

The Effect of Toxic Leadership Behaviors on Employees Job Satisfaction (A field study in a number of Iraqi private banks)

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ABSTRACT

Toxic leadership has emerged as a focal point within leadership studies, gaining prominence over the last two decades due to the escalating prevalence of harmful behaviors among leaders. While the dark side of leadership has historical roots, the nuanced examination of toxic leadership is relatively recent. This study delves into the multifaceted dimensions of toxic leadership, encompassing behaviors such as narcissism, authoritarianism, self-promotion, abusive supervision, and unpredictable conduct.

The research, conducted in private banks in Baghdad, Iraq, examining the interplay between toxic leadership and job satisfaction, the study reveals a negative correlation between toxic leadership behaviors and employees' satisfaction with their work. Abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership, and narcissism were found to be strong predictors of reduced job satisfaction. The findings underscore the importance of recognizing and addressing toxic leadership behaviors to mitigate their detrimental effects on individuals and organizations.

This research contributes to the existing literature by bridging gaps in the understanding of toxic leadership at the local level, specifically within the private banking sector in Baghdad. The study enriches the Arab and Iraqi libraries with contemporary scientific insights, aligning with global trends in leadership research. Overall, this study provides valuable insights for organizational awareness and interventions to counteract the adverse impacts of toxic leadership on both employees and organizational performance.

Keywords: Toxic leadership, job satisfaction, private banks.

Introduction

Toxic leadership is a relatively new subject in the academic field of leadership studies, having gained popularity over the last two decades as a result of the rising harmful behavior of and cooperation among leaders (yaghi,2019:P140).

While the negative aspects of leadership can be observed throughout human history, the concept of leadership has consistently been linked with a positive outlook. To this day, only a limited number of research have extensively examined the negative aspects of leadership (Singh, 2019:148).

Up until the past ten years, the construct's primary research focus has been on the military. Although this idea has been developing, it is still vague. Authors undoubtedly do not paint a clear image of it and refer to its dark side differently (Çoban,2021:51) .

Toxic leadership encompasses a wide range of behaviors. The scope includes a variety of various sorts of wrongdoing committed by managers, supervisors, and leaders in the course of their duties as president or employer of the firm (Hadadian&Zarei,2016:86). As leadership researchers increasingly recognize subordinates' importance in the leadership process, less emphasis has been devoted to their participation in the Toxic leadership process.

Sociologists have started to explore leadership from a different perspective or its dark side as a result of extensive evidence of abusive and harmful behavior by leaders in practically all sorts of major organizations, from businesses to educational institutions (Green, 2014:44).

Toxic leadership refers to self-centered attitudes, motives, and behaviors that have a detrimental impact on the performance of the organization, the organization as a whole, and the subordinates. Such leadership has poor outcomes and shows little regard for employees or the organisation (Baloyi,2020:1) .

This confluence of these three aspects has a major impact on organisational results, both favourably and adversely (Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter, and Tate) (2012).

Because of the negative or positive connection between subordinates and leaders, Toxic leadership conduct has both individual and organizational consequences (Hadadian&Zarei,2016:85) .

Whicker (1996: 11) invented the term "toxic leader," which is associated with a number of dysfunctional leadership philosophies.(Indradevi,2016)

The origin of the construct could be traced from the progress of research of the similar concepts of dark leadership. Toxic leadership has been studied under a range of different terms such as Narcissistic Leadership ,Dark Leadership ,Negative Leadership ,Evil, Charismatic, Abusive, Bullying and Destructive leadership (singh,etal,2015:148)chapter)

Toxic leaders are those that cause major and long-lasting deleterious effects on the people, families, organisations, communities, and even whole civilizations they lead by their destructive actions and dysfunctional character attributes (Jean Lipman-Blumen2005:2).

It is like poisonous snakes, drain energy from an organization. They deplete skilled people and discourage innovative and dynamic competent workers. They foster a

discouraging, demeaning, and frightened environment that paralyses the company.(Indradevi,2016).

Toxic Leadership Definition

Whicker (1996) defines toxic leaders as individuals who exhibit maladaptive behavior, are unsatisfied, display hostility, and occasionally engage in harmful actions.

They succeed by discrediting others. Instead of motivating their followers, they exalt in battling, dominating, and defending their turf.(Çoban,2022:52)

According to Wilson-Starks (2003), this leadership style is characterized by its detrimental effects on individuals' enthusiasm, creativity, independence, and innovative expression, ultimately causing harm to both individuals and the organization as a whole. Toxic leaders propagate their harmful influence by exerting an excessive amount of control (p.3).

Toxic leaders, according to Lipman-Blumen (2005), "first charm but then manipulate, mistreat, undermine, and ultimately leave their followers worse off than when they found them" (p. 3).

Toxic leaders are those that exhibit five distinct qualities. Toxic leaders, according to Schmidt (2008), are "narcissistic, self-promoters who engage in an unpredictable pattern of abusive and authoritarian supervision" (p. 57).

Toxic leadership is characterized by a conspicuous disregard for the welfare of subordinates, a personality or interpersonal style that has a detrimental impact on the overall atmosphere of the organization, and subordinates' perception that the leader is primarily motivated by self-centeredness. (Reed,2010:58).

The preceding definitions demonstrate that, while the usages of terms vary amongst scholars, the basic concept that they have attempted to convey remains consistent.

Toxic leadership behaviors

Leaders that are toxic are abusive; they engage in harassment, fraud, and dishonesty at work. They frequently have a power complex and misuse it to indoctrinate followers into never challenging their judgments or conduct. Toxic leaders intentionally lie to their followers and distort or omit information in order to further their own agendas.(Mehta, Maheshwari,2013:4) Employee fatigue is the most unfavorable consequence of such toxic leadership behaviors (etinkaya & Ordu: 2018: 15–28).

Studies on toxic leadership are many. The five characteristics of toxic leadership, according to Schmidt (2008) are: abusive behavior, authoritarian leadership, narcissism, airs and graces, and unpredictable behavior (Schmidt,2008:4). Schmidt and Hanges decide that it would be more accurate to define toxic leadership in a way that also includes narcissistic leadership and authoritarian leadership, which they refer to as the "dark" side of the phenomenon. Destructive behaviors, the use of harsh language when supervising, abuse, and selfishness are the fundamental components of

toxic leadership. The welfare of their staff is neglected by toxic bosses. They just think about themselves and disregard others. With the exercise of authority, they tyre, chastise, and threaten their staff, forcing them to carry out their commands (İrge, Bayram, 2020:12)

Reed & Olsen, 2010 characterizes toxic leadership as an illness and emphasizes three characteristics. The first of them is a lack of care for the well-being of workers; the second is individual or interpersonal relationships that negatively impact the organization's culture; and the third is the leader's prioritization of his own interests (Reed and Olsen, 2010: 59). Despite the fact that toxic leaders are competent and successful, they generate a terrible corporate atmosphere owing to their detrimental consequences on the job (Çoban, 2021:52).

Lubit (2004) has shed additional light on the detrimental characteristics of toxins. He proposed that destructive narcissism is a fundamental personality trait of numerous toxic managers. In other words, toxic leaders do demonstrate traits that are comparable to those of grandiose, narcissistic tyrants. Toxic leaders are corrupt, undermine the well-being of stakeholders, and impair their interests (Indradevi, 2016:3).

For the sake of this study, toxic leadership may be characterized as a multidimensional notion that incorporates a number of the aspects listed by Schmidt (2008). There are five components to toxic leadership

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- (1) **Abusive Supervision** : abusive supervision refers to a boss's perceived purposely antagonistic behaviours against subordinates (Schmidt, 2014)
- (2) **Authoritarian Leadership**: is defined as "a leader's behaviour in which asserts authority and control over subordinates and demands unquestionable obedience from them."
- (3) **Narcissism**: personality characteristic considered by grandiosity, arrogance, self-absorption, entitlement, low self-esteem, and antagonism" (Schmidt, 2008, p. 30).
- (4) **Unpredictability**: "Unpredictable negative conduct could make the bad results worse. Negative behavior has negative impacts
- (5) **Self-Promotion**: "Leaders frequently behave with the goal of preserving a favorable reputation at higher levels of the leadership hierarchy, putting their personal interests above and beyond those of the units they are in charge of (Schmidt, 2008, p. 28)."

Schmidt extracted the characteristics of abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership, and narcissism from the literature that already existed and the dimensions of unpredictable behavior and self-promotion from his qualitative study" (Schmidt, 2008, p. 30).

Moreover, he enumerated the various behaviors that nest inside each kind. However, Schmidt's list does not include the harmful impacts of a leader's ethical failings or inaction (Çelebi et al., 2015: 253).

Toxic leadership as a psychological construct raises challenges. According to Fiedler (1993), what one member of an organization perceives as toxic leadership may look productive to another. Alternatively, what is deemed poisonous in one corporate culture may be seen good in another (Green,20:6).

It is also worth noting that, while some individuals see toxic leaders as hazardous to the workplace, others regard them as heroes. Even when such leaders exhibit characteristics like as self-glorification, pettiness, abusiveness, and interpersonal hostility (Whicker 1996:66), some of their followers nevertheless treat them with respect.

Job satisfaction

Research on job satisfaction is an important component of occupational psychology since it expresses the degree to which individuals take pleasure in the work that they do (Spector, 1997). One way to think of job satisfaction is as a nebulous, all-encompassing emotion, while another is as a constellation of attitudes regarding distinct parts or components of the job (Arokiasamy& Park,2018:64)

The term "job satisfaction" refers to an individual's disposition toward their employment. It is a direct outcome of how satisfied they are with their work and how well they fit in with the company. When workers achieve their expectations in their work and professions, they experience a good emotional state known as job satisfaction (Bektaş,2017:628).

Also An employee's sense of fulfillment in his or her current work is defined as "job satisfaction." This concept unquestionably accounts for the affective dimension of work-relatedness, which is influenced by a wide variety of occurrences that take place in the workplace .

Job satisfaction is the most important factor in determining employee motivation, effectiveness, retention, and performance. (Shaju & Subhashini, 2017:118),

Therefore, enhanced job performance, positive work values, highly motivated employees, and low rates of absenteeism, attrition, and burnout should be expected if workers report higher levels of satisfaction with their work environment and leadership (Paltu &Brouwers ,2020:3).

It has been noted that four main categories of criteria—economic reasons, interpersonal relationships, working circumstances, and personal fulfillment—determine an individual's degree of job satisfaction. These variables include salary, hours worked, working environment, HR department, job structure, stress levels, and several demographic variables (Zagross & Jamileh,2016).

The relation between toxic leadership and job satisfaction

When leaders accurately identify the factors that impact job satisfaction, both employee morale and organizational performance will improve. Participatory leadership fosters the development of human capabilities associated with accountability by increasing job satisfaction. (ulibrk et al,2018:32) .

A human possesses essentially three forms of power. These are physical strength, mental power, and emotional power. Increasing a person's likelihood of success by concentrating these fundamental abilities on a single target. Otherwise, the lack of one of the three abilities would negatively affect work performance. A person who enjoys her/his profession and considers advances linked to it cannot be effective without exerting physical effort (Bektaş,2017:633) .

Similarly, a person who works physically and diligently to do her/his duties properly cannot be successful unless she/he enjoys her/his work. Therefore, the three relevant abilities should be enabled together.

Toxic leadership is characterized by harmful behaviors, the usage of unpleasant language when supervising, abuse, and egotism. Toxic bosses disregard their employees' well-being(Čopková&Araňošová,2020:11). They disregard others and are preoccupied with their own goals. They exhaust, criticise, and threaten their staff and utilise authority to compel them to do their bidding (Baloyi,2020:4).

Prior research conducted by Maheshwari (2013), Schmidt (2014), İrge and Bayram (2020), and Paltu and Brouwers (2020) has consistently demonstrated a detrimental impact of toxic leadership on employee satisfaction, as reported by Mehta and Maheshwari (2013). In Schmidt's (2014) study, a correlation was discovered between toxic leadership and decreased levels of job satisfaction across both individuals and groups. Research conducted by Kusy and Holloway (2009) and Tepper (2007) indicates that toxic, disruptive, and dysfunctional leadership has a detrimental impact on employee job satisfaction .

The importance of the research

This is one of the first attempts to frame the topic of toxic leadership and job satisfaction at the local level using theoretical and field research. Studies of citations have revealed the rarity of this issue and the paucity of study in this sector.

The research focuses on the topic of leadership, which is of enormous significance due to its impact on the sustainability, effectiveness, and efficiency of business organizations, and which represents the most vital organizational resources and its primary foundation. moreover the significance of the research can be emphasized because it establishes a connection between the role of the human element and its intellectual resources and their effects on the management of organizations and administrative processes, as well as their effects on the level of holistic performance. Identifying the amount of toxic leadership of banking institution leaders in the private sector of Iraq, notably in the city of Baghdad, and its consequences on the job satisfaction of banking institution employees.

This research is an attempt to enrich the Arab library in general, and the Iraqi library in particular, with the latest scientific studies related to the variables investigated, and categorizing them in a framework that serves the current research direction. in

addition to the research focused on addressing a set of international standardized standards that have been developed and presented to serve the purposes of the current research, and thus can be used in linking the internal trends of Iraqi private banks with global trends.

Research Aim

An essential technique to examine toxicity in an organization is to consider the influence of such leadership on the organization's job satisfaction. All of these toxic leaders' behaviors and attributes create an uncertain environment that results in stressed, dissatisfied employees.

The main aim of this paper is to determine the presence of toxic leadership behaviors of managers on their employees and its effect on their job satisfaction , in addition to highlighting the different perspective of researchers on the definition and behaviors of toxic leadership.

Research questions:

- 1- Is there a correlation between toxic leadership and job satisfaction?
- 2-Can toxic leadership significantly impact employees' job satisfaction?

Research hypothesis

- 1- The first main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between toxic leadership and job satisfaction combined and for each of its dimensions.
- 2-The second main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect relationship of Toxic leadership on job satisfaction and for each of its dimensions.

Limits of the search

The study incorporated four constraints:

- 1- **Spatial boundaries:** represent the practical and applied aspect of testing the assumptions of the investigation in order to provide conclusive responses to the research questions. Hence, the study exclusively focused on private banks located in Baghdad, Iraq, as they were conveniently accessible for evaluation.
- 2- The chronological limits: The start date of the field visits was 10/11/2021 and the end date was 5/30/2022.
- 3- Human limits: The study data includes employees from the chosen banks, as this study is focused on the employees' perspectives on leadership and attempts to represent their actual impressions.
4. Cognitive limits: which are reflected by research, depth, and connections between the two types of research variables (Toxic leadership and Job satisfaction).

Research methodology

Research approach

The study used a descriptive- analytical method. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

In order to help future leaders recognize toxic leadership behaviors and comprehend their detrimental effects on employee morale, physical and mental health, and organizational performance, this research was conducted to examine two variables: toxic leadership behaviors, and employee job satisfaction. Toxic leadership is the main subject of this inquiry, hence it is regarded as an independent variable. Because it is likely to be an influence on employees inside an organization, employees job satisfaction is viewed as dependent variable

Research sample

The information was gathered from the employees of four private banks in Iraq. There were 230 employees within the sample, 230 questionnaires were distributed, 123 questionnaires were received in total. 107 questionnaires were eliminated from further analysis due to improper completion. 123 questionnaires were utilized for a comprehensive examination. The basic data was acquired using the toxic leadership questionnaire (Schmidt 2008) and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Data Collection

In order to successfully conduct research and studies, it is essential to have access to a specific set of research supplies and instruments. These tools are used to collect information and data, which are crucial for establishing theoretical foundations and testing hypotheses within both theoretical and applied frameworks.

The majority of the questionnaire's paragraphs were derived from established standards in research and studies pertaining to the subject of the study. These standards were slightly adjusted to suit the requirements of the study in the Iraqi context. Additionally, the questionnaire served as the primary and dependable tool in this research for gathering data and information regarding the practical aspect.

Toxic Leadership Scale: In 2008, Schmidt created a scale to assess toxic leadership. The 30-item scale assesses five characteristics: Narcissism (five items), Authoritarian leadership (six items), self-promotion (five items), abusive supervision (seven items), and unpredictable behaviour (seven items) participants were asked if they had any experience with a toxic leader, with a definition of toxic leadership provided (Schmidt, 2008).

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire is specifically intended to assess an individual's level of job satisfaction. The survey prompts participants to rate their employment experiences according to both extrinsic and intrinsic factors of job satisfaction. This questionnaire consists of 17 items, with eight items dedicated to evaluating extrinsic job satisfaction and nine items dedicated to evaluating intrinsic job satisfaction. The scale utilized in the study was a 5-point Likert scale, which spanned from the highest level of satisfaction to the highest level of dissatisfaction (Paltu, Brouwers, 2020:11).

The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Pearson correlations and regressions were employed to examine the hypothesized associations between variables.

Validity and Reliability

The aforementioned factors were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being the strongest disagree and 5 being the (strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to determine the reliability of the scale, and the results showed that it was reliable.

Table (1) Convergent Validity Test and Reliability Analysis

Measured Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	(AVE)Higher Than 0.50
Toxic Leadership Style	0.724	0.766	0.546
Job Satisfaction	0.623	0.801	0.667
Questionnaire as a whole (47) question	0.613	0.811	0.521

Because (AVE) for the complete questionnaire and its two variables is more than (0.50), it is valid and fulfills convergent validity requirements. It may be used to evaluate variables and paragraphs qualitatively.

The table (2) presents descriptive statistics for examining the two research variables, including all their aspects.

	constructs	Mini values	Higher value	Median value	Std. deviation	Variance coefficient	Ranking
1	Independent variable Toxic leadership	1	5	3.52	0.831	23.15	1
2	Narcissism	1	5	3.74	0.845	22.2	1
3	Authoritarian leadership	1	5	3.68	0.838	22.4	2
4	Self-promotion	1	5	3.32	0.905	26.4	5
5	abusive supervision	1	5	3.15	0.751	23.23	4
6	unpredictable behavior	1	5	3.23	0.755	22.7	3
7	Dependent variable Job Satisfaction	1	5	3.43	0.906	25.87	2
8	Intrinsic job satisfaction	1	5	3.30	0.801	23.77	1
9	Extrinsic job satisfaction	1	5	3.52	0.971	27.02	2

The statistical methods

A variety of statistical approaches were selected and utilized to evaluate the hypotheses of the study, including regression analysis to determine the relationships and effects among the variables indicated in the model, using the SPSS software. This will systematically evaluate the fundamental assumptions and provide a definitive result, specifically to examine the second hypothesis of the investigation. Furthermore, the research employed Pearson's coefficient to examine the initial primary hypothesis.

Results

The inter-correlations between the scales that were employed in this investigation are presented in Table (2). As can be shown in table (4), there is a considerable link between toxic leadership and high levels of job satisfaction (0.648) in the direction of a strong and clear inverse relationship, this means that with an increase in the practice of toxic leadership, job satisfaction decreases, and this negatively affects the overall organizational performance, which requires attention to this by reducing these practices represented by (Narcissism ,Authoritarian leadership ,Self-promotion ,abusive supervision, unpredictable behavior).

Table (3) Inter-correlations of measures

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Narcissism	1.000						
Authoritarian leadership	0.704	1.000					
Self-promotion	.530**	.548**	1.000				
abusive supervision	.494**	.471**	.485**	1.000			
unpredictable behavior	.348**	.281**	.284**	.312**	1.000		
Toxic leadership	.798**	.779**	.755**	.766**	.585**	1.000	
Job Satisfaction	(.453**)	(.401**)	(.525**)	(.479**)	(.525**)	(.648**)	1.000

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

It appears from observing Table (3) above that the relationship between toxic leadership and its five practices was a positive relationship, which confirms the accuracy and good selection of it by previous researchers and complete agreement

with them, including agreement with (Schmidt,2008) the study approved by the current study.

Regression analysis were carried out in order to determine which aspects of Toxic leadership were most important in terms of accurately predicting levels of job satisfaction . The variation in job satisfaction among employees may be explained, in its whole, by the five toxic leadership dimensions in roughly (78%) of the cases. Authoritarian leadership, Unpredictability, and Abusive supervision are strong predictors of work happiness. On the other hand, self-promotion and narcissism do not play a major role in predicting low job satisfaction.

Table (4) impact of Toxic leadership styles on job satisfaction of Iraqi private bank employees.

Supported variable	MODEL SUMMARY			Variance Analysis ANOVA		Independent variable	coefficient		
	R	R2	R2 Modified	F calculate d	Model Significant		Toxic leadership	β	T calculated
Job satisfaction (collectively)	(0.877)	0.78	0.96	240.22	0.001	Narcissism	0.220	2.871	0.001
						Authoritarian leadership	0.198	1.952	0.001
						Self-promotion	0.421	7.954	0.001
						abusive supervision	0.352	7.998	0.001
						unpredictable behavior	0.345	6.867	0.001

The second hypothesis confirmed that toxic leadership has a significant impact of 78% on job satisfaction. Among the several types of toxic leadership, authoritarian leadership had the largest effect, while narcissism had the lowest effect.

Results

1-This indicates the negative impact of toxic leadership practiced by senior management in lowering the level of job satisfaction for employees across the three dimensions (Self-promotion, abusive supervision, unpredictable behavior) excluding the practice of the two dimensions (Narcissism, Authoritarian leadership) due to its lack of effective influence in reducing job satisfaction .

2- Leadership that is toxic has a larger negative impact on the development of an organization and the people who work there. It has an effect on the employees' level of job satisfaction, which in turn lowers the quality of their work and throws the institution into chaos.

3-The inter-correlations between the dimensions that were employed in this investigation are presented in Table (4). As can be shown in table (4), there is a considerable link between toxic leadership and high levels of job satisfaction (0.648). In addition, as can be shown in table 2, there is a negative correlation between job satisfaction and each of the five measures that assess toxic leadership.

4- The interpretation of (78%) of the effect of toxic leadership on Job satisfaction and the highest was Authoritarian leadership and the lowest was Narcissism.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has delved into the relatively recent and increasingly significant subject of toxic leadership within the academic realm of leadership studies. As evidenced by the literature review, the exploration of the dark side of leadership is a growing area of interest, with toxic leadership gaining attention over the past two decades. The study acknowledges that toxic leadership has roots in historical human civilizations, but its detailed examination is a recent phenomenon.

The research has underscored the multifaceted nature of toxic leadership, encapsulating various behaviors such as narcissism, authoritarianism, self-promotion, abusive supervision, and unpredictable behavior. While previous studies have primarily focused on the military, this research emphasizes the need for a broader understanding of toxic leadership, acknowledging its presence in various organizations, from businesses to educational institutions

Toxic leadership has been associated with self-centered attitudes, motives, and behaviors that adversely impact organizational performance, employee well-being, and overall organizational climate. The study recognizes the interconnectedness of toxic leadership with both individual and organizational outcomes, emphasizing its implications for organizational results, both positively and negatively.

Moreover, the research investigated the relationship between toxic leadership and job satisfaction, highlighting the negative impact of toxic leadership behaviors on employees' satisfaction with their work. The findings suggest that toxic leaders, characterized by abusive behaviors, authoritarianism, and narcissism, contribute to lower job satisfaction among employees. The study emphasizes the importance of recognizing toxic leadership behaviors and their detrimental effects on both individuals and organizations.

The significance of the research lies in its attempt to bridge the gap in the literature by examining toxic leadership and its consequences at the local level, specifically within private banks in Baghdad, Iraq. Additionally, it enriches the Arab and Iraqi libraries with relevant scientific studies and aligns with global trends in leadership research.

In summary, this study adds valuable insights to the discourse on toxic leadership, emphasizing its detrimental effects on job satisfaction and, consequently, overall organizational performance. The research opens avenues for further exploration and emphasizes the need for organizational awareness and interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of toxic leadership on employees and the organization as a whole.

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