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## IMPACTS OF DESPOTIC LEADERSHIP AND DARK PERSONALITY TRIAD ON FOLLOWER'S SENSE OF MEANINGFUL WORK: MODERATING INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

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### ABSTRACT

There is a growing interest in understanding how follower's reactions towards dark leadership are shaped by the follower's perceptions and organizational justice. Drawing on the conservation of Social Exchange Theory, this research investigates the impact of despotic leadership and dark personality triad (Narcissism, Psychopathy, Machiavellianism) on follower's meaningful work with the moderation of organizational justice. The sample consists of 190 employees with diverse organizational backgrounds serving across different industries like hospitality, healthcare, and business. The results show that despotic leadership and the dark personality triad (Narcissism, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism) has a significant and negative impact on follower's sense of meaningful work. The organizational justice moderates the relationship of despotic leadership, and Narcissism with follower's sense of meaningful work. But it has no moderating effect in the relationship of psychopathy and Machiavellianism with follower's sense of meaningful work. The study has great significance for different sectors as the top management across different industries can take as guidance to design policies regarding the leaders and they can understand that effective leadership qualities are very important to promote the active participation of employees at the workplace.

**Disciplinary:** Multidisciplinary (Management Sciences (HRM), Mathematics (Statistics)).

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Little search is conducted on dark leadership and dark personality traits of the leaders that have negative effects on the organization's performance and well-being of the employees, while past

researches aimed to explore the positive and constructive leadership (Tepper 2000). The research on destructive leadership explored that ineffective leadership is not only limited to just the absence of leadership; there are a variety of aspects and different behaviors include ineffective leadership (Bies and Tripp 1998). According to Derks et al. (2016); Hirschi (2012); Tummers and Knies (2013), perception of followers regarding work meaningfulness is very important and there are a line of researches shown that empowering leadership, transformational leadership and high-quality member exchange relationship of leaders are positively related to the follower's attitude and behavior. However, there is little research on the dark side of the leadership in making sense of meaningful work.

In today's emerging market, people across generations are motivated to work at a place where they can enhance inner life satisfaction and work meaningfulness. The meaningful work means employees get personal meaning and purpose from work and feel energized and enjoy the tasks assigned to them by supervisors (Neal and Bennett 2000). According to Fox (1994), "meaningful work is about things such as expressing one's inner life needs by seeking meaningful work, contributing to others, living one's dream, and searching for deeper meaning and purpose rather than just meant to be interesting and challenging". Campbell et al. (2010); Lepisto and Pratt (2017) proposed that many people search for something that is larger than themselves and goes beyond their ego when they lack a deeper sense of meaning at work. Cascio (1995); Carton (2018) suggested that organizations need to react to the increasing need for meaningful work by intensifying the leader's behavior at workplace. It is very important to understand those circumstances that can satisfy follower's meaningfulness at workplace.

There are certain conditions under which leaders diminish the follower's meaningfulness at work such as job designs, follower's attribution towards the leader, the relationship between leader and follower, personality traits of leaders and leadership style of the leaders. They play a vital role in shaping the behavior and perception of followers at work. The despotic leadership contains the characteristics of negative leadership style and little research is conducted in the area of despotic leadership that influences the attitude, behavior, and perception of followers (Raja et al., 2016).

De Hoogh and Hartog (2008) defined "despotic leadership as a leader's tendency to engage in authoritarian and dominant behavior in pursuit of self-interest, self-aggrandizement, and exploitation of their subordinates". Leaders exploit their subordinates for their personal gain regardless of the needs and concerns of the subordinate, use commanding and controlling mechanisms to manipulate them, and want unquestioning submission from their subordinates (Schilling 2009). They have morally corrupt behavior and legitimate organizational interests by indulging themselves in self-serving biases. According to Naseer et al. (2016), despotic leadership negatively affects creativity, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance.

The dark personality traits have negative effects on the follower's work meaningfulness and that is the reason three negative personality traits of leaders i.e. Narcissism, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism are considered in this research. According to Hartog and Belschak (2012) these three personality dimensions are a socially malevolent and insincere character, interacting with another in an aggressive and emotionally cold way having behavioral tendencies to promote oneself at the cost of others. In the view of Babiak and Hare (2006), psychopaths do not bother others because they lack conscience and morality. They are not sensitive to criticism and do not consider other's pain when making moral judgments as they lack emotions. Braun (2017) investigated that narcissists

ignore other's welfare, although they do not intend to harm others. They need constant self-affirmation, and primarily driven by self-enhancement. Machiavellians are somehow different than narcissists and psychopaths because they adapt at manipulating others and willing to do so through all means by ignoring interpersonal effects and also lack for conventional morality.

Organizational justice is the psychological concept and considered as a predictor of health at work because employees feel negative feelings and mental distress when they perceive organizational injustice but organizational justice lead towards positive outcomes at the workplace and make the work healthy (Moliner et al., 2005). An organizational structure is changing and there is more team-based work that develops the perception of organizational justice (Rupp et al., 2001). In an organizational structure where individuals have a high degree of perceived organizational justice, employees feel safe, satisfied and their well-being increases. The concept of organizational justice is firstly postulated by Greenberg (1990) "employees' perception about their organization's behaviors, decisions, and actions and how this influences employee's attitude and behavior at work".

The traditional research suggests that employee's attitude and behaviors are influenced whether employees perceive that work is given to them is meaningful or not but they did not focus that work meaningfulness is a consequence that needs a clear link that how leader's influence follower's meaningfulness (Martela and Steger, 2016). There is ambiguity in this concept that needs further detailed discussion that how despotic leadership and dark personality triad influence a sense of follower's meaningfulness at work (Lepisto and Pratt, 2017). Rare research is found that despotic leadership harms the employee's life satisfaction, inner life, and work meaningfulness.

This study tries to shed light on the dark leadership that how despotic leadership and dark personality triad (narcissism, psychopaths and machiavellianism) impact follower's work meaningfulness in the moderation of organizational justice. This model has a contribution to the literature of dark leadership and work meaningfulness. This will be a novel perspective on growing literature on destructive leadership and the dark side of leadership. Secondly, it has a great contribution to the advancement of work meaningfulness and how leader's negative or dark leadership practices harm the attitude and behavior of the followers with the help of social exchange theory. Our research extends the current literature by enabling more comprehensive understanding of leader's influence on follower's work meaningfulness.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 WORK MEANINGFULNESS

The work meaningfulness is the dimension of psychological empowerment. According to Martela and Steger (2016), meaningful work consists of three components: *significance* which consists of employee's own evaluation of their work that either it supports in their career development or not; *purpose* which means the directionality of the work and how employees align their work with higher-order goals; and *coherence* which refers to employee's understanding and making sense of their work. When these components diminish, it harms the work meaningfulness of followers.

The first component states that significance refers to the importance, value, and worth of the work (Mathieu et al. 2014). The employees want their work to be meaningful, worthwhile and career supportive. But they consider the tasks ambiguous when they are unable to justify their work and fail to explain the worth of their work. They feel dissatisfied with the work contents and find it

insignificant. The second component proposes that the purpose of the work is very important for the followers to understand. The followers seek a clear direction and contribution to their work and they expect that their work makes them different in the world but when they fail to meet their expectations they start considering that work useless and purposeless. The third component states that there will be lack of coherence when employees unable to understand the meaning at work, they feel work is unstructured and find their work chaotic and particularly they lose track to understand that what the work is all about.

## **2.2 DESPOTIC LEADERSHIP AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS**

Despotic leadership is considered the negative leadership style under destructive leadership which negatively affects the subordinates (Ötken and Cenkci 2012). De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) defined “despotic leadership as a leader’s tendency to engage in authoritarian and dominant behavior in pursuit of self-interest, self-aggrandizement, and exploitation of their subordinates”. It exploits the subordinates for their personal gain like taking benefits on behalf of subordinates regardless of their achievement without showing questionable behavior because such leaders use demanding and autocratic behavior with subordinates. They use corrupt behavior and indulge themselves in self-serving biases which harms the work meaningfulness of subordinates because followers do not feel the significance of the work as they do not get rewards against their achievements (Schyns and Schilling, 2013).

When employees invest their time and efforts at workplace then they expect that work must give them inner life satisfaction, they must understand purpose and significance of the work that how work will be helpful for them in their career satisfaction and they also want to understand at what extent their work is aligned with their personal as well as organizational goals. But despotic leaders do not care about the follower’s concern and they just think about their self-interest and cross all the limits by doing unfair means which reduced the work meaningfulness of employees at the workplace (Frone, 2003). According to Ilies, Fulmer et al. (2009); Eby et al. (2010); Nauman and Fatima (2018), despotic leadership disturbs the life satisfaction and inner satisfaction of the followers because it is considered as a social stressor in the form of emotional exhaustion. The social exchange theory Blau (1964) supported the above arguments in a way that social exchange relationships based on the reward system and cost-based analysis. If one party gives or sacrifices something the other party feels obliged to give something in return. The social exchange concept based on the equality which means if you do not give favor to anyone you cannot expect any favor from others.

H1: Despotic leadership has a significant and negative impact on work meaningfulness

## **2.3 NARCISSISM AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS**

Narcissists need constant external self-affirmation primarily driven by self-enhancement (Braun, 2017). They ignore other’s welfare and do not consider them but their purpose is not to harm others. They do not consider the achievements of the followers neither focus on their work nor showing satisfaction with their work. They are willing to put one’s own needs ahead of others because they have a selfish personality trait. Rosenthal and Pittinsky (2006) investigated in their study that socially over dominant characteristics of such leaders reduce the meaningfulness of the work by reducing follower’s inner sense of meaning and overshadow follower’s ability to develop strategies regarding meaning-making work.

H2: Narcissism has a significant and negative impact on work meaningfulness.

## **2.4 PSYCHOPATHS AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS**

According to Babiak and Hare, (2006); Boddy(2010), psychopaths creates unnecessary organizational constraints, low level of job satisfaction, increased workload, bullying characterized by conflicts and toxic work environment. In this way, it is very difficult for followers to ask a question regarding their work purpose and meaningfulness. They get motivation from their self-promotion and personal gain and show a lack of interest regarding their followers which reduces the work meaningfulness. It reduces the follower's feelings of purpose due to lack of high-order prosocial gain. The employees feel the adverse experience at workplace due to the negative and selfish personality trait of the leader. Boddy et al., (2010) investigated the negative relationship between corporate psychopaths and employee's well-being. The social exchange theory also supports the above argument that you will receive in return what you have been invested because exchange relationships always based on cost-benefit analysis.

H3: Psychopaths have a significant and negative impact on work meaningfulness.

## **2.5 MACHIAVELLIANISM AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS**

According to Myung and Choi (2017), Machiavellians adapt the behavior of manipulating others by doing so through all means because they are selfish and try to harm others. They have a low ideological commitment, ignore interpersonal effects and lack of morality and ethics. The employees feel they are not properly rewarded for their efforts and they are not appreciated for their achievements, they do not feel recognized for their job due to which their purpose of work is reduced.

Zettler, Friedrich et al. (2011) suggested, Machiavellians regulate authority on others and willing to manipulate and exploit others. They are perceived as abusive by subordinates and focus on broadening power and resources for their personal gain. They do not bother that their employees are satisfied or not and either the work is meaningful for them or not. They just impose authority and direct others what you have to do and get benefits at the cost of others which decreases work meaningfulness. According to Kiazad, Restubog et al. (2010), Machiavellians likely to desire greater reward and control over others due to which they report lower levels of job satisfaction. They exhibit selfish and corrupt behavior.

H4: Machiavellianism has a significant and negative impact on work meaningfulness.

## **2.6 MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE BETWEEN DESPOTIC LEADERSHIP AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS**

Work meaningfulness is a critical indicator of an individual's well-being because followers get inner satisfaction and purpose of the work (Aguinis and Glavas, 2019). According to Naseer et al., (2016), despotic leaders are unethical as they use unethical code of conduct and authoritarian. They are exploitative, vengeful, controlling and commanding and consider only their self-interest. It weakens the wellbeing of employees by increasing tension in subordinates. They have low ethical standards and self-centered, demand unquestioned compliance and obedience from the subordinates. In such circumstances, it is not possible for the followers to exactly understand the purpose and significance of the work due to which their work meaningfulness decrease. The organizational justice

plays a critical role in shaping positive perception, attitude, and behavior of employees because employees perceive that organizational decisions and actions are justifiable and the organization is focusing on their career development and promotions. In this way, organizational justice increase the sense of inner satisfaction and employees feel valued at workplace (Karakus et al. 2014).

**H5:** Organizational justice moderates the relationship between despotic leadership and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high.

## **2.7 MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE BETWEEN NARCISSISM AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS**

The meaningful work means employees get personal meaning and purpose from work and feel energized and enjoy the tasks assigned to them by supervisors. Meaningful work is about things such as expressing one's inner life needs by seeking meaningful work, contributing to others, living one's dream, and searching for deeper meaning and purpose rather than just meant to be interesting and challenging (Fox, 1994). It represents how people interact with each other at workplace and how they support each other by sharing their experiences to prevent problems. According to Babiak and Hare, (2006); Boddy et al., (2010), narcissists are engaged in extreme form of directionless leadership, mismanagement and they interfere with various components of meaningfulness which reduces the sense of work meaningfulness in followers because they are unable to understand the purpose and significance of the work. It affects the follower's well-being and inner satisfaction and they do not get satisfaction and value of the work. In case, when employees perceive higher organizational justice where they receive merit-based promotions, fair compensations and other perquisites they become loyal to the organization because in the context of social exchange theory if one party gives any favor the other party feels obliged to give something in return. It means the perception of higher organizational justice weakens the existing negative relationship between narcissism and work meaningfulness.

**H6:** Organizational justice moderates the relationship between narcissism and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high.

## **2.8 MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE BETWEEN PSYCHOPATHS AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS**

Each person desire to be involved in activities that give greater meaning to his/her life with inner motivation and truths that are the basic assumptions of the work meaningfulness (Hawley and Hawley, 1993). According to Boddy, (2010), psychopaths have negative personality features under dark leadership and prefer their own self-interest. They are willing to get advantage at the cost of others because they have good skills in how to manipulate the information by exploiting employees. The followers of the psychopaths receive more unfairness from the supervisor, less help, less training and fewer instructions due to which employees fail to take help at the time of any difficulty. They do not understand how work gives them value and what the significance of the work is. Their personal and organizational goals are not aligned. They get ambiguous information from supervisors regarding work which obstructs their sense of coherence which reduces the work meaningfulness. When employees perceive organization positive as organization is following justice and procedural and decision-making process which helps the employees in career development and promotions then

employees feel happy and they generate positive sensations regarding organization and exiting relationships become weak.

**H7:** Organizational justice moderates the relationship between psychopaths and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high.

## 2.9 MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE BETWEEN MACHIAVELLIANISM AND WORK MEANINGFULNESS

Alignment with organizational goals and values is also very important to bring effective results. It means the individual needs to make a connection with others where society and individual's purpose is larger than oneself. It also means that employees perceive the supervisor's concern about the welfare of community and employees. So that both managers and employees have strong values in the organization that is recognized (Hawley 1993). Li, et al. (2010) demonstrated that employees believe the supervisor cares about the employee's career development by assigning them meaningful work that will help them to learn something new which develops the urge for searching deep information that motivates employees to stay connected, attached with the organization and show commitment to the organization. Machiavellians have toxic behavior with employees and they focus on personal gains. They used an emotionally cold way and aggressive environment by showing selfish behavior (Paulhus and Williams 2002). According to Pailing et al. (2014), this personality trait is associated with bullying behavior by using manipulating tactics. It overshadows the employee's ability to look at their work positively and as serving a higher purpose, and also creates an unpleasant environment for the employees which reduces the work meaningfulness. When employees have perception of fairness and organizational justice, they generate positive feelings that organization is focusing on them and treat them fairly. The organizations explain rationale for decisions thoroughly and give respect to the employees (Greenberg 1993). In this way, organizational justice weakens the negative relationship between Machiavellianism and work meaningfulness.

**H8:** Organizational justice moderates the relationship between Machiavellianism and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This quantitative research method was applied using a self-administered Likert scale questionnaire to explore the degree of association among variables (Kerlinger and Lee 2000). The multi-source field study was used to test the research model. The sample consisted of 190 employees working in different organizations and across different industries (hospitality, healthcare, and business) in Pakistan. The non-probability sampling techniques were used under convenience sampling. The response rate was 72% (Singleton et al., 2005). Later the data were tested through SPSS 21. Furthermore, demographics (age, education, experience) of respondents were controlled because the descriptive analysis of the demographics depicts an impact on the variables under study.

Despotic leadership has been measured by using a six-item scale (De Hoogh, & Den Hartog, 2008). One of the sample item is "Is in charge and does not tolerate disagreement and questioning, gives orders". The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.80. Narcissism has been measured by using a nine-item scale based on (Jones and Paulhus 2014). One of the sample items is "I insist on getting the respect

I deserve". The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.72. Psychopaths have been measured by using a nine-item scale based on (Jones and Paulhus, 2014). One of the sample items is "I like to get revenge on authorities". The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.77. Machiavellianism has been measured by using nine-item scale based on (Jones and Paulhus, 2014). One of the sample items is "Make sure your plans benefit yourself, not others". The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.76. Organizational Justice is assessed by the Colquitt (2001) that is the self-administered version of the Organizational Justice Questionnaire (OJQ) exploring four domains but three domains have been taken in current study that is in consonance with past studies: procedural justice (6 items), with typical items such as "have those procedures been free of bias"; interpersonal justice (4 items), with typical items such as "has (he/she) treated you with dignity"; distributive justice (4 items), with typical items such as "is your (outcome) justified, given your performance". The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.74. The work meaningfulness has been measured by Ashmos and Duchon (2000). One of the sample items is "The work I do in this job is fulfilling.", with Cronbach's Alpha 0.71.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

From Table 1, no strong relationship between explanatory variables is found, which indicates a non-serious issue of multi-co-linearity. Variables have significant relationships e.g. despotic, psychopaths Machiavellianism and Narcissism have significant negative relationship with work meaningfulness but weak relationship is found. Despotic leadership is demonstrating negative correlation with Narcissism.

**Table 1:** Correlation of variables.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Despotic Leadership	1					
2 Narcissism	-0.468**	1				
3 Psychopathy	-0.362	0.084	1			
4 Machiavellianism	-0.028	-0.121**	0.078	1		
5 Organizational Justice	0.032	-0.288**	-0.122*	-0.093	1	
6 Follower's Meaningful Work	-0.035*	-0.241**	-0.146*	-0.125*	-0.546**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### 4.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Table 2, results of regression analysis indicate that in step-1, Despotic Leadership has a negative and significant influence on follower's meaningful work as  $\beta = -0.046$ . Narcissism, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism are also showing a negative impact on follower's meaningful work as  $\beta = -0.030$  for Narcissism and  $\beta = -0.034$  for Psychopathy,  $\beta = -0.022$  for Machiavellianism. Thus, the results in step-1 are showing the acceptance of H1, H2, H3, and H4.

In step-II, the results are showing that organizational justice moderates in the relationship between despotic leadership and follower's meaningful work and it weakens the relationship of organizational justice with follower's meaningful work. The interaction term (Org. Justice X Leader) has co-efficient 0.341. The interaction term (Org. Justice X Narcissism) is also significant ( $\beta = 0.135$ ), which shows that Organizational justice is moderating in the relationship between narcissism and

follower's meaningful work in a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high. Moreover, the results are also showing that organizational justice has no moderating effect in relationship of Psychopathy and Machiavellianism with follower's meaningful work. Thus H5 and H6 are accepted, but H7 and H8 are not accepted on the basis of the results of regression analysis.

**Table 2: Model Regression Analysis.**

Predictor(s)	Coefficient			p-value
	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	
<b>Step-I</b>				
Constant	0.034			
Despotic Leadership	-0.046**			<0.01
Narcissism	-0.030**			<0.01
Psychopathy	-0.034**			<0.01
Machiavellianism	-0.022*			<0.05
Organizational Justice	0.692***	0.696		
<b>Step-II</b>				
Org. Justice X Leader	0.341**			<0.01
Org. Justice X Narcissism	0.135**			<0.05
Org. Justice X Psychopathy	-0.162			
Org. Justice X Machiavellianism	0.105	0.789	0.093**	

## 5. DISCUSSION

The above results of correlation show that the first hypothesis “Despotic leadership has a significant negative relationship with work meaningfulness” is supported by the results but the weak relationship is found as ( $r = -0.035, p \leq 0.05$ ). According to Ilies (2009); Eby et al. (2010); Nauman and Fatima (2018), despotic leadership disturbs the life satisfaction and inner satisfaction of the followers because it is considered as a social stressor in the form of emotional exhaustion. The social exchange theory Blau (1964) supported the above arguments in a way that social exchange relationships based on the reward system and cost-based analysis. If one party gives or sacrifices something the other party feels obliged to give something in return. The social exchange concept based on equality which means if you do not give favor to anyone you cannot expect any favor from others.

The second hypothesis “Narcissism has a significant and negative relationship with work meaningfulness” is also supported by the above correlation results as ( $r = -0.241, p \leq 0.01$ ). According to Cramer and Jones (2008); Vaknin (2009), such self-focused personalities do not comply with their sense of making meaning from work and demand full obedience without asking any question which diminishes inner life satisfaction and work significance. They also lack empathy which shows the inability to share feelings of others while they have strong self-promoting motives. Boddy, Ladyshewsky et al. (2010) proposed that selfish leaders do not understand the needs, value, desires, and feelings of their employees and make difficult for the followers to make sense of work meaningfulness.

The third hypothesis “Psychopaths have a significant and negative impact on work meaningfulness” is supported by the results ( $r = -0.146, p \leq 0.05$ ). According to Babiak and Hare (2006); Boddy, (2010), psychopaths create unnecessary organizational constraints, low levels of job satisfaction, increased workload, bullying characterized by conflicts and toxic work environments. In this way, it is very difficult for followers to ask a question regarding their work purpose and meaningfulness. They get motivation from their self-promotion and personal gain and they do not

show any concern regarding their followers which reduces the work meaningfulness.

The fourth hypothesis "Machiavellianism has a significant and negative relationship with work meaningfulness" is supported by the above results ( $r=-0.125$ ,  $p\leq 0.05$ ). Zettler, Friedrich et al. (2011) suggested, Machiavellians regulate authority on others and willing to manipulate and exploit others. They are perceived as abusive by subordinates and focus on broadening power and resources for their personal gain. They do not feel bothered that their employees are satisfied or not and either the work is meaningful for them or not. In this way, employees reduce inner satisfaction.

Similarly, the fifth hypothesis "Organizational justice moderates the relationship between despotic leadership and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high" is supported by the regression as ( $\beta = 0.341$  with  $P<0.01$ ). According to Naseer et al., (2016), despotic leaders are unethical as they use unethical code of conduct and authoritarian. They are exploitative, vengeful, controlling and commanding and consider only their self-interest. In such circumstances, it is not possible for the followers to exactly understand the purpose and significance of the work due to which their work meaningfulness decrease. The organizational justice weakens the existing relationship by shaping positive attitude and behavior towards the organization as they perceive that organization is fair and focus on justice which increases inner satisfaction (Karakus et al., 2014).

Likewise, the sixth hypothesis "Organizational justice moderates the relationship between narcissism and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high" is supported by the regression as ( $\beta= 0.135$  with  $P<0.01$ ). According to Babiak and Hare, (2006); Boddy et al., (2010), narcissists are engaged in extreme form of directionless leadership, mismanagement and they interfere with various components of meaningfulness which reduces the sense of work meaningfulness in followers because they are unable to understand the purpose and significance of the work. In case, when employees perceive higher organizational justice where they receive merit-based promotions, fair compensations and other perquisites they become loyal to the organization and they improve their inner satisfaction.

The seventh hypothesis, "Organizational justice moderates the relationship between psychopaths and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high" is not supported by the regression as ( $\beta = -0.162$  with P-value is greater than 0.05) while many past researches show the significant results. Data has been collected from the multi-field study of Pakistan. Pakistan based on collectivistic culture having high power distance i.e. Pakistan so the areas having high Power Distance always contain Authoritative leadership styles where all the decisions take place from the top management having the least participation of lower management. At such places employees don't have right to takes part in decision making and knowledge sharing. So that's why the urge in employees to thrive for knowledge decreases and they just do their work what is assigned to them. They just focus on what they have rather than understanding the purpose and value of the work.

Similarly, the seventh hypothesis "Organizational justice moderates the relationship between Machiavellianism and work meaningfulness in such a way that it weakens the relationship when organizational justice is high" is not supported by the regression as ( $\beta = 0.105$  with P-value is greater than 0.05) while past research shows the significant results. The cultural values always considered as the important aspect of societies and such societies wherein organizations there is high Power Distance from employees they always endorse their applications on employees without asking their

comfort level. Employees of such organizations are mostly less intelligent emotionally and the urge in them to attain more knowledge for their advancement and promotions as well as to be in in-groups employees becomes decreases. Secondly, Pakistan comes in underdeveloped countries where poverty is very common and the unemployment rate is very high that is 5.8% (The Nation, 2019). The job opportunities are also very less. In such circumstances, it is very difficult for people to get job easily or to switch from one job to another. By considering all these circumstances, when people get job, they try hard to stay there without focusing that they are satisfied or not. In other terms they do not consider that work is significant for them or not. They just focus on the completion of the given tasks.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In this research, the negative outcomes of dark leadership are discussed in the context of despotic leadership and dark personality triad. The current study is very important in a leadership point of view and it has both theoretical as well as practical implications. The current study has practical implications along with the theoretical implication because this study provides important predictor in the form of work meaningfulness that is very important to address. It is a multi-field study and different organizations e.g. health sector, business sectors, and many others can take it as guidance that how negative leadership or negative personality traits of supervisors affect the well-being and perception of employees. How leadership affects the attitude and behavior of employees. They can take help from this research in policymaking or strategies regarding leadership skills. They can understand that how leader's- follower's relationship can harm the work meaningfulness of the followers. The leaders might be asked to regulate their positive behavior at workplace to bring effective outcomes.

From a theoretical perspective, it contributes to the literature of dark leadership by showing that under which circumstances negative leadership affects the followers mainly their work meaningfulness. The particular dimensions of the work meaningfulness i.e. Purpose, significance, and coherence are discussed in this research which is a great contribution to the literature of work meaningfulness.

The cross-sectional data is used to conduct the study. There are many other constraints that need to cover in the future study. The sample size was very small with certain questions on the generalizability of the results.

The present study focuses on dark leadership. The despotic leadership and dark personality triad (Narcissism, Psychopaths, and Machiavellianism) are the predictors to check their impact on the follower's work meaningfulness. The results show that the dark side of the leadership negatively impacts the well-being and behavior of employees. When employees perceive that leader has negative personality traits in which selfishness, aggression, ignorance, leader's personal interests, manipulating and exploiting employees are very common then employees work meaningfulness reduce because they are unable to understand the purpose of work, its significance and goal alignment as leaders demand unquestioned obedience from employees. In such circumstances, if employees perceive organizational justice then their positive emotions can be regulated.

## 7. AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIAL

Data can be made available by contacting the corresponding author.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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