The Impact of Despotic Leadership on Perceived Exploitation Among Health Workers: Role of Emotional Exhaustion and Perceived Organizational Support

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Abstract

This paper examined the impact of despotic leadership (DL) on employee perceptions of exploitation (PE), with emotional exhaustion (EE) as mediator and perceived organizational support (POS) as moderators. This study employed a PLS-SEM partial least square structural equation modeling approach to test the assumptions on a sample of 341 health professionals of Pakistan. This study's findings show a substantial link between employees' perceptions of exploitation and DL. The data demonstrate a favorable and substantial impact of DL on EE. Even when EE serves as a mediator, the findings still point to the importance of DL and a sense of exploitation. Furthermore, this study found a significant moderating role of POS in the relationship between DL and EE so that, at a high-level emotional exhaustion, feeling accompanied towards the organization creates a differentiation on perceived exploitation. When employees are emotionally exhausted, the link between a supervisor's despotism and their perception of exploitation strengthens. Health care organizations should benefit greatly from these findings because they could help reduce the EE of subordinates under DLby offering support systems that help them cope. A discussion of the article's implications and limitations is included as well.

Keywords: Despotic leadership, perceived exploitation, emotional, exhaustion, perceived organizational support

Introduction

Effective leadership is essential in any organization because it plays an important role in defining the working atmosphere, changing work-related behaviors and improving organizational effectiveness. More focus has been paid to the study of the characteristics of successful leaders by a large stream of studies, believing that the lack of particular leadership characteristics means the absence of leadership (Kelloway et al., 2006; Rasool, Naseer, Syed, & Ahmed, 2018). The results of previous studies show that, relative to positive experiences, negative aspects of leadership in social encounters are viewed sometimes more influential (Baumeister et al., 2001). Similarly, it is worthwhile for scholars to pay more attention to leadership's "dark side" in order to examine an accurate interpretation of leadership and its usefulness (Burke, 2006).

Researchers have used several dark leadership concepts to define the idea of dark leadership that involves abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000), petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1994), DL (Aronson, 2001), disruptive leadership (Einarsen et al., 2007; Schyns & Hansbrough, 2010), and customized charismatic or pseudo-transformative leadership (Rasool, Naseer, Syed, 2010). The style of DL is known as a particularly self-serving leadership style among all these dark leadership types, since such leaders are viewed as politically dishonest and have poor ethical expectations (Schilling, 2009). In order to save their own rights, such leaders are more likely to participate in dishonest and unsocial practices. Often recorded as dishonest and deceitful is the conduct of such leaders with their subordinates. Previous analysis also indicates that despotic leaders are politically dishonest, work in a high-power climate and seek unquestioned employee obedience and submissiveness (Naseer et al., 2016; Schilling, 2009).

In particular, scholars have observed in the past that workers who have not followed destructive policies of their leaders and voiced their opposition have lost their jobs (Coleman, 1987) and, at the same time, employees who follow the policies of the despotic leaders have earned promotions and have been their leader's favorites (Anand et al., 2004; Rasool, Naseer, Syed, & Ahmed, 2018). Study has found that there is a negative side of leadership that can negatively impact followers (Nauman, Fatima &Haq, 2018).In addition, the adverse consequences of leadership manifest in absenteeism (Frooman, Mendelson, & Murphy, 2012), turnover intention (Sun & Wang, 2017), job dissatisfaction (Boamah, Laschinger, Wong, & Clarke, 2018), work deviance (Malik, Sattar, Younas& Nawaz, 2019), EE (Stradovnik, & Gaze, 2018), performance anxiety (Pyc, Meltzer & Liu, 2017), and occupational sexual harassment (Malik &Sattar, 2019).Also, DL refers to the aggressive actions of subordinates and the misuse that makes subordinates fear and stress about the condition of their company. Likewise, there are numerous folds in the notion of DL, including petty tyranny, destructive leadership, and abusive supervision (Naseer, Raja &Donia, 2016). In addition, as per Malik &Sattar, (2019), DL is the willingness of the leader to participate in tyrannical and superior actions against their subordinates for the sake of individual interest and perception of exploitation.

It is widely found that the aggressive behavior of workers does not contribute to a relaxed environment in the organization. According to Kayani, Zafar, Aksar& Hassan (2019), their workers require continuous and unquestioned obedience by despotic representatives. For this cause, they appear to emotionally exhaust the employees. It induces a feeling of PE, which can threaten their core competencies. Therefore, instead of respecting their self-esteem, this manipulation for personal gain seeks to investigate the self-worth of workers employed under such oppressive organizations (De Clercq et al., 2018). If the negative prevails, so the organization's destiny is staff absenteeism, decreased morale, increased turnover intentions, and job dissatisfaction. Employees' persistent pains cause them to experience EE (Malik &Sattar, 2019).

Specifically, we aim to address two important research gaps. The various negative outcomes of DL have been investigated for last few years like EE (Stradovnik, & Stare, 2018),absenteeism (Frooman, Mendelson, & Murphy, 2012), job dissatisfaction (Boamah, Laschinger, Wong, & Clarke, 2018), turnover (Sun & Wang,2017), sexual harassment at the workplace (Malik &Sattar, 2019), work deviance (Malik, Sattar, Younas& Nawaz, 2019), and performance anxiety (Pyc, Meltzer & Liu,2017).There might be various other negative outcomes of DL which needs to be addressed, like employees exploitation in the organization, which has not been explored in any of the previous study in this domain of study. Secondly, in this relationship mediating role of EE this is another major gap in this domain of research. As many previous studies investigated the association of DL with EE (Stradovnik, & Stare, 2018) it could be one of the potential mediating variables in this relationship of other detrimental outcomes. Lastly, POS as a moderator in the association between EE and PE which is also never been investigated in any of the previous study.

Thus, the current study aims to address these research gaps and extend the DL literature in a number of ways. First of all, this research analyze to what degree DL explores how DL produces EE that causes the exploitation of employees. Secondly, to examine this untapped relationship, we invoke social Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and examine mediating role of EEin the relationship between DL and the outcome variable i.e., exploitation. Lastly, in the association between EE and PE, the moderating effect of the core self-evaluation assessment has also been studied. Since the dark side of leadership in an intensely collectivist and power-distant society is more evident (Luthans et al., 1998; Naseer et al., 2016; Nauman, Fatima, &Haq, 2018) as employees are required to follow what their superiors order without challenging and acknowledging power disparities in high-power-distant and collectivist societies, we therefore see Pakistani hospitality employees being part of highly collectivist society as most suitable for this analysis.

Theory and hypotheses

The Theory of Conservation of Resources (COR) deals with certain organizational challenges with great efficiency, providing a view of resources that balance DL and its negative outcomes (Ali, 2019). In addition, it is very crucial for the COR to relate the relationship of cause and effect between DL and EE, generating a sense of PE. A sense of lack of social life balance is triggered by the direct relationship between DL and PE, increasing the level of work slavery in a job position. Keeping COR Theory in view, the DL is seen as a source of stress and lack of leadership view in the supervisor-subordinate relationship (Fatima, Majeed& Shah, 2018). One of the elements that play a vital role yet moderating role in the affectivity of DL on PE is the POS competencies of an employee or the subordinate (Malik &Sattar, 2019). The POS directly impact the way we perform at the workplace and the feeling associated with our work.

The DL is the jeopardizing attitude towards the employees to exploit them and maintain the atmosphere of fear and stress among employees' lower hierarchy about their organizational positions (Nauman, Fatima &Haq, 2018). Moreover, it is a feeling of getting emotionally extended and exhausted by corporate work contribution. In an employee-organization relationship and emotional, organizational research, the PE is explained as the employee perception in association with the organizational benefit and the corporate interest (Kayaniet al., 2019).

We hypothesized that DL causes social stress and loss of leadership support, which manifests in self-serving conduct in the supervisor-subordinate relationship. According to Hofstede, (2010) In a country like Pakistan, where people are very cooperative, fear unpredictability, and prefer to keep their power close to their chests, DL will result in feelings exhaustion since it is tyrannical, spiteful, unethical, despotic, and exploitative (Naseer et al., 2016). EE also causes subordinates to be less satisfied with their lives and to think that their bosses are taking advantage of them. As a result of this, we believe that DL is linked both directly to exploitation and indirectly to EE.

DL and Perceived Exploitation

Despotic leaders demand their subordinates' unquestioned compliance and submission, their demands and controls, as well as their callous and selfish treatment of their subordinates' concerns, are all enforced by their more assertive and apparent leadership style (Schilling, 2009). This kind of leadership is based on consolidating control over subordinates and building partnerships between them and their supporters in which high power gap prevails. Despotic leaders are self-interested, socially dishonest and have poor ethical standards (De Hoogh& Den Hartog, 2008). When compared to tyrant leadership, abusive supervision, undermining supervisors, and destructive leadership, in which the primary focus is on repressive, degrading, and confrontational subordinate actions and no reference is made to the leader's values and moral character, DL contains leadership behaviors that reveal selfish goals aimed to mislead others (Schilling, 2009).

It is not only immoral and socially unconstructive to deceive subordinates in unethical and unproductive ways, but it is also detrimental to the legitimate interests of the company when autocratic leaders engage in fraudulent and morally wrong self-serving activities (Aronson, 2001; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Other forms of leadership, such as petty tyranny, abusive supervision, and undermining supervisors, do not address the intentional consequences of poor leadership behaviors on an organization's goals and priorities. Although tyrannical leadership oppresses employees that are not destructive to the organization, it is interesting to note that DL does the same (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Indeed, tyrannical leaders will prove very helpful in achieving organizational purposes and objectives, even though they also accomplish these ends by putting their subordinates humiliated and compromising their wellbeing. (Ashforth, 1994; Tepper, 2000).

Despotic leaders are autocrat who dominate and control decision making, and they take advantage of and arbitrarily negotiate with their supporters (Aronson, 2001; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Employees in this exchange arrangement can find it difficult to direct their responses to the offending figure(s), but they may do so implicitly, such as reducing their intended behavior. Since the success of a leader depends on the successes of its members and leaders are symbols of an organization, workers can reciprocate in ways that harm both leader and organization (Aronson, 2001). Followers are also prone to decrease their success and delay inventive activities in order to foil a despotic chief. Honest and trustworthy leaders are more likely to increase the optimism, faith, commitment, and corporate citizenship behaviors of followers (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). By comparison, if the ethical nature of a leader is questionable, he / she would not be able to convince workers to accomplish individual and/or corporate goals (Kanungo, 2001). Since despotic leaders lack credibility and values, supporters under these leaders are likely to challenge norms regarding good activities, resulting in poorer job performance, corporate and other citizenship behaviors, and compromised innovation. Following this line of arguments, we conclude that followers perceive

exploitation in the organization as despotic leaders disregard ethical values and norms. Since despotic leaders use their position and influence to achieve their own interests, supporters will not believe like they are governed by equal means due to their skills and abilities under such leaders. In line with the above reasoning, we hypnotized that:

H1: DL is positively and significantly associated to Perceived Exploitation.

DL and Emotional Exhaustion

According to Erkutlu, (2018) leadership is the act of motivating followers to accomplish organizational objectives. Schilling (2009) suggests that the leadership phenomenon has been romanticized since its inception and that its positive effect on adherents and organizations is long-lasting. Meanwhile, Naseer et al., (2016) is of the opinion that the darker side of leadership is seriously neglected, representing the ugly face of leadership and the implications. Karakitapoğlu-Aygün and Gumusluoglu, (2013) take the opinion that leaders should not demonstrate constructive leadership actions all the time. It is never possible to mask the dysfunctional leadership or the darkest side. The deleterious consequences on subordinates are the detrimental effects of the leader. Any other words such as Ashforth, (1994) called it petty tyranny Tepper, (2007) said it was coercive supervision to reflect the negative side of leadership and Einarsen et al., (2007) called it tyrannical leadership or disruptive leadership, then Aronson (2001) called it DL.

House and Howell, (1992) and Naseer et al., (2016) assume that a tyrant who has the thirst to achieve power and domination exercises DL. He is motivated by self-interests that, with an inflexible mentality, are practically manipulative, greedy, bossy, obstinate and unforgiving. Schilling, (2009) noted that much of the derogatory aspects of leadership are attributed to DL. When countering the negativity of the leadership, the supporters become tired and feel suppressed and powerless. De Hoogh and DenHartog, (2008) and Naseer et al., (2016) conclude that DL is more toxic and lacks ethical code of conduct, self-conception, self-assessment, personal engagement and accountability. Aronson, (2001; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008) assume that despotic leaders are self-rule, more likely to regulate and restrict subordinate involvement.

Naseer et al., (2016) claim that despotic leaders take advantage of their followers and treat them unfairly, because their values are not ethical. This is why a lack of leadership limits the span of influence and makes their morale for organizational progress less successful and less effective. The belief that emotional wear and tear was a product of pathological management was evident from Nauman, (2018). EE requires more emotional energy than normal to cope with interpersonal relationships, and these resources quickly deplete. EE happens when emotional needs outweigh the ability of an individual to cope with interpersonal experiences at work (Maslach et al., 2001).

EE, as described by, is most strongly related to resource depletion, which is one of the main factors in burnout (Johnson & Spector, 2007). From the conservation of resource theory, we propose that DL will lead subordinates, by increasing contact with the supervisor, to deplete and exhaust the personal and emotional resources (Grandey et al., 2004). There could be no motivation left from emotionally exhausted subordinates to organizational tasks contributing to employee actions or perceptions (GaliCinamon and Rich, 2010; Carlson et al., 2012). Using conservation of resource theory as a base, we observed that the perception of DL among subordinates contributes to depletion of the resources of subordinates, increased EE, and negative attitudes towards the core organizational goals. Therefore, we hypothesized that:

H2: DL is Positive and significantly associated to Emotional Exhaustion.

EE and Perceived Exploitation

EE refers to the decrease in one's emotional energy and is associated with physical restlessness and stress disorder (Johnson & Spector, 2007). This arises from a never-ending disparity between the degree of demands and productivity that promotes EE (EE) to minimize personal achievement or performance (Leiter, &Maslach and 2017).EE is characterized by low energy and extreme tiredness (Pines & Aronson 1988). In addition, when individuals are exhausted, they resort to compensatory methods that exacerbate fatigue (Dicke et al., 2015).

EE as emotional overstretching and reduced emotional resources (Dicke et al., 2015). Subsequently, many burnout studies focused solely on EE (Klusmann, et al., 2008a,2008b). EE, defined as an employee's inability to cope with interpersonal pressures, has been linked to unfavorable outcomes. (Demerouti et al., 2009). In line with the above reasoning, it seems reasonable to assume that emotionally exhausted employees may perceive exploitative in the organization. So, we hypothesize that:

H2: EE is positively and significantly associated to Perceived Exploitation.

EE as a Mediator

Previous research studies have shown that EE is typically a result of the stress response of the employee to workplace stressors (Maslach et al., 2001). Many researchers have discovered that EE not only contributes to the employee's lack of self-esteem, anger, nervousness and restlessness, but also leads to decreased work participation and decreased efficiency (Aryee et al., 2008). EE is a state of physiological and emotional resource scarcity, characterized by a perception of personal emotional resources being depleted as well as the fatigue of the physiological resources that are associated with them (Lam et al., 2017). There is evidence to suggest that when employees are confronted with unwelcome conduct, they engage in behavior that is detrimental to the company's interests (Henle et al., 2010). The practice of stealing time allows employees to escape from stressful conditions or negative thoughts for a little period of time (Martin et al., 2010).

The resources of a person are limited, according to COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) (e.g., psychological resources). In the one side, if he / she spends them constantly for jobs, it may lead to the loss of one's own funds. Individual intrinsic motivation, on the other side, offers the security needed to increase one's own capital. The resources of the individual, however, are limited. The inconsistency between these two factors helps the user to choose to minimize or avoid the contribution of resources to protect their own resources from depletion (van Woerkom et al., 2016). Leaders of stupidity frequently criticize their workers, harass or even demoralize them during contact, leading employees to develop unpleasant feelings (Grijalva et al., 2015). Klotz and Neubaum, (2016) have observed that narcissistic leaders misuse their corporate influence not only to strengthen their personal needs, but also to intimidate and oppress workers. The leaders' unpolitous attitude towards the employee adversely affects the psychology of the employee, creating more psychological stresses. The effect is negative feelings of opposition in the mind of the workers that further contribute to the employee's EE, or even selflessness (Hobfoll, 2001).

Using the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) as a basis, we theorized that DL in the supervisor-subordinate relationship is the root of social tension and lack of leadership support embodied in self-serving actions. Because DL is totalitarian, vengeful, corrupt, self-serving, and exploitative (Naseer et al., 2016; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008), DL will result in EE in a strongly collectivist, uncertainty-preventing, and power-distant society such as Pakistan (Hofstede, 1983, 2010). DL is also seen as a stressor in the workplace that absorbs the personal energy of workers (Agarwal &Avey, 2020; Syed et al., 2019), culminating in EE, which can be defined as a chronic state of decreased physical perseverance and emotions due to an unsustainable amount of work, personal demands and incessant stress (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). As a result, emotionally exhausted workers improve their sense of injustice because of the unequal treatment of corporate leadership (Agarwal &Avey, 2020; Aghaz & Sheikh, 2016; Henle & Blanchard, 2008).

We believe, in accordance with the aforementioned rationale, that the presence of DL in the organization raises employee EE, which eventually produces a feeling of employee exploitation. Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

H3: EE mediates the relationship between DL and perceived exploitation.

Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

In the notion of organizational support, people like to exemplify their organization as a character with either positive or negative motives (Rhoades &Eisenberger, 2002). Prior to the establishment of POS, this personification process is required since it pertains to the view of individuals about how much a company appreciates valuing their efforts and showing concern for their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Several studies have found that employees' attitudes and conduct at work are positively impacted by POS (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011).

The favorable impact of POS on outcomes that benefit both individuals and enterprises is explained with the help of two essential factors. According to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), founded on the principle of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), employees who feel supported by their organizations would pay back their obligation and return the care of their organizations. Identifying and enacting positive behaviors toward the organization that provides help is a natural consequence of being supported workers. However, the Organizational Support Theory suggests that self-enhancement mechanisms are potentially at risk if POS enables employees to meet their socio-emotional demands (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Therefore, employees who feel appreciated by their employer should have more vital well-being indices since POS satisfies their basic human needs (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). In addition to the direct and favorable benefits of POS on various outcomes, some research has looked at how POS influences the development of attitudes and behaviors such as organizational commitment (Butts et al. 2009), organizational citizenship behaviors (Alfes et al. 2013), and work performance (Butts et al. (Duke et al., 2009; Erdogan & Enders, 2007). According to the second mechanism, POS should increase employees' desire for moral support by

demonstrating that they will be supported and understood during complex workplace scenarios (e.g., Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998; Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999). According to POS, employees would have access to both material and emotional ways to perform their jobs more efficiently (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011).

The feeling that one's company cares about one's well-being at work may be a critical organizational resource in helping an employee cope with their job and ultimately keep favorable attitudes about it. Following this approach, Duke et al. (2009) provided academic evidence demonstrating that POS mitigates the detrimental impacts of emotional labor on work satisfaction. Erdogan and Enders (2007) found an even higher link between high levels of work satisfaction reported by supervisors and the interchange of leadership members. According to the current study, employees involved in their job are more likely to be content with their employment, which is even greater if they feel empowered by their organization. Having a high POS should make them feel more confident about their job because it shows they can get help if they need it.

H4: Perceived Organizational Support moderates the meditated relationship between EE and Perceived Exploitation in such a way that an increase in perceived organizational support weakens the said association**.**
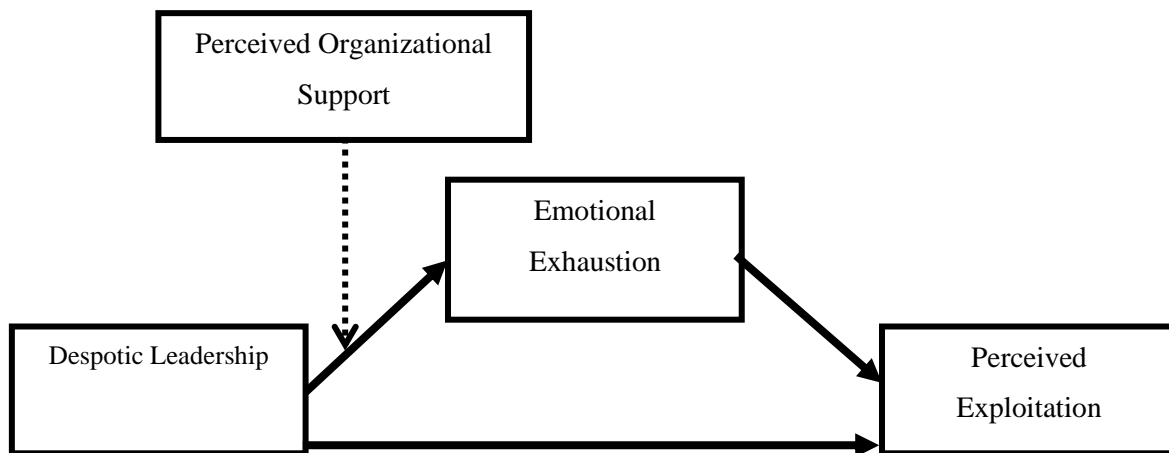

Figure 1: Proposed Research Model

Materials and Methods

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

Medical professionals such as physicians, nurses, and paramedics were the study's focus. Before collecting data, we addressed the hospitals to acquire permission for the data collection and told them this research was purely academic and promised participants the total anonymity of their replies. In addition, we gave 450 questionnaires to the medical staff at random and requested them to complete this questionnaire in their own time. The survey had a response rate of 85%, with 341 forms returned. Participants are not compensated for their efforts. Women outnumber men in the 1341-person sample by 179 to 161. A further finding was that 63% of respondents were between 31 to 40. The survey also found that 42 percent of respondents had worked for 3 to 5 years, while 25 percent had worked for more than five years. More than two-thirds of the 341 responders (256) were physicians, 38 nurses, and 36 paramedics (see Table 1).

Table 1. Respondents Demography (n – 341)

Variable	N	%
Gender		
Male	179	52.5
Female	161	47.2
Age		
(20-30yrs)	20	5.9
(31-40yrs)	214	62.8
(41-50yrs)	106	31.1
(>51yrs)	20	5.9
Experience		
Less than 1 year	18	5.3
1-3 years	89	26.1
3-5 years	145	42.5
5 and above	88	25.8
Job Title		
Doctor	265	77.7
Nurses	38	11.1
Paramedics	36	10.6

Measures

A five-point Likert scale was used to gauge how participants felt about each of the survey's questions. Scales varied from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree."

Despotic Leadership (DL) - De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) developed a six-item scale to measure DL. The supervisees described the amount to which their superior's exhibited ownership, control, and retribution in their daily interactions with them. A sample item was "My supervisor is punitive and has no pity or compassion" (Cronbach's alpha = 0.938).

Emotional Exhaustion (EE) - A measurement of EE is the "Maslach Burnout Inventory General Survey," which was established by Maslach and Jackson (1981). A five-item scale is used to assess the emotional exhaustion of workers, and it is comprised of the following items: e.g.," I feel emotionally drained from my work" (Cronbach's alpha = 0.808).

Perceived Exploitation (PE) - Various measures have been employed in previous studies to analyze exploration and exploitation (e.g., see, Kammerlander et al., 2015). Individual-level exploitation was assessed using the fourteen-item measure developed by Mom et al. (2009). Individuals' capacity to participate in exploitative behaviours such as'serve current (internal) clients with current services/products' and 'mainly concentrate on accomplishing short term objectives' was measured on a seven-item scale for the seven exploitation behaviors. (Cronbach's alpha = 0.808).

Perceived organizational support (POS) - The condensed version of the Scale of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) was used to assess employees' perceptions of organizational support. (Eisenberger et al., 1986; for example: "The clinic really cares about my well-being". It consists of eight items and is scored on a five-point scale of 1–5 with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree." (Cronbach's alpha = 0.898).

Results

Statistical analysis strategy

We first checked to see whether our research variables' data were normally distributed before deciding on an analytic method. This study revealed a skewness and kurtosis range of +1 to -1. As a consequence of these findings, we could rest comfortable that the statistics were normal (George, 2011).

Power analysis for sample size

Power analysis has been performed using G*Power 3.1.9.2 to determine how many samples are needed for the framework proposed (Faul et al., 2007). For a medium effect (0.15), with a 5% level of significance (0.05), the proposed structural model requires at least 92 data to achieve an 80 percent statistical power. There were 341, which is more than the needed sample size and following prior fundamental guidelines (Hair et al., 2010).

Common method bias

We used the strategies provided by Podsakoff et al. (2003) to eliminate systematic method bias in this study. First, the items were pretested and altered to prevent confusing responders. Second, respondents were instructed to be completely honest in their replies and told there was no right or wrong way to answer the questions. Third, Harman's single factor test was employed, and the study found that a single component did not explain the bulk of the variation. According to Podsakoff et al., a 50% threshold has been established as the minimum acceptable score for this test (39%). (2003). Lastly, the fact that we obtained our data in three waves shows that our results are free of contamination from common method variation.

Data analysis and results

To analyze the data, SmartPLS3.0 was utilized, which is a partial least squares structural equation modeling approach (Ringle et al., 2015). Multivariate statistical methods such as PLS-SEM are frequently used to determine latent path models with latent variables (Richter et al., 2016; Rigdon, 2016). In light of the study's incremental nature, PLS-SEM was selected as the most suited analytic approach, with POS acting as a moderator (Nitzl et al., 2016). In addition, a two-stage analysis of data was carried out (Andersen and Gerbing, 1988). The measurement model was evaluated first to determine the reliability and validity of the latent constructs, and then the structural model was examined to determine the hypothetical link between the constructs (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 2. "Internal consistency" and "convergent validity" evaluation

Construct	Item	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Despotic Leader Ship			0.938	0.940	0.951	0.765
	DP1	0.863				
	DP2	0.869				
	DP3	0.865				
	DP4	0.938				
	DP5	0.877				
Emotional Exhaustion			0.808	0.816	0.869	0.575
	EE1	0.865				
	EE2	0.804				
	EE3	0.565				
	EE4	0.763				
	EE5	0.760				

Perceived Organizational Support			0.898	0.957	0.911	0.566
	POS1	0.824				
	POS2	0.800				
	POS3	0.580				
	POS4	0.824				
	POS5	0.765				
	POS6	0.817				
	POS7	0.587				
	POS8	0.824				
Perceived Exploitation			0.884	0.901	0.915	0.686
	PE1	0.686				
	PE2	0.873				
	PE3	0.895				
	PE4	0.869				
	PE5	0.799				

"Internal consistency reliability"

"Internal consistency reliability is a measurement of the degree to which the items represent the latent constructs"; as such, internal consistency reliability may be tested by CR (Richter et al., 2016); a CR value more than 0.7 is deemed appropriate (Ringle et al., 2018). The findings reveal that all variables have showed an acceptable CR – DL (0.951), EE (0.869), POS (0.911), PE (0.915) – thus demonstrating strong "internal consistency reliability".

"Convergent validity"

To determine CV, look at the outer loading of the indicators and the AVE (average variance extracted). CV is defined as "the amount to which a measure correlates favorably with an alternative measure of the same concept" (Hairetal.,2017). When the indication has a high outer loading, it suggests the construct is well-represented by the indicator. It is recommended that an indicator's outer loading surpass 0.708 since the square of this figure (0.708) represents 50% of the AVE (0.50). This does not negate the ability to keep indicators with low loadings (0.4–0.7) if the AVE of the other indicators is greater than or equal to (Hair et al., 2017). The findings of CV reveal that all indicators, except DL6, have adequate loadings. Thus, DL6 was eliminated. Even though the outer loading of EE3 (0.565), POS3 (0.580), and POS7 (0.587) was below the standard requirement (0.708), it was kept since the other indicators for the same construct produced good results (loading > 0.7 and AVE > 0.5). DL (0.765), EE (0.575), POS (0.566), and PE (0.686) all had AVE ratings that agreed with the model's CV, as shown in Table 2.

"Discriminant validity"

DV is "the extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs by empirical standards" (Hair et al., 2014, p. 104). To attain DV, the HTMT value should be less than 0.85 (Kline, 2011), or more than 0.90 (Teo et al., 2008). As shown in Table 3, each of the constructions fulfilled both HTMT.85 and HTMT.90 criteria suggesting that the model contains DV.

Table 3. Evaluation of discriminant validity

Despotic Leadership	Emotional Exhaustion	POS	Perceived Exploitation	Despotic Leadership
Despotic Leadership	0.874			
Emotional Exhaustion	qq			
POS	-0.231	0.424	0.753	
Perceived Exploitation	0.195	0.536	- -0.309	0.828

Structural model

The causal linkages between the constructs are tested as part of the structural model evaluation. Path coefficients, coefficient of determinations (R2), effect size (f2), and predictive relevance (Q2) were some of the metrics used to evaluate the structural model (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2017). R2 measures the overall prediction accuracy of the model (Hair et al., 2014). (Hair et al., 2014). According to Cohen (1988), R2 values of 0.26, 0.13, and 0.02 are all deemed large by the author. PE has a low R2 (0.170) and EE has a high R2 (0.806), according to the structural model's findings (Table 5). Exogenous construct omission may be used to determine whether the omitted construct has a significant effect on an endogenous variable by measuring the change in R2 when it is removed from the model (Hair et al., 2014, p. 177). There are three f2 values that Cohen (1988) suggests for a range of effect sizes: 0, 15, and 35. Psychological weariness is strongly associated with DL (f2 = 3.284), although it has a far less impact on people's feelings of exploitation than does EE. Moreover, perceived organizational support (f2 = 0.116) has a moderate influence on EE (Table 6).

Table 4. f^{2}values of the path model

Predictor Construct	Target Construct	f^2	Effect Size
Despotic Leadership	**Emotional Exhaustion**	3.284	Small
Emotional Exhaustion	**Perceived Exploitation**	0.220	Medium
POS	**Emotional Exhaustion**	0.116	Medium

Blindfolding was conducted to produce Q2 values. "Blindfolding is a sample reuse strategy that omits every dth data point in the indicators of the endogenous constructs" (Hair et al2017). A model's dependent constructs have more predictive value if the Q2 value is greater than 0 (Fornell and Cha, 1994). EE (Q2 = 0.806) and PE (Q2 = 0.180) showed good predictive significance, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. R^2 and Q^2 value

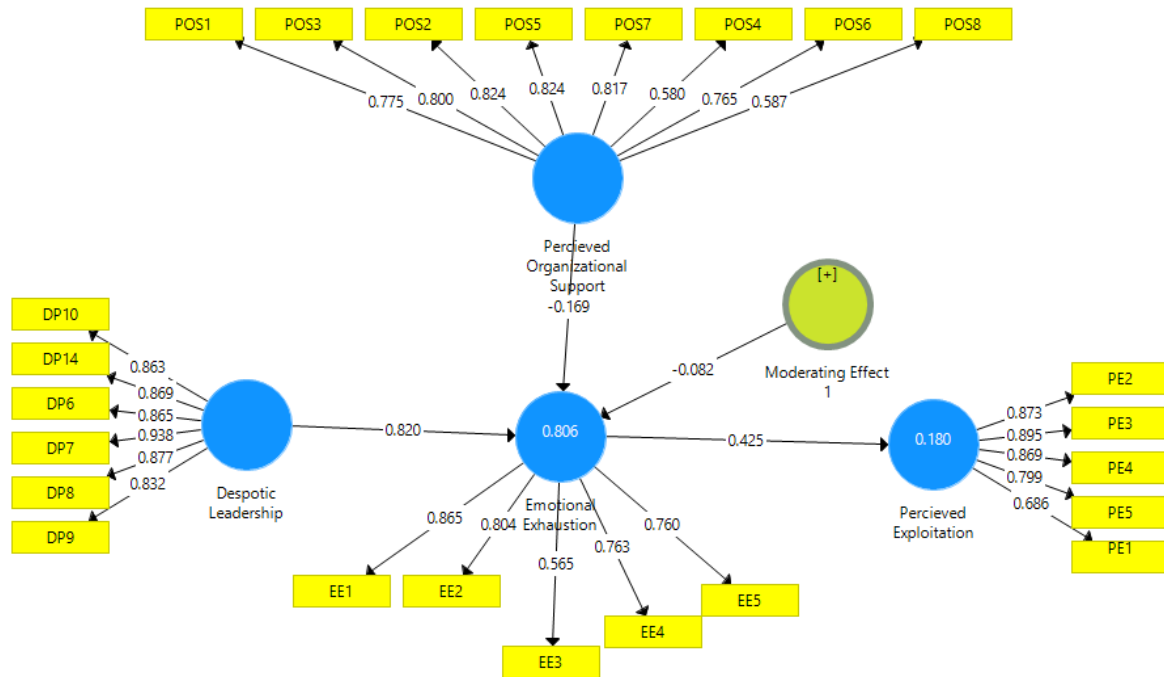| Predictor Construct	R^2	Predictive Accuracy	Q^2
EE	0.806	Moderate	0.273
Perceived Exploitation	0.180	Moderate	0.304

Figure 2: Path Model

To determine the parameter's statistical significance, we used the boot strapping approach ("5,000 subsamples, one-tailed significance"). DL (H1, =0.820, t =45.577, p = 0.000) was shown to be substantially linked with EE, as shown in Table 7. Moreover, the findings suggested that EE (H4, β =0.425, t=7.353, p = 0.000) was substantially adversely connected to employees' PE. As a result, both hypotheses H1 and H2 were found to be true.

A mediation study was conducted in order to evaluate the hypothesis H3, which predicted that EE would play a mediating role in the association between supervisors' DL and PE. Preacher and Hayes (2008) indirect effect (0 = no mediation) technique were employed to investigate the mediation impact. The findings of the indirect effects reveal that dictatorial leadership (β =0.348, t = 7.761, p = 0.000) have substantial indirect impacts on PE through emotional weariness, therefore H3 were supported.

According to hypothesis H4, POS has a moderating influence on the connection between DL and EE. According to the findings in Table 6, POS had a statistically significant effect on emotional tiredness, and the interaction between POS and DL on EE had a statistically significant impact (-0.035, t = 4.828, p = 0.00) as well. Thus, H4 has been regarded as a viable hypothesis.

Table 6. Results of hypotheses testing (direct effect and indirect effect)

Hypotheses	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H1: DL -> EE	0.820	0.018	45.577	0.000	**Supported**
H2: EE ->PE	0.425	0.058	7.353	0.000	**Supported**
H3: DL -> EE->PE	0.348	0.045	7.761	0.000	**Supported**
H4; DL*POS -> EE ->PE	0.035	0.007	4.828	0.000	**Supported**

Note(s): p < 0.05 (Hair et al., 2017); STDEV, standard deviation; DL,Despotic Leadership; EE,Emotional Exhaustion; PE, Perceived Exploitation; POS, Perceived Organizational Support

This research aimed to evaluate the impact of DL combined with emotional exhaustion on the perception of being exploited. The results of H1 show that DL has a powerful favorable impact on the perception of exploitation. DL may cause subordinates' personal and emotional resources to be depleted and drained, according to the conservation of resource theory COR's involvement in this theory (Chi et al. 2018). According to the research findings, EE is strongly linked to autocratic leadership, demonstrating that an employee is emotionally exhausted under autocratic leadership. Leaders with low ethical standards are exploitative and demand that their employees comply with no questions. Employees under a despotic boss use dynamic behavior of the self-motivation principle (Leary, 2007) to conduct impression management tactics and make self-presentational efforts to establish a favorable image in the eyes of others as they know the only option to avoid conflict and preserve a positive image which is only feasible via impression management techniques. This conclusion is partially similar to earlier results (Chen et al., 2020).

EE has a significant impact on workers' perceptions of exploitation, according to the research (H2). According to this study, emotionally fatigued employees are more prone to participate in workplace exploitation. For example, suppose workers believe they are being exploited. In that case, they may express their feelings in either an outer or an interior manner, which may lead to various negative results. According to the results of this research, exhausted workers are more likely to engage in counter-productive conduct (e.g Carlson et al., 2011, 2012; Kant et al., 2013).

According to the findings of this research, which were based on the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), autocratic leadership affects perceptions of exploitation via emotional weariness (H3). There has not been much research on the indirect effects of emotional weariness. According to a previous study, when a supervisor's conduct is unethical or dictatorial with an emotionally fatigued employee, the employee is more likely to engage in unproductive job behaviour (Nauman et al. 2018, Yan et al. 2020). This means that the foundation of social conflict and a lack of leadership support shown in self-serving activities is workers' authoritarian leadership in the supervisor-subordinate relationship. In Pakistan, EE will ensue because DL is authoritarian, spiteful, corrupt, self-serving, and exploitative. (Naseer et al., 2016; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; De Hoogh & Den Hartog) (Hofstede, 1983, 2010). Additionally, DL in the workplace is considered a stressor that drains the personal energy of employees, leading to emotional fatigue (Agarwal &Avey, 2020; Syed et al., 2019), which may be characterized as a chronic condition of weakened physical persistence and emotions owing to an unsustainable quantity of work, personal expectations and constant stress (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Consequently, emotionally drained employees enhance their perceptions of unfairness due to the rough treatment of company leadership and PE (Agarwal &Avey, 2020; Aghaz & Sheikh, 2016; Henle & Blanchard, 2008).

Regarding H4, our findings suggest that the connection between dictatorial leadership and emotional tiredness is moderated significantly by perceptions of organizational support. Research on the moderating influence of perceived organizational support on DL and EE is not studied by past researchers. We investigated the role of perceived organizational support in the dictatorial leadership and EE connection. It's been well-documented how important it is to have a positive perception of one's company, as well as how detrimental it may be if one engages in (Sak 2018). Prior studies revealed the same kind of outcomes trend (e.g., Hochwarter, Witt, Treadway, & Ferris, 2006; Shantz, Alfes, & Latham, 2016). In instance, Shantz et al. (2016) also demonstrated that POS substitutes for extremely low levels of job engagement. No of how supported they felt, employees who were disengaged were no more likely than those who were committed to talk about their plans to leave the company or to participate in deviant conduct. Using the Conservation of Resources Theory and in particular the substitution hypothesis, these researchers explained their results (Hobfoll, Freedy, Lane, & Geller, 1990). The latter argues that resources are substitutable for one another to satisfy the expectations produced by a loss or a prospect of a loss of resources. To recuperate the loss caused to the depletion of a resource, workers will substitute with another resource. According to this theory, workers who have exhausted one source of work-related energy (such as their emotional reserves) may turn to another (such as POS). The opposite may be true for workers who are already well-resourced due to their lack of EE as a result of their job duties. Shantz et al. (2016) further noted that this compensating impact of POS is compatible with Caplan's (1974) cushioning concept that was presented to describe the impact of support on the links between occupational stresses or expectations and their results.

Specifically, multiple studies found support for the buffering effect of POS by demonstrating that it dampens the detrimental impacts of different stressors on employee well-being and wellness while having little or no influence when stresses are mild. This collection of studies repeatedly reveals that employees who sense organizational support believe they have adequate access to organizational capabilities to aid their management mechanisms against poor work situations. Confidently, this research has also suggested a compensating impact of POS.

Implications

Important implications for the dark side of leadership and unproductive work conduct are drawn from this study. We conducted this study to add to the existing knowledge about dictatorial leadership, emotional tiredness, and the perception of organizational support in Pakistani health departments. Additionally, this study contributes to the conservation of resource theory since individual activity in the workplace has a positive and negative effect on mood and behavior. This research also has significant practical consequences for the health system in Pakistan. Even though DL may be found in all of Pakistan's ministries, it receives little attention when referred to them as such. One of the most important aspects may be the failure to report such incidents for various reasons appropriately. Institutions can take steps to lessen the inclination toward autocratic leadership conduct in the workplace, which has several negative consequences. A typical measure may be established that incorporates policies and measures to address the informed destructive and harmful behaviors. Low-rank police personnel may be encouraged to report cases of autocratic leadership conduct at a suitable venue to spotlight the issue and offenders with the guarantee to safeguard the victims' rights.

It is crucial for health care workers to reevaluate their eligibility criteria and recruit supervisors who are well-suited to their position to prevent the problem of counterproductive conduct on the job, as this study shows. Thirdly, this study proved that persons with a high level of emotional weariness are more prone to participate in autocratic leadership conduct with the employees. As a result, candidates will be chosen based on psychological and emotional criteria to minimize exploitative work practices problems.

In addition, the health department may look at personal traits through psychological evaluation when hiring people for jobs that match the nature of the job and the workplace. A variety of policies and measures and advanced training programs for low-ranking officers might also be implemented by the health department to help officers better deal with despotic bosses' bad experiences and actions. Additionally, the counseling desk in human resource departments will aid in favorable orientations of managerial and junior personnel to create a congenial work atmosphere.

Importantly, this study demonstrates that DL has an indirect effect on PE via emotional weariness, with the severity of the effect varying depending on the POS. According to the findings, a low level of work engagement has a more significant effect on job satisfaction when POS is more than a certain threshold. Employees who perceive a high level of organizational support feel encouraged and appreciated. They expect their manager and work environment, in general, will be more understanding and mobilized in the event of imagined difficulties. As a result, engaging in levers that are known to produce POS, such as direct supervisor support and coworker support, may help to keep employees' job attitudes positive even when exploitative behavior is revealed (Krishnan & Mary, 2012; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Management can have a severe influence on their employees' performance by, for instance, assisting them with their workload, introducing new staff member's functions, and assisting them following a personal leave. This can help mitigate the detrimental effects of dark leadership on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations.

Strengths, Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This research has limitations. First, the data collection population in Pakistan may not reflect other population densities. As a result, it is essential to proceed with caution when extrapolating the findings from this study to other industries. Research in other fields and locations may be needed to verify the current model's validity. As a second point, this study was conducted using a cross-sectional method. More information could have been gained by using a qualitative or time-lag approach. In order to make the conclusions more generalizable, future work should use more suitable interventions, such as a random selection of samples. The point of view is based on self-reported answers, which may be influenced by personal bias. Future research may be based on answers from managers across both sides of the chain of command. Investigation of PE and DL may benefit from the findings of this study, which adds to the existing body of knowledge. This research can be replicated in different geographic contexts depending on the circumstances. As a result, there is a paucity of research on leadership and negative workplace behavior in Asian contexts, particularly in Pakistani contexts.

Future researchers can further explore this interrelationship by examining the effects of moderating variables. Ideologically, it would be interesting to see how different exchange ideologies affect the overall strength of the dark leadership–exploitative worker relationship (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Saks, 2006). Finally, expanding the mediated moderation model could help mitigate the adverse effects of DL on job attitudes. Because of the heavy workload and the difficulty in managing it, healthcare providers in Pakistan may believe that engaging in exploitative behavior at work will place an additional strain on their coworkers. This could eventually reduce positive feelings towards their work. In order to avoid the negative consequences of exploitative behavior, it is necessary to investigate

contextual elements and resources. To summaries, this study's findings help us better understand how DL affects people's attitudes and motivations and how individuals and organizations alike are affected by DL. Future research is required to understand these complexities and their underlying factors better.

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