a perceived daily deficit of moral credits. Indeed, amends-making aligns particularly well with moral cleansing theory because it involves an internalization of responsibility (Brett et al., 2007; Liao, 2007) and a belief that such behavior will remedy the personal transgression (Conroy, Becker, & Menges, 2017). Given the focus of moral cleansing theory on rectifying a disruption to the moral self, we expect that when supervisors experience a daily deficit of moral credit, they will be more likely to engage in daily amends-making behavior toward their subordinates because they feel a personal drive to correct how they view their own moral selves.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived daily moral credit deficit is positively associated with daily amends-making.

In line with the overarching logic of moral cleansing theory, prior day abusive behavior should be positively associated with daily amends-making, through daily moral credit deficit, especially at high levels of internalized moral identity.

Hypothesis 3: Internalized moral identity moderates the indirect effect of prior day abusive behavior on daily amends-making through perceived daily moral credits deficit, such that the indirect effect is positive and significant at higher levels of internalized moral identity.

2.2 Social path

Although moral cleansing theory broadly suggests that when supervisors engage in abusive behavior on a given day they will respond with genuine amends-making in order to address their loss of moral credits, this perspective neglects the often public or social nature of abusive episodes. Rather than occurring in social isolation, an episode of abusive behavior involves both the supervisor as well as a victim (Tepper, 2000) or others (Mitchell, Vogel, & Folger, 2015). In this way, a daily episode of abusive behavior might not only implicate the supervisor's moral self, but also impact the social self. Indeed, an ideal self against which supervisors may compare themselves may contain an innate desire to project a moral image to others (Blasi, 1984), by way of impression management behaviors. To elucidate on this possibility, we draw on theory pertaining to impression management (i.e., IMCT; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Specifically, IMCT elaborates both the motivation for, and subsequent behavioral form of, impression management.

The first element of IMCT pertains to the motivation to manage others' impressions of oneself, which Leary and Kowalski (1990) posit is driven by a perceived mismatch between a desired image and actual image. When this mismatch occurs, individuals become more concerned with their social image and work to remedy any damage to that image through impression management behaviors. We expect this effect to take the form of increased daily image concern, defined as a state wherein the individual is aware of, and concerned about, others' perceptions of oneself (Fenigstein et al., 1975; Scheier & Carver, 1985; White, Stackhouse, & Argo, 2018).

Applying IMCT to personal moral failures such as abusive supervision, scholars have argued that prior moral violations are signals that inform the individual that his/her present image is not consistent with

his/her ideal self or desired image (Bolino, 1999; Bonner, Greenbaum, & Quade, 2017). Because abusive behavior is a public violation (e.g., denigrates employees in front of others; Tepper, 2000) of behavioral standards, and reflection on those behaviors may occur after working hours (Liao et al., 2018), supervisors who believe they engaged in abusive behavior one day will experience increased image concerns the next morning.

However, IMCT requires that the social self be implicated to drive impression motivation; thus, the content of the ideal self should include a social element. This is particularly salient in relation to a highly symbolized moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Recall that individuals with a highly symbolized moral identity place higher value on conveying their moral standards and conduct to others; this aligns well with whether the ideal self contains a social element. Given the immoral (Mackey et al., 2017; Walter et al., 2015) and social (Mitchell et al., 2015) nature of abusive behavior, supervisors higher on symbolized moral identity should view episodes of abusive behavior as more negatively implicating the social self. In these cases, the public abusive behavior is more divergent from the image that the supervisor wishes to convey to others (i.e., a moral image, as indicated by symbolized moral identity), leading the supervisor to be more concerned with his/her image the next day. Indeed, this is consistent with IMCT's contention that image concern emerges from a perceived mismatch of desired and actual image. Thus, we expect that when supervisors engage in abusive behavior on a given day, this interacts with symbolized moral identity to dictate the supervisor's concern for his/her image the next day.

Hypothesis 4: Prior day abusive behavior and symbolized moral identity interact to predict perceived daily image concern, such that the relationship is more positive at higher levels of symbolized moral identity than at lower levels of symbolized moral identity.

Given that IMCT is jointly concerned with the motivation for and forms of impression management, and because the focus of abusive behavior is on the direct reports of the focal supervisor, we expect that daily image concern best represents a perceived threat to the supervisor's image in the eyes of his/her subordinates. Consequently,

supervisors who experience increased daily image concerns as a result of prior day abuse will engage in image-repairing activities that day—particularly *ingratiation*, *exemplification*, and *self-promotion* toward their subordinates (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Turnley & Bolino, 2001)[1]—in an attempt to publicly compensate for the damage done to their image by their prior day abusive behaviors. We emphasize these three impression management activities in particular due to IMCT's stipulation that public failures prompt behaviors aimed at directly countering the image damage (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), potentially by acting to foster a positive social impression. We discuss each of these forms of impression management, in turn, below.

First, in the context of our overarching focus on IMCT (Aquino & Reed, 2002), ingratiation (i.e., flattering behaviors, such as complimenting and praising others, with the instrumental intention of being seen in a positive light; Bolino, Kacmar, Turnley, & Gilstrap, 2008; Turnley & Bolino, 2001) is a behavior that supervisors can use to attempt to convey a positive public image. By praising one's subordinates, supervisors can impact how the subordinates view the supervisor. Indeed, Yukl and Tracey (1992) found that ingratiation influences the opinions of subordinates, by creating a positive image of kindness and consideration. In this way, and given that such behaviors have been shown to positively influence the actors' images, supervisors who are concerned with their image are likely to engage in behaviors aimed at creating a positive, kind image (i.e., ingratiation).

Second, self-promotion behaviors are those impression management behaviors focused on highlighting one's past accomplishments or capabilities in an effort to appear competent (Turnley & Bolino, 2001). Although ingratiation may be seen as seeking to appear kind and considerate to others, self-promotion seeks to elevate others'

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1. Jones and Pittman (1982) also identified two additional forms of impression management: supplication (purposefully creating the perception that one is weak and needy) and intimidation (creating the perception that one is dangerous or threatening). We believe that these two forms of impression management are less germane to our theory because each involves creating a negative image (i.e., needy or dangerous), rather than repairing damage to one's image. Further, intimidation involves aggression, anger, and making threats (Turnley & Bolino, 2001), which is conceptually similar to abusive supervision and is thus unlikely to emerge as a response to such behaviors.

perceptions of their competence, success, and fit in their role (Bourd-age, Roulin, & Tarraf, 2018). As such, supervisors who are concerned about their public image are likely to engage in self-promotion be-haviors, because such behaviors foster a positive image among those toward whom they are directed.

Finally, exemplification involves communicating to others one's dedication (Turnley & Bolino, 2001), by way of highlighting how hard one has been working (Bolino & Turnley, 1999). Indeed, Bolino and Turnley (1999) noted that exemplification is used "in an attempt to create a favorable image of oneself" (p. 198), making it a natural re-sponse to a perceived image concern. In fact, Bonner et al. (2017) showed that employees utilize exemplification tactics as an image-repairing tactic following unethical behavior.

In sum, rather than genuinely repairing harm to others and the moral self, as suggested by moral cleansing theory, IMCT suggests that on days that they experience higher levels of image concern, supervisors are more likely to engage in image-repairing behaviors (i.e., ingratiation, exemplification, and self-promotion) that are more geared toward repairing their social image.

Hypothesis 5: Perceived daily image concern is positively associated with daily (a) ingratiation, (b) self-promotion, and (c) exemplifica-tion toward subordinates.

Consistent with IMCT and our preceding predictions, we expect that for those supervisors who value publicly conveying a moral im-age (i.e., high symbolized moral identity), daily episodes of abusive behavior will lead them to feel greater concern for their image and, in turn, engage in impression management acts to repair the dam-age done to their image.

Hypothesis 6: Symbolized moral identity moderates the indirect ef-fect of prior day abusive behavior on daily (a) ingratiation, (b) self-promotion, and (c) exemplification through perceived daily image concern, such that the indirect effect is positive and significant at higher levels of symbolized moral identity.

3 Method

3.1 Sample and procedures

To test our model and our proposed daily, episodic hypotheses, we utilized an experience sampling method (ESM) design. Specifically, we first recruited a sample of 120 supervisors, geographically dispersed across the continental United States, from a data service operated by Qualtrics; these data were collected in 2019, with the study protocols approved by the Texas A&M University IRB (IRB # 2019-0592M). Each supervisor reported that he/she was a full-time supervisor over two or more employees. One week prior to the daily portion of the study, all supervisors completed a baseline survey containing the between-person moderators (i.e., moral identity internalization and symbolization) as well as demographic information. During the daily portion of the study, participants completed two daily surveys for three working weeks (i.e., one each morning and one each evening for 15 workdays). To maximize our responses, we compensated participants based on the number of surveys completed, up to $50 of Amazon credit. The total cost of the study was $4,474.

Each morning before work, participants received an email link to a short survey, a process that was mirrored at the end of each workday. To preclude common method variance from impacting our analyses, supervisors evaluated all stages of our model at different points in time (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). At Time 0, the supervisors reported their moral identity and demographic information. During the evening survey, supervisors rated the level of abusive behavior they exhibited that day. The following morning supervisors were asked to complete a survey that asked about their current moral deficit and image concern. At the end of the workday, supervisors reported the level of amends-making behavior as well as impression management behaviors (i.e., ingratiation, self-promotion, and exemplification) they exhibited that day. This process was repeated for three weeks. To account for potential careless responses, we randomized survey items within scales and randomized scale order across survey instances. Further, we included two attention check items in the baseline survey; only supervisors who passed both were included in the final study.

We retained data from supervisors who provided at least three complete observations—with each observation including consecutive surveys at Time 1 evening, Time 2 morning, and Time 3 evening. This is consistent with suggestions that at least three complete observations are necessary to represent within-person experiences (Beal, Trougakos, Weiss, & Dalal, 2013; Gabriel, Koopman, Rosen, & Johnson, 2018; Singer & Willett, 2003) as well as prior experience sampling work (e.g., Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014; Rosen, Koopman, Gabriel, & Johnson, 2016). Also, we excluded observations where supervisors noted that they have not interacted with their employees on a given day. Our final sample thus consisted of 79 supervisors who provided 620 complete observations (52.32% response rate). Of these supervisors, 54.43% were male and were, on average, 43.72 years of age (*SD* = 10.14). Furthermore, 59.49% of supervisors were located in the Eastern time zone, whereas 27.85%, 1.27%, and 11.39% were located in the Central, Mountain, and Pacific time zones, respectively.

3.2 Measures

Unless otherwise noted, all measures utilized a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

3.2.1 Daily abusive behavior

We measured abusive behavior each evening at the end of the workday using 10 items from Tepper (2000) that capture active and passive forms of abuse (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). Specifically, we asked supervisors to report the frequency with which they engaged in these abusive behaviors using a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *a great deal*) that day, with behaviors including "Today, I ridiculed a subordinate or follower" and "Today, I told a subordinate or follower that they are incompetent." This measure was then lagged, such that abusive behavior reported the night before represented our independent variable. The daily range of reliability was between .94 and .98, with an average of .97.

3.2.2 Daily moral credit deficit

Each morning, we measured daily moral credit deficit, relying on five items adapted from Lin et al. (2016). Given our focus on prior day abusive supervision, we asked participants to reflect upon their behavior the prior day, and report on their momentary evaluation of that behavior. This scale included items such as "Yesterday at work, my actions (or, lack thereof) resulted in me losing moral credit" and "Yesterday at work, my actions (or lack thereof) cost me credit as amoral person." The daily reliability ranged from .91 to .98, with an average reliability of .95.

3.2.3 Daily image concern

We measured daily image concern in the morning survey, utilizing four items from Fenigstein et al. (1975), as revised by Scheier and Carver (1985).We adapted these items to fit our daily context. The scale included the following sample items: "Right now, I am concerned about the way I present myself" and "Right now, I am concerned about what other people think of me." The range of reliability was between .89 and .95, with a mean of .92.

3.2.4 Daily amends-making behavior

Each evening, supervisors rated the extent to which they engaged in amends-making behaviors toward their subordinates that day. We used a three-item scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *a great deal*) from Gromet and Okimoto (2014). A representative item from this scale is "Today, I apologized sincerely to my subordinates." The daily reliability ranged from .86 to .97, with an average of .94.

3.2.5 Daily impression management behaviors

We measured three impression management behaviors (i.e., ingratiation, self-promotion, and exemplification) each evening in the Time 3 survey. Supervisors rated the frequency with which they engaged in each behavior toward their subordinates that day (1 = *not at all* to 5 =

a great deal) using adapted scales from Bolino and Turnley (1999) as modified by Turnley and Bolino (2001). A representative item for ingratiation was "Today, I praised my subordinates for their efforts so that they will see me a nice person," whereas self-promotion included "Today at work, I made my subordinates aware of my talents or qualifications." Finally, exemplification included "Today at work, I let my subordinates know how hard I have been working." The range of reliability of daily ingratiation was from .91 to .93, and that of self-promotion was from .92 to .98. The average reliability for both was .95. Reliability of daily exemplification ranged from .85 to .94 with an average of .91.

3.2.6 Moral identity

To measure moral identity, we used 10 items from Aquino and Reed (2002). During the baseline (Time 0) survey, we presented nine moral characteristics (e.g., "caring" and "honest") and asked supervisors to rate the degree to which the characteristics were generally important to them. Five items measured internalized moral identity, and five other items measured symbolized moral identity. An example item for moral identity internalization is "It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics" and for moral identity symbolization is "I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics." The reliabilities were .71 and .83, respectively.

3.3 Control variables[2]

3.3.1 Daily guilt

Given that Liao et al. (2018) found that prior day abusive behavior was positively associated with daily feelings of guilt on the part of the supervisor (Tangney, Wagner, Hill-Barlow, Marschall, & Gramzow, 1996), we included guilt to control for an alternative mechanism. Daily supervisor

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2. The results reported below also remain consistent without these control variables. However, we retained them in our final model to avoid potential contaminants, for a more conservative estimate (Becker, 2005), and provide a statistical test of the proposed model above and beyond what has largely been found in prior research (Liao, Yam, Johnson, Liu, & Song, 2018). Appendix A provides results for our model without any of these control variables.

guilt was measured each morning with a three-item scale developed by Tangney, Miller, Flicker, and Barlow (1996). An example item is "Right now, I feel guilty." The average reliability for guilt was .80.

3.3.2 Daily positive and negative affect

Recent experience sampling methodology research has recommended that such studies account for baseline affective states at the start of each day (Gabriel et al., 2019). We therefore controlled for positive and negative affect in the morning, each with five items each from Mackinnon et al. (1999), using a 5-point scale (1 = *to a very small extent*; 5 = *to a very large extent*). A sample item for positive affect is "Right now, I feel excited" and one for negative affect was "Right now, I feel upset." The average reliability for positive affect and negative affect was .93 and .77, respectively.

3.3.3 Temporal and artifactual controls

To account for other potential explanations for our effects, we controlled for various temporal and artifactual factors suggested by prior research. First, prior experience sampling (e.g., Beal & Ghandour, 2011; Gabriel et al., 2018) and methodology research (Beal &Weiss, 2003) has suggested that researchers should control for potential cyclicality in daily states and behaviors. We thus followed the suggestions of Beal and Ghandour (2011) and controlled for the day of the week (i.e., Monday through Friday) as well as the sine and cosine of that day, such that a week represents a full cycle. We also controlled for the day. Including these control variables further allowed us to account for potential linear daily and weekly trends within our data (Beal et al., 2013). Finally, we also controlled for lagged, prior day versions of all endogenous study variables.

3.4 Analysis

Due to our experience sampling design, which involves the nesting of daily observations within supervisors, we utilized multilevel path analysis using Mplus 8 (Muthén & Muthén, 2017). Also, we used full-information maximum likelihood (FIML) in Mplus, which uses all available

data when estimating parameters (Koopman et al., 2020; Newman, 2009). All hypothesized within-person relationships and alternative mechanisms were modeled at Level 1 with random slopes. However, and in order to reduce model complexity and maximize sample size, within-person control variables (i.e., cyclical and lagged variables, daily supervisor positive and negative affect) were modeled with fixed slopes, in line with prior research (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2018; Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott, 2016; McClean, Koopman, Yim, & Klotz, 2020; Rosen et al., 2016). The between-person moderators were modeled at Level 2. With regard to the Level 1 exogenous variables, we group-mean centered to partial out any potential between-person effects. At the between-person level of analysis, we grand-mean centered the Level 2 moderators, consistent with prior recommendations (Enders & Tofighi, 2007; Hofmann, Griffin, & Gavin, 2000).

To test our conditional indirect effect hypotheses, we relied on the suggestions of Preacher, Zyphur, and Zhang (2010) and Selig and Preacher (2008). Specifically, we calculated the value of each path at high (+1 *SD*) and low (−1 *SD*) levels of our moderator (Aiken &West, 1991), and used a Monte Carlo simulation with 20,000 replications to construct 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI) around these conditional indirect effects. Similar methods have been used in prior studies (e.g., Foulk et al., 2018; Matta, Scott, Colquitt, Koopman, & Passantino, 2017; McClean et al., 2020; Rosen et al., 2016). Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes (2007) have suggested that moderation, using this method, is supported when the CI for the difference between the two indirect effects (i.e., high and low levels of the moderator) excludes zero.

4 Results

Table 1 shows the proportion of variance at the within- and between-person levels for each daily variable, whereas **Table 2** provides descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations among study variables. Specifically, all Level 1 variables exhibited sufficient within-person variance to justify multilevel modeling: prior day abusive behavior (19%), current day moral credit deficit (37%), image concern (28%), guilt (58%), amends-making behavior (41%), ingratiation (24%), self-promotion (37%), and exemplification (47%).

Table 1 Within- and between-individual variance among daily behaviors

Construct	Within-individual variance	Between-individual variance	Percentage of within-individual variance
1. Abusive behavior (T1)	0.05	0.21	19%
2. Moral deficit (T2)	0.21	0.36	37%
3. Image concern (T2)	0.47	1.18	28%
4. Positive affect (T2)	0.42	0.89	32%
5. Negative affect (T2)	0.06	0.05	55%
6. Guilt (T2)	0.14	0.10	58%
7. Amends-making behavior (T3)	0.43	0.61	41%
8. Ingratiation (T3)	0.31	1.00	24%
9. Self-promotion (T3)	0.47	0.78	37%
10. Exemplification (T3)	0.57	0.72	47%

Prior to testing our hypotheses, we conducted a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis to ensure the distinctiveness of the study variables. Specifically, our hypothesized model contains eight within-person variables (i.e., prior day abusive behavior, moral deficit, image concern, guilt, amends-making behavior, ingratiation, self-promotion, and exemplification) and two between-person variables (i.e., symbolized and internalized moral identity). This full 10-factor model showed acceptable fit (χ^2 = 905.76, df = 566, RMSEA = .03, CFI = .90, $SRMR_{Within}$ = .05, $SRMR_{Between}$ = .14[3]). However, to provide additional evidence for our factor structure, we compared this model against two others using a pair of Satorra–Bentler-scaled chi-square difference tests (Satorra & Bentler, 2001): a four-factor model to account for the four different measurement points in our design (χ^2 = 2,483.47, df = 592, RMSEA = .07, CFI = .43, $SRMR_{Within}$ = .10, $SRMR_{Between}$ = .18, $\Delta\chi^2$ = 1,577.71, p < .05), and a two-factor model that includes one factor each in the between- and within-person level (χ^2 = 3,723.38, df = 595, RMSEA = .09, CFI = .06, $SRMR_{Within}$ = .15, $SRMR_{Between}$ = .18, $\Delta\chi^2$ = 2,817.62, p < .05). Our hypothesized model showed significantly better fit than these alternative models.

3. Although this value for Standardized Root Mean Residual($SRMR_{Between}$) is higher than traditional standards, these standards were designed for non-multilevel models (Gabriel, Koopman, Rosen, & Johnson, 2018). In addition, because all other fit indices indicate the hypothesized factor structure fits the data well, we are confident in the overall fit of the model (West, Taylor, & Wu, 2012).

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Level 1														
1. Abusive behavior (T1)	1.17	0.54	(.97)	.79*	.14	.06	.74*	.85*	.53*	.31*	.37*	.35*	-.48*	-.01
2. Moral deficit (T2)	1.35	0.77	.03	(.95)	.19	.07	.66*	.78*	.60*	.38*	.40*	.48*	-.60*	.05
3. Image concern (T2)	2.65	1.29	.07	.01	(.92)	.18	.12	.12	.38*	.36*	.34*	.36*	-.15	-.05
4. Positive affect (T2)	3.16	1.15	.16*	-.08	.08	(.93)	-.14	-.11	.42*	.42*	.47*	.37*	.06	.32*
5. Negative affect (T2)	1.11	0.34	.08	.06	-.03	-.08*	(.77)	.97*	.42*	.26*	.26*	.26*	-.49*	-.04
6. Guilt (T2)	1.15	0.49	-.00	.10*	.07	-.01	.13*	(.80)	.46*	.33*	.30*	.31*	-.51*	.06
7. Amends-making (T3)	1.54	1.06	.03	-.07	.13*	-.04	-.07	-.06	(.94)	.81*	.84*	.79*	-.58*	.26*
8. Ingratiation (T3)	2.28	1.19	.05	-.07	.08*	-.06	-.03	-.12*	.25*	(.95)	.85*	.79*	-.42*	.36*
9. Self-promotion (T3)	1.92	1.16	.01	-.06	.06	-.08*	.03	-.05	.14*	.36*	(.95)	.87*	-.54*	.30*
10. Exemplification (T3)	1.98	1.15	.04	-.08	.06	.08*	-.02	-.02	.11*	.21*	.40*	(.91)	-.56*	.27*
Level 2														
11. Moral identity-I	4.43	0.68	-.48*	-.60*	-.15	.06	-.49*	-.51*	-.58*	-.42*	-.54*	-.56*	(.71)	.01
12. Moral identity-S	3.92	0.79	-.01	.05	-.05	.32*	-.04	.06	.26*	.36*	.30*	.27*	.01	(.83)

Level-1 N = 620; Level-2 N = 79.

Moral identity-I: Moral identity internalization;

Moral identity-S: Moral identity symbolization.

Correlations below the diagonal represent within-person correlations, whereas those above the diagonal represent between-person correlations.

Scale reliabilities are reported in parentheses along the diagonal.

* p < .05

4.1 Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1 proposed that internalized moral identity interacts with prior day abusive behavior, such that the effect of abusive behavior on daily moral credit deficit is positive at high levels of internalized moral identity. As **Figure 2** and **Table 3** show, this interaction was not significant (γ = .17, *SE* = .17, *p* = .31). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Hypothesis 2, meanwhile, proposed that daily moral credit deficit is positively related to daily amends-making behavior. This result was likewise not significant (γ = .03, *SE* = .14, *p* = .83), failing to support Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 suggested internalized moral identity moderates the indirect effect of prior day abusive behavior on current day amends-making behavior via perceived daily moral credit deficits. As shown in Table 4, the indirect effect of prior day abusive behavior on amends-making behavior via moral credit deficit was not significant at either high (indirect effect = .008, 95% CI [−.065, .185]) or low (indirect effect = .001, 95% CI [−.027, .052]) levels of internalized moral identity. Also, the difference between the indirect effects at high and low levels of the moderator included zero (indirect effect difference = .007, 95% CI [−.056, .155]). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.
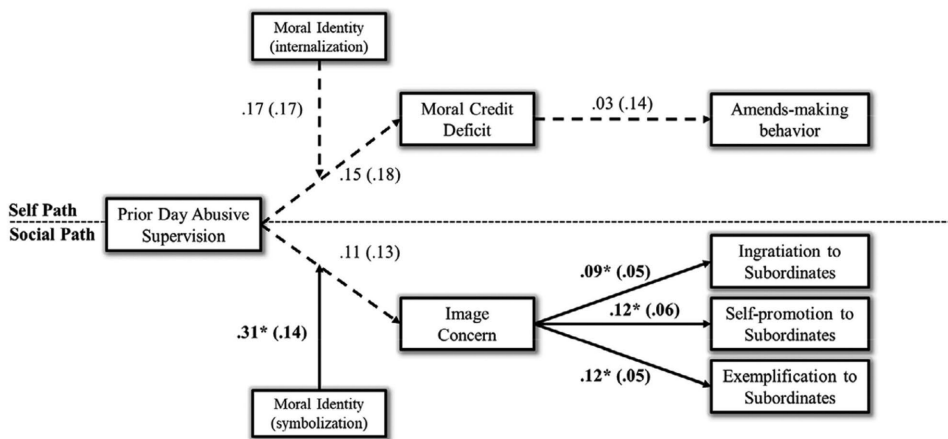
Figure 2 Path model results. Results shown include control variables; control variables are not graphically depicted for the sake of figure parsimony. Standard errors for path estimates are displayed in parentheses. Solid lines indicate paths significant at *p* < .05; dashed lines indicate nonsignificant paths. **p* < .05

Table 3 Daily path analytic results

| | Mechanisms (T2) | | | | | | Outcomes (T3) | | | | | | | |
| | Moral deficit | | Guilt | | Image concern | | Amends-making | | Ingratiation | | Self-promotion | | Exemplification | |
Predictors	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE
Study day	-.01	.00	.01	.00	.01*	.01	.00	.01	.00	.00	.00	.01	-.01	.01
Week day	-.03	.08	-.04	.04	.04	.11	-.01	.08	-.09	.10	-.07	.10	-.04	.19
Week day (sine)	-.02	.06	.02	.03	.04	.06	-.07	.05	-.09	.05	-.07	.07	-.01	.09
Week day (cosine)	.12	.11	.02	.06	-.13	.16	.01	.12	.07	.12	.09	.13	.05	.24
Positive affect	-.05	.04	.00	.01	.06	.05	-.08	.06	-.07	.05	-.09	.07	.10	.05
Negative affect	.11	.06	.14	.10	-.14	.10	-.24*	.09	-.06	.08	.06	.09	-.02	.10
Lagged moral deficit	-.11	.07												
Lagged guilt			.00	.08										
Lagged image concern					.12*	.05								
Lagged amends-making							-.05	.06						
Lagged ingratiation									.16*	.06				
Lagged self-promotion											.05	.05		
Lagged exemplification													.04	.08
Abusive behavior (AB)	.15	.18	-.03	.11	.11	.13	.05	.14	.12	.31	.04	.24	.03	.26
Moral identity-I	-.52*	.12	-.24	.08										
AB × Moral identity-I	.17	.17	.00	.14										
Moral identity-S					-.07	.17								
AB × Moral identity-S					.31*	.14								
Moral deficit							.03	.14	.02	.08	.06	.07	.05	.08
Guilt							-.07	.10	-.14	.10	-.05	.11	.04	.08
Image concern							.14*	.06	.09*	.05	.12*	.06	.12*	.05
Intercept	1.50*	.29	1.24*	.16	2.33*	.41	1.14*	.43	2.40*	.39	1.75*	.39	1.74*	.69
Pseudo R²	.061		.029		.045		.088		.126		.049		.016	

Level-1 *N* = 620; Level-2 *N* = 79.
Moral identity-I: Moral identity internalization;
Moral identity-S: Moral identity symbolization.
Unstandardized coefficients are reported.
* *p* < .05
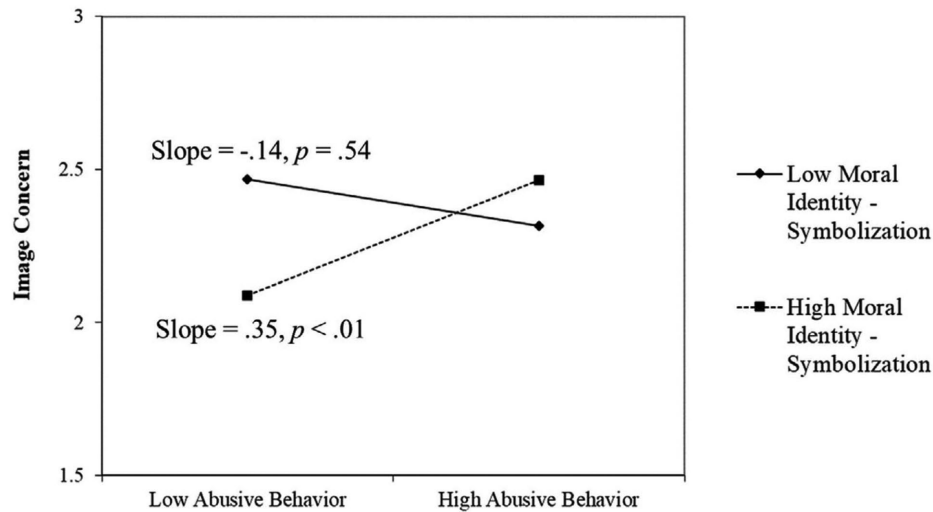
Figure 3 Moderating effect of moral identity (symbolization) on the relationship between prior day abusive behavior and current day image concern

Turning to the social path of our model, Hypothesis 4 suggested that prior day abusive behavior and symbolized moral identity would interact to influence daily image concern, such that the effect of prior day abusive behavior is more positive when symbolized moral identity is high. As shown in Figure 2 and Table 3, the interaction between prior day abusive behavior and symbolized moral identity was significant (γ = .31, *SE* = .14, *p* = .03). **Figure 3** shows the effect of prior day abusive behavior on current day moral image concern at high (+1 *SD*) and low (−1 *SD*) (Aiken & West, 1991) levels of symbolized moral identity. At high levels of symbolized moral identity, prior day abusive behavior was positively and significantly associated with current day image concern (slope = .35, *p* < .01). However, this effect was not significant at low levels of symbolized moral identity (slope = −.14, *p* = .54). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

In turn, Hypothesis 5 posited that daily image concern would be positively associated with supervisor ingratiation behavior (H5a), self-promotion (H5b), and exemplification (H5c) toward their subordinates. As shown in Figure 2 and Table 3, daily image concern was positively associated with ingratiation behavior (γ = .09, *SE* = .05, *p* = .05), self-promotion (γ = .12, *SE* = .05, *p* = .03), and exemplification (γ = .12, *SE* = .05, *p* = .02). Therefore, Hypotheses 5a, 5b, and 5c were all supported.

Table 4 Summary of hypothesized indirect effects

	Indirect effect	Conditional indirect effect
Prior abusive behavior→Moral deficit→Amends.	005 [−.043, .112]	.008 [−.065, .185]
Moral identity internalization		.001 [−.027, .052]
High (+1 *SD*)		.007 [−.056, .155]
Low (−1 *SD*)		
Difference		
Prior abusive behavior→Image concern→Amends	.015 [−.017, .071]	**.050 [.012, .112]**
Moral identity symbolization		−.020 [−.111, .037]
High (+1 *SD*)		**.070 [.009, .188]**
Low (−1 *SD*)		
Difference		
Prior abusive behavior→Image concern→Ingratiation	.009 [−.008, .053]	**.031 [.002, .077]**
Moral identity symbolization		−.012 [−.068, .023]
High (+1 *SD*)		**.044 [.005, .120]**
Low (−1 *SD*)		
Difference		
Prior abusive behavior→Image concern→Self-promotion	.013 [−.014, .061]	**.042[.008, .094]**
Moral identity symbolization		−.017 [−.102, .028]
High (+1 *SD*)		**.059 [.005, .173]**
Low (−1 *SD*)		
Difference		
Prior abusive behavior→Image concern→Exemplification	.012 [−.013, .060]	**.040 [.007, .094]**
Moral identity symbolization		−.016 [−.094, .028]
High (+1 *SD*)		**.056 [.005, .163]**
Low (−1 *SD*)		
Difference		

Note. Prior work suggests that moderated mediation exists when the confidence interval for the difference between two conditional indirect effects excludes zero (Preacher et al., 2007). Effects in boldface indicate significant effects (bias-corrected CI shown).

Hypotheses 6a, 6b, and 6c suggested symbolized moral identity moderates the indirect effect of prior day abusive behavior on (a) ingratiation, (b) self-promotion, and (c) exemplification through perceived daily image concern such that the indirect effects are higher when symbolized moral identity is higher. As **Table 4** shows, the indirect effect of prior day abusive behavior on ingratiation via daily image concern was positive and significant at high (indirect effect = .031, 95% CI [.002, .077]), but not at low (indirect effect = −.012, 95% CI [−.068, .023]) levels of symbolized moral identity. Moreover, the

difference of indirect effects between high and low levels of symbolized moral identity excluded zero (indirect effect difference = .044, 95% CI [.005, .120]). Thus, Hypothesis 6a was supported. Similarly, prior day abusive behavior had a positive and significant indirect effect on self-promotion via daily image concern at high (indirect effect = .042, 95% CI [.008, .094]), but not at low (indirect effect = −.017, 95% CI [−.102, .028]) levels of symbolized moral identity. Also, the indirect effect difference between high and low levels of symbolized moral identity did not include zero (indirect effect difference = .059, 95% CI [.005, .173]), supporting Hypothesis 6b. Finally, Hypothesis 6c proposed a conditional indirect effect of prior day abusive behavior on current day exemplification via daily image concern. Consistent with our predictions, the effect of prior day abusive behavior on current day exemplification was positive and significant at high (indirect effect = .040, 95% CI [.007, .094]) levels but not at low (indirect effect = −.016, 95% CI [−.094, .028]) levels of the moderator. The difference between the indirect effects at high and low levels of symbolized moral identity was also significant (indirect effect difference = .056, 95% CI [.005, .163]). These results therefore support Hypothesis 6c.

4.2 Supplemental analyses

Although moral cleansing theory and IMCT theoretically guide the placement of internalized and symbolized moral identity, respectively, on each relevant path, we also considered a model wherein both moderators acted upon both theoretical paths. Specifically, we modeled interaction effects between abusive behavior and internalized moral identity on moral credit deficit, and also between abusive behavior and symbolized moral identity on daily image concern. Neither the moderating effect of internalized moral identity on the relationship between abusive behavior and daily image concern ($\gamma = -.00$, $SE = .19$, $p = .98$) nor the moderating effect of symbolized moral identity on the relationship between abusive behavior and moral credit deficit ($\gamma = .40$, $SE = .35$, $p = .26$) reached significance. Further, our results remain substantively unchanged despite including these additional moderators; the interaction between prior day abusive behavior and internalized moral identity on daily moral credit deficit remained nonsignificant ($\gamma = .04$, $SE = .28$, $p = .90$), whereas the interaction with

symbolized moral identity on the relationship between abusive behavior and daily image concern remained significant (γ = .33, *SE* = .12, *p* = .01).

Further, and although our theoretical reliance on moral cleansing theory suggests amends-making behavior as an appropriate form of genuine reparative behavior, it is possible that when the moral self is implicated, supervisors act to reduce the very behavior that implicates the moral self. Put differently, in addition to engaging in amends-making behavior, supervisors may reduce their abusive behavior following a deficit of moral credits. Beyond that, it is possible that daily image concerns could also encourage supervisors to reduce the likelihood of same-day abusive supervision episodes. To that end, we considered a version of our model wherein next-day abusive behavior was modeled as a complementary outcome variable to daily amends-making behavior and daily impression management behaviors. We relied on the same 10 items from Tepper (2000) noted above; these items were measured during the focal evening survey. Results from this test failed to support the link between either daily moral credit deficit or daily image concern on next-day abusive behavior. Specifically, daily moral credit deficit failed to relate to abusive behavior later that day (γ = .05, *SE* = .04, *p* = .31). Also, daily image concern was not significantly associated with abusive behavior at the end of the day (γ = .01, *SE* = .01, *p* = .52).

5 Discussion

5.1 Overview of study findings

Since the inception of abusive supervision research two decades ago (Tepper, 2000), researchers have largely operated under the assumption that its effects are unidirectional, exerting an effect solely on the victims of abuse. Although this perspective has been invaluable in demonstrating the destructive and immoral nature of abusive behavior, it has largely neglected the possibility that supervisors, too, may be affected by their abusive behavior and may try to, in their own way, compensate for some of the damage caused by their prior abusive episodes. Integrating moral identity theory (Aquino & Reed, 2002)

with moral cleansing theory (Tetlock et al., 2000; Zhong & Liljenquist, 2006) and IMCT (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), we explored a dual process model whereby supervisors appraise and respond to their own past abusive behaviors with either genuine, morally driven reparative behaviors or surface-level, image-focused behaviors. Our empirical test of this model reveals that when supervisors engage in abusive behavior, those higher on symbolized moral identity experience increased image concern the next day, which is a catalyst for supervisors to engage in next-day impression management behaviors (i.e., ingratiation, exemplification, and self-promotion) toward their subordinates. However, contrary to our expectations, we found no support for the genuine, reparative path suggested by moral cleansing theory.

The failure to find support for the moral cleansing path, although counter to our predictions, may stem from a few sources. First, our choice to focus on a cross-day effect may mask the moral cleansing effect found by Liao et al. (2018). In the context of internalized moral identity, it may be that supervisors whose ideal self includes being moral may feel a deficit of moral credits and engage in genuine amends-making behavior the same day as the behavior occurs, rather than waiting until the next day to do so. Indeed, this aligns with the approach taken by Liao et al. (2018), who assessed all study constructs within a single workday. Further, although our Level 2 sample size is consistent with recent experience sampling research (e.g., Lanaj et al., 2019; Rosen et al., 2019), we may not have sufficient statistical power to derive a significant cross-level moderating effect for internalized moral identity. Therefore, we encourage future research to further explore the potential moderating effect of internalized moral identity with a larger sample.

In addition, although our moral cleansing results are counter to recent work by Liao et al. (2018), a second key distinction separates our findings from their findings. Specifically, Liao et al. (2018) utilized subordinate ratings of supervisory behaviors, resulting in subordinate perceptions of increased leader consideration behaviors in response to guilt and reduced moral credits. In contrast, by utilizing self-report ratings of supervisor responses to abusive behavior, our results show that the motives may not be so pure; although supervisor behaviors may appear reparative and genuine to observers, they may not truly be so when factoring in the additional information afforded by the

supervisor. Therefore, our data reveal an alternative response that supervisors have to their abusive behavior—namely, they may "fake nice" rather than "make nice" with their subordinates.

5.2 Theoretical implications

Our study contributes to multiple literatures, including the leadership and impression management literatures, as well as to the theories upon which we draw. First, although prior studies have paid ample attention to the effects of abusive behavior on subordinates (e.g., Lian et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2015; Tepper, 2000, 2007; Tepper, Duffy, &Shaw, 2001; Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone, & Duffy, 2008; Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002), including how subordinates appraise and make sense of such behaviors (Oh & Farh, 2017), such perspectives have neglected the notion that supervisors are not immune from being affected by their own abusive behaviors. However, work that has examined this question (e.g., Liao et al., 2018) has primarily adopted a moral cleansing theory view that overlooks the possibility that supervisors often act to manage the impressions of others (Conger, 1990; Gardner & Avolio, 1998). The current prevailing view thus suggests that supervisor behaviors following unethical behavior (e.g., abusive behavior) are genuine (e.g., amend making). Challenging this assumption, we integrated research on impression management to examine an alternative possibility regarding how supervisors would respond to their own behavior. In this way, our work shifts the narrative regarding how supervisors respond to their own negative behavior by demonstrating that efforts to repair the supervisor's image in the form of impression management may result.

In a similar vein, and by integrating theorizing on impression management (Leary & Kowalski, 1990) with the prevailing moral cleansing view, we identified two discrepant perspectives that facilitate competing explanations for how supervisors might respond to their own abusive behavior. By bridging these two perspectives by way of moral identity theory and theorizing on the ideal self, our work creates consensus regarding when each might be manifested. Specifically, we find that supervisors higher on symbolized moral identity perceive abusive episodes as damaging their image—as reflected in an increased concern for their image. This then drives supervisors to repair that

image with positive, image-focused behaviors such as displaying instrumental kindness (i.e., ingratiation), touting dedication (i.e., exemplification), and highlighting successes (i.e., self-promotion). This finding contributes to the broader leadership literature by suggesting that abusive behaviors exert an effect on response behaviors largely through their effect on the supervisors' image rather than their perceived moral worth.

Meanwhile, by drawing on moral identity theory and theorizing on the content of the ideal self (i.e., the social self), we extend the impression management literature by adding a critical boundary condition (i.e., symbolized moral identity) of how past behavior influences image perceptions and subsequent impression management. When taken together with recent calls to pay greater theoretical attention to the antecedents of impression management (Bolino et al., 2016), our study contributes to the impression management literature by first identifying abusive acts as an impetus for impression management behaviors. In addition, by positioning symbolized moral identity as a moderator of this effect, we elucidate "who" engages in impression management behaviors following image-damaging behaviors: those who value conveying a positive, moral image. Similarly, we extend impression management research by examining antecedents of such behaviors. By identifying daily image concern as a mechanism in our model, we enrich this literature by noting that supervisors are more likely to engage in daily impression management behaviors when they perceive damage to their daily image, which occurs when those higher on symbolized moral identity engage in daily abusive episodes. Thus, our theoretical integration between IMCT and moral identity theory allows us to elaborate on "what" encourages impression management behaviors, and "for whom" this effect emerges.

5.3 Practical implications

Beyond the aforementioned implications for theory and research presented by this study, there are also some important practical implications of our research. First, we provide insights regarding how supervisors respond to their own abusive behaviors, which allows organizations to better address its consequences. By exploring how abusive behavior impacts the supervisor him/herself, we help to identify

potential "blind spots" in how abuse can promote (or inhibit) other behaviors. Specifically, we find that symbolized moral identity is a key characteristic that prompts abusive episodes to impact image concerns and subsequent impression management behaviors. Thus, organizations might consider offering ethics trainings to help supervisors monitor their symbolized moral identity when it comes to mistreating subordinates. Such trainings have been shown to impact individuals' other forms of moral perceptions (Reynolds, 2008). Similarly, other scholars have advocated for employees to develop their self-monitoring and political skills being that they are critical when it comes to favorable impression management tactics (Bolino et al., 2016), suggesting a valuable focus on symbolized moral identity. In this way, these trainings may help supervisors become more aware of the impacts of their behavior for their image which, as indicated by our findings, may lead to some degree of reparatory behavior—albeit inauthentic reparatory behaviors.

Second, our findings have implications for the selection of organizational supervisors. That is, organizations that place greater emphasis on authenticity regarding leadership or organizational climate (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007) would benefit from our findings, particularly when it comes to supervisor selection. Specifically, we find that supervisors who endorse less of a symbolized moral identity are less likely to have image concerns and thus less prone to engage in impression management tactics that may be perceived as inauthentic following abusive episodes (Eastman, 1994). Thus, it behooves organizations that want to develop highly authentic supervisors or organizational climates to seek to hire supervisors that are lower (or at least not higher) on symbolized moral identity.

Third, prior research indicates that engaging in daily impression management tactics comes with a personal cost to the actor. Specifically, impression management tactics have been linked to greater subsequent daily cognitive depletion, exhaustion, anxiety, work–family conflict, and sleep (Klotz et al., 2018; Wagner, Barnes, & Scott, 2014), while potentially being deceptive to the supervisor themselves (Conger, 1990). Supervisors who engage in abusive episodes not only experience greater daily image concerns but, in attempting to resolve those concerns with daily impression management tactics, are likely to generate greater personal exhaustion, anxiety, and work-to-family

hardships (Wagner et al., 2014). Although it would be most beneficial for organizations to integrate training initiatives that aid supervisors to develop better interpersonal and leadership skills as a means of curtailing abusive episodes in the first place (Tepper, 2000), it would also be advantageous for organizations to provide support for leaders that have engaged in abusive episodes to more effectively cope with the image concerns they experience as a result of mistreating their employees. Further, providing training to supervisors on the implications of their behavior—moral or image—may prove to be a fruitful path forward for practitioners. Recent research has highlighted the value of self-reflection for supervisors (Lanaj et al., 2019) as a means of fostering improved behaviors; encouraging such reflection may help supervisors to more genuinely respond to their past behavior, rather than engage in surface-level, image-focused behaviors.

Finally, Eastman (1994) indicates that impression management tactics are received unfavorably when perceived as insincere or there are ulterior motives for the behaviors (see also Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska, & Shaw, 2007; Leary, 1996). Our study shows that prior day abusive episodes precede next-day ingratiation, exemplification, and self-promotion behaviors. Given the temporal proximity of abusive and impression management behaviors, third-parties (e.g., subordinates, the focal supervisor's direct supervisor) may view next-day impression management behaviors as insincere or owing to ulterior motives of the supervisor trying to repair his/her damaged image as a result of his/her prior day abusive behaviors. Indeed, our emphasis on within-person variation on such impression management behaviors underscores this point; within-person variation on impression management behaviors, by deviating from the supervisor's typical impression management behaviors, may warrant additional attributions of insincerity. This lack of attributed sincerity can undermine the effectiveness of the impression management tactics (Eastman, 1994; Leary, 1996) or erode the supervisor's relationships with others (Kim, LePine, & Chun, 2018). Thus, supervisors who engage in any form of abusive episodes would benefit by being cognizant that their impression management approaches intended to repair their image concerns may be interpersonally costly. In other words, impression management behaviors should be employed with caution given the potential downsides of those behaviors (Bolino et al., 2016). Instead, managers may

find value in employing more genuine forms of reparative behaviors, rather than impression management behaviors, following episodes of abusive behavior.

5.4 Limitations and future directions

Although our study methodology has a number of strengths—including an experience sampling design, temporal separation across our model, and geographic diversity among study participants to improve generalizability—it is not without its limitations. Specifically, all variables in this study were obtained from a single source, representing a potential common source threat (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). However, we did take steps to address this possibility, including person-mean centering all within-person variables to remove between-person variance, introducing temporal separation across each stage of our model, and controlling for lagged versions of all endogenous variables.

Despite these steps, we view our single-source design as a potential strength of the present study (Gabriel et al., 2019). That is, our focus on supervisor reports of their own responses and behavior allowed us to expose behavioral responses that may be less visible to subordinates. Specifically, our focus on genuine versus image-focused reparative behaviors requires self-report measures from the focal supervisor. Further, as a low base rate phenomenon, prior work has highlighted the fact that supervisors are in the best position to evaluate their own immoral behaviors (Courtright et al., 2016; Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao, & Chang, 2012; Lanaj, Johnson, & Lee, 2016; McClean et al., 2019) due to the fact that not all subordinates may interact with their supervisor or witness immoral behaviors on a given day. However, future research may benefit from obtaining multisource ratings of leader behaviors in order to more fully eliminate the possibility of bias. Indeed, this approach could help address another limitation of our study; by focusing on supervisors' intentions for their behavior, we could not fully capture subordinate perceptions of supervisors' behaviors (e.g., impression management). By adopting multisource ratings, future research could shed light on how subordinates react to supervisor behaviors, potentially by asking participants to recall supervisor abusive behavior and responses

in a critical incident study. Our self-reported data also precluded us from capturing how subordinates respond to amends-making and impression management. Thus, future research would greatly benefit by exploring the extent to which subordinates may be able to distinguish the two types of leader behaviors from one another and their response to such behaviors.

In addition, four points bear mentioning regarding measurement. First, although our decision to focus supervisors on their behavior the prior day when measuring daily moral credits deficit was intentional, this focus did not completely mirror our measure of daily image concern. Future research may wish to adopt greater parallelism across scales by aligning daily image concern to specific past conduct. Second, our measure of ingratiation is inherently double barreled. However, we believe this is not merely a limitation to our study but a limitation of impression management measures at large. Future studies may benefit from developing a measure of ingratiation that does not conflate motive with behavior. Also, although we placed our emphasis on the three forms of impression management aimed at fostering a positive image (Bolino& Turnley, 1999; Turnley & Bolino, 2001), two additional forms of impression management remain (i.e., supplication and intimidation). We recommend future researchers consider all five forms of impression management behaviors as potential outcomes of concern for one's image. Third, due to our focus on the ideal self as a "cognitive" benchmark against which one's conduct is evaluated, we did not build theory pertaining to affective mechanisms linking prior day abusive behavior to subsequent behavior. We suggest this as a valuable direction for future research. Finally, although we build upon the work of Liao et al. (2018), we did not consider all variables included in their model (e.g., moral attentiveness and moral courage); thus, future research may consider accounting for these variables in future extensions of this work.

Beyond addressing the aforementioned limitations, there are some additional avenues for potential future research in this area. One direction for future inquiry is an increased focus on boundary conditions. Although we do identify symbolized moral identity as a moderator of the effect of prior abusive behavior on daily image concern, other individual differences or situational factors may similarly moderate that effect. For instance, relational identity, or the extent to which individuals

define themselves by their relationships with others (Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2006), may offer a different pattern of results than the one presented by moral identity. Similarly, daily factors may serve to mitigate the effects of prior day abusive behavior, such as other types of prior day leader behaviors. For example, recent work has begun to highlight the notion that leaders may engage in contradictory, paradoxical behaviors (Zhang, Waldman, Han, & Li, 2015), therefore it is possible that certain leader behaviors during the prior day may prevent supervisors from responding as strongly to their own prior day abusive behaviors. In this vein, supervisors who are abusive may experience a less negative effect on moral self-perceptions if they also display high levels of leader consideration that same day.

Extending the preceding discussion of moderators, there may also be other individual differences that affect how supervisors respond to their image concern. One possibility may be narcissism (Owens, Wallace, & Waldman, 2015), as highly narcissistic supervisors may place a greater emphasis on their image and social standing, and may thus be more likely to engage in ingratiation or passive–aggressive abuse following prior abuse. Similarly, and on a more general basis, supervisors lower on political skill (Harris et al., 2007) may be both unable to regulate their behavior away from abusive behavior and may lack the capability to effectively apologize or compensate for abusive behavior. Future research may benefit from exploring such potential second-stage moderators of these effects.

Meanwhile, our focus on impression management raises important questions regarding authenticity, particularly in the eyes of subordinates. Indeed, we noted that in contrast to recent research (Liao et al., 2018), supervisors may give the appearance of genuine reparative behaviors, even when those behaviors are not genuine. Examining subordinate attributions of authenticity may be an interesting direction for future research. Specifically, subordinates who attribute a particularly high symbolized moral identity to their supervisor may be more likely to interpret that supervisor's behavior as inauthentic and owing to their desire to maintain a moral image. As such, impression management behaviors may be ineffective at repairing the supervisor's image to the extent that subordinates do not perceive those behaviors as genuine; future research may find value in examining this point with a critical incident or between-person field study.

In a similar vein, information from subordinates could influence supervisors. For instance, supervisors' attributions of reactions by subordinates to abusive behavior may give the supervisor important clues about his/her social standing (i.e., image). Future research may consider the reactions of subordinates, in the eyes of supervisors, as key sources of information for supervisors that affects how they react to their own abusive behavior.

One additional point of interest emerged from our analyses. Specifically, as shown in Table 3, daily image concern exerted a positive and significant effect on daily amends-making behavior. Although we did not theorize such an effect, it may be that amends-making behavior is seen as a form of impression management. Indeed, some of the elements of amends-making behaviors (e.g., "I tried to make things right between me and my subordinates") border on ingratiation behaviors (e.g., "I praised my subordinates for their efforts" and "I did personal favors for my subordinates"). Although these two variables were significantly correlated with each other ($r=.25$), the proportion of shared variance would suggest that they are distinct variables and reflective of different behaviors. Similarly, the apologies included in amends-making behavior might be conceptually similar to some supplication behaviors, which involve advertising one's shortcomings (Turnley & Bolino, 2001). As such, although we believe that amends-making behavior is better suited to the genuine, moral cleansing path, there may be elements of amends-making that are not fully captured by existing impression management scales, and we encourage future research to consider this point in greater detail, as well as a broader array of genuine reparative behaviors in an effort to more clearly delineate between genuine and impression management behaviors.

Finally, to unpack the lack of significant findings in the moral path of our model, we recommend scholars consider the potential "dark side" of internalized moral identity, such that it may lead supervisors to construe their past behavior through a more moral lens. For example, it is possible that individuals with high internalized moral identity may justify past abusive behavior as moral given their strivings to achieve an ideal moral self. Alternatively, our null findings regarding amends-making may belie either the presence of a moderator or a different target for amends-making behavior. That is,

individual differences such as moral courage (Liao et al., 2018) may influence the extent to which supervisors engage in genuine reparative behaviors. Further, supervisors may engage in displaced reparative behaviors to unaffected employees rather than addressing such behaviors to the original victims; this may be because the original victim may not respond positively so soon after the initial moral violation (i.e., abusive episode). Finally, future research may further consider the role of abusive behavior as an outcome of moral credits deficits; supervisors who perceive a deficit of moral credits may be more likely to reduce their subsequent abusive behavior as a means of compensating for past behavior. Indeed, this may be a way of extending recent work on the cyclical nature of abusive behavior (Simon, Hurst, Kelley, & Judge, 2015). Although we considered this possibility in our supplemental analyses, integrating this point with the aforementioned discussion of second-stage moderators may be particularly interesting.

6 Conclusion

This study represents a critical step toward understanding how supervisors evaluate and respond to their own abusive behavior. Our findings suggest that supervisors evaluate their own prior abusive behavior and respond with increased concern for their image when coupled with low symbolized moral identity. Such concerns then foster self-interested, image-focused behaviors that aim to address the damage done to the image of the supervisor, not in genuinely making amends with employees. In that sense, contrary to the prevailing assumption in the literature, supervisors may be more prone to "fake nice" rather than "make nice" after an abusive episode. Based on these findings, organizations aiming to reduce the prevalence of abusive behavior should both focus on improved supervisor selection on the basis of moral identity and helping supervisors become more self-aware of the personal consequences of their behavior. Otherwise, supervisors may simply, as a result of their prior day abusive behavior, fake nice toward their subordinates rather than make nice.

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