



## What Happens When a Leader is Toxic? A Qualitative Investigation

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### Abstract

This paper investigates the phenomenon of toxic leadership and its dynamics within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Drawing upon social constructivist worldview, the research explores the prevalence, antecedents, outcomes, and impacts of toxic leadership behaviors on the psychological well-being of individuals within academic settings. The study employs a qualitative research design, utilizing semi-structured interviews to gather comprehensive insights from faculty, staff, and students across multiple HEIs. The findings reveal that the causes of leader toxicity extend beyond the leaders' personality alone, rather other factors are associated to it as well. In addition to the personality traits highlighted which are associated to toxic leaders, certain environmental and cultural factors also foster the development of toxicity among the leaders and their subordinates. Such leader-member exchanges lead to destructive consequences, affecting not only the subordinate alone at an individual level but the overall organizational effectiveness as well. Thus, coping strategies to deal with such toxicity have also been discussed. Key themes identified were categorized as personality traits, organizational culture, psychological consequences and coping strategies. This research contributes to both theoretical understanding and practical implications, shedding light on the complexities of toxic leadership dynamics within the academic context. It underscores the importance of fostering healthier leadership practices and organizational cultures to promote positive psychological well-being and enhance overall academic experiences within HEIs. Recommendations for future research have also been discussed.

**Keywords:** toxic leadership, psychological consequences, Higher Education Institutions, leadership practices, leadership behaviors

### 1. Introduction

Psychological well-being of employees at workplace is important because of its association to a number of positive work outcomes like increased job satisfaction, work engagement or an overall happiness and sense of joy at work (Wang, Derakhshan, & Azari Noughabi, 2022). Contrarily, the absence of psychological well-being can potentially lead to negative outcomes too. Therefore, any factors in an organizational context that can disrupt the psychological well-being of employees must be avoided and treated before it can harm at both the individual as well as organizational level. Leadership is one of the primary factors that determine the dynamics of any organization. The influence of leaders and the power they exercise develops certain psychological and cognitive consequences among the employees working under them (G. Voyer & McIntosh, 2013).

Over the years leadership has been studied with a lens of morality and ethics. The term itself has been used in a positive realm both in research arena as well as practice. The nobility associated with the concept of leadership has been so hardcore that the acceptability of an otherwise thought has been almost impossible, until recently when the researchers, based on practical experiences and observation, started highlighting and exploring the negative side of leadership, emphasizing on the need to unlearn the constant perception of leadership that has prevailed for so long. This turned the heads in the stream of literature on leadership, bringing to notice the kinds of leaders who are toxic and harmful both to their subordinates as well as the organizational environment at large (Abbas Khan, 2021). Whether it is their personality traits or their own past experiences that become the reason behind such negative attitudes and behaviors is still debatable. Literature has been explored to unearth the antecedents (Hattab, Wirawan, Salam, Daswati, & Niswaty, 2022), outcomes (Bakkal, Serener, & Myrvang, 2019), processes (Williams, 2018) and other aspects associated with such attitudes, particularly at the level of organizational leadership.

Since the negative attitudes of managers can have adverse effects on both personal and performance levels for the powerless individuals working under them, it is important to identify and fix such behaviors. Further, this toxicity also prevails when managers prioritize their self-interests over the organizational interests in general, another red alert for the associated entities. Because of this toxicity among the leaders, several negative consequences have been highlighted in literature, which affect the psychological well-being of employees (Naeem & Khurram, 2020) including emotional distress (Bhandarker & Rai, 2019), social isolation (Moghtadaei, 2020) and disturbed work-life balance (Gandhi, 2022). It has also been known to lead to reduced commitment among the employees, reduced morale and higher turnover, which causes organizations lose their effective and trained employees. However, the organization wide perception of justice among the employees is affected because of these toxic leaders, potentially leading them to raise their voices, which in turn leads to enhanced effectiveness in organizational as well as individual performance.

Due to this multiplicity of effect of Toxic Leadership on various dimensions and aspects of organizational effectiveness, it is important to explore its effects, particularly the psychological consequences, to be able to mitigate the negative outcomes before they cause irreversible damages (Boddy & Taplin, 2017).

This paper thus aimed to understand the construct of toxic leadership, what it entails and the consequences of it, particularly on psychological well-being of the individuals who experience it.

### 2. Literature Review

Literature highlights the use of several other terms similar to toxic leadership like abusive supervisions (Tiware & Jha, 2021), destructive leadership, unethical leadership, however, the definitions and confines of the concepts differ at varying degrees. Moreover, there are other closely related concepts like social undermining, corporate psychopaths, bullying which may be related to the term toxicity but may or may not be at the leadership level.

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However, the scope of this study is only confined to the term “toxic leadership” or the variations of it, like “leader toxicity”. This paper focuses only on the literature work that has particularly used these terms. Other terms like destructive, unethical, abusive all lie outside the scope of this paper.

Authors across the literature have given various, yet strikingly similar, definitions of toxic leadership over a decade. While the other similar terms have also been coined through the same literature stream, like destructive leadership and unethical leadership, we shall only be focusing on how “toxic leadership” to be exact has been defined.

Leaders, according to Schmidt (2008) who was the pioneer in contributing to the literature on toxic leadership in particular, are generally identified as being toxic when they intentionally bring their subordinates down, and intimidate them to an extent that exerts a pressure, thus affecting their professional growth and performance. This intimidating behavior regresses the confidence as well as level of interest of employees in their work. Such leaders are not hesitant in hurting others to serve their own motives. In spite of such toxic traits, these leaders still tend to present themselves as heroic and prefer charming the subordinates into believing the same. In other words, the toxicity of these leaders is not aggressive or obvious but inherent in their otherwise soft behaviors. They appear as your friends and would then pull you down in a rather unnoticed manner.

Other traits that the toxic leaders are identified on specifically include their short sightedness, because of which they do not usually realize the damage they cause to their organization in the longer run, their tendency to damage the motivation level and performance of their subordinates due to the stress they cause with their acts, and their general insensitivity towards causing the deviance at individual, organizational and environmental levels. In addition to causing just the pressure and stress, these leaders terrorize their subordinates at a more intense level and even compromise on integrity and ethics to achieve their personal motives. Such traits are likely to produce negative outcomes like increased stress and counterproductive work behaviors (Kayani & Alasan, 2021).

Precisely, toxic leaders affect the personal and professional lives of their subordinates, damaging not just the performance, creative abilities and satisfaction at work but their self-esteem in general as well. (Saleem, Malik, & Malik, 2021)

Thus the negativity caused by the toxic leaders brings damage at both individual as well as organizational level. Their belittling ways, rude behavior and disrespect cause harm to the well-being of subordinates. Using humiliation, favoritism and coercion for their own personal motives are the traits that classify a leader as a ‘bad boss’. Such leaders do not utilize the policies and their authority, or take initiatives, in the interest of the organization at large or considering other people but for personal gains only. As a result of this, the response from the subordinate may show up either in the form of increased turnover, compromised performances or a distorted organization wide culture, leading to negative behaviors like workplace gossip, social undermining and organizational hypocrisy and politics.

The concept of Toxic triangle, as termed by Padilla et al, (2007), emphasizes that toxic leadership is a result of interaction between a toxic leader, an organizational environment that is conducive to toxicity and the followers who allow the toxicity to prevail. This means that toxicity in a leader is not alone an outcome of his or her own personal traits, rather it is exercised when subordinates allow themselves to be exposed to it and in an organization that allows such behaviors to exist because of poor policies, weak culture and flawed structures. Reed (2004), on the other hand, identified that leadership is said to be toxic when no attention is being paid to the well-being of the employees, normalizing practices that are damaging to the culture of the organization, and being driven by self-serving motives instead of focusing on the organizational objectives at large. Other traits associated to toxic leaders by other authors (e.g. Labrague et al. (2020)) include humiliation, intolerance and self-promotion (Labrague, Nwafor, & Tsaras, 2020).

### **3. Outcomes of Toxic Leadership**

Outcomes of toxic leadership from the available literature have been found to be at various micro (affecting the individuals), meso (affecting groups) and macro levels (an organization wide effect).

#### **3.1. Organizational level outcomes**

Masculinity contest culture has also been highlighted to facilitate the hiring, retention as well as development of leaders who become toxic. Such leaders utilize their power and authority to exert pressure in ways that are damaging to the subordinates’ well-being at workplace. This leads to destructive cultural dynamics in the longer run, causing job stress, work life conflict, increased intention to leave and lower work engagement (Matos, O’Neill, & Lei, 2018). However, this work engagement was found to increase among the male workers, which is a further testimony to the existence of masculinity contest culture. This further confirms how masculinity contest culture can facilitate not just the survival rather the growth and development of toxic leaders, despite the detrimental effects on employees in general.

#### **3.2. Group level outcomes**

Furthermore, organizational citizenship behavior has also been studied as a potential outcome of toxic leadership where followers’ trust and commitment mediate the association between toxic leadership and OCB, which found a significant yet negative relation between the two. However, the relation of OCB with followers’ trust was significant and positive (Behery, Al-Nasser, Jabeen, & El Rawas, 2018). Traits like self-promotion and narcissism were used to measure as the sub scales of toxic leadership, whereas the different dimensions of OCB included challenge oriented OCB and affiliation oriented OCB.

Unit civility has also been analyzed with toxic leadership in relation to job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the context of military, which identified a negative relationship between toxic leadership and unit civility. It was further identified that this unit civility works as a mediator when testing the relationship of toxic leadership with job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Gallus, Walsh, van Driel, Gouge, & Antolic, 2013).

#### **3.3. Individual Level Outcomes**

The most frequently and conveniently observed outcomes of toxic leadership are on individual level. Individuals are affected by toxic leader behaviors in terms of their psychological well-being, their performance at work, their overall productivity levels, their work-life balance and the overall quality of their personal and professional lives.

Individual level outcomes include job satisfaction and turnover intention as discussed by (Bakka, Serener, & Myrvang, 2019) along with staff morale, professional agency, reduced job performance, increased attrition and a general impact on an individual's personal and professional life. Furthermore, certain negative behaviors are elicited when exposed to leader toxicity for the longer intervals-incivility, reduced self-confidence, anxiety and stress, depression and fear, stifled career development, humiliation, exhaustion and burnout, anger, fear, lack of trust and other health issues including migraines, sudden weight gain or weight loss or even substance abuse and suicidal thoughts in the worst case scenarios, to name a few (Snow, Hickey, Blom, O'Mahony, & Mannix-McNamara, 2021).

Empirical evidences (Samnani and Singh, 2012; Williams, 2018) have been found between toxic leadership and physical and mental illnesses including sleeplessness, cognitive impairment and post-traumatic stress disorder. Moreover, decreased performance and innovation, commitment, motivation, and increased turnover intention and counter-productive work behaviors (Hattab, Wirawan, Salam, Daswati, & Niswaty, 2022) are the other costs that the organizations have to bear along with other legal and medical costs and resource wastage.

#### **4. Psychological Consequences of Toxic Leadership**

Some of the many psychological consequences pointed out across the literature that made to the list in this particular study include:

##### **4.1. Job satisfaction**

Since job satisfaction comprises of all the emotions, experiences and attitudes related to job, leadership has a great role to play in determining job satisfaction (Bakka, Serener, & Myrvang, 2019). While positive experiences with the leaders can lead to job satisfaction, negative ones can lead to job dissatisfaction (or reduced job satisfaction). As leadership as well as the satisfaction of workers both contribute towards organizational effectiveness at large, it is important to create an environment in organizations where job satisfaction can be ensured. For this, toxicity or any other negative leadership aspects are to be controlled to maximize organizational effectiveness.

##### **4.2. Different forms of Workplace Ostracism**

Exclusion from social activities is a common type of workplace ostracism. This occurs when an individual is purposefully left out of social events, such as team lunches, after-work drinks, or other social gatherings. It can make the excluded person feel isolated, lonely, and disconnected from their colleagues, which can negatively impact their job performance and well-being. (Pereira, Meier, & Elfering, 2012).

##### **4.3. Emotional Dissonance**

Emotional congruence refers to the difference between the emotions that you feel and the emotions that you express. This incongruence happens when the employees are bound to display only the emotions that are expected. Emotional dissonance refers to the "incongruence between felt and expressed emotions that arises when employees are expected to display emotions that do not match their true feelings" (Karatepe & Aleshinloye, 2009)

It is also defined as "the extent to which employees suppress their true emotions in order to comply with organizational display rules". Emotional dissonance as "the tension experienced when a person must project one emotion, while actually feeling another" (Lewig & Dollard, Emotional dissonance, emotional exhaustion and, 2010). In 1983, Hochschild coined the term "emotional labor" to describe the act of managing emotions, including emotional dissonance, in order to present a visible display of facial and bodily expressions to the public. Overall, emotional dissonance can have negative effects on employee well-being and job satisfaction, and it is often a byproduct of organizational norms and expectations surrounding emotional expression in the workplace.

Emotional dissonance is a concept that refers to the conflict between an individual's true emotions and the emotions that are expected of them in their job role. A literature review on emotional dissonance can examine the various strategies that individuals use to manage their emotions, such as deep acting and surface acting. The review can also explore the consequences of emotional dissonance on individuals and organizations, such as increased emotional exhaustion, decreased job satisfaction, and reduced performance.

##### **4.4. Organizational Cynicism**

Organizational cynicism is generally defined as a lack of faith and loss of regard for one's organization (Yang, Chen, Roy, & Mattila, 2020). Toxic leadership has been found to significantly impact the commitment and engagement level of employees with their organizations. Since leaders are perceived by the subordinates as the overall representatives of the organization, negative experiences with these leaders can potentially lead to organizational cynicism among the followers (Dobbs & Do, 2019).

#### **5. Method**

In depth qualitative study has been performed using the semi structured interviews. For this purpose, an interview guide was developed based on the themes identified from the review of literature and subsequent questions were added to explore further factors that are possibly associated to toxic leadership. The study was based on higher education institutes of Punjab. Faculty members from higher education institutes who have had experienced or observed some kind of negative leadership with their leader or boss at any point in their careers were selected as the target respondents.

Semi-structured format allowed for a systematic exploration of the research objectives and relevant literature while accommodating the unique perspectives and experiences of each participant. By incorporating questions derived from the literature review, the interviews were able to cover essential topics identified in prior research, ensuring alignment with the overarching aims of the study. Additionally, the semi-structured nature of the interviews provided the opportunity to delve deeper into emergent themes and responses, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This flexibility facilitated the adaptation of the interview process based on the insights gained during the interviews, allowing for the exploration of unexpected avenues and ensuring the relevance and depth of the data collected.

The design of the interview guide for this study was meticulously crafted to align with the research objectives and theoretical underpinnings while incorporating insights gleaned from the existing literature on toxic leadership. The questions were carefully selected to delve into various dimensions of the phenomenon, including its manifestations, contributing factors, coping mechanisms, and psychological impacts on subordinates. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as social learning theory, organizational justice theory, and leader-member exchange theory, the interview guide aimed to explore how toxic leadership behaviors are learned, perceived, and experienced within the specific context of Pakistani universities. Additionally, the inclusion of questions derived from pilot testing and preliminary interviews ensured the relevance and comprehensiveness of the interview guide, allowing for iterative refinement and adjustment based on feedback and emerging themes.

Purposive and Convenience sampling has been utilized during the data collection process, since data has to be collected from the particular respondents only who fulfill a certain criteria. As the selected population is Higher Education Institutes of Punjab, in the first stage, we will select the cities from which to sample the universities. For this, we tentatively short listed Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan, and Bahawalpur. Both public and private sector universities were included in the sample. This gave us representation of total 10 universities from across Punjab in our final sample.

Since the interviews were conducted mostly in the native language, forward-backward translation technique was employed during the transcription process. This means that interviews conducted in Urdu were first translated into the target language i.e. English, and then that translated script was translated back into Urdu to see if it matches the original responses. Thus, no major differences were made to the original responses during the translation and transcription process.

## 6. Results and Discussion

The qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews has been analyzed using the thematic analysis approach, identifying the underlying common themes across the responses collected.

The analysis was conducted both manually as well as using the software tool MaxQDA. Codes were assigned to the responses identified from the transcribed scripts and recurring codes were clustered into the broader themes. These identified themes were then matched with the themes identified from the detailed literature review to analyze the similarities and contrasting factors.

The process of dissecting qualitative data into manageable and meaningful units stands as a pivotal endeavor within this research endeavor. These units often referred to as segments, exhibit diverse forms, spanning from individual sentences to comprehensive paragraphs, contingent upon the complexity and granularity of the data under examination. In this research endeavor, meticulous efforts are directed towards imbuing structure and coherence into this process, with each segment being meticulously assigned a specific code, typically manifested as a succinct word or concise phrase (Morse, 1994; Vears et al., 2016). Consequently, every response extracted from the transcribed data undergoes meticulous scrutiny to discern the underlying nature of the responses across all variables. Subsequently, a systematic process ensues wherein the principal keywords extracted from the responses are identified and meticulously categorized into first-level codes, thereby elucidating the overarching themes inherent within the data corpus.

After the first level codes, the similarly occurring phenomenon were placed under the similar head, regarded as 'themes'. Thus this study resulted into the identification of four broad themes, and the codes, or sub-themes lying under these themes have been discussed.

**Table 1**

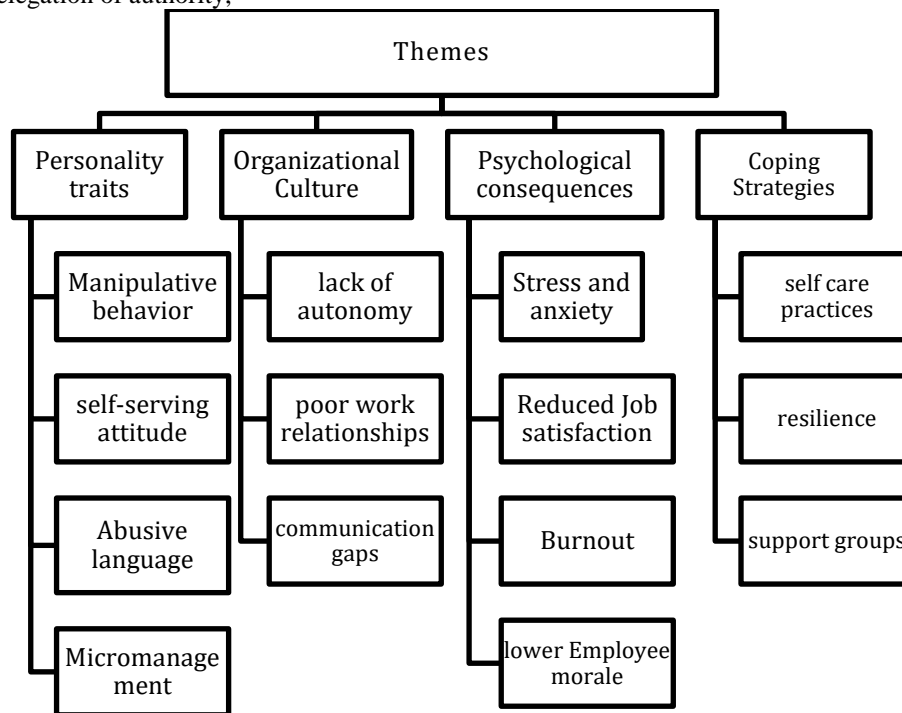
Example response	Analysis (Notes)	Codes	Categories and themes
Leadership experience in academia is in a public sector university, and in public sector universities, leaders do not have much autonomy. They are subject to the directions from the top i.e. VC. Because policies are made there. Leader can only play a role in implementation. They do not get to participate in things like planning and all. Number 2, people who are working in public sector universities do not have independence of selecting the team themselves. Since people in public sector are hired by virtue of the selection board, and hence the leader does not have as much say in the selection process as it should be. So the leaders in public sector are the ones who do not select their teams themselves rather this leader only exhibits the leadership qualities that how he or she utilizes the given resources. (R1)	The respondent highlighted the overall climate of the public sector universities and their hiring process.	Lack of autonomy	Organizational Culture
See once you are into it, you have to have patience and tolerance and it develops in you. So the edge I have is that by virtue of my age and extensive experience, I have more capacity to listen. TL has a disadvantage when they are not ready to listen. So you see people lose half of their problems when they know they are being heard and there is someone to understand. So it developed in me as a capacity. Yes there were pressures too, like when you cannot express your displeasure. I used to give people an edge to express their displeasures but I was myself cope and deprived of it. (R1)	Respondent has the ability to cope in the difficult situations; through this he/she may avoid toxicity in the leadership role.	Coping Mechanism	Coping Strategies

Sample schema to code allocation and themes identification

The four broad themes identified included personality traits, organizational culture, psychological outcomes and coping strategies. These results validate the stance of the Toxic Triangle Theory, which exclaims that it is not just the personality of the leader alone that causes toxicity among the leader-member exchange dynamics; rather it is the environmental factors and subordinates' characteristics as well.

### 6.1. Personality Traits

Here, the theme that has been called “personality traits” highlights the traits among the leaders which have been regarded as toxic by the victims who were interviewed. This broadly included manipulation, abusive language, micromanagement and self-serving attitude. While most of these traits or behaviors are similar to what Schmidt (2008) highlighted as traits of a toxic leader, the component of micromanagement, however, is a unique addition to this definition. A deeper dive into the interview responses also explains the reason behind this micromanagement which has been said to be lack of expertise among the leaders. Subordinates who have had experienced leader toxicity were found to be of the view that leaders tend to become toxic when they lack expertise in their relevant area and hence try to shadow their incompetence through such behaviors and try to micromanage their subordinates, with no sense of delegation of authority,



**Fig 1: Identified Themes for the Qualitative Data**

### 6.2. Organizational Culture

The analysis of data from Code 2, focusing on Organizational Climate, revealed four prominent themes that play crucial roles in shaping the dynamics within the workplace. Firstly, Trust and transparency emerged as fundamental elements for fostering a positive organizational climate. When employees feel trusted and have access to transparent communication channels, it cultivates a sense of belonging and encourages open dialogue, ultimately enhancing organizational cohesion. Secondly, Organizational culture was identified as a significant factor influencing the overall climate. A strong organizational culture characterized by shared values, norms, and beliefs contributes to a cohesive work environment where employees feel aligned with the organization's mission and purpose. Thirdly, Workplace relationships play a pivotal role in shaping the organizational climate. Positive relationships among colleagues promote collaboration, teamwork, and mutual support, fostering a sense of camaraderie and boosting morale. Finally, Communication effectiveness emerged as a critical theme, highlighting the importance of clear, timely, and respectful communication practices. Effective communication channels facilitate information flow, minimize misunderstandings, and promote trust among employees, thereby contributing to a positive organizational climate.

### 6.3. Psychological Consequences

Psychological well-being is crucial as it influences one's ability to cope with challenges, make meaningful contributions to society, and maintain healthy relationships. It is not merely the absence of mental illness but rather the presence of positive attributes that contribute to a fulfilling life. When individuals experience psychological well-being, they are better equipped to handle stress, bounce back from setbacks, and pursue their goals with confidence and optimism. Moreover, psychological well-being has been linked to numerous health benefits, including improved physical health, longevity, and overall life satisfaction. By prioritizing psychological well-being, individuals can lead more fulfilling lives and contribute positively to their communities and society as a whole.

### 6.4. Coping Strategies

Coping mechanisms vary widely and can include both adaptive and maladaptive strategies. Adaptive coping mechanisms involve constructive approaches such as problem-solving, seeking social support, positive reframing, and acceptance, which enable individuals to address stressors effectively and maintain psychological resilience. On the other hand, maladaptive coping

mechanisms, such as avoidance, substance abuse, and denial, may provide temporary relief but can ultimately exacerbate stress and contribute to long-term psychological distress.

The importance of coping mechanisms lies in their ability to buffer the negative impact of stressors on mental health and overall functioning. Effective coping strategies can help individuals build resilience, enhance their ability to adapt to challenging situations, and mitigate the harmful effects of stress on physical and psychological well-being. By providing individuals with tools to manage stressors effectively, coping mechanisms empower them to maintain a sense of balance, control, and optimism even in the face of adversity. Moreover, coping mechanisms are instrumental in promoting healthy coping behaviors, fostering social support networks, and facilitating personal growth and development. Overall, cultivating adaptive coping mechanisms is essential for promoting mental health, enhancing resilience, and fostering overall well-being in individuals and communities.

## 7. Conclusion and Future Directions

This study based on the qualitative method of investigation, explores the phenomenon of toxic leadership in detail and develops a comprehensive understanding of why toxicity may prevail at leadership levels, what are its effects at the organization as well as on individuals and how to develop coping mechanisms to deal with it. There has been an increase in interest in understanding how the topic of toxic leadership relates to tertiary education. Since higher education is primarily an area that is supposed to produce leaders for all other areas, be it medical, engineering, law or corporate sector, thus this sector is particularly important to exhibit the best leadership practices itself. This study, therefore, analyzes the dark side of leadership in this particular sector to identify the problems, challenges and shortcomings in the leadership of this sector and to explore how these shortcomings and challenges can be overcome. It is essential for the leaders of higher education to realize the impact that they create on the societies at large through its students, thus maintaining a good culture through good leadership practices is of utmost importance here.

Therefore, higher education institutes of Punjab were selected as the target population to collect the data from. Purposive and convenience sampling was used to draw the sample based on the pre-decided criteria. This criteria included faculty members who have had experienced or observed any negative kind of leadership at any point in their career, and the faculty members at any of the leadership positions across these institutes.

Both public and private sector universities were included in the sample from the cities of Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan and Bahawalpur to conduct this study. Total 12 interviews with the subordinates and 9 with the leaders were conducted, after which the data seemed saturated so a few of the responses were eliminated from the final sample. The profiling of the respondents included in the study has also been presented.

After conducting the thorough thematic analysis, using both manual techniques as well as with the help of the software tool MAXQDA, the final themes identified included personality traits, organizational culture, psychological consequences and coping strategies. These findings not only relate to the Toxic Triangle Theory, but also add to the theoretical and practical understanding of the phenomenon by highlighting the significance of coping strategies in order to deal with leader toxicity.

However, this study is not free from limitations, some of which can be covered in future studies. Because of the time and resource constraint, only a limited number of universities could be included into the sample of the study while collecting open ended data. Inclusion of more universities from across Punjab could present a more generalizable picture of the problem being presented. Future studies may include a wider sample of universities from across Punjab, particularly focusing on keeping an equal representation of public and private sector universities and male and female respondents in the final sample to collect the data from.

Then, the study is based on only one technique of analysis i.e. thematic analysis, with the slight inclusion of researcher's own observations as supplementary information in support of the analysis results. Inclusion of other qualitative techniques could have further strengthened the results drawn from this research.

Just as this study is based on the construct of "Toxic Leadership", similar methodology can be adopted for a thorough review of literature on the other relevant constructs like "destructive leadership", "abusive supervision", "unethical leadership". This would further help draw line among the definitions and operationalization of such constructs, making it possible to understand the difference, both on theoretical as well as practical level. Longitudinal studies may also be conducted in future to see how toxic leaders affect subordinates' performance and other personal and psychological attributes over an extended period of time.

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