

## THE INTERACTIVE ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT BETWEEN DESPOTIC LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF MEDICINE COMPANIES IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to determine whether social support acts as a moderator between despotic leadership, and employee performance. This study is based on the concept of resource conservation (COR). Information was gathered from workers and their employers at different medicines companies in Mardan and Peshawar, Pakistan. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed and only 220 questionnaires were found completed. The data was run SPSS. The findings of the study show that despotic leadership negatively affects employee performance. The study further reports that social support moderates the relationship between despotic leadership and employee performance. It also explores the implications of the findings.

**Keywords:** *Despotic Leadership, Social Support, Employees Performance*

### **Introduction**

Employee performance (EP) can be improved by implementing a variety of leadership strategies that are despotic leadership (DL), Transactional, transformational, and many other styles are among them (Rasool, 2018). While many studies (Nauman, 2018) have looked at the positive and helpful effects leaders have on their followers and organizations, few have looked at the dark side of leadership (Naseer et al., 2016). The flip side of leadership is an

appealing research topic in current times. Regardless of what academics' think is best, confident leaders' actions harm their followers and the organization. Research in project management strongly suggests that using projects to implement change within an organization may be quite successful (De, 2008). The effectiveness of the project and the organization can be significantly influenced by implicit and explicit interpersonal elements, including the managerial and team members' cognitive capacities, the level of team interaction, and the members' consensus on how to continue (Erkutlu, 2018). Two sources primarily cause the increased focus on unfavorable leadership traits. The fascination with destructive leaders is due in part to their highly severe effects on specific followers, as well as to their domination and expenditure. Specifically (Kayani, 2019). Even though authoritarian leadership shares many traits with the most harmful leadership styles, as defined by Malik (2019), there is a dearth of research on it in the management and psychological literature. Yet, leadership's shadow side has several detrimental effects on EP (Eliyana, 2019).

Driven by self-concern, DL persons seek dominance and authority in the job; researchers also discover that such managers are autocratic, arrogant, and inflexible (Nasser et al., 2016). The study of DL is critical due to the leader's exploitative and self-absorbed behavior, which displays a lack of concern for the team (Iqbal, 2015). This leadership style has been linked to several adverse outcomes, including decreased EP, organizational commitment, and psychological distress (Asfaw, 2015).

DL is a severe social stressor that negatively impacts private and professional spheres. Building a solid social network can help people better balance their lives between work and family. Social support has close friendships or contacts that help you succeed professionally, boost your self-esteem, or feel better about a particular circumstance. According to Naseer et al. (2016), social support helps workers feel less stressed in both their personal and professional lives, and this reduced stress improves the quality of their lives. So, in this study, social support will act as a moderator between DL and EP.

## **Literature Review hypotheses development**

### **Despotic Leadership (DL)**

According to recent studies, DL is cutthroat and self-serving, exploiting its employees for gain (Rasool, 2018). Nauman (2018) defines DL as one of several authoritarian leadership styles in which bosses behave aggressively and authoritatively to subordinates, causing stress and work dissatisfaction. Subordinates' job satisfaction suffers due to their supervisors' concern about DL (Malik, 2019). According to Kayani (2019), DL is a negative leadership style that is more concerned with establishing one's control and authority in the workplace than achieving the organization's stated goals.

According to Naseer et al. (2016), dictatorial leaders' unethical treatment of subordinates adds to low morale, which results in decreased collaboration and a loss of the organization's reputation (Naseer et al., 2016). DL workers will not have access to any of the organization's resources (Erkutlu, 2018); as a result, followers are less attentive and driven to contribute to the organization's progress.

### **Employee's Performance**

Scholars define "performance" as the outcomes some workers achieve in a specific field (Eliyana, 2019). Those who are content and thrilled about their jobs outperform others who are less

enthusiastic (Iqbal, 2015; Khan, 2020). We define "worker performance" as the extent to which an employee's quantity and quality of work contribute to the firm's overall success (Asfaw, 2015). The study characterizes individual performance as "the employee's approach and productivity to completing the assignment and the supervisor's prospect to meet company goals" (Anitha, 2014). Worker performance also encompasses worker motivation, workplace performance, and the effort employees make to achieve the firm's goals by utilizing the firm's resources (including money, knowledge, and other people) to create a favorable work environment and achieve those goals (Tufail, 2020; Schreurs et al., 2012).

Supporters are valuable information-gathering resources because they give the organization new ideas and feedback. Employees provide firms with new knowledge, ideas, and creativity. Various factors influence employee performance and must be addressed for a business or project to be successful (Idowu, 2018). There is a strong link between a leader's demeanor and the quality of their team's work. Workers are more likely to stay in their jobs if they see their managers acting in ways that boost their morale and productivity (Foy et al., 2019).

### **Despotic Leadership and Employees Job Performance**

According to the study's authors, DLs are prone to abusing their authority, prioritizing their interests primarily, and demonstrating a lack of understanding of the effects of their actions on the organization and their subordinates (Anitha, 2014; Schreurs et al., 2012). Despots encourage their subjects to rebel and undermine group loyalty (Eliyana, 2019). Workplace deviance is "voluntary action that breaches corporate rules and endangers the organization's well-being." DL, in which the leader prioritizes his or her interests over those of the workforce, is a substantial source of workplace stress and should be forcefully opposed (Idowu, 2018).

Task-focused leadership makes decision-making much easier (Naseer et al., 2016). Despot supporters negatively perceive their organization as a whole (Nauman, 2018). DL-induced workforce strain resulted in massive differences in productivity, efficiency, and wealth (De, 2008). Only two research looked at the impact of destructive or authoritarian leadership on organizational performance (Naseer et al., 2016).

According to a Kayani (2019), DL has a minor impact on business success (2008). Cost overruns are a significant link between DL and organizational success, as evidenced by (Malik, 2019). According to a recent study, DL significantly impacts workers' personal lives, and this effect is amplified when workers are stressed (Erkutlu, 2018).

*H<sub>1</sub>: DL has negative association with EP.*

### **The Moderation Role of Social Support (SS) between DL and EP**

Social support (SS) is described as "a technique for public corroboration or affiliation that makes reachable persons with separate help or with a lot of linkage to an individual that is implicit as responsive" by Schreurs et. (2012). Those in society who experience more significant levels of anxiety and stress, as well as higher levels of support from their families and places of employment, can compute their heights of hopelessness-related indicators and difficulties at work (Chiu, 2015).

According to the researcher, Administrator SS is a public service that fosters compassion, an understanding of employees' needs, the development of values, and the solution of problems using resources that can be traced or materials that can be contributed (Idowu, 2018).

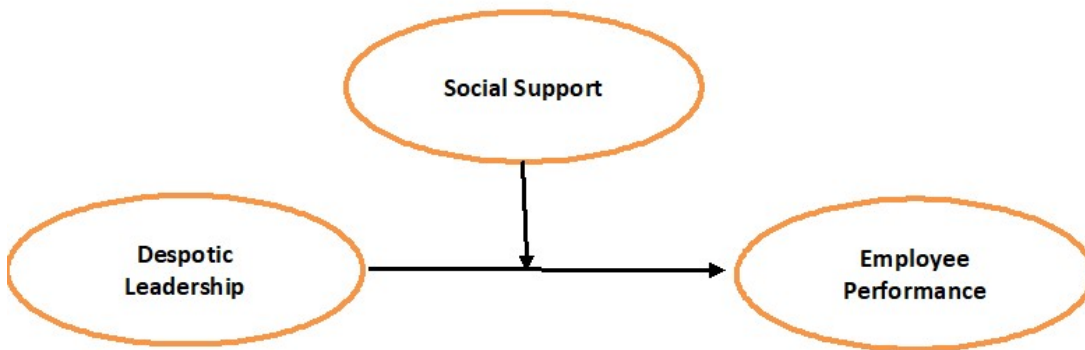
The researcher said that administrative SS would put up a socio-emotional support system that

would assist people in responding favorably to the supervisor. Social assistance or support is one example of how relationships between individuals can strengthen trade (Halbesleben, 2007). According to the researcher, social support or help can empower people, and social support has more excellent psychological than material effects (Foy et. 2019).

Rasool (2018) claim that psychological achievement and life success are broad considerations of one scenario that might be either positive or negative. The effectiveness of employees who seek social support at work will be higher than those who do not (Nauman, 2018). Due to the DL style, one of the significant issues in the workplace is job strain (Erkutlu, 2018). Even after adjusting for negative affectivity, SS from colleges and supervisors demonstrated job satisfaction (Iqbal, 2015).

**H2:** Social support Moderates the negative effect between DL and EP

### **Conceptual Model**



*Figure 1: Conceptual Model*

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Population and Sample**

Each of the respondents worked as a salesperson for a service company. Researchers got in touch with these companies via personal connections, and employees who agreed to participate in the study were given surveys. All participants agreed to participate in the surveys by signing a consent form that included information about the study's goals and guaranteed their privacy. The data will only be available to the researchers, and only the aggregate findings will be made public. These techniques put respondents at ease and helped us deal with pressures for social acceptance. A second attempt was made to contact the late responders and non-responders to boost the response rate. If things continue in this direction, we may be sure that our samples are representative of the entire population and cover a wide range of occupational classifications, work settings, and other essential characteristics.

Data were gathered in two distinct phases separated by two weeks to lower the standard deviation of the conventional method (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Opinions on DL and EP were gathered in the initial survey. Respondents were questioned about their SS in the second poll two weeks later. The questionnaires from both periods were linked together using a distinct identification. By using codes to conceal their identities, we guaranteed the confidentiality of the survey participants. Data was collected from the respondents working in medicine companies in districts Mardan and Peshawar. A total of 300 employees were reached to collect data. However, only 220 of them were returned and used for analysis.

## Measurement

The data was collected through an adopted questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of 3 different studies that were DL is measured using 6 items (Hangs & Dickson, 2008), EP is measured using 4 items (Ferris, Gerald R., L.A. Witt, and Wayne A. Hochwarter, 2001), and SS is measured using 6 items (Karasek, R. A., 1998). And the responses of the respondent were measured using the Five point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

### Reliability Analysis of Scale

The researcher can decide whether or not the scale's questions are compatible when the sample size and nature of the investigation vary. Cronbach's alpha, a measure of reliability, should be more significant than 0.70, according to Nunnally. (1994). Reliability scales assess how consistently an instrument performs after repeated use. The alpha value of DL is.821, the alpha value of EP is.893, and the alpha value of SS is.706. A Cronbach's Alpha better than 0.70 indicates that the estimates are adequate for keeping the items.

### Demographics of the Respondents

**Table 1: Demographics**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
male	127	57.8
female	93	42.2
Total	220	100
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
25-30	93	42.3
31-35	71	32.4
36-40	52	23.6
41-45	4	1.7
46 and above	0	0
Total	220	100
<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Intermediate	10	4.5
Bachelor	54	24.7
Masters	126	57.2
MS/MPHil	27	12.3
Ph. D	3	1.3
Total	220	100
<b>Job Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1 to 5 years	84	38.3
6 to 10 years	58	26.4
11 to 15	61	27.8
16 to 20	14	6.2
21 and above	3	1.3
Total	220	100

Table 1 indicates that 127 of the 220 individuals in the sample are men and 93 are women.

In addition to age, sample groups should be characterized by additional demographic factors. Because some individuals may feel uneasy sharing their age, we use a scale range when inquiring about age demographics. Table 1 indicates that most respondents (25-30%) are firm employees. There are 220 respondents, and those aged 0 and older constitute a small proportion (0.1%). Although 23.6% of respondents were between 36 and 40, 1.7% were between 41 and 45, and 32.4% were between 31 and 35.

A qualified labor force is crucial for the growth of a prosperous nation. Hence, educational attainment is also a critical statistical component. 4.5% of the sample has an associate's degree, 24.71 % has a bachelor's degree, 57.2% has a master's degree, 12.3 % has a master's degree or higher in philosophy, and 1.3% has a Ph.D.

We designed a selection of time intervals for employees to choose from while completing the experience-based data-gathering form. 38.3% of the 220 respondents have 1 to 5 years of experience, 26.4% have 6 to 10 years, 27.8% have 11 to 15 years, 6.2% have 16 to 20 years, and only 1.3% have more than 21 years of experience. The sample is skewed towards individuals with 1 to 5 and 6 to 10 years of experience.

**Results**

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis**

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	1	2	3
DL	220	1	5	4.2233	0.40831	1	-	
EP	220	1	4	1.585	0.44677	-.290**	1	
IWE	220	1	4	1.5862	0.46201	-.269**	.983**	1

Table 2 provides information on the factors utilized in the investigation. The sample size is 220 for all variables. Table 2 reveals that the mean value of the independent variable DL is 4.2233, with a respectable standard deviation of 0.40831. EP's mean of 1.5850 and standard deviation of 0.44677 are comparable to SS's mean of 1.5862 and standard deviation of 0.46201. The DL and EP mean values are oppositely extreme.

**Regression Analysis**

Regression analysis was used to infer the causal connection between our dependent and independent variables. Using the values of the independent variables as input, it predicts the values of the dependent variables. It is helpful to know how many changes in the dependent variable take place for each unit shift in DL in order to predict the causal relationship. The main idea behind regression was proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

**Table 3: Connection between DL and EP**

Predictor	EP						
	B	R <sup>2</sup>	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	SE	t	Sign.	F change
DL	-0.29	0.084	0.08	0.42855	-4.59	0	21.058

*DL-Despotic Leadership, EP-Employee Performance, P<.05, N=220*

Table 3 reveals that DL reduces EP (r=-0.29, t=-4.59, P0.05). Greater DL impact results in lower EP. When DL is used, the EP transition time can be lowered by up to 8%. The fact that p is smaller than.05 and the two variables move in different directions reinforces the significance of the link; thus, Hypothesis 1 is accepted.

**Moderation Analysis between DL and EP**

**Table 4:** The moderating effect of SS between DL and EP

SS	$\beta$	SE	t	95%LLCI	95%LLCI
Interaction Terms	-.2116	.0583	-3.63	-.3265	-.0967

*SS-Social Support, DL-Despotic Leadership, EP- Employee Performance, N=220, P<0.05*

According to Table 4, non-standardized regression analysis ( $B = -.2116$ ,  $t = -3.63$ ), SS moderates the link between DL and EP. Moreover, with zero not being the midpoint of the ranges, the bottom and upper-class bootstrapping values are  $-0.3265$  and  $-0.0967$ , respectively. Moreover, data points to SS as a moderator of the relationship between DL and EP. This supports the second hypothesis.

**Discussion**

According to the first hypothesis, DL has a negative impact on EP. According to the theory, there is a significant inverse relationship between EP and DL. The t values demonstrate the significance of the relationship between DL and EP; if DL has a more substantial impact on the job, employee performance suffers.

DL appears to have no regard for the impact of their actions on the firm or their employees, in addition to being exploitative, self-centered, and indifferent to the needs of subordinates (Hoogh & Hortog, 2008). Despots rule Pakistan, imposing a foreign culture on the country and its people. Looking into how poor management affects employee satisfaction and output is logical. We propose using COR as a starting point for our inquiry (Hobfoll, 2001). Working for a tyrant leader is said to cause high social stress, which reduces workplace efficiency. According to the COR theory, employee burnout is caused by the presence of DL because workplace resources are spent faster than they are created (Freedy & Hobfoll, 1994). Resources, much more than resource growth, greatly impact distress (Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993).

The data suggest that despotic leaders are harmful to EP. Despotic employers were found to have a negative impact on employee morale and productivity. Because of its authoritarian treatment of subordinates, Naseer et al. (2016) classify DL as unethical. Corruption and narcissism are only the icings on the cake.

We use Preacher and Hayes' (2012) SPSS (Bolin, 2014) process macros in conjunction with the Hayes' Model: 05 templates to investigate the moderation hypothesis. Table 4 clearly shows that the second hypothesis, "Social support moderates the link between DL and EP," is correct. Furthermore, the bootstrapping values for the lower and upper classes are  $-.3265$  and  $-.0967$ , respectively, with zero indicating that the value is beyond the range.

**Practical and Theoretical Implications**

The new study adds to the body of knowledge both conceptually and experimentally. Previous studies have shown a connection between DL, EE, and anxiety (Nauman et al., 2018). This study adds to the body of knowledge on several essential outcome variables, such as how well people do at work under authoritarian leadership.

This study shows that employee and leader disengagement due to inadequate leadership will generate serious productivity challenges for the company. Performance is crucial for every project, task, employee, manager, and overall corporate objective.

In the current competitive economic environment, authoritarian leadership can be costly and result in low output for organizations. The study advises organizations to be cautious when selecting new leaders and regularly evaluate current leadership. It is essential to ask for and act on input from prior leaders since authoritarian leaders usually act unethically toward their

employees.

Businesses that create a positive workplace culture can lessen the adverse effects of authoritarian leadership on worker performance. You should reassure the staff members who have to put up with the leader's behavior as a preventative step. Employers can lessen the stress associated with workplace unhappiness and work-family conflicts by encouraging employees to participate in relaxation, psychological objectivity, personnel management, and fitness programs (Soonentag, 2008). The current study results have significant repercussions for upper management, supervisors, and subordinates of the company because of the persistent issue of power cultural gaps in Pakistan. This suggests that training sessions at the executive and personnel levels are necessary for the organization. Businesses should not only be on the lookout for leaders who might abuse their position of power and treat their subordinates unethically, but they should also allow these leaders to receive training and develop more just, moral, and ethical attitudes.

### **Limitations**

Like any other, the scope and depth of this investigation are limited by time and resources. This study focuses solely on one group (the Pakistani medicines industry), limiting the findings' application to other contexts and cultures.

Also, the cross-sectional methodology used in this study makes it biased. Comparatively speaking, longitudinal studies can be conducted with less time and money but are more likely to have a common bias. In-depth interviews with the manager and staff supervisor are conducted as a result, and they yield helpful information.

### **Conclusions**

This study provides empirical evidence for the influence of DL on EP. The authors of this study have attempted to account for the relationship between DL and EP in the Pakistani medicines industry. Workers and managers in the medicines business in Pakistan completed questionnaires to establish the degree of the negative effect that DL has on employee performance (EP) and the moderating role that SS plays in this connection. Just 220 of the approximately 300 questionnaires sent out were returned for analysis, yet, these surveys contain the majority of the information necessary to draw any conclusions from the study. In addition, statistical analysis demonstrates that the variables' validity and dependability are sufficient for inclusion in the model. The notion of the Conservation of resources is also compatible with the proposed ideas. When all numbers are accounted for, the hypothesis holds.

It adds much to the existing corpus of knowledge. The findings of this research contribute to the study of EP using DL. Despotict dictators have been shown to have a destructive impact on EP (Naseer et al., 2016). They obtained their information from the retail and academic sectors, but we focus on the medicines industry in Pakistan.

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