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[A STUDY ON THE MODERATING EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL INJUSTICE AND TOXIC SUPERVISION AND WORKPLACE DEVIANCE BEHAVIOUR]

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the current study is to investigate the impact of perceived organizational injustice and toxic supervision on workplace deviance behaviour and the moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between perceived organizational injustice and toxic supervision and workplace deviance behaviour, drawing upon the underpinning of social exchange theory and psychological contract theory. A total of 380 employees from educational public sector organizations situated in the Punjab, Pakistan in this study. The findings from partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) by using Smart PLS analyses revealed a significant relationship and positive impact of perceived organisational injustice and toxic supervision on workplace deviance behaviour. The moderation analysis revealed that transformational leadership moderates the relationship between toxic supervision and workplace deviance behaviour. However, the moderation effect of transformational leadership between perceived organisational injustice, the moderation effect between toxic supervision and workplace deviance behaviour is not supported. This study contributed theoretically and practically. The outcome of this study contributed to theoretical research in existing literature of leadership, workplace and workplace deviance behaviour and practically, guides organisational leadership, how to control workplace deviance behaviour in public sector organizations.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Workplace deviance behaviour, Perceived Organizational injustice, Toxic leadership, Public sector organizations, Pakistan

Introduction

Workplace deviance behaviour (WDB) is increasingly recognized as a critical research area due to its adverse effects on employee behavior and organizational health (Yildiz et al., 2015). As an ongoing concern, workplace deviance demands continuous examination due to its evolving complexity and diverse sources (Shakir & Siddique, 2014). Toxic supervision (TS) characterised by manipulation, dishonesty, and abusive behavior, fosters hostile work environments (Abid, Batool, Murtaza, & Idrees, 2025) and elevate stress, increase turnover intentions, and reduce job satisfaction (Ahmed et al., 2024). However, transformational leadership (Tr.L) can potentially mitigate the negative impact of a toxic supervisor by promoting a positive organizational culture, inspiring employees, and reducing the overall levels of WTB (Tuna et al., 2016).

Toxic behaviors are growing concerns, particularly in Pakistan, where such type of issues is widespread yet understudied (Iqbal, 2019; Fatima et al., 2012; Iqbal et al. 2023). These workplace negative behaviors pose various socio-economic risks to organizations and making the study of employee-organization relationships crucial, especially in developing countries (Khan et al., 2015). With the positive impact of Tr.L organizations can better manage counterproductive workplace behaviour by fostering trust, transparency, and fairness and diminishing the adverse influence of toxic supervision and POI (Asraf, Iqbal, & Ahmad, 2023; Iqbal et al., 2023). The construct of WTB has been defined variably by researchers, reflecting diverse perspectives without a universal consensus (Iqbal, 2019; Iqbal et al., 2024; Iqbal, et al., 2017; Iqbal et al., 2023).

Workplace deviance behaviour (WDB) through various behaviours, such as absenteeism,

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theft, verbal abuse, tardiness, sabotage, physical assault, and spreading rumors Pakistani scholars (e.g., Anjum & Parvez, 2013). Western research, as exemplified by Buss's (1961) eight-part typology of workplace aggression, divides deviance behaviour along direct-indirect, active-passive, and physical-verbal lines. Building on this typology, Neuman and Baron (2005) examined workplace aggression, reinforcing its application in study of deviance behaviours in organisational settings.

The main objective of the study to examine the impact of POI and toxic supervision on workplace deviance behaviour and to investigate the impact of toxic supervision on workplace deviance behaviour and to investigate the moderating effect of Tr.L between POI and WDB and to investigate the moderating effect of Tr.L between toxic supervision and WDB. To obtain these research objectives, the study will address the following research questions. What is the impact of perceived organisational injustice on workplace deviance behaviour? What is the impact of toxic supervision on workplace deviance behaviour? and how transformational leadership the moderating effect of POI and workplace deviance behaviour? And how transformational leadership moderate the effect on the relationship between toxic supervision and workplace toxicity behaviour?

Literature Review

To support this research framework on "The moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between POI, toxic supervision and WDB ," underpinning theories, i.e., social exchange theory and psychological contract theory.

1. Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Social exchange theory posits by Blau, (1964) that individual behavior is the outcome of an exchange process, where individual seeks to maximise benefits and minimise costs. In organizational settings, this theory can help explain how POI and toxic leadership can affect employee attitudes and behaviors. POI, when employees perceive unfair treatment, it can lead to negative exchanges between employees and the organization, growing workplace toxicity (Iqbal et al., 2024; Iqbal, 2017; Iqbal et al., 2023). Moreover, TS can create an environment of distrust and resentment, further exacerbating POI.

In organizational settings, employees engage in a reciprocal relationship with their organization based on perceived fairness and treatment (Iqbal, 2019). POI, employees who perceive unfairness may withdraw or retaliate, leading to increased workplace toxicity. An individual who POI may feel exploited, leading to negative feelings and attitudes toward their organization (Iqbal, 2019). This sense of unfairness can manifest in decreased motivation and increased WDB (Iqbal et al., 2023). TS often engages in deviance behaviors that violate the principles of fair exchange, such as manipulation, bullying, and unfair treatment (Ahmad et al., 2023). Such workplace deviance behaviors damage the social fabric of the workplace, resulting in lower morale and higher levels of WDB (Iqbal, 2019).

In contrast, Tr.L foster trust and commitment, improving exchanges between employees and the organization and mitigating the negative impacts of POI and toxic supervision (Iqbal, 2019). This theory is crucial in understanding workplace dynamics such as productive and counterproductive workplace behaviours, as it underscores the importance of reciprocal relationships between employees and their organisation (Ali et al., 2022). Transformational leaders can restore positive exchanges by fostering trust and commitment. By promoting a supportive work environment, they can mitigate the

negative impacts of POI and toxic supervision on workplace deviance behaviour (Iqbal, 2019). However, transformational leaders can mitigate the negative effects of POI and TS by fostering trust, loyalty, and positive exchanges, thereby reducing workplace deviance behaviour.

2. Psychological Contract Theory

Rousseau, (1990) posits that the theory of psychological contract encompasses the beliefs that employees' perceptions of fairness in terms of the exchange agreement between themselves and their organization. This psychological contract is a mutual obligation that significantly explains the relationship between an employee and the organisation (Iqbal, 2019). Based on the knowledge of psychological contract, employees perceive and believe that his organization has fulfilled its workplace promises (Iqbal et al., 2023). Resultantly, the positive outcome of the psychological contract is recognized as organisational citizen behaviour. On the other side, when the expectations of employees are not fulfilled or met by their organizations or employers, it will result in the breach of the psychological contract, leading the feelings of frustration. and a demotivated employee. The outcome of breach of psychological contract induced individuals to indulge in deviance.

Transformational leaders counteract these negative effects by promoting fairness, transparency, and ethical behaviour, thus enhancing justice perceptions and reducing workplace toxicity (Iqbal 2019; Iqbal et al., 2023; Iqbal et al., 2024). Psychological contract theory encompasses various aspects of organizational justice (Colquitt, 2004). Employees' perceptions of fairness in these areas significantly impact their attitudes and behaviours. When employees POI in any dimension, it can lead to negative outcomes, such as decreased job satisfaction and enhanced WDB (Iqbal, Ashraf, Islam, & Ahmad, 2023).

Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Injustice and Workplace Deviance Behaviour

This study examines how POI affects workplace deviance behaviour. POI, categorized into distributive and procedural injustice, can adversely impact employee behavior, reducing organizational productivity (Koç, Bozkurt, Taşdemir & Günsel 2022). POI is a critical concern, as it often leads employees to engage in deviant acts to address perceived wrongs (Bies & Tripp, 2020). Dissatisfaction due to unmet personal needs, stemming from unfair treatment, may also provoke misbehavior (Koç, et al., 2022). PIO, encompassing both distributive and procedural injustice, significantly contributes to workplace toxicity, with numerous studies highlighting how unfair treatment fosters negative employee behaviors. Distributive injustice, inequity in resource allocation or rewards and procedural injustice, unfairness in processes and decision-making, can erode employee morale and trust in the organization, leading to deviance workplace environments (Aquino et al., 2021; Bies & Tripp, 2020; Koç, et al., 2022). When employees perceive that organizational policies are biased or outcomes are unfair, they may engage in toxic behaviors as a response to their dissatisfaction (Bies & Tripp, 2020; Aquino et al., 2021).

Recent research underscores the intensifying effect of POI on WDB. Individuals who feel unfairly treated are more likely to experience resentment, which can lead to toxic behaviors, such as aggression, sabotage, and withdrawal from productive activities

(Bies & Tripp, 2020; Aquino et al., 2021). Dissatisfaction arising from unmet needs, triggered by perceived injustice, often provokes deviant behaviors as employees seek ways to cope or regain a sense of control (Harlos & Knoll, 2021). Furthermore, the stress associated with POI can create a toxic atmosphere, where negative emotions spread throughout teams, increasing conflict and reducing organizational cohesion (Iqbal et al., 2024; Iqbal, 2017; Iqbal et al., 2023; Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017).

Workplace toxicity, closely linked to POI, also exacerbates workplace deviance behaviours. When leadership exhibit toxic behaviors, employees are more likely to feel unsupported and marginalized, often leading to further deviant acts as a form of indirect resistance or self-defence (Harris et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2020). POI thus create a cyclical effect that sustains toxicity within the workplace, with employees responding to POI through behaviors that further degrade the work environment (Yang et al., 2022). Thus: -

H1: *There is a significant positive relationship between perceived organizational injustice and workplace deviance behaviour*

Relationship Between Toxic Supervision and Workplace Deviance Behaviour

Toxic supervision is another critical factor closely linked to workplace toxicity behaviors (Jha, & Sud, 2020). It is characterised by the perception among subordinates that their supervisors or senior engage in sustained displays of unfairness and hostility (Litzky et al., 2006; Sarwar, Alam, & Anwar, 2010). Factors such as workload, fatigue, and interpersonal conflict can exacerbate stress and leading to job dissatisfaction, further prompting deviance behaviours (Bakker, Van Emmerik, & Van Riet, 2008). The relationship between TS and WTB is well-documented, as toxic supervisory behaviors often create a hostile work environment marked by high stress, distrust, and reduced morale (Ashraf et al., 2023; Iqbal, 2019). Toxic supervisors engage in behaviours of verbal abuse, manipulation, favouritism, and disregard for employees' well-being, which erode trust and cohesion within teams and promote eDWB (Tepper, 2007). These negative actions not only harm the targeted employees (Koç, Bozkurt, Taşdemir & Günsel, 2022), however, also permeate the larger organizational culture, leading to a deviance workplace where negativity, lack of engagement, and increased conflict become prevalent (Koc et al., 2022). Studies suggest that TS correlates strongly with adverse employee outcomes, including emotional exhaustion, reduced organizational commitment, and intentions to leave the organization (Zhang & Liao, 2015).

Additionally, toxic supervision contributes to a cycle of WDB (Abid et al., 2025) and employees respond with workplace toxicity behaviors, such as gossiping, passive resistance, or absenteeism, which further destabilise the work environment (Raza, St-Onge, & Ullah, 2023). This phenomenon is often explained by social learning theory, where employees mimic hostile behaviors observed in their leaders, perpetuating a negative culture (Bandura, 1977). A study by Tepper et al. (2011) found that employees under toxic supervision reported higher instances of workplace incivility and bullying among peers, suggesting that toxic leadership indirectly fosters a culture of disrespect and aggression. Ultimately, the presence of TS leads to a pervasive atmosphere of toxicity, harming individual and organizational well-being alike (Raza et al., 2023).

H2: *There is a significant positive relationship between Toxic supervision and workplace deviance behaviour*

Moderating Effect of Transformational Leadership on the Relationship Between Perceived Organisational Injustice and Workplace Deviance Behaviour

Leadership is an essential component in any organization, fundamentally shaping its capacity to thrive and effectively manage individual behaviour (Maher & Youssef, 2016). Leadership plays a critical role in addressing dysfunctional or deviance behaviour at the workplace, with organizational success heavily reliant on effective leadership (Iqbal et al., 2023). Without strong leadership, organizations, whether public or private, struggle to achieve long-term sustainability and growth (Maher & Youssef, 2016). Leadership, as defined by Puni, Agyemang, and Asamoah (2016), is a process of influencing subordinates to achieve targeted goals and organizational objectives. Leadership motivates employees, fosters collaboration, and drives productivity and innovation within the organization (Bass, 1965; Yukl, 1994; Fry, 2003). Given its complex nature, leadership can refer both to those who occupy executive positions and to those who exhibit specific leadership qualities (Silva, 2014). As Silva (2014) suggests, effective leadership is a relational and situational construct that emerges from the dynamic interaction between a leader and their followers.

Among various leadership styles, Tr.L is particularly notable for its emphasis on positive change in both individuals, organisational and social systems (Iqbal, 2019; Zhang, 2016). Tr.L encompasses four key dimensions (e.g. charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration) (Bass, 1987; Iqbal et al., 2024; Iqbal 2017; Iqbal et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2020).

Pervious research indicates that, Tr.L is positively related to organizational factors such as fairness and support while moderating the impact of negative elements like POI and TS contribute to WDB (Yang et al., 2022). Employees tend to model their behavior after leaders, and if leaders engage in or tolerate deviant acts, subordinates may feel compelled to emulate these actions, exacerbating WDB (Greenbaum et al., 2018; Zhang, Liao, & Wang, 2021).

Various theories support this perspective, suggesting that employees reciprocate the behaviors and attitudes modeled by their leadership (Iqbal, 2019). When leaders demonstrate integrity and ethical standards, they cultivate a workplace climate that reduces toxicity by encouraging positive exchanges between the organisation and its members (Harris et al., 2018). In contrast, a lack of moral and ethical leadership creates an environment conducive to deviance, reinforcing negative behaviors across the organization (Bies & Tripp, 2020; Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017).

In conclusion, a moderate positive relationship is anticipated between transformational leadership and organizational factors, as transformational leadership serves as a buffer against workplace toxicity by promoting ethical standards and supportive practices. Thus

H3: There is a moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between Perceived organizational injustice and workplace deviance behaviour.

Moderating Effect of Transformational Leadership on the Relationship Between Toxic Supervision and Workplace Deviance Behaviour

Subordinate employees frequently observe and emulate the ethical decisions and behaviors of their leaders, which can lead to either ethical or unethical actions on the part of employees (Koç, Oktay, Hayrettin Şahin, Öngel, Günsel, and Schermer, 2022).

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Consequently, supervisors and managers bear a critical responsibility to act as ethical role models by consistently demonstrating integrity in their actions (Pradhan & Pradhan, 2014). Effective leaders not only communicate organizational ethics and standards but also implement reward systems to reinforce ethical behavior across the organization (Treviño, Hartman, & Brown, 2020). Tr.L recognized for its strong ethical foundation, has proven especially effective in encouraging positive behavioral changes among employees (Lee, & Barrett, 2011; Treviño et al., 2020).

Transformational leaders possess the capacity to enact meaningful changes in individuals' lives and influence organizational norms, standards, and culture (Treviño et al., 2020). This leadership style impacts followers by aligning their perceptions, values, and aspirations with the organization's goals (Burns, 1978; Pradhan & Pradhan, 2014). Through fostering trust, promoting open communication, and inspiring employees to embrace positive workplace behaviors, transformational leaders can counter the detrimental effects of TS (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Research indicates that, Tr.L reduces WDB by creating a supportive and inclusive environment where employees feel valued and engaged (Li et al., 2020).

Further, recent studies underscore the role of Tr.L in actively buffering against toxic supervision by fostering a positive organizational climate resultantly builds resilience among employees (Zhang, Liao, & Wang, 2021). This moderating effect is crucial, as Tr.L not only mitigate the negative impact of toxicity behaviors (Asraf et al., 2023). However, align employee attitudes, behaviour and actions with ethical standards that enhance organizational well-being (Koç et al., 2022). Thus, Tr.L moderates the impact of toxic supervision on WTB, potentially decreasing negative behaviors that arise from toxic supervision.

H4: *There is moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between toxic supervision and workplace toxicity.*

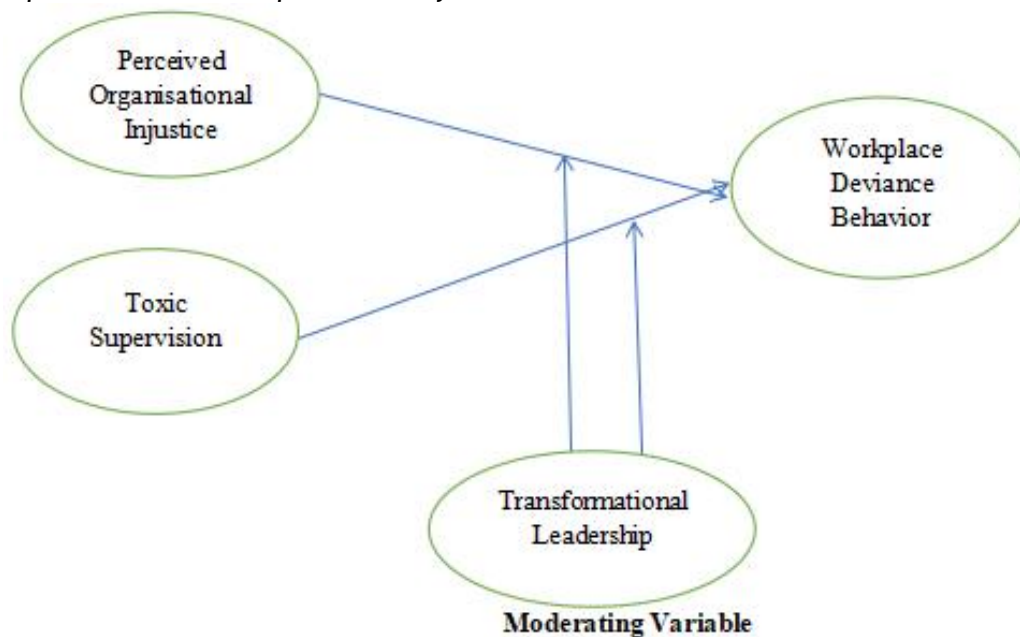


Figure-1

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Methodology/Data Collection/ Data Analysis/Unit of Analysis

To investigate the impact of POI and toxic supervision and WTB of employees and moderating effect of Tr. L between POI, TS and WDB in public sector organizations. Data collected via survey questionnaire. Reliability has been checked with the Cronbach's Alpha on SPSS 21. Findings from data reported for all proposed variables mean values of Cronbach alpha are more than 0.7 that showed that the scales were reliable. Therefore, the targeted population consisted of public sector organisations in the Punjab, Pakistan. The purposive, non-probability sampling technique was adopted Sample from a population was determined on base of guidelines presented by Krejcie & Morgan, (1970).. A self-administered questionnaire survey was conducted to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire was adopted from eminent scholars which consists of five sections. Section 1; contained demographic information such as gender, material status, age, education, experience, tenure, and level of job. Section 2; to measure workplace deviance behavior, stated 76 subscale that can be divided as 4 sub scale to measure "Sabotage" (Spector, et al., 2006); 4 sub scale to measure "Withdrawal" (Spector,., 2006); 04 sub scale to measure "Theft" (Spector, Fox, Penney, et al., 2006); 3 sub scale to measure to "Property deviance" 5 sub scale to " Misuse of time and resources" (Bashir et al., 2012); 5 subscale to measure to" Kickbacks /Corruption" (Bashir et al., 2012); 18-sub scale to measure to "Abuse to others/Bullying" (Spector, et al., 2006). In survey questionnaire, section; 2, measured at five Likert scale that contain (1 to 5) such as strongly disagree, disagree, to strongly agree. Section 3; related to contained 4 sub scale to measure level of POI (Hodson et al., 1994); 15 sub scale of Tepper, (2000) for measure of abusive supervision for toxic supervision and 7 sub scale of level of job satisfaction (Taylor & Bowers, 1974). Section 4; of the questionnaire related to the 20 items of Tr. L from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1995). In survey questionnaire, generally, five Likert scale range (1 to 5), such as strongly disagree, to strongly agree. However, dimensions of POI were measured as strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neutral, somewhat agree and strongly agree.

Data Analysis: For data analysis, the Structural Equation Model (SEM) is used in social and behavioral sciences (Hult, Ringle & Sarsted, 2013). SEM is largely applied in the behavioral science field to assess the causal modelling of complex and multivariate data sets in which there are compound measures of proposed constructs (Hair et al., 2013). Applying SEM in the field of social sciences has considerably increased because of the presence of several packages of software that perform SEM (Hair et al., 2013). Accordingly, SEM techniques are used to analysis the data of the current study because is a very general modelling technique that contains a combination of path analysis, regression analysis as well as factor analysis.

Results and Discussion

Table:1 Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	S.D	Skewness
Perceived Organizational Injustice (POI)	3.0927	0.71399	-.213
Toxic Supervision (TS)	3.0010	0.54876	-.877
Workplace Deviance Behaviour (WDB)	3.7900	0.21555	-.490

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Transformational leadership (Tr. L)	3.0203	0.76921	-.645
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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, presents the descriptive statistics of the study's primary variables, including Perceived Organizational Injustice (POI), Toxic Supervision (TS), Workplace Toxicity (WT), and Transformational Leadership (Tr. L). The mean values range from 3.00 to 3.79, indicating moderate perceptions among respondents across these constructs. The standard deviations range from 0.21 to 0.76, suggesting a reasonable spread around the mean values. The skewness values are within the acceptable range of -1 to +1, confirming the normality of the data, thus validating further statistical analysis.

Table No. 2 Model Fitness Measures

	CMIN/DF	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	IFI
Model 1	3.008	0.911	0.997	.029	0.972

Table 2: Model Fit Indices presents the model fit indices for the measurement model. The values, including Normed Chi-square (CMIN/DF) = 3.008, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.911, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.997, Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = 0.972, and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.029, all fall within acceptable thresholds. For instance, an RMSEA value below 0.08 is preferred, and our model's RMSEA of 0.029 is well within this range, indicating an excellent model fit. These indices support the reliability and suitability of the measurement model for subsequent analysis.

Table No. 3 Psychometric Properties

Constructs	A	CR	AVE	MaxR(H)	POI	TS	WT	Tr. L
POI	0.899	0.911	0.596	0.903	0.654			
TS	0.901	0.888	0.586	0.901	0.321	0.702		
WT	0.902	0.806	0.520	0.889	0.487	0.443	0.654	
Tr. L	0.823	0.921	0.597	0.909	0.544	0.578	0.501	0.666

Table 3: presents Psychometric Properties that illustrates the psychometric properties of the constructs used in the study. Composite Reliability (CR) scores, ranging from 0.80 to 0.92, exceed the 0.8 threshold, confirming construct reliability. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are also above 0.5, meeting the requirement for convergent validity. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha values for all variables are above 0.7, indicating high internal consistency. The discriminant validity, as per Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion, is also confirmed, as the square root of the AVE values along the diagonal in bold is higher than the correlations with other constructs.

Table No. 4 Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) Results

Relationships	Un standardized β	Standardized β	S. E	C.R	P
POI→WDB	.312	.294	.173	2.007	***
TS→WDB	.161	.153	.090	.072	**

Note: *= $p < 0.05$, **= $p < 0.01$, ***= $p < 0.001$.

Table 4 presents the standardized regression weights obtained from SEM analysis. Findings reveal that Perceived Organizational Injustice (POI) significantly impacts Workplace deviance behaviour WDT), with a 29% increase in deviance behaviours (standardized $\beta = .294$, $p < 0.001$). Toxic supervision (TS) also shows a significant positive relationship with Workplace Toxicity, increasing it by 16% (standardized $\beta = .153$, $p < 0.01$). These results align with the theoretical expectations, suggesting that higher levels of

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perceived injustice and toxic supervision correlate with increased deviant workplace behaviors.

Table: 5 Moderation Analysis For Transformational Leadership Between Perceived Organizational Injustice and Workplace Deviance Behaviour

	Coefficients	SE	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.4193	0.0932	45.419	0.000	2.001	4.010
Tr. L						
WDB						
Int_1	-.0910	0.0798	-1.133	0.0663	1.027	2.039

Table 5 provides the moderation analysis results for Transformational Leadership (Tr.L) on the relationship between Perceived Organizational Injustice (POI) and Workplace Toxicity Behaviour (WTB). The interaction term (Int_1) has a p-value of 0.066, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that Tr. does not significantly moderate the relationship between POI and WTB. This suggests that Tr.L does not effectively mitigate the impact of POI on WDB within this sample.

Table: 6: Moderation Analysis for Transformational Leadership Between Toxic Supervision and Workplace Deviance Behaviour

	Coefficients	SE	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.2103	0.1202	51.051	0.000	2.133	4.222
Tr. L						
WDB						
Int_1	-.0621	0.0494	4.633	0.0003	-0.089	1.099

Table 6 shows that Transformational Leadership (Tr.L) significantly moderates the relationship between Toxic Supervision (TS) and Workplace Toxicity (WTB), with a p-value of 0.0003. The interaction term (Int_1) coefficient is -0.0621, indicating a 6% decrease in the impact of toxic supervision on toxic behaviors when transformational leadership is present. This finding suggests that Tr.L may help reduce the negative effects of toxic supervision on workplace deviance, albeit modestly.

Table: 6 Summary of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Relationship	Outcome
H1	POI positively impacts on WDB	Supported
H2	TS positively impacts WDB	Supported
H3	Tr.L moderates the relationship between POI and WDB	Not Supported
H4	Tr.L moderates the relationship between TS and WDB	Supported

Discussion

The positive relationship identified between POI and WDB aligns with the foundational work of previous researchers who argued that unfair treatment perceptions could lead to negative employee attitudes and behaviors. Recent studies have further substantiated this connection, with researchers like Colquitt et al. (2013) indicating that PIO significantly correlates with negative outcomes, including WDB. The present study extends this understanding by demonstrating that perceived injustice fosters individual deviance and contributes to an overall toxic work environment.

Conversely, while some literature posits that the impact of POI may vary depending on

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contextual factors (e.g., organizational culture), as another study Ambrose et al. (2008), this study emphasises a broader influence of POI on WTB. This divergence suggests that the effects of organizational injustice may be more pervasive than previously recognised, warranting further investigation into its implications across different workplace contexts. Similarly, the study's findings regarding toxic supervision align with the previous research of Tepper (2000), who established a direct link between abusive supervision and workplace deviance. Recent meta-analyses, such as those conducted by Wu et al. (2020), have reaffirmed these findings, highlighting the detrimental effects of toxic supervision on employee behaviour and performance. However, while earlier studies often emphasized the direct impact of abusive supervision, this research introduces the concept of workplace deviance behaviour as an intermediary outcome, suggesting a more complex relationship between supervisory behaviour and employee outcomes. Interestingly, some studies suggest that the impact of toxic supervision may be moderated by contextual variables, such as organizational support (Nielsen et al., 2016). The findings of the current study highlight Tr. L is a crucial moderating factor, providing a nuanced understanding of leadership dynamics in mitigating the adverse effects of POI and TS.

The role of Tr. L in moderating the relationship between POI and WDB is a significant contribution of this study. This finding corroborates the assertions of Bass and Avolio (1994), who highlighted the importance of Tr. L in fostering organizational citizen behaviour. Transformational leaders can mitigate the adverse effects of POI and TS, reducing WDB. Recent studies, such as those by Wang et al. (2021), reinforce this idea, suggesting that, Tr.L is not only enhances employee motivation but also acts as a buffer against deviance workplace factors.

However, the study's findings regarding the limitations of transformational leadership style as a moderator present a nuanced perspective. While previous research has often depicted Tr.L as a universally effective remedy for deviance workplace dynamics (Breevaart et al., 2014), this study indicates that its moderating effects may not be uniform across all contexts. For instance, in highly toxic environments, even transformational leaders may struggle to exert positive influence, as suggested by the findings of Liu et al. (2022). This highlights the need for further exploration into the conditions under which transformational leadership can effectively mitigate workplace deviance behaviour.

Moreover, the current study's examination of the intersection between individual factors contributing to DWB addresses a critical gap in the literature. While numerous studies have explored either individual characteristics or organizational contexts in isolation (Mikić et al., 2022), this research emphasises the need for an integrated approach. By incorporating TR.L as a moderating variable, the study provides a more comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamics of workplace deviance.

Implications/ Contribution of the Study

These results contribute to the theoretical understanding of how leadership style can influence and, in some cases, moderate the effects of negative organizational factors such as perceived organisational injustice and toxic supervision on WTB. This study contributes to the literature by exploring the moderating effects of transformational leadership on the dynamics of perceived organizational injustice and supervision toxicity.

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Our findings underscore the critical role of transformational leadership style in influencing workplace deviance behavior, especially in high-toxicity workplace contexts. Transformational leadership, through their support and positive influence, appear to mitigate some adverse outcomes of toxic supervision, thus fostering a more resilient organizational environment.

This study makes valuable contributions to the existing literature on organizational behavior by expanding the understanding of how perceived organizational injustice and toxic supervision contribute to WDB. It also investigates the moderating role of transformational leadership, adding a novel perspective to discussions around mitigating workplace deviance. The key contributions are as follows:

Theoretical Contribution

The study addresses a critical theoretical gap by incorporating Tr.L as a moderating variable between organizational factors (perceived organisational injustice and toxic supervision) and toxic workplace behaviour. While prior research has largely focused on the direct effects of negative organizational practice on workplace deviance, this study demonstrates how transformational leadership can buffer some of these adverse effects, thereby offering a fresh perspective on leadership's role in reducing workplace toxicity. By empirically validating the moderating effect of transformational leadership, this study contributes robust findings that confirm leadership style as an influential organisational factor in reducing the impact of negative organizational practices on workplace toxicity behavior. The evidence supports the idea that transformational leadership can help limit the detrimental effects of toxic supervision, offering a practical strategy for organizations to reduce the incidence of workplace toxicity.

Practical Contribution

The study provides valuable insights into managing and controlling workplace deviance behaviours to organizational leaders, managers, and HR practitioners. By highlighting the protective role of transformational leadership, it suggests that organisations can mitigate toxic outcomes by fostering a transformational leadership style that promotes fairness, inclusivity, and support. This guidance is especially relevant for institutions seeking to build positive work environments and manage workplace toxicity effectively.

Methodological Contribution

The study also advances methodological rigour in WDB research by applying structural equation modelling (SEM) and moderation analysis, offering a comprehensive assessment of how leadership moderates the relationships between POI, toxic supervision, and WDB. This approach provides a robust framework that future researchers can employ to study similar constructs in different organizational contexts.

Study Limitations and Future Directions

The findings of this study have limited generalizability, as they are primarily based on data from employees in the public sector of Pakistan, excluding those from the private sector. Upcoming research should include respondents from private sector organizations to broaden the applicability of the results. Additionally, WDB within private sector settings warrants further exploration. Secondly, this study simultaneously examined both organizational factors perceived organisational injustice and toxic supervision contributing to workplace toxicity, which resulted in a complex and lengthy questionnaire, potentially affecting the quality of responses. Future research could

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address these factors separately to enhance response accuracy and improve generalizability. Thirdly, this study utilized a quantitative research approach exclusively. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of workplace deviance, future research could employ a mixed-methods approach. Fourthly, the study examined employee behavior across diverse type of public organizations, such as universities, boards, and authorities. Future research could investigate WDB within specific separate public organizations or department as unit of analysis (e.g., Police and FBR) to obtain more targeted insights. Fifthly, this study examined various dimensions of WDB in toto. Other forms of workplace toxicity, such as sexual harassment, cyberloafing, gender discrimination, occupational stress, workplace aggression, and incivility, also impact organizational performance but were excluded from this framework due to data complexity. Future research could analyze these dimensions individually to better understand their unique effects on workplace outcomes. Finally, this study focused on micro-level factors, such as individual, demographic, and organizational influences on WDB, without considering macro-level or external factors like social, cultural, political, and administrative contexts. These environmental factors significantly shape workplace behaviors, and future research should examine their impact on WT to inform more comprehensive control strategies.

Conclusion

This study adds valuable insights and evidence to the expanding research on the impact of POI, toxic supervision, workplace deviance behaviour, and the moderating role of Tr.L in these dynamics. Despite some limitations, the findings support the study's theoretical propositions, objectives, and research questions. While many studies have examined the antecedents and causes of workplace deviance behaviour, this research addresses a notable gap by introducing Tr.L as a moderating factor between organizational influences and WDB. The findings of the study strengthens both theoretical and empirical frameworks by showcasing the moderating effect of Tr.L of organisational factors (e.g., POI and TS) on deviance workplace behaviours.

Additionally, this research extends theoretical understanding within the fields of social exchange theory and theory of psychological contract by examining how organizational factors such as POI and toxic supervision influence workplace deviance behaviour. The findings also underscore the theoretical moderating effect of Tr.L, providing insights into its role in shaping relationships between key independent and dependent variables. Practically, the study offers actionable recommendations for organastional leadership, managers, and organizations aiming to mitigate WDB. Despite some limitations, this research provides a foundation for further studies by proposing directions and guidelines to broaden the understanding and management of deviant behaviours in the workplace.

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