



## Despotic Leadership and Employee Behavioral Outcomes: Unveiling the Relationship through the Mediation of Psychological Distress

### Muhammad Zaffar Iqbal

Ph.D. Management Sciences Scholar  
Qurtuba University of Science and  
Information Technology, Dera Ismail  
Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
Email: [zafariqbalkundian@gmail.com](mailto:zafariqbalkundian@gmail.com)

### Muhammad Inam Khan

Ph.D. Management Sciences Scholar  
Qurtuba University of Science and  
Information Technology, Dera Ismail  
Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
Email: [inam\\_dera@gmail.com](mailto:inam_dera@gmail.com)

### Asim Nawaz Awan

Ph.D. Management Sciences Scholar  
Qurtuba University of Science and  
Information Technology, Dera Ismail  
Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
Email: [engrasimawan@gmail.com](mailto:engrasimawan@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT:

Leadership, behavioral outcomes, and employee behavior. The mediating role of psychological distress in the relationship between despotic leadership and employee behavioral outcomes was investigated by analyzing data from 380 employees in the banking sector using regression analysis and correlation studies. The findings indicate that despotic leadership is significantly positively correlated with both turnover intention and psychological distress. Conversely, employee deviant behavior was negatively correlated with both despotic leadership and psychological distress. The results of the current study disclosed that psychological distress serves as a mediator in the relationship between despotic leadership and employee behavioral outcomes. In conclusion, this investigation underscores the detrimental effects of despotic leadership on the overall performance of organizations and the well-being of employees. It emphasizes the importance of fostering leadership styles that are empowering and beneficial in the workplace. However, the investigation acknowledges the limitations of its numerical methodology and suggests additional research directions.

**Keywords:** Despotic Leadership, Deviant Behavior, Turnover Intention, Psychological Distress.

## Introduction

For an extended period, the field of organizational behavior has been preoccupied with the investigation of leadership, which has generated substantial interest from both academicians and professionals (Rafiq *et al.*, 2023). Although distinct positive leadership styles, such as democratic transformational and transactional leadership, have been extensively studied, from the previous few years the dark side of leadership, which is characterized by despotism, control, and micromanagement, is getting relatively high scholarly attention. Despotic leadership is prevalent in numerous organizations, particularly in specific cultural contexts where it is considered traditional, despite the fact that it is not universally embraced (Islam *et al.*, 2023). As (Fatima & Majeed, 2023) define the as the Despotic leadership is a leadership style marked by a high degree of authority, domination, & thorough oversight. Despotic leadership is characterized by autonomous decision-making, the imposition of stringent policies and protocols, and the utilization of disciplinary measures to assert power (Parray *et al.*, 2023). Previous research has shown that this specific leadership style can lead to negative outcomes for employees, including an increase in deviant behavior, a decrease in job engagement, a higher likelihood of wanting to leave the job, and a decrease in job effectiveness (Al-Madi & Khasawneh, 2015; Ng & Feldman, 2012). The high occurrence of despotic leadership in specific organizational settings highlights the urgent necessity to investigate its influence, especially in industries where this approach dominates. Despotic leadership, characterized by its despotic attitude and insistence on absolute compliance, typically becomes prominent in sectors where hierarchical structures and centralized control are well rooted. Sectors such as manufacturing, conventional business environments, and particularly the banking industry in Pakistan sometimes experience instances of autocratic leadership.

The existence of despotic leaders inside Pakistan's banking sector has significant consequences. The hierarchical structure of several banking institutions frequently corresponds with autocratic leadership styles. These executives possess considerable authority, controlling operations and decision-making, sometimes disregarding employee empowerment and engagement. It is essential to comprehend the frequency of dictatorial leadership in this particular situation because it is directly linked to several adverse behavioral consequences among employees, as emphasized by Mukarram *et al.* (2021). Their research sheds light on the negative connections between autocratic leadership and important aspects such as employee's deviant behavior, organizational commitment, and job involvement. The results highlight the crucial influence of dictatorial leadership on the work experiences and behaviors of employees in the Pakistani banking industry. The consequences of despotic leadership in Pakistan's banking industry go beyond immediate behavioral effects, impacting employee deviant behavior and retention. Elevated levels of psychological discomfort, intensified by despotic leadership, heighten the inclination to resign from posts. In addition, there is a strong correlation between absenteeism rates and dictatorial leadership, which highlights the negative impact it has on the work culture. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the influence of dictatorial leadership in this particular situation in order to comprehend its harmful consequences on employee well-being and retention. This highlights the need for proactive actions to foster a more favorable work environment and guarantee a productive staff (Afshan *et al.*, 2023).

Employee behavioral outcomes refer to the observable behaviors shown by individuals in the workplace, which can have significant effects on the overall effectiveness of a business. The aforementioned implications may include many elements such as job satisfaction, job performance, organizational commitment, intention to quit, and absenteeism (Gentry *et al.*, 2014). Organizations are motivated to analyze the behavioral outcomes of their employees because of the potential direct impact on the company's financial performance. Studies have demonstrated that there is a positive correlation between employees' deviant behavior and decreased productivity, increased levels of involvement, and a higher possibility of staying with the firm. In contrast, employees who indicate dissatisfaction with their job are likely to display absenteeism, below-average performance, and higher rates of employee turnover (Jang & Kandampully, 2018). The high occurrence of despotic leadership in some sectors, particularly the banking industry in Pakistan, highlights its substantial influence on employee conduct and welfare. Within this hierarchical framework, autocratic bosses wield authority, resulting in less employee empowerment and involvement. The study conducted by Mukarram *et al.* (2021) emphasizes the adverse correlations between autocratic leadership and variables such as employee deviant behavior and organizational commitment. In addition, Ahmad *et al.* (2021) demonstrates the mediating effect of psychological discomfort, highlighting the negative impact of despotic leadership on employee well-being. The presence of this harmful environment frequently results in heightened intentions to leave the company and greater

rates of absenteeism. It is imperative to confront despotic leadership in the Pakistani banking sector in order to cultivate a more favorable work atmosphere and guarantee the sustained efficiency and involvement of employees in the long run.

### Problem statement

This study aims to fill a huge research gap in the study of despotic leadership in the banking sector, with the goal of making a considerable contribution to existing information. Although despotic leadership in management studies has received increasing attention, there is a surprising lack of empirical research on its effects in the heavily regulated banking industry (Naseer *et al.*, 2016). This gap is of utmost importance considering the intricate organizational structures and regulatory frameworks in the sector. Moreover, the study addresses the need to investigate harmful leadership practices in non-Western settings, specifically focusing on the distinct socio-cultural factors present in the Pakistani banking sector (Gentry *et al.*, 2014). The study seeks to illuminate the multifaceted ramifications of autocratic leadership by analyzing empirical data from actual banking personnel. The study examines the elements that contribute to psychological discomfort, deviant behavior, and turnover intentions in the banking industry. It recognizes the importance of these factors in relation to employee loyalty and service quality (Saputra & Mahaputra, 2022). The study emphasizes the importance of comprehending the factors that contribute to employee turnover, given their negative impact on the stability and performance of the industry (Jian *et al.*, 2022; Tews & Stafford, 2020). The research is to provide practical insights that are essential for creating a healthy work environment and improving organizational effectiveness in the Pakistani banking industry. This will be achieved by addressing the underlying reasons for turnover intentions, deviant conduct, and psychological distress.

### Research Questions

1. Is there any impact of Despotic leadership on employee's deviant behavior employee's turnover intention?
2. Is there any role of psychological distress as a mediator in the relationship between despotic leadership and employee behavioral outcome (deviant behavior and turnover intention)?

### Research Objective

1. To investigate the impact of despotic leadership on employees' deviant behavior and turnover intention.
2. The objective is to investigate the mediating effect of psychological distress on the relationship between despotic leadership and deviant behavior, as well as the relationship between despotic leadership and turnover intention.

## Literature Review

### Despotic Leadership

Zhang *et al.* (2019) define despotic leadership as a form of leadership characterized by a high level of control, centralized decision-making, and a disregard for the opinions and needs of subordinates. This style of leadership is also referred to as despotic or autocratic leadership. Despotic leadership is synonymous with despotic leadership. This particular leadership style has been extensively examined in the field of organizational psychology, and empirical evidence consistently demonstrates its capacity to yield undesirable outcomes for both leaders and subordinates inside the corporation. Studies have confirmed a link between despotic leadership and negative outcomes for both people and corporations. Deviant behavior of employees is an often studied consequence in academic literature. Tepper's (2000) study found that employees who are supervised by autocratic bosses are more likely to display high levels of deviant behavior and are more susceptible to suffering stress and burnout. Zhang *et al.* (2019) suggest that this could lead to higher employee turnover rates and lower levels of organizational engagement. Prior study has confirmed the detrimental effects of autocratic leadership on employee behavior. More precisely, Goh *et al.* (2015) discovered that this type of leadership is linked to diminished job performance and unproductive work

practices. Employees who feel disempowered or unsupported in their work environment may have less motivation to perform at their best or may participate in counterproductive actions that could potentially damage the organization. Furthermore, despotic governance can have a negative impact on the operational efficiency of a business. Zhang et al. (2019) found that organizations that support dictatorial leadership experience higher rates of employee turnover, lower levels of employee engagement, and decreased productivity. Zhang et al. (2019) discovered that despotic leadership was negatively correlated with employee performance and positively correlated with intention to leave the job. The research study also discovered a negative correlation between employee performance and despotic leadership, which can be partially attributed to the presence of psychological distress. This discomfort was observed to be more prevalent among employees who perceived their executives as exhibiting a greater degree of dictatorial leadership. Tepper (2000) discovered that despotic leadership was directly and positively correlated with counterproductive job behavior, which included actions such as larceny, sabotage, and deliberate damage to corporate assets. The research also revealed that employees' perceptions of organizational injustice had an impact on the relationship between despotic leadership and unproductive job conduct. This was particularly apparent to those who perceived their superiors as demonstrating high levels of despotism.

### **Deviant behavior**

Deviant behavior, which refers to actions that violate established standards within an organization, has a substantial negative influence on both individuals and the overall effectiveness of the business. Such behavior include acts of theft, dishonesty, and sabotage, which ultimately result in diminished levels of job satisfaction, organizational dedication, and performance. When employees engage in deviant behavior, they often experience negative psychological consequences such as stress and guilt. These factors might lead to higher rates of absence. Furthermore, aberrant conduct erodes confidence in leadership and disrupts the unity of the business. Multiple studies consistently establish a strong connection between dictatorial leadership and employee aberrant behavior. The association between views of psychological safety and unhappiness in one's employment has been demonstrated in studies conducted by Li, Liang, and Crant (2010), Zhang, Zheng, and Liu (2015), and Kim et al. (2019). Wang et al. (2021), Wu and Hu (2018), and Lee et al. (2018) have also discovered that dictatorial leadership is positively linked to deviant behavior. This connection is influenced by employee rage and the perception of a breach in the psychological contract. Zhang and Bednall (2016) establish a connection between abusive supervision and antisocial behavior, which is driven by the perception of a breach in the psychological contract. On the other hand, paternalistic leadership is negatively associated with deviant conduct, and this relationship is influenced by the level of job satisfaction among employees (Wu et al., 2019). Aquino and Douglas (2003) and Greenberg and Barling (1999) conducted research that demonstrates a direct relationship between psychological distress and deviant behavior. This relationship is regulated by factors such as emotional regulation and organizational support. In summary, it is essential to support leadership styles that focus on empowering and collaborating with others in order to reduce deviant behavior and enhance the well-being of employees.

### **Turnover Intention**

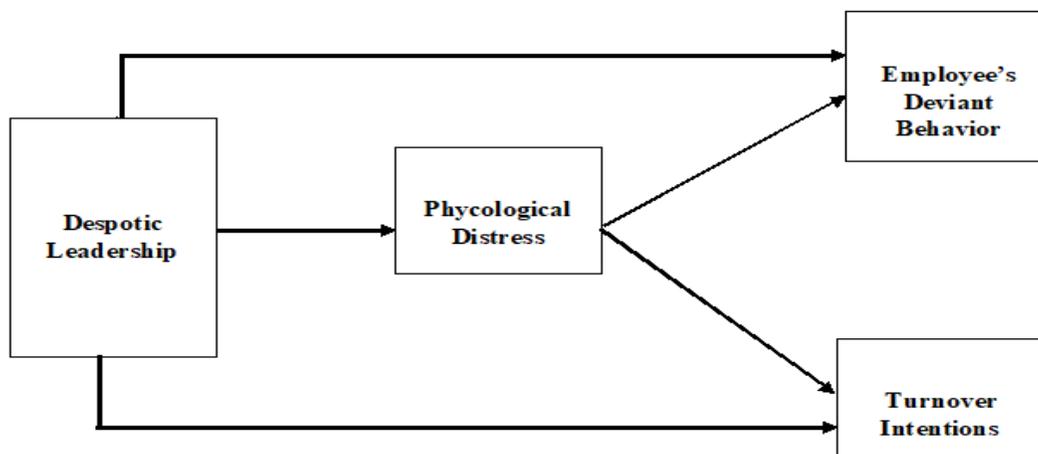
Turnover intention, the inclination to quit one's employment, is impacted by factors such as job satisfaction, leadership style, and corporate culture. Employees that have a strong desire to leave their job frequently show lower levels of happiness and productivity, which in turn leads to higher rates of employee turnover and increased expenditures for the firm. Research conducted by Han, Chen, and Wang (2020) and Akhtar, Abbas, and Latif (2018) consistently demonstrates a strong association between dictatorial leadership and increased turnover intentions. Specifically, their research find positive correlations between despotic leadership and turnover intentions in China and Pakistan, respectively. Moreover, the presence of physiological stress has a notable impact on turnover intention. Research conducted by Lee and Ashforth (1996) and Cheng and Lu (2012) has shown a robust correlation, particularly in settings characterized by limited autonomy and elevated work-related constraints. In addition, autocratic leadership might heighten levels of psychological stress, therefore exacerbating turnover intentions (Tepper et al., 2017). In order to reduce employee turnover and promote employee well-being, firms should give priority to empowering leadership styles and ensure that employees have sufficient tools and support.

## Physiological Distress

Recent research has thoroughly investigated the connection between despotic leadership and the physiological stress that employees undergo. Research conducted by Zhai et al. (2020) and Huang and Zhou (2019) has demonstrated a direct relationship between employees' opinion of their supervisors as despotic and increased physiological stress levels. The presence of stress, which is evident through a range of physical and psychological symptoms, has been linked to detrimental consequences such as higher intentions to leave the job and engaging in inappropriate behavior by employees. Furthermore, the research indicates that autocratic leadership indirectly impacts these adverse consequences by intensifying employees' physiological stress levels. Li et al. (2021) showed that the connection between dictatorial leadership and employees' tendency to quit their positions was affected by the level of job-related stress they experienced. Moreover, research done by Wang, Lu, and Qin (2021) and Albrecht, Liu, and Kupfer (2021) has emphasized the intermediary function of physiological stress in the connection between dictatorial leadership and adverse employee behaviors, such as deviance and turnover intention. These findings emphasize the significance of tackling despotic leadership styles to reduce the negative impact on employee well-being and organizational outcomes. Organizations should prioritize leadership techniques that focus on empowering and involving people, while also providing the necessary support and tools to help them effectively manage stress.

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Framework*



This study specifically targeted personnel working in the commercial banking industry with the objective of examining the association between despotic leadership and employees' behavioral outcomes. A stratified random selection technique was employed to pick a sample of 380 employees, ensuring that representation across different job functions was achieved. Data were gathered using a modified questionnaire that included a 5-point Likert scale to measure individuals' opinions of autocratic leadership and their experiences of physiological stress. Prior to completing the questionnaire, individuals were required to provide informed consent, either electronically or in paper format, after obtaining ethical approval. The study will utilize descriptive and inferential statistics, namely correlation and regression analyses, to investigate the connection between perceived despotic leadership and physiological stress. The analysis will also take into account control factors such as demographics.

## Method

This study specifically targeted personnel working in the commercial banking industry with the objective of examining the association between despotic leadership and employees' behavioral outcomes. A stratified random selection technique was employed to pick a sample of 380 employees, ensuring that representation across different job functions was achieved. Data were gathered using a modified questionnaire that included a 5-point Likert scale to measure

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### Data Analysis and Results

**Table 1**  
*Reliability Statistics*

Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items	
.802		4	

Item-Total Statistics				
		Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Item-Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Despotic Leadership	11.1576	4.317	.683	.722
Psychological Distress	11.3324	4.653	.654	.742
Employee's Deviant Behavior	11.3824	4.178	.482	.836
Turnover Intention	11.1205	4.023	.701	.708

The reliability analysis conducted on the scale yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.802, indicating a good level of internal consistency among the four items. The item-total statistics reveal that each item contributes differently to the overall reliability of the scale. For instance, "Despotic Leadership" and "Psychological Distress" exhibit strong correlations with the total scale score, as evidenced by their high item-total correlation coefficients of 0.683 and 0.654 respectively. Removing these items would lead to a marginal decline in Cronbach's Alpha, suggesting their importance in maintaining the scale's reliability. Conversely, "Employee's Deviant Behavior" shows a more modest correlation, but its exclusion would paradoxically increase Cronbach's Alpha to 0.836, indicating potential redundancy. Similarly, "Turnover Intention" demonstrates a substantial correlation, with its removal resulting in a slight decrease in Cronbach's Alpha to 0.708. These findings underscore the nuanced contribution of each item to the scale's reliability and highlight considerations for scale refinement and item selection.

### Factor Analysis

**Table 2**  
*KMO and Bartlett's Test*

KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.727
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	560.6
	Df	6
	Sig.	.00

The dataset is appropriate for factor analysis, as indicated by the significant Bartlett's Test with a chi-square value of 560.6 and a p-value of 0.00, as well as the KMO value of 0.727. These results suggest that the variables exhibit a

significant correlation and a satisfactory degree of sampling adequacy, which supports further investigation into potential underlying causes that may clarify their connections.

**Correlation Analysis**

**Table 3**  
*Correlations*

		<b>Despotic Leadership</b>	<b>Psychological Distress</b>	<b>Employee's Deviant Behavior</b>	<b>Turnover Intention</b>
Despotic Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Psychological Distress	n	350			
	Pearson Correlation	.585**	1		
Employee Deviant Behavior	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		1	
	n	350	350		
Turnover Intention	Pearson Correlation	.754**	.549**	-.425**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	n	350	350	350	

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

The above table shows the correlation between variables which reveal crucial insights into their relationships. Despotic Leadership exhibits a perfect correlation, as expected. Psychological Distress shows a significant positive correlation (0.585,  $p < 0.01$ ) with Despotic Leadership, indicating that higher levels of autocratic leadership are linked to increased psychological discomfort. Employee's Deviant Behavior has a significant negative correlation with both Despotic Leadership (-0.358,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Psychological Distress (-0.480,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting lower deviant behavior among those experiencing less psychological distress.

Turnover Intention demonstrates significant positive correlations with Despotic Leadership (0.754,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Psychological Distress (0.549,  $p < 0.01$ ), and a significant negative correlation with Employee's Deviant Behavior (-0.425,  $p < 0.01$ ). These findings imply that individuals perceiving despotic leadership and experiencing psychological distress are more inclined to desire leaving their jobs, while those engaging in deviant behavior are less likely to do so. Overall, these correlations underscore the robust relationships among the variables in the dataset.

**Regression Analysis**

**Regression Analysis (Deviant behavior as dependent Variable)**

**Table 4**

*Model Summary*

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.668 <sup>a</sup>	.538	.536	.9370

a. Predictors: (Constant), Despotic Leadership

**Table 5**  
ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	46.044	1	45.044	51.296	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	306.586	348	.878		
	Total	352.630	349			

Dependent Variable: Employee's Deviant Behavior  
Predictors: (Constant), Despotic Leadership

**Table 6**  
Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.856	.251		7.407	.000
	Despotic Leadership	.458	.064	.358	7.162	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee's Deviant Behavior

The regression analysis indicates that "Despotic Leadership" significantly predicts "Employee's Deviant Behavior" ( $p < .000$ ). The model has a moderate correlation ( $R = .658$ ) and explains approximately 52.6% of the variability in deviant behavior. The ANOVA results confirm the model's statistical significance, with an F-statistic of 51.296 ( $p < .000$ ). The coefficient for "Despotic Leadership" is  $-.458$ , indicating a negative association with deviant behavior. Higher levels of autocratic leadership are linked to lower levels of employee's deviant behavior.

**Regression Analysis (Turnover Intention as Dependent)**

**Table 7**

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.754 <sup>a</sup>	.568	.567	.56278

a. Predictors: (Constant), DL

**Table 8**  
ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	145.833	1	144.833	457.294	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	111.218	348	.317		
	Total	257.050	349			

a. Dependent Variable: TI  
b. Predictors: (Constant), DL

**Table 9**  
Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.723	.151		4.805	.000
	Despotic Leadership	.831	.038	.754	21.384	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TI

The regression analysis reveals that "Despotic Leadership" significantly predicts "Turnover Intention" ( $p < 0.001$ ). The model explains approximately 56.8% of the variability in turnover intention, as indicated by the coefficient of determination (R-squared = 0.568). The F-statistic of 457.294 ( $p < 0.001$ ) confirms the overall significance of the regression model. The coefficient for "Despotic Leadership" is 0.821, suggesting a strong positive association with turnover intention.

**Regression Analysis (Psychological Distress as mediator)**

**Table 10**  
*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.765 <sup>a</sup>	.586	.583	.55194

**Table 11**

*Regression Model Direct Effect*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.642	.155		10.573	.000
	Despotic Leadership	.530	.039	.585	13.470	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PD

The regression analysis in above table investigates the potential mediating effect of Physical Distress on the relationship between Psychological Distress and Despotic Leadership. The model's coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.586, which suggests that the factors of the model can account for 58.6% of the variation in Psychological Distress. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for Despotic Leadership is 0.530, with a significant t-value of 13.460 ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a robust direct effect.

**Table 12**

*Regression Model Mediation Effect (DV-JS)*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.908	.269		3.369	.001
	Despotic Leadership	.150	.074	.118	0.118	.042
	Psychological Distress	.581	.081	.412	0.412	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EDB

The regression model investigated the mediating role of Psychological Distress in the connection between Despotic Leadership and Employee's Deviant Behavior. The coefficient of the constant term, which is 0.908 ( $p < 0.001$ ), reflects the baseline level of Employee's Deviant Behavior. The coefficient for Despotic Leadership was 0.150 ( $p = 0.042$ ), indicating a direct beneficial impact on Employee's Deviant Behavior. Similarly, the coefficient for Psychological Distress was found to be 0.581 ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that there is a positive relationship between higher levels of Psychological Distress and increasing instances of Employee's Deviant Behavior. The results emphasize the intricate relationship between Despotic Leadership, Psychological Distress, and Employee's Deviant Behavior.

**Table 12**  
Regression Model Mediation Effect (DV-TI)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.401	.170		2.363	.019
	Despotic Leadership	.717	.046	.658	15.431	.000
	Psychological Distress	.197	.051	.164	3.847	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TI

The regression research examined the mediating impact of "Despotic Leadership" and "Psychological Distress" on "Turnover Intention" (DV-TI). The model demonstrated a noteworthy constant term of 0.401 ( $p = 0.019$ ), suggesting a fundamental level for turnover intention. The study found a significant and positive correlation between despotic leadership and turnover intention, with a coefficient of 0.717 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that higher levels of despotic leadership are linked to a greater likelihood of employees wanting to leave their jobs. Similarly, there is a positive correlation between "Psychological Distress" and turnover intention, with a coefficient of 0.197 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This means that higher levels of psychological distress are associated with higher levels of turnover intention. These findings provide insight into the elements that contribute to turnover intention and how they are interconnected among the variables analyzed.

### Conclusions

leadership is often associated with management studies, it is a process that influences a coordinated group to achieve Based on the data and analysis presented in this study, several significant conclusions can be drawn regarding the relationship between despotic leadership, deviant behavior, turnover intention and psychological distress among employees:

- 1. Despotic Leadership and Turnover Intention:** This present study disclosed a robust positive relation between despotic leadership and turnover intention. Employees who perceive higher degrees of despotic leadership are more inclined to indicate a wish to quit their current position. This discovery emphasizes the harmful effect of despotic leadership styles on the ability of firms to retain employees.
- 2. Psychological Distress and Turnover Intention:** Likewise, there was a direct correlation between psychological distress and the intention to leave a job. Employees who are suffering elevated levels of psychological distress are more likely to contemplate resigning from their positions. This underscores the significance of attending to the well-being and mental health of employees in the workplace in order to reduce turnover intentions.
- 3. Mediating Effect:** The study indicates that psychological distress plays a role in partially mediating the connection between despotic leadership and turnover intention. This suggests that the negative impacts of despotic leadership on employees' desire to leave their jobs can be partially attributed to the psychological anguish they suffer under such leadership styles.

### Significance and Practical Implications

This study is essential for comprehending the aspects that contribute to emotional strain in the banking business. Its significance lies in its ability to affect service quality and staff well-being (Sangal *et al.*, 2021). By filling the void in research on psychological distress within financial institutions, it meets the demand for thorough investigation of mental health concerns among non-Western populations. Furthermore, it improves comprehension of the correlation between autocratic leadership, mental anguish, and employee performance, providing practical suggestions for firms to boost employee welfare and productivity. The research focuses on the banking sector of Pakistan and offers distinct

insights on the relationship between autocratic leadership, psychological distress, and employee behavior results in this specific context. The study's results can provide guidance for policy-making in the banking sector, delivering vital knowledge on the detrimental impacts of autocratic leadership and the significance of supporting ethical leadership and employee well-being.

These findings highlight the crucial significance for firms to cultivate supportive and empowered leadership styles that promote the well-being of employees. Organizations might potentially decrease turnover intention and improve employee retention by encouraging good leadership behaviors and establishing a psychologically healthy work environment. This study offers significant insights into the intricate relationship between leadership styles, psychological well-being, and turnover intention among employees. To cultivate employee satisfaction and retention, it is crucial to confront autocratic leadership tendencies and cultivate a supportive company culture.

### Limitations and Future Direction of the Study

Although this research offers essential insights, it is important to acknowledge and resolve its shortcomings. The exclusive reliance on quantitative methods may have limited the investigation of subtle and complex experiences, while the only use of self-reported measures could potentially add bias. Moreover, restricting the analysis to managerial personnel exclusively in commercial banks hinders the capacity to draw broad conclusions. The use of a cross-sectional design makes it difficult to demonstrate causal linkages. In order to enhance comprehension of these dynamics, future research could employ mixed-methods approaches and investigate moderating effects.

### Deceleration of Interest

The authors declare that there was no clash of interest.

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