

## How does Leaders' Aversiveness Effect Employees' Life Satisfaction? Moderation of Emotional Resilience

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<b>Article History:</b>	<b>ABSTRACT</b>
<b>Received:</b> 6 Jan, 2023	<b>Purpose:</b> The current study investigates the impact of aversive leadership on employee life satisfaction with the moderation of emotional resilience. The study is conducted on service sector employees as being the major contributor to economic growth.
<b>Revised:</b> 25 May, 2023	<b>Design and Methodology:</b> The study was conducted cross-sectionally with a sample of 350 in Pakistan using the convenience sampling method.
<b>Accepted:</b> 20 June, 2023	<b>Findings:</b> The current study discovered that aversive leadership has a significant negative impact on employee life satisfaction. As aversive leaders practice threatening and intimidation leading to employee stress at work and at home. Moreover, employees with the ability of emotional resilience were found to be better at handling their leaders' aversion, reducing their life stress and dissatisfaction.
	<b>Implications:</b> The current study provides significant literature and helps practitioners better judge these aspects in humans when hiring and handling.
	<b>Keywords:</b> Destructive Leadership Aversive Leadership, Life Satisfaction, Resilience and Emotional Resilience.

### 1. Introduction

Human resource management has become a significant concept in highly competitive business world. Firms with best human resource management gains competitive edge over their competitors (Chadwick & Flinchbaugh, 2021). Leadership is an important phenomena in human resource management (Zhao, Liu, Zhu, & Liu, 2020). Leadership is a concept quite discussed by researchers and is still being discussed due to the importance that it holds in organizational settings. As per the previous literature, bad, dark or destructive leadership leads to poor organizational outcomes and good, bright, or constructive leadership leads to positive organizational outcomes. Mostly, management sciences researchers showed concern towards the type of leadership and its traits due to their impact on the performance and productivity of the organization. A very few have considered it to be affecting the employees' personal life as well. Human psychology is an important aspect to study in regards to the role of humans in the overall economic cycle of a state. Individuals'

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traits and their emotions towards their part of the economic cycle make a great difference. The personality types the environment in which it is both matters in making the decisions. These decisions eventually contribute to the accomplishment of the organizational goals either negatively or positively.

Destructive or dark leadership contributes negatively imposing both negative impacts on the employee psyche and the organization as well. Previously, literature has unfolded few molds related to the impact of destructive leadership on the employee psyche. But this research is undertaking a new and novel aspect by testing the impact of a style of dark leadership on employee life satisfaction. Akca (2017) discussed the impact of toxic leadership on the subordinates' intention to leave their organizations. Another research by Trépanier, Boudrias, and Peterson (2019) linked the destructive forms of leadership with subordinates' health. Moreover, Nauman, Zheng, and Basit (2020) discussed in their research the effect of abusive supervision on the quality of work produced. Several other studies have likewise explored the negative impacts of bad leadership upon employee psyche.

This paper intakes one such type of destructive leadership to study under the current research and how it may influence subordinates' life satisfaction in regards to service sector employees. Aversive leadership is not been much studied previously. Especially, in the last 5 years, only a few studies had undertaken aversive leadership style but these studies had also only studied it in an organizational context (Fatima, Majeed, & Shah, 2018; Khan, Nisar, Bashir, & Ahmed, 2018; Saeed, 2017). This study would be the first one to evaluate and contribute to the literature of aversive leadership in subordinates' life contexts. Aversive leadership style is defined as the one which negatively impacts subordinates' by imposing threats and intimidation on them (Fatima et al., 2018). Pearce and Sims Jr (2002) previously discussed different types of leadership in which he discussed aversive leadership as well. According to their study, aversive leaders try and use coercive power towards their subordinates and merely rely on punishing them. Aversive leadership prime focus is hitting the pinching or weak areas of their subordinates. Academicians thought of school portray aversive leaders as the one bullying employees for the sake of execution and accomplishment of their personal goals (Yun, Cox, Sims Jr, & Salam, 2007). In brief the bullying conduct, the exercise of threat and intimidation by aversive leaders makes the employees performance lower (Pearce & Sims Jr, 2002).

In 1961, Newgarten first proposed the concept of life satisfaction. It evaluates the results or outcomes are discovered by comparing individual needs (Demirel, 2014). Previously life satisfaction has been described as the prime objective of life by different individuals. It explains the person's various events in life. Alternatively stated, it deliberates the overall attitude of the person towards life. Happy in terms of monotonous life, economic safety, physical health and the relationship with society is an essential component of life satisfaction (Schmitter, 2011). Latti And Lee, (2017) elaborate that knowledge of perception is limited to life satisfaction which is a thoughtful gap in organizational research. Life satisfaction addresses the judgment that an individual makes about his/her life in a few spaces (ED Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985; Ed Diener,

Inglehart, & Tay, 2013), and it is the most expanded develop for surveying emotional prosperity (Helliwell, Shiplett, & Barrington-Leigh, 2019). A developing assemblage of exploration has revealed that higher life satisfaction is connected to a few alluring organizations' outcomes, like higher professional fulfilment, authoritative responsibility, and particularly, work fulfilment (Ed Diener et al., 2013).

Notwithstanding, the job of the leader in improving workers' life satisfaction has gotten sparse experimental consideration. This is to some degree astonishing because a prior study has shown that leaders are probably going to significantly affect their followers' joy and prosperity (Kuoppala, Lamminpää, Liira, & Vainio, 2008; Nielsen & Munir, 2009). Leaders assume a critical part in forming the workplace of a firm (Laschinger & Fida, 2014; Tuckey, Bakker, & Dollard, 2012). This is because of the way that in many firms' key parts of work, for example, rewards, cut-off times, work allotment, and execution assessments are in the hands of the immediate hold of the leaders (Donaldson-Feilder, Munir, & Lewis, 2013; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005). Subsequently, how, they oversee and impact these elements can strongly affect workers' prosperity (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). And the case with workers' life satisfaction is the opposite if provided with destructive or dark leaders. Dark leaders compromise their subordinates' well-being leading to dissatisfaction in their lives.

Prior researches have labelled resilience as a process within humans that help them recover or cope with adverse events or feelings. A research analysis in Shanghai and Ji'nan on approximately 241 families declared that the support of family is related to young people's circumstances and emotional resilience. Young people are helped to cope with a changing environment by non-traditional, libertarianism about fostering that teach them innovative techniques (Chang, Chen, & Ji, 2011). Mid of twentieth century has been working on the digging the advantageous outcomes of the reliance when humans encounter an adverse situation or feeling (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Rutter, 1987). Five major sub-subjects of resilience have been revealed by a consolidated study (Aburn, Gott, & Hoare, 2016). This consolidated study explained resilience as a capacity of an individual to cope with the adverse feelings from an unfortunate event in order to deal with the situation. The concepts of mental and emotional resilience have been labelled as similar psychological phenomena (Denny, Fleming, Clark, & Wall, 2004). Emotional Resilience is merely an individual's; capacity to fix oneself up bearing pressure by adapting the best style. At the end of the day, emotional resilience alludes to a versatile component where individuals can recover quickly from adverse or pessimistic passionate states and alter themselves in a better way (Davidson, 2000).

Service sector bears the most human interaction (Ahmed & Ahsan, 2014) thus can have the most effect of the leaders. Services sector is principal and most rapid growing sector in the global economy, making major share in net yield and employment in maximum countries (Ahmed & Ahsan, 2014). So, the research under study aims to identify the impact of leaders' aversion on employee life satisfaction and investigates the moderating role emotional resilience plays in between leaders' aversion and employee life satisfaction. Previous researches undertook impact on

employees because of leaders' aversion in organizational context (Bligh, Kohles, Pearce, Justin, & Stovall, 2007; Fatima et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2018; Thoroughgood, Hunter, & Sawyer, 2011) but this the first attempt in literature to study impact of leaders' aversion on employees in their life context.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Impact of Aversive Leadership on Employee Life Satisfaction**

According to Bernarto et al. (2020) teachers need respect and motivation to perform their roles which is often somewhat hindered by their principals. They stated that teachers with a high level of respect and motivation from their leaders were found to have life satisfaction. As indicated by Colquitt and Wesson (2009), life satisfaction is the condition in which workers are content with their lives and is identified with work satisfaction. Numerous investigations had secured the connection between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. It was featured that an instructor, who was happy with their work, was additionally happy with their life, and the other way around. Along these lines, when an instructor is cheerful and happy with her work, she will be glad and profitable in the school as she invests most of her energy there. Sousa and Lyubomirsky (2001) expressed that life satisfaction alludes to an individual's acknowledgment of the condition of life just as how much an individual can satisfy what he/she needs altogether. Aversive leaders (principals) with poisonous traits impose stress on their subordinates (teachers) and ignore their needs leading ultimately to life dissatisfaction via job dissatisfaction.

It may be said that life satisfaction considers what degree somebody is happy with their accomplishments until now. Him/herself is a benchmark for the following stage to stand. It is abstract because every individual has a degree of life satisfaction that is different from others' viewpoints. ED Diener et al. (1985) clarified that every individual requirement to consider angles to be life satisfaction all in all. Edward Diener, Lucas, and Oishi (2002) likewise expressed that life satisfaction can be evaluated exhaustively through one's sentiments and mentalities identified with the accomplishment of his life at one point. Beutell (2006) referenced that there are life satisfaction with family, hereditary and social cognitive elements that are reasonable for one's life objectives and life satisfaction is normally firmly identified with parts of life including wellbeing, riches, psychological well-being, social relations, and accomplishment (Ye, Yu, & Li, 2012). It has a relationship with various individual variables and confidence (Rode, 2004).

Aversive leadership is accused of showing up with negative traits that rest and rely on threatening and intimidating followers. According to G. Tummers and Den Dulk (2013) under aversive leadership, subordinates are likely to be disappointed and not perform their obligations towards the organization and they feel fail to show up with their actual personality potential. This leads employees under aversive leadership to greater disappointment as not only do they feel

humiliated under threatening and intimidation but also find no growth opportunities that can raise their economic aspect of life. Aversive leaders humiliate both by their verbal actions or by their psychological attack by ignoring and overlooking subordinates (Khan et al., 2018). Russell, Cutrona, McRae, and Gomez (2012) states that under such circumstances imposed by aversive leaders, subordinates bear psychological burden in form of stress which imbalances their work-life balance initiating life dissatisfaction as life satisfaction can be evaluated exhaustively through one's sentiments and mentalities identified with the accomplishment of his life at one point (Ed Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003) and under aversive leaders' threat and intimidation, subordinates' emotions and sentiments are badly hurt with no or few accomplishments leading to life dissatisfaction. It leads to the formation of our very first hypothesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: Aversive Leadership has a significant negative impact on employee life satisfaction.

## 2.2 Moderation of Emotional Resilience

Stress writing recommends that both occupation attributes and individual qualities add to the detailed degree of stress (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Character hypotheses additionally guarantee that people's qualities decide how they react to the outer climate (Swider & Zimmerman, 2010). Subsequently, it tends to be a significant hypothetical and down-to-earth commitment to distinguish character attributes that can influence workers' weakness to undeniable degrees of weariness in relational circumstances. Employees vary in the quality and amount of their assets; thusly, their capacity to adapt to work environment stressors additionally differs (Al-Hawari, Bani-Melhem, & Quratulain, 2020). It is contended that resilience goes about as an adapting asset that decreases the enthusiastic depletion brought about by the negative feelings (Al-Hawari et al., 2020) instigated by aversive leadership.

Resilience has been analysed as an arbitrator of the effect of working environment stressors on different results (Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008). In any case, Britt, Shen, Sinclair, Grossman, and Klieger (2016) note that most of the existing examination play inspected the part of resilience according to work environment requests that don't address critical affliction; subsequently, the appraisal of employee resilience is fragmented. Work requests contrast as far as their recurrence, power, span, and consistency. Customary working environment stressors (e.g., job equivocalness, work over-burden, and hierarchical imperatives) are somewhat low-level stressors as far as their low force, recurrence, and term; accordingly, they don't address critical affliction (Gilboa et al., 2008).

Aversive leadership exerts negative stressors on employees by punishing and threatening them and by practicing coercive power on them (Fatima et al., 2018). Employees experience a loss of personal resources as experiencing stress under aversive leadership (Fatima et al., 2018). Further, employees feel alienated under aversive leaders (Fatima et al., 2018). In such a state employees experience dissatisfaction in their lives as are unable to control their stress in their personal lives as

well and lose work-life balance. In this regard, individuals high in emotional resilience will cope with this situation and will not experience dissatisfaction in their personal lives. It leads to the second hypothesis of the study:

H<sub>2</sub>: Emotional Resilience moderates the relationship between Aversive Leadership and employee life satisfaction.

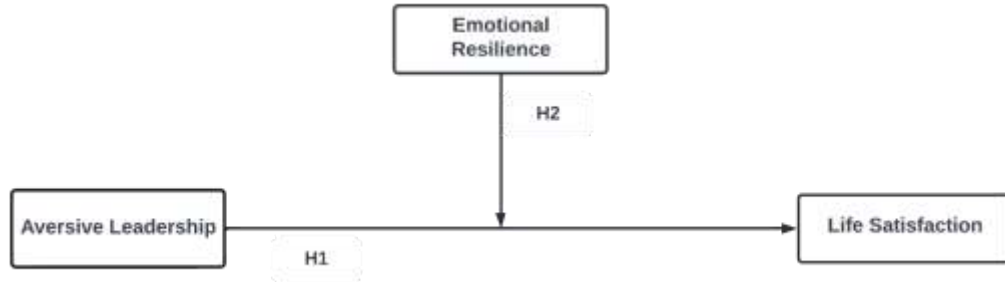


Figure 2.1. Research Model

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Population and Sampling

The current study uses positivist philosophy to investigate the hypothesized relation. Moreover, the current research uses deductive approach as the hypothesis are derived from existing literature. Additionally, the research uses monomethod (quantitative) to acquire the desired results by using survey method. The present study identifies the impact of aversive leadership on employees' life satisfaction in the Pakistan education industry. It also studies the mechanisms of emotional resilience as a moderator to further deepen the relationship of aversive leadership with life satisfaction. This study intakes one independent variable with one dependent variable. The moderating variable, however, can either strengthen or weaken the bond between the independent variable and dependent variable (Mike, 2017). The emphasis of this study is to evaluate the impact of aversive leadership among the employees of the service industry; thus, service sector employees are the unit of analysis for this current study. A total of 350 samples was taken which had a response rate of 71% with 251 complete responses. Three demographical variables were utilized in the study namely, gender, age and type of service sector.

To get desirable data set, the study needed to approach different service organizations' employees including IT sector, Education Sector, Healthcare Sector, etc. This research follows a deductive research method based on determinism. Previous research and existing theories have been used to test and support our hypothesis, and then we perform an empirical test of the hypothesis to verify the proposed hypothesis. General quantitative methods have been used that are of great value

and can be integrated into a wide range of population sizes. Therefore, the data were analysed quantitatively. Quantitative technique refers to empirically or numerically measuring something (Bryman, 2016). As per Rasinger (2013) this technique refers to how much of something or how many or to what limit. The advantage to using this technique for the current research is that it quantifies the problem being researched in form of empirically represented items called variables. The technique is also useful in generalizing the results for sample data on the entire population making the results truth-worthy (Powers D. and Powers A., 2015). Moreover, this technique is less time-consuming in comparison to qualitative and can easily be analysed using statistical software (Connolly, 2007) like SMART PLS.

### 3.2 Research Instruments

This phase consists of three variables which are aversive leadership, life satisfaction and emotional resilience. The questions included in the instruments, feedback is taken from the respondents. Utilizing a five-point Likert Scale i.e., 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree information from the targeted respondents for all variables. The original questionnaire was followed for the current study survey form.

**Table 3.1: Distribution of Instrument Variables**

S No	Variables	Reference	No. of Items	Reliability ( $\alpha$ )
1	Aversive Leadership	Pearce and Sims (2002)	6	0.79
2	Life Satisfaction	Diener et al., (1985)	5	0.91
3	Emotional Resilience	Zhang and Lu, (2010)	6	0.83

## 4. Data Analysis

### 4.1 Statistical Analysis

The data was analysed using SMART PLS software. Both measurement and structural models are discussed in the forthcoming section. Variables that are not observable can easily be measured with help of structural equation modelling with indicators. There are both types of variables formative and reflective which are described by their respective indicators within the formulated model (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). There exist covariance and variance-based techniques. SMART PLS is a variance-based model (Sander & Teh, 2014). The premise for a model is a hypothesis and theory. The factors with their indicators and the arrows make the ways in the model. These ways and hypotheses are essential for the theory and it clarifies the causal component. (Sander & Teh, 2014) The upside of the model is to investigate the build noticeably and to streamline

the research so researchers can gauge the connection among constructs and factors to test the hypothesis (Urban & Mayerl, 2013). The threat is that the model misrepresents and the deliberate information also, the truth is excessively unique. That diminishes the worth of the model (Sander & Teh, 2014). Measurement model and structural model are two parts of SMART PLS. Second portion which is the structural model, however, explains the linkage between the variables (Sander & Teh, 2014). The structural model checks the influential factor among variables to identify the existence and intensity of cause and effect (Urban & Mayerl, 2013).

## 4.2 Measurement Model

First part, measurement model presents the variables with its corresponding items. The items further explain the variable in numeric terms telling whether it is measurable or not (Sander & Teh, 2014). Measurement model analysis is a common practice in HR researches. This portion basically check that the variable is quantifiable or not via its validity and reliability measures.

**Table 4.1: Internal Consistency Measures**

Variables	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)
AL	0.756	0.606
ER	0.891	0.84
LS	0.863	0.768

Note. AL=Aversive Leadership, ER=Emotional Resilience, LS=Life Satisfaction

The above table 4.2 depicts the measurements model for the established relations. The table 2 shows that all construct i.e., Aversive Leadership (AL), Life Satisfaction (LS) and Emotional Resilience (ER) are valid and reliable. All the constructs have value greater than 0.6 and less than 0.9 for cronbach's alpha and composite reliability making them valid. All constructs likewise have a value of average variance extracted above tan 0.5 making all constructs valid.

## 4.3 Hypothesis Testing

**Table 4.2: Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
AL -> LS	-0.628	0.627	0.038	16.627	0
ER -> LS	-0.199	-0.206	0.056	3.54	0

Moderating Effect ER -> AL-	-0.159	-0.151	0.044	3.617	0
LS					

The above table 3 shows the structural model for the established relations. The table shows that Aversive Leadership (AL) have a significant negative impact on Life Satisfaction (LS) of employees with a p value less than 0.05 and t value greater than 1.96, thus, accepting first hypothesis of the study. Moderating effect of Emotional Resilience (ER) was found to be effective between the relationship of Aversive Leadership (AL) and Life Satisfaction (LS) such that weakening it ( $P < 0.05$ ,  $t > 1.96$ ).

## 5. Discussion

Results support the first hypothesis of the study that aversive leadership have a significant negative impact on employee life satisfaction. According to G. Tummers and Den Dulk (2013) under aversive leadership, subordinates are likely to be disappointed and not perform their obligations towards the organization and they feel fail to show up with their actual personality potential. This leads employees under aversive leadership to greater disappointment as not only do they feel humiliated under threatening and intimidation but also find no growth opportunities that can raise their economic aspect of life. Aversive leaders humiliate both by their verbal actions or by their psychological attack by ignoring and overlooking subordinates (Khan et al., 2018). Russell et al. (2012) states that under such circumstances imposed by aversive leaders, subordinates bear psychological burden in form of stress which imbalances their work-life balance initiating life dissatisfaction as life satisfaction can be evaluated exhaustively through one's sentiments and mentalities identified with the accomplishment of his life at one point (Ed Diener et al., 2003) and under aversive leaders' threat and intimidation, subordinates' emotions and sentiments are badly hurt with no or few accomplishments leading to life dissatisfaction.

Results also support the second hypothesis that emotional resilience moderates the relationship between aversive leadership and employee life satisfaction such that weakening it. As it is contended that resilience goes about as an adapting asset that decreases the enthusiastic depletion brought about by the negative feelings (Al-Hawari et al., 2020) instigated by aversive leadership. Employees vary in the quality and amount of their assets; thusly, their capacity to adapt to work environment stressors additionally differs (Al-Hawari et al., 2020). So, when employees with high emotional resilience encounter stressors as aversive supervision, they are less likely to have life dissatisfaction. Employees feel alienated under aversive leaders (Fatima et al., 2018). In such a state employees experience dissatisfaction in their lives as are unable to control their stress in their personal lives as well and lose work-life balance.

## **5.1 Implications of the Study**

This study provides significant input to the literature by addressing two relations which have not been covered in the literature before. Moreover, the current study adds on to the literature of individual variables. The current study provides a better understanding of employees' mental psychology and its impacts on their work and personal lives. Further, this study provides practitioners to hire employees who have the ability of emotional resilience and can better handle stress situations like aversion from leaders. Moreover, current study provides with the characteristics of aversive leaders that must be avoided when hiring employees for the organisations. Spill over theory further explains how stress at leadership can ruin an employee life satisfaction. Bad leaders result in bad outcomes, so good leaders must be hired in organisations. Also, a good followership is helpful in dealing with bad leadership provided that they have the ability of emotional resilience. As service sector employees are vital to economic growth and their satisfaction is a key concern to organisations.

## **5.2 Limitations and Recommendations**

The research is limited to only one predictor of life satisfaction of employees. Future researchers can look for other variables like work-life balance, compensations, Intrinsic motivation as predictors of life satisfaction. This research takes into account only the service sector employees. Future researchers can test the same model for manufacturing sector or a comparative study can be done for both the sectors. Moreover, this research undermines only one type of destructive leadership in employee life context. Future researchers can look for other leadership styles like, exploitative, toxic, transformational leadership and check their effect on employees' life satisfaction. The current study is a cross-sectional study conducted in single time-frame; however, future researchers can conduct the study longitudinally in different time frames. A qualitative study can better provide with supporting points on the current model so is to why aversive leadership impacts employee life satisfaction negatively or how emotional resilience weakens their relationship. Current study only encompasses quantitative aspect explain the degree and intensity of effect. Probability sampling can be used by future researchers for more accurate results removing biasness if any. Future researches can opt a different research design to test the same model for better accuracy.

## **6. Conclusion**

The current study sheds light on the human psychology of service sector employees. Being a major contributor to GDP, service sector and its employees hold prime importance. This study discovered that aversive leadership have a significant negative impact on employee life satisfaction. As aversive leaders practice threatening and intimidation leading to employee stress at work and at

home. Moreover, employees with the ability of emotional resilience were found to be better in handling their leaders' aversion, reducing their life stress and dissatisfaction. Emotional stability is the key aspect of people having emotional resilience ability. The current study provides literature with significant findings and help practitioners to better judge these aspects in humans when hiring and handling. The study also has few limitations with recommendations for future researchers.

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