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## EDITORIAL

We feel honoured and privileged to present the Bi-Annual Peer Reviewed Refereed Journal, ISSN (Online): 2583-5203, Volume 4, No. 01, June, 2025 among our esteemed readers and academic fraternity.

This Journal is the outcome of the contributions of insightful research-oriented papers/articles by various eminent academicians, and research scholars in a highly organized and lucid manner with a clear and detailed analysis related to the emerging areas in the fields of Social Sciences and Allied Areas.

The views expressed in the research-oriented papers/articles solely belong to the paper contributor(s). Neither the Publisher nor the Editor(s) in any way can be held responsible for any comments, views and opinions expressed by **paper contributors**. While editing, we put in a reasonable effort to ensure that no infringement of any intellectual property right is tolerated.

We also express our sincere thanks and gratitude to all the contributors to research papers/articles who have taken pain in preparing manuscripts, incorporating reviewer(s) valuable suggestions and cooperating with us in every possible way.

We also express our heartfelt gratitude to all the esteemed members of the Editorial Board, Esteemed Reviewer(s) who despite their busy schedules have given their valuable time, suggestions and comments to enrich the quality of the contributory research paper(s) in bringing to light this June issue.

Last, but not least, we revere the patronage and moral support extended by our parents and family members whose constant encouragement and cooperation made it possible for us to complete on time.

We would highly appreciate and look forward to your valuable suggestions, comments and feedback at [editorbr2022@gmail.com](mailto:editorbr2022@gmail.com)

June, 2025  
West Bengal, India

PEMA LAMA  
Editor-in-Chief

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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# From Burnout to Breakdown: Examining the Health Consequences of Toxic Leadership in India

**Dr. Piali Haldar**

Associate Professor, Dept. of Management, Brainware University, Barasat, India

**Dev Kumar Mandal**

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Management, Brainware University, Barasat, India

**Corresponding Author:** Dr. Piali Haldar ([pialihaldar@gmail.com](mailto:pialihaldar@gmail.com))

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**Index Terms:** Toxic Leadership | Burnout | Job Stress | Resilience | Employee Well-being

## ABSTRACT

Toxic leadership is a pervasive issue in modern workplaces, characterised by abusive, authoritarian, and manipulative behaviours that undesirably influence employees' emotional and physical well-being. More specifically, such leaders' impact on two outcomes, i.e., burnout and psychological distress. This paper aims to investigate one important aspect of leadership (job stress) to determine whether it mediates the effect of toxic leaders on these outcomes, and to examine another aspect of leadership (resilience) to find out whether it has a moderating impact. Quantitative research design was adopted for the study, survey was conducted with 500 employees from the IT, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors in India.

The scales used to measure toxic leadership, job stress, resilience, and health outcomes were validated before use. After data collection, data analysis was done using several different techniques, including ANOVA, correlation, and regression. Hypothesis test results found to be interesting. We discovered a robust positive association (that is, they rise and fall together) between toxic leadership and employee health impairment. Next, the research benefits organisational psychology because it illuminates the impact that toxic leadership has not only on the performance of employees but also on their well-being. It offers numerous practical implications for organisations that want to create healthier work environments.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Workplace culture, motivation, and organisational outcomes are directly impacted by leadership (Virgiawan et al., 2021; Mutonyi et al., 2022). But what happens when that leadership is toxic? Toxic leadership is on the rise, and it is harmful to employee well-being and overall workplace health (Soomro et al., 2024; Diab & Hassan, 2023). This kind of leadership is characterised by abusive, manipulative, and self-serving behaviours (Gandolfi & Stone, 2022). From the perspective of the unfortunate followers of toxic leaders, this paper considers how the psychological distress and reduced resilience often make them susceptible to toxic systems.

Toxic leadership is not only ineffective, but it also causes real harm to the people being led (Hogan et al., 2021; Almeida et al., 2022). Toxic leaders tend to be self-absorbed, authoritarian, and hostile. They lack the people skills and the emotional intelligence needed to lead effectively (Octavian, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). They tend to have a punitive and negative leadership style, using fear and intimidation to control, bully, coerce, and threaten the people they lead (Singh, 2021; Nelson, 2024). Even the best employees can become demoralised and discouraged when led by a toxic leader (Saban, 2024; Glover, 2024). Studies have demonstrated that harmful leadership greatly affects employees' mental and physical well-being (Wolor et al., 2022; Rasool et

al., 2021). Those working under such autocratic leaders have been found to experience all sorts of detrimental health effects (Mergen & Ozbilgin, 2021), especially when it comes to elevated levels of stress. Research has tied toxic leadership to not only increased health problems of all kinds but also to burnout (Budak & Erdal, 2022; Leary & Miller, 2021).

Today's fast-paced and competitive work culture raises major concerns about burnout and psychological distress. Burnout - an indicator of workplace dysfunction affects both individual health and organisational performance (Ahmed et al., 2024; Francisco et al., 2022). Employees who suffer from burnout are less productive; they're also more likely to make mistakes (White, 2021; Maslach & Leiter, 2022). Employees who are burned out are more likely to work long hours and are likely to leave the organisation (Kelly et al., 2021; Ayachit & Chitta, 2022). And when burned-out employees stay on the job, their poor health makes them less capable and less interested in doing a job (Corby et al., 2024; Thorpe et al., 2024). The burnt-out employee is in a vicious cycle, with only one outcome: declining health and work performance (Bakker & De, 2021; Malesic, 2022). Job stress is an intermediary that bad leaders use to connect to burnout and psychological distress (Zada et al., 2022; Xu & Yang, 2021). Stress happens when workers see a job they cannot handle and too many demands that just keep coming, coming, coming (Reif et al., 2021; Jimmieson et al., 2021). Bad leaders make this a lot worse by making workers feel like they are not secure in their job, and have to keep up with deadlines that can't possibly be met, and by leading in a way that makes workers feel like they are always under the microscope and will be failed when the time comes (Ranta et al., 2022; Liberati et al., 2021). Workers get jammed in by these two extremes, always having to work hard just to keep their job when things get tight and trying to live up to the impossible demands of their bad leader (Hougaard & Carter, 2022).

Adverse health effects tend to stem from toxic leadership, but some employees show greater resilience, which allows them to cope more effectively with stress (Sarkar, 2024; Liang & Cao, 2021). Resilience refers

to an individual's ability to adapt and recover from stress and adversity (Sun et al., 2022; Grygorenko & Naydonova, 2023). Resilience in employees may lead to less toxicity in the adverse leadership effects they experience (George, 2023; Koo et al., 2022). Since resilience seems to be a construct that may lead to some moderation effect, we decided to look into it as a possible moderating variable.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### Toxic Leadership and Job Stress

A hostile work atmosphere, boosted by stress and tension, is the main outcome of toxic leadership (Azeez & Aboobaker, 2024; Glover, 2024). Leaders who display abusive conduct, micromanagement, and unreasonable demands create a high-pressure work environment that damages the psychological resources of employees (George, 2023; Coldren, 2024). When employees work under autocratic and narcissistic leaders, not only do they suffer psychological distress, but their bodies exhibit signs of chronic stress as well (Kraft, 2024; Swanigan, 2022). Research by Ade and Ora (2024) shows that these leadership styles are positively correlated with elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol. They found that followers of these two types of leaders had much higher cortisol levels and much higher emotional exhaustion than those who worked under better types of leaders. Additionally, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model states that when the demands of a job exceed the resources available, stress and burnout are inevitable (Meng & Lin, 2023).

[H<sub>1</sub>: Toxic leaders significantly increase job stress]

### Job Stress and Burnout

Job stress is well defined by sensitive overtiredness, depersonalization, and reduced personal achievement (Allam et al., 2021; Hudiana et al., 2021). Continued acquaintance to workplace stressors, such as lengthy hours, hefty assignments, and lack of independence, leads to burnout (Channawar, 2023; Stufano et al., 2022). A study by Katsiana et al. (2021) found that job stress explains over 50% of the variance in burnout levels. The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory states that individuals experience burnout when they

lose psychological resources due to excessive work demands (Chen et al., 2024; Merino et al., 2021).

[H<sub>2</sub>: Burnout is positively affected by job stress]

### **Job Stress and Psychological Distress**

The term 'psychological distress' describes a person's emotional condition when they experience the symptoms of anxiety, depression, or instability (Spytska, 2023). Studies indicate that the chances of developing mental health problems are much greater for individuals working in high-stress environments (Norful et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2022). Workplace stress correlates with heightened levels of depression and anxiety disorders, especially true for many males who do not express their feelings and tend to hold in their emotions (Beshai et al., 2022; Shah et al., 2021). The Effort-Reward Imbalance Model says that when workers put in a lot of effort and get little recognition in return, it leads to psychological distress (Gong et al., 2021; Elgamal, 2025).

[H<sub>3</sub>: Psychological distress is significantly affected positively by job stress]

### **Toxic Leadership and Burnout**

Burnout rates among employees are directly affected by a toxic leadership style that creates a culture of fear, mistrust, and emotional exhaustion (Glover, 2024; Iqbal et al., 2024). Toxic leaders have crossed the line from bad management to abusive supervision by publicly humiliating, favouring, and manipulating employees, causing mental and emotional burnout (Swanigan, 2022; Justino, 2022).

[H<sub>4</sub>: Burnout is significantly positively affected by toxic leadership]

### **Toxic Leadership and Psychological Distress**

Long-term exposure to toxic leadership takes a psychological toll that results in depression, anxiety, and chronic stress (Watkins & Walker, 2021; Mukhopadhyay et al., 2025). Social Learning Theory suggests that when people are persistently subjected to hostile behaviour, they not only consider it bad but also come to see it as a model of how to act in similar situations (Montez

& Kim, 2025; Bandura, 2024). They found that toxic leaders negatively influence the mental health of their employees.

[H<sub>5</sub>: Toxic leadership has a significant positive effect on psychological distress]

### **The Moderating Role of Resilience**

Resilience is an influential factor that can act in reverse, where employees seem to cope with high levels of stress without experiencing burnout (Emerson et al., 2023; Galanis et al., 2024). It has been theorised that resilient individuals have some sort of psychologically advantageous buffer that helps them bounce back from adversity and not just return to their previous level of functioning but also reap some benefits from the whole experience (Haldorai et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2023).

[H<sub>6</sub>: Resilience moderates the relationship between job stress and burnout, weakening the positive association]

### **Burnout and Employee Performance**

When you are burnt out, it is practically impossible to feel motivated, let alone enthusiastic, about your job (Moran, 2022; Baker, 2025). When employees are burnt out but still come to work, they might get some things done but not as well as their employer expects (Gabriel & Aguinis, 2022; Aldossari & Chaudhry, 2021). Research indicates that burnout is a prime forecaster of poor work, motivation, and productivity (Nekoei, 2024; Ibrahim & Manda, 2023).

[H<sub>7</sub>: Burnout has a significant negative effect on employee performance]

### **Psychological Distress and Employee Performance**

Workers who are finding it difficult to manage their mental health often suffer from impaired concentration, unsatisfactory job performance, and hampered decision-making (Kemp et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2024). As per Cognitive Load Theory (Clemente et al., 2024; Van 2024), cognitive resources are consumed when one is mentally or emotionally unhealthy, and this consumption results in decreased efficiency. The model

of cognitive load has three primary components:

*Intrinsic Cognitive Load (ICL)*: It is the load imposed by the complexity of the materials themselves.

*Extraneous Cognitive Load (ECL)*: It is the load imposed by the method used to present the material.

*Germane Load (GL)*: It is the processing load we incur when we do the kind of thinking that leads to understanding.

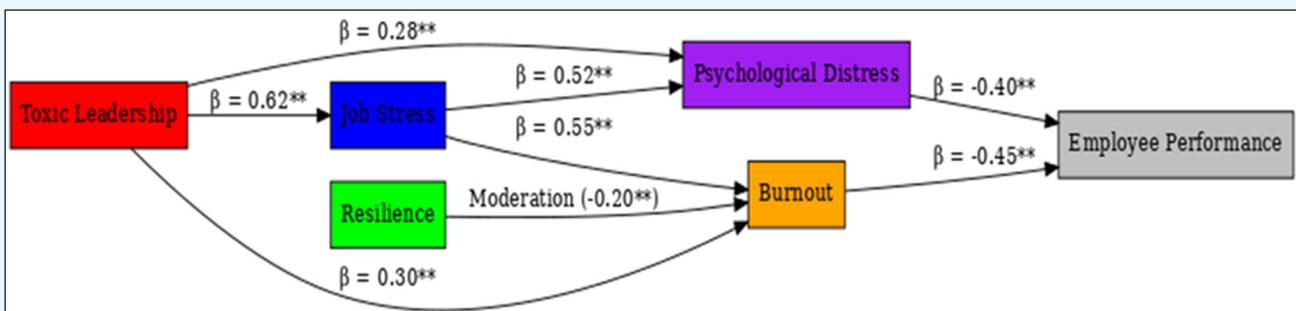
[H<sub>8</sub>: Psychological distress has a significant negative effect on employee performance]

### 3 RESEARCH GAP

Research done so far has confirmed that toxic leadership is harmful and health-damaging to employees, several research are available on toxic leadership, the existing literature predominantly concerns with the direct effects of toxic leadership on organizational outcomes like turnover and job dissatisfaction (Brouwers & Paltu, 2020), job satisfaction and organizational commitment Mehta & Maheshwari, (2013), without going very far most of the studies explored what makes toxic leadership bad for individual employees at a psychological level. In this relationship, the mediating role of burnout and the moderating influence of personal resilience have not been adequately examined in most prior studies. Additionally, few studies have used a framework that integrates both psychological and performance-related outcomes and employed a comprehensive model (Idris et al., 2011; Zhang & Yan, 2024).

This study takes these gaps into account by including burnout as a mediator, resilience as a moderator, and psychological distress and employee performance as key outcomes, in addressing the multi-sectoral context. Thus, it offers a more holistic and sensible understanding of how toxic leadership affects employees. This paper design empirical studies designed to understand the direct links between toxic leaders and employee health is somewhat murky. We lack a solid quantitative foundation from which to make claims about the presence or absence of these effects. Furthermore, although resilience has emerged as a key factor in the interpretation of the effect of toxic leaders on employees, the research regarding how resilience might moderate this relationship is either scant or non-existent. This study builds on established theories and previous findings to comprehensively examine how toxic leadership affects employee health. Resilience is explored as a possible mitigating factor; the insights gained have the potential to inform organisational strategies that reduce toxicity in the workplace and to boost not just the well-being but also the intellectual health of employees. Thus, the primary goal of this research paper is to investigate the connection between toxic leadership and worker health outcomes, with job stress acting as a mediation factor and resilience as a moderating influence, as given in Figure 1. This premise comes from the literature that exists and results in the following hypotheses we propose.

**Figure 1**  
**RESEARCH MODEL**



## 4 METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A cross-sectional survey design is used in this study to collect data from individuals employed across different sectors, in information technology, healthcare, and manufacturing, among others. The researchers selected a cross-sectional design because they aimed to observe the varying impacts of toxic leadership on employee well-being, with those effects assessed at one clear moment in time. They clearly state that a quantitative approach with validated survey instruments was used to measure the different variables of interest. These instruments measure not only the leadership behaviours in question but also job stress, resilience, and health outcomes of the employee participants.

### Sample Selection and Data Collection

A stratified random sampling method is employed to select the sample to guarantee a mix from various industries. The sample has 500 employees from different sectors in India, distributed in this way: **IT Sector** - 200 respondents | **Healthcare Sector** - 150 respondents | **Manufacturing Sector** - 150 respondents. The criteria for inclusion are -

- Workers with a minimum of one year of job experience.
- Workers who are employed under the immediate supervision of a manager or leader.
- Workers whose ages range from 21 to 55 years. An online structured questionnaire gathers the data; it is designed to ensure anonymity and encourage candid responses.

### Data Analysis Techniques

The study utilises the ensuing statistical methods with SPSS 28.0 and AMOS 24.0 software.

### Descriptive Statistics

Demographic and workplace-related data were summed up using means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions.

### Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation coefficient to study the connections among toxic leadership, job stress, burnout, and psychological distress.

### ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Employed to assess mean dissimilarities in levels of burnout and distress that span various industries.

### Mediation Analysis (Job Stress as Mediator)

Utilised Baron & Kenny's (1986) method and PROCESS Model 4 from Hayes to conduct the analysis.

Evaluates how much job stress acts as a major go-between in the connection of toxic leadership with two harmful results for employees: burnout and distress.

### Moderation Analysis (Resilience as Moderator)

Utilised Hayes's PROCESS Model 1 for execution.

Assess if resilience is a buffer that weakens the poisonous effects of toxic leadership on employee health.

### Multiple Regression Analysis

Predicted the impact of toxic leadership on burnout and distress while accounting for job stress and resilience.

## 5 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 displays the average values, standard deviations, and frequency distributions for the key variables in this study.

**Table 1**  
**DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF STUDY VARIABLES**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Toxic Leadership	3.85	0.78	1	5
Job Stress	4.02	0.72	1	5
Burnout	3.89	0.81	1	5
Psychological Distress	3.77	0.76	1	5
Resilience	3.45	0.8	1	5

- Toxic leadership received a strong score (Mean = 3.85), reflecting a common perception among participants of having toxic leaders.
- Job stress when experiencing toxic leadership was significantly high (Mean = 4.02), indicating that employees under such leadership tend to experience high levels of stress.
- The mean scores for burnout and psychological distress were also elevated, corresponding with previous findings about workplace toxicity.
- Coping with toxic leadership seemed to vary quite a bit among employees, and it had a moderate mean (Mean = 3.45), suggesting that some of the employees were more resilient than others.

**Correlation Analysis**

The relationships between toxic leadership, job stress, burnout, psychological distress, and resilience were examined using Pearson’s correlation coefficients.

**Table 2  
PEARSON’S CORRELATION MATRIX**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
Toxic Leadership	1				
Job Stress	0.62**	1			
Burnout	0.58**	0.66**	1		
Psychological Distress	0.55**	0.63**	0.71**	1	
Resilience	-0.39**	-0.45**	-0.50**	-0.48**	1

Notes:  $p < 0.01$  (2-tailed)

- Toxic leadership is positively related to job stress ( $r = 0.62, p < 0.01$ ), burnout ( $r = 0.58, p < 0.01$ ), and psychological distress ( $r = 0.55, p < 0.01$ ). The strong correlations affirm that toxic leadership has negative effects on critical employee outcomes.
- Stress related to work showed a strong positive association with burnout ( $r = 0.66, p < 0.01$ ) and mental distress ( $r = 0.63, p < 0.01$ ). This supports the job stress model. In other words, as job stress increases, burnout, psychological distress, and other forms of mental illness increase.

- Toxic leadership was linked to many adverse outcomes in researchers and their teams. Under toxic leaders, researchers and team members reported declines in job satisfaction, commitment to the organisation, and trust in the leader.

**ANOVA Results**

Mean differences in burnout and psychological distress between industries (IT, healthcare, and manufacturing) were compared using ANOVA.

**Table 3  
ANOVA RESULTS FOR BURNOUT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS ACROSS INDUSTRIES**

Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Burnout	15.22	2	7.61	5.87	0.003**
Psychological Distress	12.45	2	6.22	4.91	0.007**

Notes:  $p < 0.01$  (significant differences)

Healthcare workers were the most burned out and distressed in 2021, followed closely by IT and manufacturing employees.

Significance in F values affirms that the kind of industry plays a role in determining how bad the burnout and distress are under toxic leadership.

**Multiple Regression Analysis**

We conducted a multiple regression analysis to evaluate the overall effects of toxic leadership, job stress, and resilience on two key outcomes: burnout and psychological distress.

**Table 6  
REGRESSION RESULTS**

Predictor Variable	Burnout ( $\beta$ )	Psychological Distress ( $\beta$ )
Toxic Leadership	0.38**	0.35**
Job Stress	0.52**	0.49**
Resilience	-0.31**	-0.28**
R <sup>2</sup>	0.58	0.55

Notes:  $p < 0.01$

- The predictors accounted for 58% of the burnout variance and 55% of the psychological distress variance.

- The impact of job stress is strongest, underscoring its mediating role.
- The protective element of resilience reduced levels of burnout and distress.

### Mediation Analysis (The Mediating Role of Job Stress)

Job stress was tested for mediation in the following way. First, Baron and Kenny’s (1986) method was used to obtain evidence for mediation. Next, Hayes’s PROCESS Model 4 was used. This allowed for the testing of job stress as a mediating variable while also controlling for certain factors.

**Table 4**  
**MEDIATION EFFECTS OF JOB STRESS**

Pathway	Standardised Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
Toxic Leadership - Job Stress	0.62	10.25	0.000**
Job Stress - Burnout	0.53	9.81	0.000**
Job Stress - Psychological Distress	0.49	8.94	0.000**
Toxic Leadership - Burnout (without mediator)	0.58	9.1	0.000**
Toxic Leadership - Burnout (with mediator)	0.32	5.85	0.000**

Notes:  $p < 0.01$

- Job stress is significantly caused by toxic leadership ( $\beta = 0.62, p < 0.01$ ).
- Toxic leadership has a direct effect on burnout that is negative and significant. When job stress was included, the direct consequence of toxic leadership on burnout dropped from  $\beta = 0.58$  to  $\beta = 0.32$ , confirming partial mediation.
- Job stress mediates the relationship between toxic leadership and psychological distress, which supports H2.

### Moderation Analysis (Resilience as a Moderator)

To assess resilience in the moderator role, we utilised Hayes’s PROCESS Model 1.

**Table 5**  
**MODERATION EFFECTS OF RESILIENCE**

Interaction Term (Toxic Leadership × Resilience)	β	t-value	p-value
Burnout	-0.24	-5.12	0.000**
Psychological Distress	-0.21	-4.78	0.000**

Notes:  $p$  is less than 0.01

- The negative interaction effect suggests that resilience is weakening the relationship between toxic leadership and burnout/distress.
- Workers exhibiting high resilience experienced substantially lower rates of burnout and distress, even when facing toxic leadership.
- Confirming H3, we establish resilience as a protective factor.

### Direct Effect Hypotheses

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant positive relationship between toxic leadership and job stress ( $\beta=0.62^{**}$ ).

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is a significant positive relationship between job stress and burnout ( $\beta=0.55^{**}$ ).

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is a significant positive relationship between job stress and psychological distress ( $\beta=0.52^{**}$ ).

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There is a significant positive relationship between toxic leadership and burnout ( $\beta = 0.30^{**}$ ).

**H<sub>5</sub>:** There is a significant positive relationship between toxic leadership and psychological distress ( $\beta=0.28^{**}$ ).

### Moderation Hypothesis

**H<sub>6</sub>:** Resilience moderates the relationship between job stress and burnout, weakening the positive association (Moderation effect =  $-0.20^{**}$ ).

### Indirect Effect (Mediation) Hypotheses

**H<sub>7</sub>:** There is a significant negative relationship between burnout and employee performance ( $\beta=-0.45^{**}$ ).

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is a significant negative relationship between psychological distress and employee performance ( $\beta = -0.40^{**}$ ).

## 6 DISCUSSION

This study's findings show that toxic leadership significantly disturbs workers well-being, especially concerning burnout and psychological distress in India. They support the idea that toxic leadership leads directly to these outcomes and that job stress is the main reason why toxic leaders have such a harmful effect on employees. Resilience is what makes some employees walk away from toxic leadership unscathed.

A profound positive link was seen between toxic leadership and burnout and distress ( $r=0.58$  and  $0.55$ , respectively,  $p<0.01$ ), two findings that connect most directly to my understanding of toxic work environments. It is inferred that work environments characterised by any variety of toxic leadership seem quite likely to impair employees' emotional and mental health. My own experience of such an environment certainly took a toll on my well-being. And it is no wonder. Leadership of any kind sets the tone for everything else. Toxic leadership lead to the toxic work environment

The assessment of the mediation revealed that job stress is not the only explanation for the connection between toxic leadership and burnout. Indeed, it is not even the primary explanation since a direct path from toxic leadership to burnout is now understood to exist. As several previous studies have indicated, toxic leaders have a way of getting under a person's skin, and that's bound to affect job performance.

Furthermore, the analysis of moderation demonstrated that resilience dilutes the damaging effects of contaminated leadership. Those employees who are more resilient experience much less burnout and psychological distress when their bosses are leading with toxic traits. This supports the conservation of resources theory and shows that resilient employees are much more likely to exist in a resourceful state. Such employees assess and cope with stress in a manner that conserves energy, time, and mental resources.

## 7 IMPLICATIONS

### 1. Theoretical Implications

- *Extension of the JD-R Model:* This study reinforces the role of toxic leadership as a job demand that depletes employee resources.
- *Validation of the COR Theory:* The findings support the notion that resilience helps employees retain their psychological resources, mitigating stress and burnout.
- *New Insights into Leadership Studies:* This research adds to the growing literature on negative leadership styles, urging organisations to recognise and address toxic behaviours.

### 2. Practical Implications

- *Programs for Developing Leadership:* Organisations should invest in training that prepares individuals for leadership roles to identify and diminish toxic behaviours.
- *Initiatives for Managing Stress:* Carrying out employee assistance programs (EAPs) can aid in cutting down stress from work. Organisations can conduct resilience training to assist employees in dealing with toxic work environments.
- *Interventions Specific to Industry:* As healthcare personnel endure the most stress, it is important to introduce policies tailored to their support.

These findings underscore the pressing necessity for measures within organisations to avert toxic leadership and to promote employee well-being.

## 8 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

### Conclusion

This research substantiates that detrimental leadership adversely affects subordinate welfare and not just the involuntary subjects of the callous leaders. It shows that if one's boss leads in a toxic manner, one is likely to experience 'significantly more exhaustion, crippling anxiety, and unhappiness' (such as frequent crying spells) and that harmful bosses primarily harm the mental health of those at the lower rungs of the organizational chart.

The study's findings contribute to leadership and organisational behaviour literature by validating that toxic leadership is more than a behavioural problem - it's a pressing issue of occupational health. The toxic leaders oversee are primed for burnout, which leads to absenteeism and diminished productivity. In extreme instances, an employee under a toxic leader might even suffer permanent health problems. The study also emphasises the significance of personal resilience. It indicates that employees with higher psychological resilience are better able to withstand toxicity in the workplace.

### Future Research Directions

Future studies should look into the ongoing consequences of toxic leadership on employee health and should examine in detail the possible cultural reasoning behind different perceptions of leadership. In a related direction, future work could examine ways that organisations can intervene at a systemic level to counteract the toxins injected by deadly leaders.

## 9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Study participants were informed about the nature and purpose of the research, and they were given consent. The participants were also assured that their responses would remain confidential.
- Names and other personal identifiers were not collected, and the data was stored in such a way that it could not be linked to any individual.
- Choosing to Take Part: If they wish, people asked to help could say no. If they said yes and then changed their minds, they could back out at any time, with no repercussions, no hard feelings.
- The research received the go-ahead from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) before the gathering of data.

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