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Power Misuse: How Top-Managers Can Reduce the Level of Performance of Their Organizations Without Knowing It

Significant attention has been devoted to the important role that top managers play in raising their companies to high levels. However, there is another side to the story that also needs attention. This side negatively affects top managers and their companies, leading to a decline in organizational performance. In this article, we investigate relationships between misuse of power by top managers and the deterioration of subordinates' performance and, as a result, reduced productivity of the entire organization. These relationships are generally explained by dissatisfaction of subordinates. We researched other causes of employees' performance declines to get a fuller understanding of the mechanism of relationships between top management power misuse and organizational decline. We suggest that it is not only employee dissatisfaction, but also the whole spectrum of factors that include deterioration of subordinates' physiological, mental, and psychological states that lead to their performance declines and, consequently, to the declines of the entire organizational performance.

Keywords: top-management, subordinates, organizational power, organizational power misuse, performance management, organizational performance

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Significant attention has been devoted to the great role top managers play in raising their companies to high levels. Many leaders of organizations have become outstanding examples of professionalism, courage, and ethics who raised their companies to star status. However, top managers can also have a negative effect on their companies. This negative effect is the consequence of many top managers' behavioral patterns; for example, being an untrust-

worthy manager [1]; letting personal negative affects influence business decisions [2], being a toxic leader [3], being a poor communicator [4], to name a few. Another very important way of how top managers can negatively affect their organizations is by their misuse of power [5–8]. The relationship between top-managers' power misuse and reduction in organizational performance is generally explained by dissatisfaction of subordinates, leading to consequent

reduction of their level of performance and increased employee turnover [9–11]. In this paper, we investigated other possible causes of employees' performance decline related to top management power misuse to get a fuller understanding of the mechanism of relationships between top management power misuse and organizational decline. As such, our goal was to identify conceptually this mechanism by utilizing the method of literature review. The questions guiding this article were: What are causes other than dissatisfaction of subordinate employees' performance decline in case of power misuse of their supervisors? What is the mechanism of relationship between top-managers' power misuse and the decline in the overall organizational performance?

The first section of the article — Research Methodology, is followed by an analysis of the negative consequences of top managers power possession as experienced by their subordinates in the organizational environment. It presents the features of the internal organizational environment created by top managers misusing power as felt by subordinates. Following is a discussion of the implications of the lack of power as experienced and displayed by subordinates, that includes physical, mental, and psychological decline. This section assesses how subordinates' performance is affected by these factors with consequent reduction in their performance. Following is a Findings section with a summation of the above discoveries establishing a mechanism of how an organization may be negatively affected by top managers' power misuse via decline in performance of this organizations' employees. Discussion and recommendations for future research section provides ideas about possible improvement of the situation and raises new research questions.

Research Methodology — Literature Review

Systematic literature review, as one of the major methods for gathering and reporting on data, was used as the method of this study with the goal of producing evidence-based research. The literature review method developed by Fink [12] was utilized. The questions guiding the study were: What are causes other than dissatisfaction

of subordinate employees' performance decline in case of power misuse of their supervisors? What is the mechanism of relationship between top-managers' power misuse and the decline in the overall organizational performance? As such, a search was conducted for peer-reviewed journal articles and books that explored the broader effect of supervisors' power misuse on their subordinates and the consequences for organizational performance as a whole. Searchers for the relevant literature were conducted on different databases such as the Social Science Citation Index and Scopus. Additionally, a number of databases from publishers (Wiley, Emerald, JSTOR, SAGE and SpringerLink) were utilized as well. For books, the Library of Congress (USA) was used. The data sources were examined for the period 1970–2023.

In order to get a comprehensive view, but taking into consideration the magnitude of the field, we explored literature on intrapersonal and interpersonal effects of organizational power in terms of top managers and interpersonal effects of the manager's power in terms of subordinates. All other manifestations of power were not included in the analysis. In order to minimize the risk of bias in the included studies, all the identified sources that dealt with the stated research goal were assessed. They were further grouped according to the suggested categories, with the sources providing redundant information consequently eliminated.

Power Defined and the Power Framework Chosen for This Study

Power has been studied across many disciplines, including economics, politics, medicine, sociology, psychology, management, organizations, and human resources. The three major paradigms of power are *controlling* [13–15], where power is viewed as power-over others; *cooperation* [16–18], where power is viewed as the entity that can be harmoniously shared under conditions of strong interdependence of everyone involved in reaching an organizational goal; and *criticality* [19–20], where power is viewed as intentionally constructed with the purpose of self-preservation. With the controlling paradigm of power, it is assumed that there is a limited amount of power in any relationship, and the more power A has, the less power is available for

B [21]. With the cooperation paradigm, it is assumed that power is the power with others, and A and B can willfully and happily share power for their mutual benefit and for the benefit of their organization. And with the criticality paradigm, it is assumed that the playing field is uneven, intentionally skewed for the benefit of one of the parties involved. Although there are many definitions of power the following seems to encompass the major approaches: "power is exercised within a complex and contradictory network of relations, structures and meaning-making processes at different levels of organizational and community life" [21, p. 239].

Because the scope of this article is power misuse, the *power as control* paradigm was used. This is the paradigm that specifically allows for power misuse due to participants' actions. In this framework, power can be viewed in two ways: as having control of one's life and as having control over others' lives. In fact, as Smith and Bargh put it, "When we talk about power, we are talking, at its core, about control. Power involves control: over resources, over outcomes for both oneself and others" [22, p. 2]. Smith and Hofmann defined power as "asymmetric control over valued resources" [23, p. 10043] and the consequent ability to influence others thanks to this. According to Fast and Schroeder, power is defined as a "state in which a person has disproportionate control over valued outcomes allowing the power-holder to influence another's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors" [24, p. 172].

According to extensive research (e.g. [25–27]), power has a strong effect on those who possess it. When activated, the psychological experience of power can change a person's cognition and behavior in significant ways. Power fundamentally changes how an individual construes and approaches the world [28]. As Galinsky et al. succinctly explained, those with power "roam in a very different psychological space than those without power" [29, p. 1451].

There are significant intrinsic valuable benefits that power possession creates for top managers as power holders in their companies. For example, possessing power increases sense of control and choice [30] and action orientation with facilitated goal pursuit [26; 31]; develops an ability to see a big picture via distinguishing trends and patterns [32]; helps having a stable view and appreciation of oneself [33]; positively

influences physical and mental health [34]. Overall, power can create value for an individual and equips them with the ability to fulfill their leadership functions well.

Negative Consequences to Subordinates of a Top Manager's Power Possession

Although top managers can create positive value for their companies thanks to their power possession, there are also numerous negative consequences [35]. Although leaders can help their organizations to achieve great goals, they also might be motivated to increase their capacity for power at the expense of their organizations [36]. As Singth succinctly suggested, power "is a tool that only the mentally healthy can successfully wield" [37, p. 167]. Following is the discussion of the negative manifestations that power holders display due to their power possession. These negative features are experienced by the subordinates as power resides in the social context of the parties involved [38].

Unconstraint of Behavior

Many people with power may develop unconstraint of behavior. According to the approach/inhibition theory of power [39], powerful individuals may allow themselves to adhere significantly less closely to social and organizational norms than do those with less power. According to this theory, the powerful have a certain degree of freedom to behave as they wish without fear of negative consequences, while lower-power individuals may experience significant social constraints on their behavior, including threats and punishment that restrict their behavior via a behavioral inhibition system. Pfeffer [40] confirmed that power provides people with more latitude in their behavior. The same behavior that is often not tolerated when performed by the less powerful is rationalized and excused if displayed by those with power. As Pfeffer put it, "This excuse making helps explain why the powerful behave differently: Not only does power induce different motivations in individuals, but the powerful soon learn that they can get away with things that others cannot" [40, p. 277]. Hasty and Mamer [33] joined this discussion by stating, "People often face negative social consequences by

heedlessly pursuing their goals. However, those with power have a degree of protection from the social penalties that could otherwise come from unrestricted goal pursuit" [33, p. 1]. Keltner [41] emphasized that powerholders often feel entitled to break the law or behave in an aggressive, arrogant way.

Self-Enhancement and Its Consequences

Another negative factor that becomes pronounced in those with power is self-enhancement and its consequences. Self-enhancement is defined as the motivation to think favorably and positively about oneself and one's capabilities. While self-enhancement can serve positive purposes, such as increased confidence and self-esteem, it also has negative consequences. Anything that threatens positive self-image is viewed as a threat and is ignored or attacked (e.g., a suggestion from a subordinate different from the boss' opinion). With self-enhancement, most people are less motivated to assess themselves accurately but are more motivated to create and preserve a positive self-image at the expense of dealing with difficult organizational issues [40]. People generally want to see themselves as efficacious and associated with positive outcomes and are often prone to positive self-illusions and a belief in the efficacy of their actions. With powerful people in charge of important decisions, such behavior becomes costly. For example, the desire to think well about oneself makes it difficult to admit mistakes. One consequence of this is escalated commitment to assigning more resources to their wrong decisions because of the refusal to admit their mistakes. Another consequence of this situation is powerful people's disinterest in evaluating their prior decisions. Individuals do not want to face the possibility that their decisions were poor and do not conduct any analysis, which is an effective way to escape such a possibility [42].

A related consequence of self-enhancement is the us vs. them approach. Self-enhancement motivation leads to a view of similarity (in attitudes, demographics, values, views) as being very important. Such egocentric biases can lead to non-meritorious organizational decisions with decisions actually being based on the thought of "I favor those who resemble me." As Pfeffer [40] explained,

people who master the ability to find or demonstrate their similarity with powerful others and develop the skill to imitate or mimic others and who are more willing to engage in these tactics and more skilled at doing so will achieve advantages in building and exercising influence and also in advancing their careers [40, p. 275].

This leads to favoritism that eliminates trust and reduces organizational morale. Powerful people are known for having their inner circle of favorites in their organizations [43]. Those who belong to that circle have the ear of the leader and enjoy numerous advantages that other people (out-circle) do not enjoy. Organizational rules are strictly applied to the out-circle people, while insiders are often nearly exempt from following them.

Utilitarian Attitude Toward Others

Another negative consequence of holding power is developing a utilitarian attitude toward others. As power strongly activates goal pursuit, it causes its holders to view others by how they are conducive to meeting the powerful one's goals [33]. When dealing with powerful individuals, it often becomes clear that (with some exceptions, of course) powerful individuals are generally more likely to view other people in terms of their usefulness for that individual's goals, treating other individuals as a means to their personal goals [35]. At the same time, those high in power tend to devalue the effort and performance of those lower in power, attributing their results to the influence of those in power [44]. Also, when dealing with a choice between self-interest and group performance, individuals with power tend to prioritize self-interest over the group's performance [45]. As Cho and Keltner stated, "when confronted with a conflict between self-interest and group performance, group leaders — that is, those in more powerful positions — were found to prioritize self-interest...over the group's earnings" [35, p. 198]. Related to this, power leads people to develop a feeling of entitlement [46]. For example, powerful individuals are often not even grateful to others for their help.

Lack of Interest in Other People

Another feature describing power-holders is the increased social distance that they develop.

According to the social distance theory of power [47], social distance results when people with power are more independent from others when pursuing their goals, being able to achieve them without dependence on others [33]. Thus, powerholders have a more egocentric orientation in their social judgments as manifested by less interest in others as humans, displaying inattention to others, and less desire to develop and sustain close relationships [48]. Furthermore, people with power lack a desire to understand and correctly interpret others' feelings and emotions [31]; they are generally less compassionate than those with less power [35]; they consider situational outcomes significantly less often when making moral judgments [33] and they show lower emotional responses to the suffering of others [49]. As Cho and Keltner put it, "powerful individuals are more likely to dehumanize other individuals, allowing them to engage in distant and cold decision making, at times coolly sacrificing the welfare of others" [35, p. 198].

Another negative manifestation of this factor is that power increases the likelihood of automatic social cognition whereby powerful individuals stereotype more [26] and tend to objectify others [50]. According to Overbeck and Park, "power leads people to stereotype others and pay careless social attention characterized by cognitive laziness and shortcuts" [51, p. 227].

Bullying Behavior by Powerholders

Powerful individuals act more on their dispositional inclinations and momentary desires [29] and can readily engage in bullying behavior in the workplace context [36]. "In fact, the majority of workplace bullying comes from those who occupy a higher rank in the organizational hierarchy" [50, p. 945]. Different sorts of harassment are also often conducted by those with power. Yet, while people who possess power often require high moral standards from others, they seem not to bind themselves by the same standards [52]. For example, cheating is often a problem of people in power [52].

Not Taking Advice

Another negative feature of individuals with power concerns not accepting advice from others. The ability of powerful individuals to take advice and use it in their decision-making is especially

important for their organizations. However, a negative consequence of power is that powerful individuals are more vulnerable to decision mistakes because they ignore information from others [53]. Significant research has shown that increased power is associated with less advice-taking, even if advice is freely available and can significantly improve performance [42]. According to See et al. [27], greater power reduces advice-taking due to the elevated confidence in the accuracy of one's own judgments, as the feeling of power increases an individual's level of confidence in their own opinion [54; 42]. Furthermore, advice can be viewed as an affront to the self-esteem of a high-powered individual, often resulting in the powerholder acting aggressively toward the source of the threat [55]. This is another reason why powerholders often reject advice even from experts: "the expert status of the advisor is a challenge to their own standing" [55, p. 9].

To sum up this section, we can state that although power can create ample benefits for its holders, its possession also creates numerous negative consequences for everyone around and for organizations. Subordinates get "bitten down" by supervisors' numerous negative manifestations of power misuse. The organizational environment created by power misuse is oppressive and unjust. Employees cannot perform up to their potential in such an environment.

As has been demonstrated in this section, possessing power by someone can negatively affect others. Top managers misusing power adhere to the *power as control* view of power. Therefore, they view power is an entity which cannot be shared with others without themselves losing it; as an entity which can be used to get more of it; as an entity which is a scarce resource and is intrinsically competitive; and as an entity which essence is control over others [21]. Such an attitude leads to reduction of power available for subordinates. As a result, lack of power is strongly felt by subordinates of such leaders. Let us now discuss what are the consequences of the lack of power as experienced by subordinates.

Consequences of a Lack of Power as Experienced by Subordinates

According to Guinote [30], lack of power creates a completely different environment for individuals, shaping their actions in that environ-

ment. Lacking power has a fundamental impact on the way individuals perceive others, make judgements, and behave. According to Tobore [56], lacking power affects the human body on physiological, neurological and psychological levels.

Extensive Information Processing Regardless of the Situation

Individuals who lack power have a harder time achieving their goals and advancing themselves in their careers and in social life. While powerful individuals can easily distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information about an issue at hand, those who lack power exercise extensive information-processing strategies that are more insensitive to the situation. In other words, lack of power affects processing foci. Because of the prevalence of fear in their consciousness or subconsciousness, those who lack power attend to multiple sources of information regardless of their personal needs in a situation and their demands. This leads them to disperse their efforts and attention and makes them less able to concentrate specifically on the most important aspects of a situation [57]. Unlike more powerful individuals, those who lack power demonstrate lower ability to focus their attention on task demands and to prioritize goal-consistent behavior that eventually blocks them from achieving their desired outcomes easily [58].

Caution in Reaching Goals; Prevalence of Fear

According to the Approach-Inhibition Theory of Power [39], while powerful individuals tend to be active in pursuit of their goals, seeing opportunities and rewards in the environment, those who lack power tend to be significantly more cautious in trying to reach their goals, seeing obstacles, challenges, and possibilities of punishment in the environment [35]. Those who lack power tend to be governed more by fear, which significantly hinders their activities and pursuits. While individuals with a greater sense of power tend to be more optimistic about their possibilities for success, those who lack power are significantly less optimistic in risk perception and are less confident in their decision-making [54].

Strong Negative Emotions and Pessimism; Non-Appreciation of Oneself

Furthermore, while power possession is a source of positive emotions for its holders, those who lack power tend more often to possess strong negative emotions, such as the feeling of inferiority, shame, anger, social anxiety, and depression [31], which may lead to mental health issues. While powerholders tend to experience positive emotions toward their inner selves, those who lack power tend to devalue themselves and appreciate themselves significantly less [59]. This may be a cause of psychological and mental illness.

Physical Health Deterioration

Another enormously important negative effect of lack of power is physical health deterioration. According to Sapolsky [60] and Scheepers and Knight [34], lacking power leads to an increased cortisol level and a cardiovascular response pattern indicative of threat. An increased level of cortisol over long periods is one of the key factors leading to negative health outcomes [61; 57]. According to Steptoe [62], the chronic stressors caused by the lack of control lead to increased blood pressure and heart rate and a score of negative health consequences. Scheepers et al. [63] research indicated that low social power is associated with maladaptive cardiovascular response pattern which suggests an inefficient cardiovascular patterns. According to Orton et al., "Adjusting for potential confounders, 30% of the socioeconomic inequalities in heart disease risk were accounted for by the SES differences in control believes, while only 40% were accounted for by the classical risk factors such as smoking, hypertension and unhealthy dietary habits" [64, p. 931]. Rivers and Josephs concluded that social rank and the power dynamics associated with it "has been shown to influence exposure to physical and psychological stressors..., and as a result increases vulnerability to disease" [65, p. 99]. Furthermore, "The unchecked chronic stress response appears to be a principal mechanism for illness, and the effect of cortisol dysregulation can cascade down to affect the health of numerous systems in the body" [65, p. 100]. Tobore [56] also indicated that low social status and low power connected with it is affiliated with diminished gray matter

size associated with adaptive physiological and emotional reactions to psychological and environmental stressors. Whitehead et al. also underlined that for people

with low control, demand overload goes up, causing a decline in ability to cope with stressful home and work environment, and a decline in ontological security, as the world is experienced as an insecure, unpredictable place. Demand overload, powerlessness and insecurity are hypothesized to induce chronic stress responses, which leads to poorer health in terms of both mental and physical conditions [66, p. 55].

As Rivers and Josephs suggested, "the evidence supports the conclusion that it is imperative to consider power and social rank when investigating the physiology and health of social animals" [65, p. 109].

Decreased Level of Cognitive Processes; Memory Deterioration

Further, while power possession improves cognitive processes, lacking power leads to decreased levels [32]. High-power individuals process information more thoroughly than low-power individuals [22]. While having power improves a person's executive functions, lacking power decreases them [56]. Executive functions are a set of mental processes that control and regulate thinking and behavior [67]. The core executive functions form the backbone for higher-order processes, such as planning, problem-solving, and decision-making. Lacking power appears negatively to affect all core executive functions [58]. Furthermore, according to Tobore, "low social power state is associated with significantly reduced left-frontal cortical activity" [56, p. 2]. Lack of power also negatively affects individuals' memories. Contrary to high-power individuals, those who lack power perform worse on activities that require intensive use of working memory. Overall, lacking power "is associated with feeling more mentally depleted than having power" [32, p. 96].

As is obvious, lack of power negatively affects a person. By definition, power that a subordinate possesses, is limited. At the same time, the level of power associated with a subordinate's organizational position does not always constitute a problem and a real feeling of the lack of power. What makes the difference is the way the super-

visor/top manager uses their power. Demonstration of power holder's signs of power misuse as described in the previous section creates the response of powerlessness in subordinates [68]. This feeling can only be offset by the leader's ethical leadership [69], which is a contradiction with the power misuse inclination. In such a situation, the discussed above characteristics may be applicable to a subordinate employee. In such case, the inner self of employees whose supervisors misuse their power becomes not well and exhausted. This condition does not let an individual to see career, economic and social opportunities and exercise active approaches to achieve them. This condition does not allow them to perform up to their potential.

As we have seen in this section, there are many negative consequences for subordinates of their supervisors' power possession. These negative consequences are not only dissatisfaction of subordinates, but a score of other factors including physiological, emotional, psychological, learning and motivational disbalance. All of them negatively affect subordinates' performance and, as a result, the overall performance of the entire organization.

Does Power Always Produce Negative Consequences for Its Holders?

The above sections have drawn a rather grim picture of what power possession can potentially lead to. As is evident from the above discussion, negative consequences of power abound. Is the picture really that grim? Good news is that it is not. An array of research has yielded quite different results. Classical research [70–71] demonstrated that power does not always lead to corruption or ennoblement; it can create understanding and helping others, not just exploitation. Anderson et al. [72] demonstrated that individuals with a very high sense of power did not always have anti-social tendencies. They showed that high personal sense of power was positively related to generosity and the desire to help others. Furthermore, Komdörfer et al. [73] used big datasets to demonstrate positive effects of higher social class on pro-social behavior, such as different forms of helping others, and being trustworthy in business. Galinsky et al. [74] stated that individuals with high power not only could take more resources for themselves,

but also could contribute more of their resources toward the common good.

A way of explaining this seeming contradiction is viewing organizational power in the form of socialized power (power used for the benefit of the organization) and personalized power (power used for selfish gain) [75]. According to Singth [37], "the desire to impact others, or the need for power, can be responsibly sought for the purpose of doing good for the organization. All power seekers are not necessarily neurotic, despotic, or troubled people. Power seekers can be effective, well adjusted, and highly motivated" [37, p. 166]. Similarly, McClelland and Burnham [76] suggested a three-type approach to organizational leadership: affiliation, achievement, and power, describing the third type of managers as those who are most interested in power for the purpose of improving their organizations. They suggested that such managers are very effective in building up their organizations and motivating their subordinates for high achievement.

According to De Wit et al. [53] and Sassenberg et al. [77], people can perceive power in two ways: as an opportunity associated with their position on which to capitalize to obtain more resources for themselves and strengthen their power, or as a responsibility toward the organization and toward others. Tost suggested that perception of power as responsibility is "a feeling of obligation to act in ways that benefit others" [78, p. 46], understanding the requirements that need to be fulfilled or taken care of, and meeting certain expectations because it has important consequences for others [53]. According to Sassenberg et al. [79], this view involves consideration of others' perspectives and interests. At the same time, perception of power as an opportunity is "focusing on how their power enables them to do what they find important... (which may be self-serving or for the common good)" [53, p. 924]. In other words, by construing power as a responsibility, individuals answer the question: "What can I do for the organization at this position?" while by construing power as an opportunity, individuals answer the question: "What can this position do for me?" The latter leads to more selfish behavior [79].

Individuals adjust their behavioral use of power depending on how they construe power: as a responsibility toward others or as an opportunity to obtain more resources for themselves [26].

Those who view power as an opportunity try to capitalize on this opportunity, thus increasing the negative features of holding power. In contrast, when individuals perceive power as a responsibility, the strength of many negative manifestations of power significantly diminishes [53; 22]. Scholl et al. [80] summarized the discussion well by pointing out that power construed as responsibility (vs. opportunity) lowers selfishness, and, as a result, benefits the powerless. The authors also said, "leaders considering power as an opportunity, may act in more selfish ways potentially undermining subordinates' performance... Accordingly, power-holders acknowledging responsibility are likely to boost organizational success and subordinates' satisfaction" [80, p. 1036].

Based on these arguments, viewing power as a responsibility leads to a societal or socialized approach to the use of power, while viewing power as an opportunity leads to the personal approach to the use of power. An organization that has a top manager with a responsibility view of power (socialized power) suffers significantly less from the consequences of the misuse of power. As such, top managers are better able to exercise more self-control for the benefit of their organizations. Thus, it is beneficial for companies to have this type of top managers. Subordinates who have such a top manager are capable of high achievements which agglomerates toward productivity increased of the entire organization. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true.

The Mechanism of the Effect

What is the mechanism of the relationship between top managers' power misuse and decline of performance of their organizations? As discussed in the previous sections, the organizational environment created by the manifestations of power misuse leads to it being highly taxing physically, mentally, psychologically, and emotionally. The internal state of subordinates is negatively affected, more specifically, their physical, mental, emotional and psychological states suffer. It is also necessary to add here the high toll on the subordinate employee's families because of the suffering inflicted on employees due to their supervisors' power misuse [81–82]. This is additional negative effect that a subordinate employee experiences. All of this together inevitably leads to the reduction of performance

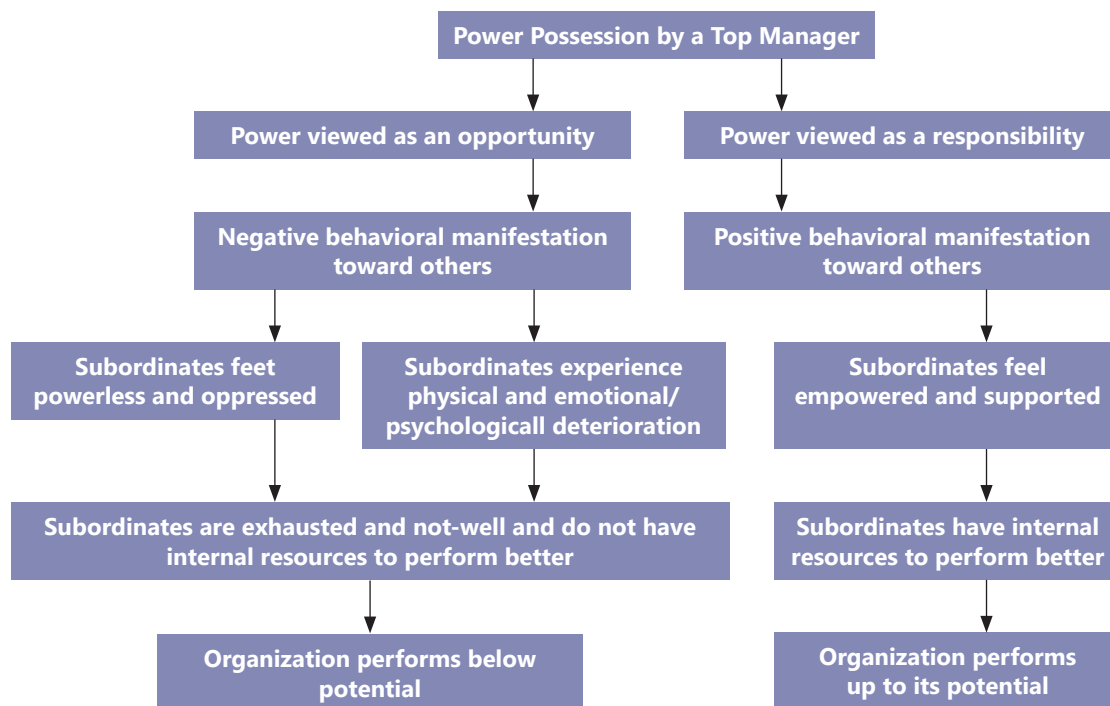


Fig. 1. The mechanism of relationship between top managers power misuse and organizational performance

and employees performing lower than their potential. As a result, the entire organization loses in its performance. The mechanism of the effect can be presented as in Figure 1.

Findings

As has been shown in the above sections, negative effects of a manager's power possession go significantly farther than just a subordinate employee dissatisfaction. Ramifications are felt on all levels of a human being of a subordinate employee. Their physical health deteriorates; their emotional stability declines; their psychological strength drops; their level of cognitive abilities worsens; their memory slides down; their overall view of the world becomes pessimistic. This situation is further negatively affected by the slide in their family support base as the family of such an employee also suffers. The employee simply cannot perform according to their abilities, and this is not their fault. The more of such employees are in an organization, the worse this organization fairs in terms of its performance. Of course, the worst scenario is the situation of the top-manager power misuse. In such a situation, the entire organization is affected with the majority of employees under the repercussions. Such an organization usually declines, as nu-

merous pieces of evidence in the corporate and non-corporate world demonstrate.

Discussion

As has been shown in the paper, having power by top managers may turn out to be very costly for their subordinates and for their organizations at large. Truly, power dynamics can build or break organizations. Managers appropriation of power can motivate subordinates to achieve and be proud of themselves and their companies [68], while their misuse of power can reduce subordinates' performance, create distrust and resentment among the workforce, and lead to organizational deterioration [81; 41]. Many organizations are not capable of reaching their highest potential simply because their top managers are often guided by personal interests and not by the wellbeing of the organizations. Top managers' inappropriate use of power creates oppressive and unfair organizational environment with pronounced powerlessness of subordinates. Powerlessness is known to associate with significant negative consequences for people, including deterioration of physical, mental, and psychological health. Therefore, the negative effect of managers' power misuse extends farther than simply dissatisfaction of their sub-

ordinates. It negatively affects physical, mental and psychological health of subordinates. Well-being of subordinates suffers greatly because of power misuse by their bosses. As "wellbeing is vitally important for organizational actors, as it impacts not only how employees think and feel, but also how they do their jobs" [81, p. 667], it is obvious that abuse of power by superiors negatively affects the overall performance of organizations. Subordinates are exhausted and do not have internal resources to perform up to their potential. Foulk et al. summed it up well by saying, "since power causes leaders to engage in abusive behavior, followers of leaders who regularly experience psychological power are likely to perform worse" [81, p. 674]. As a result, organizational performance suffers [83]. Keltner [41] concluded that the costs to others of individuals succumbing to power are profound. It is important, therefore, for organizations to take steps toward minimization of potential power misuse by their top managers.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

The significance of this study lies in its raising of issues related to top management power misuse and demonstrating the profound negative effects on subordinates and organizations whose managers misuse power. The negative effects go further than only dissatisfaction, including deterioration in subordinates' physical, mental, and psychological health. Subordinates of such a manager simply cannot perform better. Thus, some urgent practical steps need to be available to organizations in handling such top managers. It could be achieved, for example, by creating a measurement instrument on the top managers' use of power that can be used by companies. A manager can be regularly assessed by their subordinates in terms of their power use. Such an instrument could show managers and the company whether the situation requires improvement. Such an instrument can serve as a safeguard toward negative use of power. Creating and validating such an instrument can be a valuable pursuit.

Another potentially interesting direction of research is investigation of any relationships between national culture and abuse of power at a work place. How is managers' power misuse

treated in different cultures? Are there any relationships between power misuse and Hofstede's dimensions? If yes, are there differences in how the situation should be addressed in different countries?

In the paper, we concentrated on intrapersonal effect on subordinates of their supervisor's power use. It would be interesting to explore the interpersonal effect on the organizational level.

One more promising direction of research is an assessment of any relationship between a subordinate employee's qualities such as age, gender, personality type and their ability to handle abusive supervisor. Who handles the situation better? What are the implications for HRM and for a society as a whole?

Overall, the field of power allows for numerous interesting investigations which can create knowledge valuable for organizations and societies at large.

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*Верхогляд О. О., Маклін Г. Н.***Зловживання владою в організації: як топ-менеджери можуть знизити рівень якості роботи своїх компаній, навіть не підозрюючи про це**

Значну увагу в літературі приділено важливій ролі топ-менеджерів у піднесенні компаній на високий рівень. Однак є й інша сторона, яка також потребує уваги. Ця сторона негативно впливає на топ-менеджерів та їхні компанії, що призводить до зниження ефективності організацій. У цій статті ми досліджуємо зв'язок між зловживанням організаційною владою топ-менеджерами та погіршенням якості роботи їх підлеглих і, як наслідок, зниженням продуктивності всієї організації. Ці відносини зазвичай пояснюються невдоволенням підлеглих. Ми дослідили також інші причини цього з метою отримати повніше розуміння механізму взаємозв'язку між зловживанням організаційною владою керівництва компаній та занепадом цих організацій. В статті ми показуємо, що не тільки незадоволеність співробітників, але й цілий спектр інших факторів, що включають погіршення фізіологічного, ментального та психологічного стану підлеглих, призводять до зниження якості роботи підлеглих працівників і, як наслідок, до зниження ефективності всієї організації.

Ключові слова: топ-менеджмент, підлеглі, організаційна влада, зловживання організаційною владою, управління продуктивністю, організаційна ефективність