

The Relationship Between Despotic Leadership and Employee Outcomes: An Empirical Study from Pakistan

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Abstract

Through emotional exhaustion, this study empirically tests followers' behavioral responses to autocratic leaders. The current research focuses on effects caused by despotic leadership on followers' emotional exhaustion, which leads to employee outcomes such as interpersonal deviances and indirect aggression. The association between despotic leadership and results (employee interpersonal deviance and indirect violence) is investigated in this study. In this study, emotional exhaustion is used as a mediator. Furthermore, negative affectivity is used as a moderator between despotic leadership and emotional exhaustion. A time-lagged framework is employed with a sample of 255 respondents. Age, qualification, marital status, gender, grade, type of organization, department, and job experience are among the eight demographical questions in this study. After evaluating the data for normality, correlation analysis was performed, followed by moderation and mediation analysis. The current study explores the link between despotic leadership and emotional exhaustion among followers, arguing that a despotic leader will leave followers exhausted at work. Emotional exhaustion was also linked to interpersonal deviances, such as indirect aggression, in a significant and positive way. Employee outcomes, such as interpersonal deviances and indirect aggressiveness through emotional exhaustion, will be influenced by a despotic leader, according to the findings.

Keywords: Despotic Leadership, Emotional Exhaustion, Interpersonal Deviances, Indirect Aggression

JEL Classification Code: C32, E24, D91, M10

1. Introduction

Leadership plays a crucial role not only in groups but also in organizations and societies. Leadership successes are organizations' success, and when it goes wrong organizations

suffer, and armies are defeated (Khan et al., 2022; Nurani et al., 2021; Thoroughgood et al., 2018). Previously various researchers have explored productive leadership (Wei et al., 2016) but very few studies highlighted the darker side of leadership (Naseer et al., 2016). Baumeister et al. (2001) elaborated that in the course of social interaction negative events have a far greater impact than positive ones. To get a precise view of leadership, organizations need to consider the negative leadership as it may affect the follower's efficiency and growth.

Extant research has stressed the significance of the dark side of leadership (Kawiana et al., 2021; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020; Pancasila et al., 2020; Saleh et al., 2022; Mackey et al., 2019; Neves & Schyns, 2018; Thoroughgood et al., 2018; Naseer et al., 2016; Spain et al., 2016). A systematic analysis by Mackey et al. (2019) revealed that darker side of leadership has a constructive effect on organizational deviance. Previous studies also explored the influence of the dark side of leadership on the satisfaction of followers, their well-being (Spain et al., 2016), as well as their mental health. Leaders are very costly for organizations, and

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administrations lose an average of \$500,000 to \$3,000,000 budget in contradiction of anyone disrupted leader (Russell, 2001). Business indignities like that of Enron also show the importance of leadership and how a darker leadership can result in damaging effects for the employees as well as the company. The trio typology of the dark side of leadership proposed by Einarsen et al. (2007) consisted of a) tyrannical leadership, b) derailed leadership, and c) supportive-disloyal leadership.

There are eight different leadership groups: restrictive, exploitative, laissez faire, despotic, failed, avoiding (active), avoiding (passive) and insincere leadership. Among these despotic leadership (DL) is defined as “the type of leader behaviors which are specifically *engrossed on attainment sovereignty and domination, and are stirred by a leader’s interests, arrogance, scheming, and intolerance*” (Bass, 1990). This style of leadership is eminent among all other categories (Schilling, 2009). It is comparatively a new concept and requires further investigation (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). These types of frontrunners bound contribution from their followers, especially in the decision-making process, and focus on working for their interests (De Hoogh & Den Harton, 2008) moral corruption and misconduct. The impact of the social responsibility of leaders on the performance of top management and the optimism of followers via the despotic leadership style (De Hoogh & Den Harton, 2008). They called for a further empirical investigation on understanding the role of despotic leaders in influencing individuals and affecting the outcomes of organizations. Furthermore, Naseer et al. (2016) tested the interaction between leader-member exchanges (LMX), Despotic Leaders, and organizational politics to determine employee outcomes and found that DL is damaging to employees. Furthermore, they insisted on other models and more research to magnify despotic leadership styles in organizations. Another research by Simões (2016) showed that both ethical and despotic leadership affect the emotions of employees either positively or negatively which eventually influences the work engagement of employees. The association between helping behavior and Islamic work ethic is elaborated under the despotic leadership style as personal attributes stimulate them to help their colleagues.

Erkutlu and Chafra (2018) demonstrated that the association between despotic leadership and employees’ organizational deviance is mediated by organizational identification, moreover, the affiliation between DL and organizational deviance of employees via organizational identification is moderated by value congruence. Nauman and Fatima (2018) established that Despotic leadership augments the work-family conflict among employees.

Syed et al. (2019) stated that Despotic Leadership spurs bullying behavior among nurses via moral emotions. All these researches emphasize one more examination of the despotic leadership style and its consequences (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2018; Rasool et al., 2018). So, this current study is addressing these gaps by scrutinizing the influence of DL on interpersonal deviance and indirect aggression of employees via emotional exhaustion.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conservation of Resources Theory (COR)

This study investigates the effect of despotic leadership on employee outcomes with moderated mediation model under the lens of COR theory. COR has concluded a framework for understanding the methods which are involved in an experience, management, and becoming resistant to continuing stress (Hobföll, 1989). According to (Hobföll, 2001) COR theory recognizes some conditions, which give threaten or diminish resources, that are empirically stressing. It is an environmental theory consisting of many levels which seek in understanding the nesting of individuals among their communities, families, and cultures. In specific, the loss of resources is a major predictor of psychological stress period to stir natural disasters. Therefore, the suggestion of COR theory is, that those individuals who have faced leadership’s dark nature due to resource loss are more vulnerable to suffering from emotional over-exhaustion. According to Hobföll (2001), COR theory’s basic principle is that “individuals struggle to preserve, guard, and foster those things which they value”. Hence, according to (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobföll, 1989) COR philosophers have portrayed individuals to be very highly proactive to the loss of valued resources.

Thus, the current study explained how employees move towards emotional exhaustion due to despotic leadership which further leads to individual outcomes (interpersonal deviance and indirect aggression).

2.2. Despotic Leadership (DL) and Outcome of Employees

2.2.1. Despotic Leadership (DL) and Interpersonal Deviance of Employees

Despotic leaders possess an authoritative style, are much interested in personal interests, and try to exploit their followers as much as possible (Asad et al., 2022; Aronson, 2001). These leaders have an unambiguous style of leadership as they are very demanding, scheming, and

behave heartlessly and egoistically toward their assistants/juniors, and also they require very unthinking compliance from their underlings (Schilling, 2009). Leaders devouring this leadership style exercise a high power distance over their juniors and try to solidify their power over their assistants (Naseer et al., 2016). Thus, this type of behavior from the supervisory side might lead to interpersonal deviance among followers.

Members of an organization can evaluate their worth based on signals they receive throughout their interactions with supervisors. Employees will feel competent and appreciated if supervisors' routine acts and statements during encounters with their employees convey the idea that they are required and useful for the firm. Contradictory to this, employees will involve in corrupt or immoral practices when they perceive that they are being treated dishonorably, therefore, we conclude that employees working under despotic leaders will be more attracted to corrupt or immoral behaviors.

The long-lasting pounding may result in the abused assistants with a decreased energy to carry out tasks. According to the fundamental principle of COR theory "People endeavor to hold, secure, and cultivate those things that they esteem" (Hobföll, 2001). In accordance, COR researchers have exposed people as exceptionally sensitive to damaged resources that are of esteem worth (Hobföll, 1989; Halbesleben et al., 2014). Conservation of Resource theory of stress proposes a structure to see how intercessions are intended to re-establish the mental resources of employees that can expand employees' viability and boost the achievement of large organizational outcomes. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H1a: Despotic leadership is positively related to employee interpersonal deviance.

2.2.2. Despotic Leadership and Indirect Aggression

Baron et al. (1999) while identifying various facets (personal and social) of workplace aggression unveiled that covert or indirect forms of aggression are more prevalent in the workplace as compared to overt aggression. Heightened social intelligence decreases inclination towards direct physical or verbal aggression instead when people are more socially intelligent and lack empathy they indulge in indirect aggression where high empathy encourages conflict resolution. The reciprocal nature of workplace aggression specifies that employees indulge in aggressive behaviors after experiencing or witnessing mistreatment and aggression either by a supervisor/or coworker (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). Experienced aggression at the workplace has

severe implications on the target such that they have lower psychological well-being, depleted emotional and cognitive resources, and higher levels of fear, anxiety, and distress (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010).

When leaders employ tactics to gain personal appreciation and supremacy such as derogating others and achieving one's own goals by outlaying others then their coworkers and subordinates turn against them. Despotic leadership has four typical manifestations (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Aggression begets aggression, it is most likely that followers of despotic leaders respond to their aggressive and exploitative behaviors aggressively. Conversely, revenge and retaliation literature advocate that individuals avoid getting even against high-status offenders due to fear of counter retaliation. Retaliation against a dark supervisor is a function of the supervisor's power and individual's self-control; thus, when supervisors possess high power and control over resources, then direct aggression is less likely to occur. Thus, we propose that interpersonal provocations and transgressions of despotic leaders would urge followers to retaliate against them, but instead of directly confronting them, followers will opt for indirect aggression to minimize the risk of counter retaliation. Since previous literature on workplace mistreatment suggests that supervisory mistreatment induces feelings of aggression, anger, and anxiety in employees, which affect their behaviors such that they respond aggressively and show deviance thus, it is expected that followers of despotic leaders respond aggressively to them but to save themselves from curse and exploitation of such leaders they would try to harm them circuitously and would indulge in indirect aggression. Therefore;

H1b: Despotic Leadership is positively associated with indirect aggression.

2.3. Despotic Leadership and Employees Emotional Exhaustion

Despotic leadership acts as a relational stressor that intimidates reasoning, mental, and sensitive resources. Hobföll (2001) distinguishes numerous sorts of activities that offset resources disaster or help in gaining new resources. COR hypothesizes that people look to keep up physical and mental properties, and when resources are debilitated or exhausted, it increases levels of stress, and employee withdrawal, as proven by absenteeism, might be watched (Bakker et al., 2003). Hence;

H2: Despotic leadership is positively associated with emotional exhaustion.

2.4. Emotional Exhaustion of Employees & Employees' Outcomes

2.4.1. Emotional Exhaustion and Interpersonal Deviance of Employees

According to COR theory, when a person's limited resources are depleted or threatened by a prospective loss, they may develop emotional weariness, prompting them to seek immediate relief. Employees frequently participate in such behavior (interpersonal deviance) to relieve stress at work (Lim & Teo, 2005). Thus, I proposed that

H3a: Emotional exhaustion is positively associated with employee interpersonal deviance.

2.4.2. Emotional Exhaustion and Indirect Aggression of Employees

Covert or indirect aggressive behaviors include manipulating the target's social relations to harm him/her, gossiping about the target, spreading rumors about the target, or utilizing any other means which doesn't involve confrontation with the target. Such a form of aggression is most suitable when there is an increased threat of counter retaliation or confrontation from the target. The existing literature reports that the aggressive behavior of supervisors and employees generally results in the emotional exhaustion of target employees (Merecz et al., 2009). Moreover, the vice versa can also happen as the emotionally exhausted generally employees emotionally become impulsive to indulge in aggressive behavior towards other organizational members. Moreover, Zaczyk et al. (2018) recently studied the Polish nurses and established a positive association between emotional exhaustion and workplace aggression.

H3b: Emotional exhaustion is positively related to employee indirect aggression.

2.5. Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion

DL results in creating undesirable and offended responses among people in a way that their judgment of interaction is of a very poor quality (Nguyen, 2021). Hobföll (1989) in his theory of COR, stated that people have a tendency to procure, keep up, and save resources, for example, time and vitality. As it may, people encounter mental pressure when faced with the risk of the misfortune of resources, real loss, or an inability to recover assets following an investment. Employees under despotic leadership are probably going to encounter a real loss of esteemed assets or perceive a risk of

asset loss because of the despotic behavior of their superior. We draw on COR theory (Hobföll, 1989) as a basis for theorizing how and why despotic leadership may influence emotional exhaustion and will lead to follower outcomes. When individuals experience continuous losses like despotic leadership, they come to suffer from resource loss, so they feel emotionally exhausted like that ultimately leads to interpersonal deviance. Therefore present study expects the effect of despotic leadership and followers' interpersonal deviance to be mediated by emotional exhaustion. Therefore, we predict that

H4a: Emotional exhaustion of employees is mediating the association between Despotic Leadership (DL) and interpersonal deviance.

H4b: Emotional exhaustion of employees is mediating the association between (DL) & indirect aggression.

2.6. Moderating Role of Negative Affectivity

Negative affectivity is a term that describes a person's proclivity for negative feelings and worry (Watson & Clark, 1984). Previous studies showed that individual qualities influence how people interpret and respond to events in their surroundings (Raja & Johns, 2010). Negative affectivity is well studied feature that relates to the overall dimension of subjective distress, negative engagement, and the degree to which one feels upset or unpleasantly stimulated in general (Watson & Clark, 1984). Individuals with high NA score tend to dwell on the negative aspects of life and have a pessimistic view of their surroundings and are more likely to face and create constraints. Therefore, it is hypothesized that (Figure 1).

H5: Negative Affectivity (NA) will moderate the negative association between (DL) & employee emotional exhaustion so that the connection will be stronger when Negative Affectivity (NA) is higher.

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1. Sampling

The current research employs a quantitative research design, in which a survey method was engaged, and responses were collected by utilizing already developed valid instruments. Personal & professional possessions were utilized to generate data for the study variables, including Despotic Leadership (IV), Negative affectivity (Mod), Emotional Exhaustion (Med), interpersonal deviance, and Indirect Aggression (DVs).

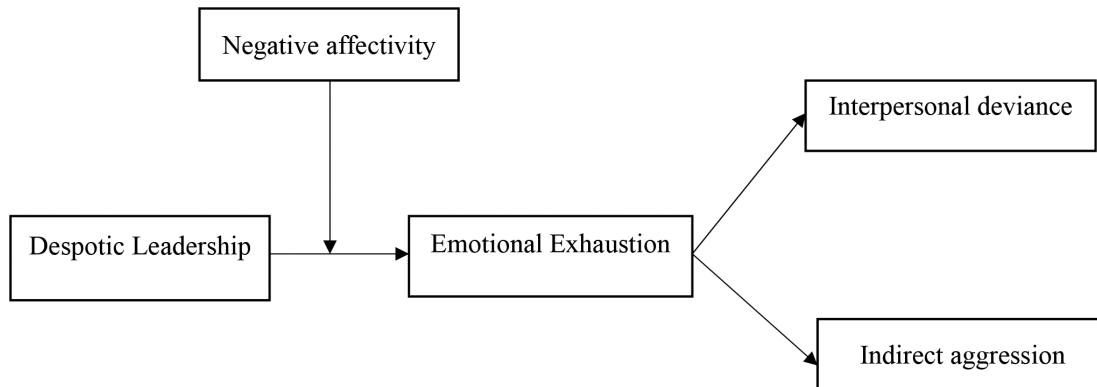


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Despotic Leadership was measured by six items by De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008), NABY ten items scale by Watson et al. (1988), Emotional Exhaustion by nine items by Maslach and Jackson (1981), Interpersonal Deviance by six items by Aquino et al. (1999) and Indirect Aggression twelve items by Björkqvist et al. (2000).

The current study’s populations are employees employed mainly in public sector organizations based in Islamabad. Data has been collected from employees of ministries, divisions, and services sectors by using a convenient non-probability sampling procedure. As this study aimed at capturing emotional responses and corresponding behaviors of employees’ working under despotic leaders, therefore, respondents constituted a diverse sample of employees working in various organizations at different managerial levels.

Research questionnaires were developed to collect data from respondents. Responses were obtained on existing validated instruments, and self-administered questionnaires were distributed to obtain the responses. Deploying a time-lagged design, respondents who participated in the study at time T1 were again contacted at time T2 and time T3 to get their views on respective research constructs. All the responses are self-reported where they rated for their leader’s behaviors, their own affective reactions, emotional exhaustion, and behaviors. The current research employed a time-lagged research design (e.g. T3), and specifically, two sources, either from the focal persons reported or the peer-reported. Boomsma (1983) argued that a 200–300 sample size is considerable for a time-lagged or longitudinal study. Therefore the sample size of the current research is 255 respondents.

3.2. Data Coding

For analyzing the SPSS analysis software, the first requirement is to enter data in the datasheet. In which every

response has a specific numerical value. This research consisted of 8 demographics, namely age (1 = 21–25 years, 2: 26–30 Years, 3: 31–35 Years), gender (2: Female, 1: Male), qualification (1: Graduate/Master, 2 for MPhil, & 3: Ph.D.), marital status (2: Married & 1: Unmarried), type of organizations (Government; 1, 3: Private, 2: Semi-Government &), dept. (2: Administration & 1: Faculty, 3: Others), grade (1: ≤ 16 or 16, 2: 17 & 18, 3: 19 & above), and 4: 41 & above and work experience (1: 1–5 years, 2: 6–10 Years, 3: 11–15 years, 4: 16–20 Years, 5: 21 & Above).

3.3. Data Screening

Data entering in this software requires a detailed and thorough screening before initiating the analysis process. This study’s datasheet does not consist of any missing values or outliers.

4. Results

4.1. Normality Test

Range of values for normality test in kurtosis & skewness must be within the range of –3 to +3. The results are shown in Table 1.

Results in Table 2 stated that despotic leadership has a negative correlation with negative affectivity ($r = -0.15$, $p < 0.01$), while positively associated with emotional exhaustion ($r = 0.39$) interpersonal deviance ($r = 0.48$) and indirect aggression ($r = 0.56$). Negative affectivity negatively associated with emotional exhaustion ($r = -0.20$) interpersonal deviance ($r = -0.06$, $p = ns$), and indirect aggression ($r = 0.05$, $p = ns$). Emotional exhaustion +ive correlated with interpersonal deviance ($r = 0.44$) & indirect aggression ($r = 0.36$). Interpersonal deviance is positively connected with indirect aggression ($r = 0.55$).

Table 3 shows the results of regression for both the direct and meditational hypotheses (H1a, H2, H3a, H4a). Despotic leadership is positively connected with interpersonal deviance ($B = 0.51, p < 0.001$) and emotional exhaustion ($B = 0.58, p < 0.001$). Also, EE is positively linked with the ID of employees ($B = 0.28, p < 0.001$). The current research results show support for H3a, H2 & H1a. Hence, these are supported. Despotic leadership has a significant indirect influence on interpersonal deviance through emotional exhaustion. For testing the mediation effect, we consider the bootstrap estimate and confidence interval of 95%. Where the effect is significant when both intervals (UL and LL do not contain zero. Hence, the Table 4 show that the in-direct

effect not containing zero (indirect effect = 0.16 Lower Limit = 0.08, Upper Limit = 0.26). Therefore, Hypothesis 4a is also accepted.

Table 4 shows the regression for direct and mediation hypotheses (H1b, H2, H3b, H4b). Despotic leadership is positively connected with in-direct aggression ($B = 0.39, p < 0.001$) and emotional exhaustion ($B = 0.58, p < 0.001$). Emotional exhaustion is positively linked with indirect aggression ($B = 0.09, p < 0.001$). This research results provide support for H1b, H2, and H3b. Hence, study hypotheses (H1b, H2, and H3b) are also supported. Despotic leadership has a significant in-direct effect in-direct aggression through emotional exhaustion. Also, the Table 4 demonstrates the

Table 1: Skewness and Kurtosis

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
Despotic Leadership (DL)	-0.22	-1.76
Negative affectivity	-1.11	0.42
Emotional exhaustion	0.30	-1.39
Interpersonal deviance	-0.06	-1.51
Indirect aggression	-0.28	-1.36

Table 2: Correlations

S. No		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	Despotic leadership	4.71	0.49	(0.71)				
2	Negative affectivity	5.19	0.39	-0.15**	(0.76)			
3	Emotional exhaustion	4.90	0.72	0.39**	-0.20**	(0.70)		
4	Interpersonal deviance	4.21	0.69	0.48**	-0.06	0.44**	(0.74)	
5	Indirect aggression	4.14	0.38	0.56**	0.05	0.36**	0.55**	(0.75)

$n = 255$; alpha reliabilities are presented in parentheses, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 3: Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion

Variables	R^2	B	SE	T	P
Despotic leader → interpersonal deviance	0.30	0.51	0.07	7.44	0.000
Despotic leader → emotional exhaustion	0.15	0.58	0.07	7.93	0.000
Emotional exhaustion → interpersonal deviance	0.30	0.28	0.05	6.06	0.001
Bootstrap Results for Indirect Effects					
		M	SE	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
Effect	Emotional exhaustion	0.16	0.05	0.08	0.26

Note: $n = 255$.

Table 4: Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion

Variables		R ²	B	SE	T	P
Despotic leaders' → indirect aggression		0.34	0.39	0.04	10.44	0.000
Despotic leader → emotional exhaustion		0.15	0.57	0.07	7.93	0.000
Emotional exhaustion → indirect aggression		0.34	0.09	0.03	3.55	0.01
Bootstrap Results for Indirect Effects						
		M	SE	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI	
Effect	Emotional exhaustion	0.05	0.02	0.01	0.10	

Note: *n* = 255. Bootstrap sample size = 5000. Unstandardized regression coefficients.

Table 5: Moderation Results

Predictors	Emotional Exhaustion					
		R ²	Estimate	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Stepno.1		0.20				
Const.			10.96***	2.11	6.80	15.11
(DL)			-1.16***	0.48	-2.11	-0.21
Negative affectivity (NA)			-1.57**	0.38	-2.31	-0.83
Step 2	ΔR ²	0.03				
DL x NA			0.31***	0.09	0.14	0.48
Conditional Direct Effects of DL on EE at Values of Negative Affectivity (Slope Test Results)						
Moderator	Emotional Exhaustion					
Negative Affectivity (NA)	Effect	Boot SE	LL CI	UL CI		
NA -1 SD (-1.80)	0.42***	0.08	0.26	0.57		
NA M (0.00)	0.45***	0.08	0.30	0.60		
NA +1 SD (1.80)	0.48***	0.07	0.34	0.63		

Note: *n* = 255. Bootstrap: 5000. Unstandardized regression coefficients.

in-direct effect not containing zero (indirect effect = 0.05 Lower Limit = 0.01, Upper Limit = 0.10). Therefore, Hypothesis 4b is also accepted.

Hypothesis 5 is that negative affectivity moderates the association among DL and EE of employees. Table 5 reveals that the interaction-term of despotic leadership * negative affectivity have significant influence on emotional exhaustion (B = 0.31, SE = 0.09, *p* < 0.05). The conditional

direct effect of DL on EE also varies across the various levels of negative affectivity verified via bootstrap results (see Table 4). After plotting the significant connections for below & above scores of Standard Deviation of the mean of the moderator. The positive association between DL and EE was stronger when negative affectivity was high (*β* = 0.48, *p* < 0.01) while it was weaker while negative affectivity was - low (*β* = 0.42).

4.2. Hypotheses Test Results

Table 6: Hypotheses' Main Effect Summary

Hypothesis	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Status	
H-1a		Interpersonal deviance	Supported	
H-1b	Despotic	Indirect aggression		
H2	Leadership	Emotional exhaustion	Supported	
H3a	Emotional exhaustion	Interpersonal deviance	Supported	
H3b		Indirect aggression	Supported	
Mediation Summary				
Hypotheses	IV	Med	DV	Status
H4a	Despotic leader	EEEE	Interpersonal deviance	Supported
H4b			Indirect aggression	Supported
EE: Emotional exhaustion.				
Moderation Hypothesis Summary				
Hypothesis	IV	Mediator	Moderator	Status
H5	Despotic leader	Emotional exhaustion	Negative affectivity	Supported

5. Findings and Discussion

For the current research, nine main effect hypotheses were proposed connecting despotic leadership to employees. Interpersonal deviances, indirect aggression (H1a & b) respectively, despotic leadership to emotional exhaustion (H2), Emotional exhaustion to employee behavioral outcomes i.e. interpersonal deviances, and indirect aggression (H3 a & b) correspondingly (Table 6).

Findings also show a significant positive association between Despotic Leadership (DL) and employees' interpersonal deviances and indirect aggression, which ultimately supports our hypotheses H1a, & H1b, respectively. Furthermore, findings also maintained the positive and significant association between DL and EE, which further supported the second hypothesis. Furthermore, findings show a significant positive connection between Despotic Leadership (DL) and employees' interpersonal deviances and indirect aggression which further supported Hypothesis 3a and Hypothesis 3b.

5.1. Mediation Hypotheses

Four mediation hypotheses were proposed, emotional exhaustion mediates the association between Despotic Leadership (DL) and interpersonal deviances (H4a), and indirect aggression (H4b). We employed bootstrapping technique and Sobel tests for testing the indirect effects.

Results exposed that emotional exhaustion mediates the association between Despotic Leadership (DL) & employee interpersonal deviances and in-direct aggression. Furthermore, the Normal theory test also discloses that indirect effect is significant as proposed direction because of which hypotheses H4a & H4b is also accepted.

5.2. Moderation Hypotheses

Negative Affectivity moderating role in the relationship among (DL) & employee emotional exhaustion that association is weakened when negative affectivity is high. PROCESS macro model 1 was utilized for testing moderation. Results accepted the moderation hypothesis of negative affectivity at changed levels and projected the way of the relationship. Therefore, hypothesis five is also accepted.

The current study also investigates the moderating role of negative affectivity in the association between Despotic Leadership (DL) and employees' emotional exhaustion. Results also support this hypothesis. High negative affectivity leads to access to knowledge structure (Aquino & Reed, 2002) which nurtures moral conduct (Hertz & Krettenauer, 2016; Chowdhury & Fernando, 2014), & emotional exhaustion developed less when the presence of negative affectivity is higher (Hardy et al., 2015). Therefore, we confirm that negative affectivity moderates the relationship between Despotic Leadership (DL) & emotional exhaustion.

5.3. Methodological Strengths

The current research employed a time-lagged data collection research design (Cook et al., 2002), previous research also employed a time-lagged design of research Podsakoff et al. (2003) argued that there is a high probability of common method bias when data is collected from a single source because of social desirability bias. Therefore, to address the issue of common method bias, current research employed a two sourced time-lagged design of research, & negative affectivity conveyed by the focal person (employees) at time T1, after a gap of 3 to 4 weeks employees' emotional exhaustion was reported at time T2, and again a gap of 3 to 4 weeks employees' interpersonal deviances & indirect aggression were self-reported. Also PROCESS macro techniques established by (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) was employed for analyzing above mentioned hypotheses.

6. Conclusion and Limitations

The current research has various theoretical ramifications. Firstly, the findings of this study added to the small but growing body of knowledge about the unethical implications of autocratic leadership. Previous research has looked at the psychological effects of despotic leadership, such as life satisfaction, anxiety and emotional weariness but only a few have looked at the behavioral affects, such as job performance, creativity, career progression (Rasool et al., 2018) and organizational deviance. Second the study employs Emotion Exhaustion Theory (EEA) proposed by (Bandura, 1990), in the literature as emotional exhaustion and we found that it is the strongest predictor of undesirable work outcomes. We also investigated the antecedents and outcomes of emotional exhaustion. We also found that DL is positively associated with EE, while emotional exhaustion is positively connected to employee interpersonal deviance and indirect aggression. Emotional exhaustion further is mediating the positive association among despotic leadership, interpersonal deviance and indirect aggression. Also, we empirically tested negative affectivity as a moderator in the connection between (DL), and emotional exhaustion.

This research has several strengths but still, there are a few limitations that can serve as a basis for future studies. Firstly, data is collected from a small sample size, which may affect the studies' generalizability. Therefore, the future studies could increase the sample size

Secondly, at times T2 and T3 the gap was only 3 to 4 weeks, which is not recommended to be purely longitudinal. Hence, future longitudinal studies should try to have a gap of at least four to five months in data collections of time T2

and time T3 for more authenticated results and to quantify the cause and effect relationship (Dobrow Riza et al., 2018).

Thirdly, the current research collected the dyadic (focal employees & peer-reported) rule for gathering data, where Despotic Leader (DL), negative affectivity, emotional exhaustion, interpersonal deviance, and indirect aggression were reported by the focal person.

Fourthly, the current study examined the effect of a Despotic Leader (DL), on emotional exhaustion which results in employee outcomes but on our data basis it is impossible to speak about mental contrivance due to which despotic leader triggers emotional exhaustion among employees. Also in the future, the moderating role of constructs like any type of justice and (LMX), etc. can be explored (Malik & Sattar, 2019).

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