Nexus between Despotic Leadership, Faculty Performance, and Faculty Behavior: A Case of a Pakistani Public University

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Abstract: *The aim of this study was to examine the effects of despotic leadership on the output of university faculty members. The study was conducted by using a mixed methods technique in accordance with the pragmatism paradigm. The population of the study was the 74 permanent faculty members of the one Public Sector University's two campuses located in Lahore, Pakistan. A semi-structured interview protocol was used to interview 15 faculty members through a convenient sampling technique. Thematic analysis was used to examine the qualitative data, while descriptive analysis percentage (%) and frequency(f) were used to examine the quantitative data. The results demonstrate that faculty members may become uncomfortable and agitated due to the hostile behavior of the HODs, which could lead to a negative work environment and a decreased desire to share ideas. The unfavorable work environment and decreased job satisfaction are caused by the bad behavior of HODs. The HODs' menacing actions have a clear detrimental impact on staff members' performance, foster a hostile work atmosphere, and jeopardize faculty members' mental health. Based on the research findings, it is recommended that HODs should behave civilly toward faculty members. The HODs could also receive leadership training from the experts.*

Introduction

The most well-known Greek philosopher of all time, Aristotle, lived 2400 years ago and was the first to explain leadership. Leadership is a recognized and well-researched concept with important administrative implications (Antonakis et al., 2012; Bass & Bass, 2009; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). Numerous books and publications have been published, demonstrating the quick advancement of its research (Batistic et al., 2017). Setting specific goals and considering the effects those goals have on followers who follow them are central to the leadership phenomena (Shamir et al., 1993).

It is incredible to note that tyrannical leaders operate under the same principles but in the other way. That is to say, they convince people to pursue undesirable goals after selecting them. Because of the public's current infatuation with spectacular supervillains, academic studies on the negative effects of bad leadership are quite popular (Krasikova et al., 2013; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). The destructive leader has something to do with the harsh realities of organizational life. "One of the systematic and repetitive actions of a leader, supervisor, or manager that violates the legitimate interests of the organization by undermining and sabotaging the organization's goals, task, resources, and effectiveness as well as the motivation, well-being, or job satisfaction of subordinates" is the succinct definition of harmful

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management (Einarsen et al., 2007). When individuals in positions of power act destructively, they are often labeled as abusive, poor, or authoritarian leaders instead of being called leaders (Tepper, 2000).

The literature identifies toxic leadership, subversive superiors, self-serving behavior, and poor management (Lipman-Blumen, 2005). Extensive research has been conducted on destructive leaders, and Tate, Sawyer, and Jacobs, among others, all meet the criteria. Authoritarian, autocratic, and Machiavellian leadership philosophies (Christie & Geis, 1970) are all detrimental. Despotic leaders negatively impact job performance, employee satisfaction, and emotional well-being in the workplace because most employees find this condition intolerable (Raja et al., 2019).

Previous research often overlooked the negative aspects of managerial leadership (Naseer et al., 2016) in favor of examining the benefits that leaders provide to their teams and the company as a whole (Schilling, 2009). However, research into leadership's murkier sides has been more interesting in recent years. Many negative labels have been proposed, such as authoritarian leadership (Aronson, 2001) and destructive management (Einarsen et al., 2007). In the words of De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008), despotic leadership is shown when a leader acts in a way that is motivated only by self-interest and is intent on establishing dominance and supremacy in the workplace. Despotic leadership tends to be self-absorbed, exploitative, and insensitive to the requirements of the workforce, with little regard for the effects of their actions on the business or the workforce (De Hoogh& Den Hartog, 2008). According to Erkutlu and Chafra (2018), despotic leadership is adversely linked with organizational identity and favorably associated with follower deviation. Workplace deviation is described as "voluntary behavior that violates organizational norms and endangers the organization's well-being." Organizations should take all necessary measures to prevent despotic leadership, which prioritizes leader advantages over employee well-being and, as a result, can cause substantial stress in the workforce (De Clercq et al., 2018).

Organizational results may be affected by organizational conspiracy theories. Despotic leadership, according to research, raises organizational conspiracy ideas, which diminish followers' commitment to organizational goals and decrease it to the point where employees quit their jobs (DiStefano et al., 2018). According to M. R. Lee (2016), one of the primary causes of employees feeling stressed at work is authoritarian leadership. Because autocratic leadership prioritizes employee perks, employees are subject to significant pressure (De Clercq et al., 2018). The dictatorial leadership behaved under circumstances or settings that were stressful and dictated to the employees. The economy, institutions, and employment have undergone significant change as a result of the oppressive leadership style. Tepper (2000) discovered that dictatorial leadership is one of the main causes of low employee satisfaction because it treats its workers with a heavy hand and an air of authority. Employee morale, motivation, and independence will suffer as a result of the autocratic behavior of the leader (Naseer et al., 2016), in contrast to honest leaders who support their staff and foster a sense of mutual trust (De Hoogh& Den Hartog, 2008).

The worker lacks the requisite organizational skills for functioning effectively in a dictatorial leadership setting in order to ensure the timely and efficient completion of assigned tasks, according to research from the past decade that links despotic leadership to circumstantial rather than behavioral circumstances (Goffee& Jones, 2007). Despotic leadership is said to be an unlawful leadership style by De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008). According to Carnevale and Huang (2017), Leaders who are authoritative, disrespectful, haughty, and emotionally distant from their employees create an unbalanced work environment that may have negative effects on morale, productivity, and innovation. According to Naseer et al. (2016), leaders who do not exhibit strong autocratic inclinations will find that their staff members may accomplish their goals on their own without assistance from their coworkers.

Research Questions

1. What is the perceived influence of despotic leadership on the behavior of faculty?
2. What is the perceived influence of despotic leadership on the performance of faculty?

Methodology

The researcher used a method research design to conduct this study. The population is the 74 permanent faculty members of one public sector university on two campuses in Lahore, Pakistan. The study's

participants consist of 15 faculty members. The researcher used a convenient sampling technique to choose a sample. The researcher concentrated on four factors: conducting in-person interviews, evaluating individual interviews, and interpreting data that has been recorded. Structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and in-person interviews were used to collect data on how faculty members deal with challenges, perform well, and cope. Open-ended questions are commonly used in semi-structured interviews to promote flexibility. It is simple to compare answers when questions are answered in a particular order, although the format may be restrictive. Less structure, nevertheless, might make it easier to compare answers and identify trends. The data collected from interviews was examined using thematic analysis and descriptive analysis, such as percentage and frequency.

Results and Discussion
Quantitative Data

1) How do despotic (aggressive, uncontrolled, threatening, and unforgiving) behaviors of HOD affect your attitude and behavior?
2) How do despotic (aggressive, uncontrolled, threatening, and unforgiving) behaviors of HOD affect your performance?

Table 1
Data related to the question (1) is presented in table

HOD Despotic Behavior	Percentage (%)		Frequency (f)	
aggressive, uncontrolled, threatening, and unforgiving	Yes	No	Occasionally	Frequently
	73	27	7	4

This table indicates that eleven out of 15 faculty members highlight that the HOD shows despotic behavior. However, 04 faculty members mentioned that their HODs do not show despotic behavior. Furthermore,07 out of eleven faculty members pointed out that HOD shows despotic behavior occasionally, and 04 out of eleven faculty members highlighted that HOD shows this behavior frequently.

Qualitative Data
Affect on Attitude and Behavior

Out of the fifteen faculty members, eleven reported that their HOD's despotic behavior had a negative impact on their attitude and behavior. These included feeling anxious and uncomfortable, being defensive or avoiding interactions with them, feeling intimidated and less willing to share ideas, creating a negative work environment, and being impolite and stubborn.

Stressed and Uncomfortable

Three out of eleven faculty members stated that they feel anxious and uncomfortable because of their HOD's despotic behavior. According to one respondent:

My HOD's violent conduct sometimes causes me to feel uneasy and nervous. It could cause me to feel distant or fearful of my HOD, which would hinder communication and teamwork. Furthermore, it may create a bad work environment that exacerbates my anxiety and negatively affects my overall job satisfaction.

Avoid Interactions or Defensive

Faculty members emphasized that when HOD acts aggressively, it puts them on the defensive and prevents them from interacting with HOD. The following statement is presented as evidence:

My HOD's aggressive behavior makes me feel uncomfortable and engaged. Additionally, it might also make me defensive or make me avoid interacting with them.

Intimidated and Anxious

Data indicate that they feel intimidated and uneasy by the HOD and show uncontrolled behavior. A faculty member states:

Yes, I feel intimidated and uneasy by HOD's behavior, and it may affect how I behave by preventing me from speaking out or expressing my ideas. It also affects me by making me feel irritated or unmotivated.

Less Willingness to Share Ideas and Thoughts

Faculty members pointed out that we are less inclined to offer our opinions and thoughts because of the uncontrolled behavior of our HOD. According to one respondent:

I may become cautious, nervous, and less inclined to discuss my views and opinions with other staff members. My HOD's assertive behavior can make me feel uncomfortable and engaged. It might also cause me to grow afraid of them or prevent me from working with them.

Creation of a Negative Work Environment

According to the information, the harsh behavior of the HOD produces a bad work atmosphere that influences the behavior of other staff members. According to one respondent:

It might make me avoidant or defensive toward my HOD, which would hinder our ability to collaborate and communicate. It may also result in an unfavorable work atmosphere that raises my stress levels and lowers my level of job satisfaction.

Stubborn and Rudeness

The interviewee shares the following observation because of the leader's unforgiving behavior:

I feel depressed because of HOD's aggressive behavior. Sadness and guilt overtake me. I attempt, but fail, to defend myself. Workers dislike their jobs and employers, which reduces a person's capacity to perform their work effectively. It can also cause a decline in both mental and physical health. When the HOD acts aggressively, I generally become aggressive as well. I start acting impolite and obstinate.

Affect on Employee's Performance

Out of the fifteen faculty members, eleven of them report that HOD despotic behavior negatively impacts their performance in various ways. These include de-motivation, impairing concentration, making less productive overall, causing a loss of focus, creating a negative work environment, hesitation to present ideas, and restricting creativity.

Making Feel De-motivated

According to data, faculty members feel de-motivated by the aggressive behavior of the HOD. According to one respondent:

My performance may suffer as a result of my HOD's aggressive behavior, and it may de-motivate me or make me hesitant to take chances.

Reducing the Ability to Concentrate

When teachers lose focus, they are unable to do their best work in front of the students. According to what the responder said:

It had the opposite effect on my performance, making me less valuable overall and impairing my ability to focus or exercise sound judgment. It causes me to become distracted or agitated, which lowers my productivity and the quality of my job. It might also cause me to lose inspiration, which could lead to a reduction in the overall quality of my work.

Overall Less Productivity

One participant stated, "My overall productivity is decreased by the disrespecting behavior of the HOD." As the interviewee explains:

It had a negative impact on my performance, leaving me less focused and able to make wise decisions, as well as less productive all around.

Lack of Focus

Teachers who are not focused can perform poorly, and this is what happens when the head of the department deals with faculty members with harsh and uncontrolled behavior. According to one respondent:

My performance as a teacher is inadequate, even by my own standards. This may be the result of a drop in the standard of work produced, a lack of focus, and decreased efficiency. It may create an unfavorable work environment that affects my ability to focus and work well.

Negative Work Environment

The data indicates that the despotic behavior of the HOD creates an adverse working environment that affects faculty members' performance. A participant states:

To make even my own standards, I am not doing well as a teacher. This may be brought on by a lack of concentration, a decline in output, or a drop in the quality of the work that is performed. It could produce an unpleasant work atmosphere that affects my capacity to concentrate and give my best work.

Decrease in Motivation

Analysis showed that when a head of department exhibits unforgiving conduct, faculty members become de-motivated. The following response is offered as evidence:

It makes me nervous or distracted, which lowers my output and lowers the quality of my work. It might also make me de-motivated, which could lower my level of efficiency at work as a whole.

Hesitation in Presenting the Ideas

The data indicate that the faculty members' reluctance to share views is solely due to the disrespectful behavior of the HOD. One of the participants said that:

I become hesitant to take the initiative on any creative project. I'm hesitant to share my opinions with the class. Low productivity, miscalculations in performance, and a communication gap, which are finally reported, all have an impact on performance.

Snubs Creativity

One respondent gives an outstanding response by stating, rather simply:

It restricts my creativity and makes me less productive.

Discussion

Despotic leadership is a topic that warrants much deeper and wider examination due to the incredibly terrible consequences and frequent occurrence rate. To lay a firm basis for knowledge, this study attempts to give a succinct summary of despotic leadership's impact on employees' performance and behavior. This will speed up the process of developing theories and provide a tone of new ideas for subsequent study. The study's goal is to investigate the negative effects of college leadership. I examine how leadership is crucial for followers and organizations but that unethical leadership may negatively affect workers' conduct and productivity.

Genuine leadership results in increased accountability and work happiness. The investigation of leadership's shadow side is fascinating since certain leaders may be detrimental to their staff members

and the company as a whole. Interpersonal elements determine whether initiatives and performances are successful or unsuccessful. The purpose of the study is to pinpoint instances of HOD faculty members acting aggressively against one another. Faculty members' behavior, attitudes, and performance are negatively impacted by the HOD's confrontational behavior. I also look at how destructive leadership styles have well-known characteristics, but there hasn't been much research in this area in leadership and emotional literature. However, leadership has a dark side that includes a number of negative. There will definitely be no advantageous work done if an organization hires such a person. Capacity loss typically reflects the common nature of mental pressure. The search for alternative opportunities to replace the unpleasant job. There will definitely be no advantageous work done if an organization hires such a person. Capacity loss typically reflects the nature of mental pressure that is common; therefore, most employees explore alternative opportunities to replace the unpleasant job. Although the dark triad leadership has a detrimental impact on people's behavior, it is crucial for the success of the organization. Despotic behavior is exploitative and self-centered, whereas abusive behavior is unpleasant toward employees.

The term "follower deviance" describes voluntary actions that go against the norms and ideals of the organization. Despotic leadership puts a burden on employees and has a bad influence on their family lives; this effect may be even worse when the employee is under stress. The present study's main focus is on how poor leadership traits, including dictatorial behavior, impact worker behavior, and productivity. It is crucial to research how dictatorial behavior affects important facets of human resource management, organizational goals and performance, and employee performance. The first concerns the pervasiveness and cost of a damaging leader, and the second is the severity of their effects on particular followers. These are the two main justifications for studying the negative aspects of autocratic rule. As a result, the performance of the employee is being negatively impacted by autocratic leadership.

Conclusion

Although the dark triad leadership has a negative impact on people's behavior, it is also necessary for the organization to succeed. Despotic behavior is self-centered and exploitative, whereas abusive behavior is hostile toward workers. When voluntary behavior deviates from the norms and ideals of the organization, it is referred to as follower deviance. Anxious workers may experience an even greater negative influence on their family lives as a result of despotic leadership tension. The current study's main focus is on the effects of authoritarian and other negative leadership styles on worker behavior and output. It is crucial to research how authoritarian conduct affects important facets of human resource management, organizational goals and performance, and worker performance. The first discusses the problem of destructive leaders being common and expensive, while the second highlights how bad they may be for certain followers. These are the main motivations for studying the negative aspects of autocratic rule. Therefore, the performance of the workers is being negatively impacted by autocratic leadership. This study aims to investigate the impact of the Head of Department's aggressive behavior on the conduct and output of staff members. It was found in this study that the HOD exhibited a confrontational manner. Since they are unable to control his aggressive conduct, they are dealing with a lot of problems. The faculty members were uncomfortable and unsatisfied due to the HOD's unfriendly, harsh, unforgiving, uncontrolled, and numerous other behaviors that are relevant to these difficulties. Additionally, the HODs are frequently helpful; however, occasionally, their attitude causes issues for faculty members. Regretfully, there is a lot of opposition when we attempt to solve them. The faculty faces serious problems as a result of the HOD's aggressive behavior. Employee performance is affected by despotic leadership.

It has been observed that there is a communication breakdown and simmering hostility between the workforce and the HOD. The faculty members' performance suffered as a result of the HOD's intimidating actions since they impaired their ability to concentrate, make sound judgments, and feel less useful overall. It was found that HODs' strict behavior had a detrimental effect on faculty members' performance and made them less attentive and efficient in general. It is claimed that a department head's polite demeanor improved employees' productivity by boosting their ability to work and creating an environment that allowed for easy communication and the development of the department's entire system under supervision. The study showed that faculty members may feel insulted and undervalued as a result of the HOD's strict behavior. It could also make someone rebellious or defensive. The HOD's menacing actions

caused faculty members to become distracted and stressed, which can lower output and the quality of the work they produce.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are made based on the research's findings:

1. Provide the head with constructive criticism on how their actions are affecting the behavior and performance of other staff members. Promote candid communication and pay attention to what they have to say. Offering them tools or chances for professional growth could be beneficial in assisting them in developing their leadership abilities.
2. Establish a culture at the institute that values cooperation, respect, and honest communication. Encourage collaboration, provide credit for accomplishments, and offer chances for career advancement. Efforts like training courses or team-building exercises can significantly increase employee enthusiasm and morale.
3. To find out how the head's actions are affecting the staff and their output, it is critical to get anonymous input from them. This input will offer insightful information and assist in pinpointing particular areas in need of development. Make sure the feedback procedure is private and foster an environment where employees feel free to voice their opinions.

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