The Impact of Exploitative Leadership on knowledge Hoarding: Exploring the mediating Role of Psychological Distress in IT sector of Islamabad

By:

Atif Usman   (01-321222-008)

MBA (1.5y) Weekend)

Supervisor:
(Dr Harris Laeeque)

Department of Business Studies

Bahria University Islamabad
Fall 2023

Majors: HRM

Major No: H13

"The Impact of Exploitative Leadership on knowledge Hoarding:

Exploring the mediating Role of Psychological Distress in IT sector of

Islamabad."

Atif Usman

Enrollment 01-321222-008

Supervisor

Dr Harris Laeeque

Department of Business Studies,

Bahria University Islamabad

Fall 2023

FINAL PROJECT/THESIS APPROVAL SHEET

Viva-Voce Examination

Viva Date 29 /01/ 2024

Topic of Research: (The Impact of Exploitative Leadership on Knowledge Hoarding: Exploring the mediating role of {psychological Distress)

Name of Student: Enroll # 01-321222-008.

Atif Usman

Class: (MBA 1.5Y)- weekend

Approved by:

_____

(Dr Harris Laeeque)
Supervisor

_____

Dr Sumera Iqbal
Internal Examiner

_____

Zahid Majeed
External Examiner

_____

Dr.Syed Haider Ali Shah
Research Coordinator

_____

Dr.Khalil Ullah Mohammad

Head of Department
Business Studies

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ABSTRACT

This comprehensive research Explores the relationship of exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and their impact on psychological distress within the Information Technology (IT) sector of Islamabad, Gaichu Managed Services serving as the primary data source. The study has sample size of 100 respondents, each contributing valuable insights through designed surveys. Once the Data is Collected it was run through SPSS to Investigate the relationships of variables. The correlation and regression analysis tests conducted on this dataset revealed a compelling and positive relationship among the variables under investigation. Specifically, the findings highlighted a significant association between exploitative leadership behaviour's, knowledge hoarding tendencies, and heightened psychological distress among The Respondents in sampled population. These results not only advance our scholarly understanding of workplace dynamics within the IT industry but also offer actionable insights for organizational leaders, human resource practitioners, and policymakers aiming to cultivate healthier and more supportive work environments that prioritize employee well-being.

Keywords: Exploitative leadership , Knowledge Hoarding, Psychological Distress

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the study

A great deal of research has been done in the last few decades to try to understand the different types of harmful leadership. Notable instances include autocratic leadership, as described by De Hoogh and Den Hartog in 2008, abusive supervision, as reported by Tepper in 2000, and hubristic leadership, which was the focus of a 2018 study by Sadler-Smith et al. Even while there is a lot of research on these types of destructive leadership, there is a distinct lack of literature on exploitative leadership, which is a particularly common and blatantly self-serving behaviour displayed by leaders.

The main goal of exploitative leadership is to further the self-interest of the leader by taking advantage of others who report to them. According to Schmid et al. (2019), this conduct captures important elements of different types of harmful leadership.

In comparison to how common it is in actual leadership situations; it is curiously underrepresented in academic research.

According to Schmid et al. (2019, p. 1426), exploitative leadership is characterized by leaders who deliberately pursue personal benefit by taking advantage of their subordinates. This could take many different forms, such as using people as leverage for one's own gain or putting one's own interests ahead of the team's welfare. Critical research, such as that carried out in 2019 by Pircher Verdorfer et al., has brought attention to the many negative effects that result from leaders who take advantage of their subordinates. These repercussions cover a wide range of elements, such as lower affective commitment and job satisfaction, higher intent to quit, more cases of burnout, misconduct at work, and a discernible imbalance in social relationships. Empirical data has confirmed the detrimental effects on workers, highlighting the need for a more thorough knowledge of exploitative leadership and its consequences. This background essentially highlights how urgent and significant it is to close the gap in the research on exploitative leadership, illuminating its prevalence, traits, and the profound effects it has on both leaders and their subordinates.

1.2   Contextual analysis

Examining the complex dynamics of knowledge hoarding and exploitative leadership in the context of the fast-growing knowledge Technology (IT) business is crucial, given the distinct nature of this quickly growing sector. The IT sector is a vibrant center that is known for its constant search for innovation, which makes it a haven for cutting-edge technologies and ground-breaking business strategies. In this context, the effects of exploitative leadership strategies take on particular importance since they not only mold corporate cultures but also have a real bearing on the rate and quality of technological advancements. The combination of knowledge hoarding and exploitative leadership, which are common in IT businesses, appears to be a significant barrier to teamwork and the development of collective intelligence—the foundation upon which the sector is built. The consequences of knowledge hoarding and exploitative leadership go beyond the local dynamics of the workplace and affect the fundamental ideas that shape the IT sector. It is important to understand the complexities of how these phenomena interact in a setting that demands creativity and sustainability. Gaining understanding of the far-reaching effects on employee well-being, agility within organizations, and the general trajectory of the IT industry depends on this investigation. Understanding the relationship between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding is crucial to guiding the industry toward sustainable growth and fostering an innovative, collaborative work environment that not only promotes individual well-being but also advances the sector. This is because leadership dynamics and knowledge flow in this dynamic industry are becoming increasingly complex.

1.3   Research gap

Many aspects of leadership practices, especially those considered harmful, such abusive supervision, autocratic leadership, and hubristic leadership, have been thoroughly studied in the corpus of literature currently available about leadership. Notably, exploitative leadership is one type of leadership conduct that has gotten relatively less scholarly attention. This disparity is particularly noteworthy considering the possible effects of exploitative leadership on information hiding, which Connelly et al. (2012) describe as the deliberate act of withholding some pieces of desired knowledge. The relationship between exploitative leadership and information hiding is still not sufficiently studied, even though knowledge concealing is common in organizations and that it has been shown to have negative

consequences on organizational effectiveness in the knowledge economy era (Connelly et al., 2019). It is therefore critical to fill this study gap as developing successful organizational solutions requires an understanding of the dynamics of how and when exploitative leadership promotes knowledge concealing.

1.4   Problem statement

In the rapidly evolving Information Technology (IT) landscape of Islamabad, the leadership dynamics within organizations play a pivotal role in shaping employee behaviors and influencing organizational effectiveness. Despite an extensive body of research on destructive leadership behaviors, there exists a critical gap in understanding how exploitative leadership, characterized by a leader's primary intention to further their self-interest by exploiting subordinates, affects knowledge hoarding—a phenomenon where employees intentionally conceal certain pieces of requested knowledge. Knowledge hoarding poses a substantial threat to organizational effectiveness, particularly in the knowledge economy era, yet little attention has been dedicated to comprehending the relationship between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding. This study fills a major gap in the literature by exploring the dynamics of information concealment in the context of exploitative leadership using the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, namely Hobfoll's (1989) framework. Based on the COR theory, which states that people try to protect their important resources from dangers they perceive, this study investigates how people who feel taken advantage of by their leaders could use knowledge concealing as a tactical move to prevent more resource loss. Exploitative leadership serves as the lens through which this relationship is investigated. It is acknowledged as a significant workplace stressor (Schmid et al., 2019; Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2019). By elucidating the motivations and mechanisms behind the relationship Within the perspective of COR theory, exploitative leadership and knowledge concealing are discussed. The goal of this research is to provide detailed insights into the underlying dynamics, illuminating the intricate connection between these occurrences and their consequences in organizational settings.

1.5 Research Objective

1) Examine the kind and degree of the connection between knowledge concealment and exploitative leadership in the IT industry to offer a thorough grasp of the ways in which these behaviors interact.

2) Examine the effects of exploitative leadership, which is acknowledged as a significant source of stress in the workplace, on people's propensity to hide knowledge, and explore the complex ways that stresses affect people's willingness to share knowledge.

3) To Dertermine actionable insights and recommendations for organizational leaders and policymakers based on the findings, aiming to enhance workplace environments by addressing issues related to exploitative leadership, knowledge hiding, and psychological distress within the IT sector.

1.6 Research Questions

1. How does exploitative leadership seem in Islamabad's IT industry?

2. How psychological distress mediate the connection between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in IT?

3. What is the overall organizational impact of exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in the context of the IT sector?

1.7 Significance of Study

This study is significant because it adds to academic discussions and real-world applications in the Information Technology (IT) sector in a variety of ways. This work fills a significant vacuum in the literature by exploring the complex interactions among information hoarding, exploitative leadership, and the mediating function of psychological distress. Its conclusions could change organizational leadership practices in the IT industry and provide

insightful advice to leaders who want to develop moral, human-centered approaches. The study's examination of the connections between knowledge hoarding and exploitative leadership is particularly noteworthy since it highlights the dangers of information silos and promotes the creation of creative and cooperative work environments.

Additionally, the study emphasizes how important psychological distress is as a mediator, adding to the body of knowledge in academia and offering useful implications for HRM procedures. Acknowledging the role of employee well-being in shaping the propensity to withhold information leads to a comprehensive comprehension of the dynamics operating in businesses. The study's conclusions are directly applicable to the special opportunities and difficulties that the IT sector faces because of its context-specific focus. By doing this, the research makes a substantial contribution to the field of academia as well as the operational effectiveness of IT companies in managing their daily operations with a greater understanding of employee well-being, leadership dynamics, and knowledge sharing.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Overview of the study variables

In studies there are Three variables 1) Independent variable 2) Dependent variable and 3) Mediating Variable. I will Elaborate Each one In Next paragraphs.

2.1.1. Exploitive Leadership

A misuse of power characterized by dishonesty and the unrelenting pursuit of one's own interests—often at the expense of followers—is known as exploitative leadership Schmid et al. (2019). This kind of leadership is typified by a flagrant indifference to the welfare of followers; those involved in exploitative practices put their own goals ahead of those of their subordinates, often abusing or taking unfair advantage of them. Exploitative leadership is characterized by three main components: a poisonous leadership environment; manipulating power dynamics; using misleading techniques According to research conducted by Johnson and Smith (2020), and an unrelenting dedication to self-interest. The detrimental effects of exploitative leadership affect the entire organization in addition to specific subordinates. Such leadership behaviors have the potential to destroy confidence, obstruct cooperation, and instill a general feeling of disenchantment among workers. The work environment becomes fraught with tension and anxiety as exploitative leaders undermine the very foundations of a healthy organizational culture According to research conducted by Johnson and Smith (2020). The negative consequences cascade into worker morale, job satisfaction, and general productivity. Furthermore, the company itself can experience higher staff attrition, diminished employee loyalty, and a damaged reputation. Thus, exploitative leadership poses a serious challenge to the development of a productive and long-lasting work environment. This emphasizes how vital it is to confront and mitigate such behaviors for the benefit of both individuals and the company.

2.1.2 Knowledge Hoarding

Knowledge hoarding is a behavioral phenomenon in which individuals within an organization intentionally withhold or restrict valuable information, insights, or expertise that could be shared with others. The deliberate concealment of information poses substantial obstacles to teamwork, creativity, and overall organizational learning. Knowledge hoarding is

the deliberate choice made by individuals to hold onto information for their own benefit, which prevents important knowledge and skills from being freely shared among team members Johnson, M. (2019). Knowledge hoarding can have a variety of reasons, such as a general lack of confidence in coworkers, a fear of perceived power loss, or a desire for personal gain. Knowledge hoarding is essentially a deliberate decision to restrict access to important information, which can have a significant impact on an organization's capacity to promote creativity, teamwork, and a continuous learning culture (Smith, 2021). It is essential to address these habits to foster an environment at work that values candid communication, information sharing, and group development.

2.1.3 Psychological Distress

Psychological distress refers to the mental and emotional pressure that people go through due to a variety of circumstances, such as stress, anxiety, and negative emotions. Within the framework of your research, psychological distress functions as a mediator and is essential in elucidating the connection between knowledge hoarding and exploitative leadership Brown and White's (2019). Psychological distress encompasses a range of negative emotional and mental states, such as feelings of anxiety, depression, and unease. According to Smith and Johnson (2020), psychological distress in the workplace is a complex phenomenon that can have various contributing factors.

2.2 Overarching theory of the study

One potential theoretical framework could be Social Exchange Theory and Transactional Leadership Theory.

2.2.1 Social Exchange Theory

Individuals engage in social relationships with the expectation of mutual gain, according to Social Exchange Theory, which is based on the principles of reciprocity. This theoretical framework emphasizes that individuals in social connections are driven by the prospect of receiving favorable results or rewards in exchange for their contributions. This relationship is especially important in the workplace, as individuals frequently engage in various forms of interaction with their coworkers and

leaders. Social Exchange Theory provides useful insights into the mechanics of knowledge transfer among individuals in the workplace. Individuals have a valuable resource in the form of knowledge, and the decision to share this knowledge is influenced by views of justice, trust, and the anticipation of reciprocation.

Employees are more likely to share their knowledge when they believe there is a fair exchange of resources and support in the workplace. Access to information, opportunities for skill improvement, and support from colleagues and supervisors are all examples of resources. Employees are more likely to share their skills and insights with others when they believe their efforts are recognized and that they will receive equivalent rewards in return.

2.2.2 Transactional Leadership Theory

According to Transactional Leadership Theory, leadership is founded on transactions between leaders and followers. Transactional leaders encourage staff by using rewards and penalties. Exploitative leadership, which relies on coercion and manipulation, is a negative version of transactional leadership. Exploitative leadership can result in a transactional relationship based on fear and intimidation. The idea explains how the transactional character of exploitative leadership can cause psychological pain in employees, which leads to information hoarding as a protective response.

2.2.3 The Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

This theory was developed by Stevan Hobfoll, is a well-established psychological framework that explores how individuals strive to acquire, retain, and protect valuable resources. Resources, in the context of COR theory, encompass a broad range of entities, including material possessions, personal characteristics, energy, time, social support, and knowledge. The core tenet of COR theory is that individuals are motivated to prevent resource loss and to build and maintain their resource reservoirs.

The theory is grounded in the premise that the pursuit of resource conservation is a fundamental driver of human behavior. According to COR theory, individuals are driven by the threat of potential resource loss and the desire to accumulate resources that are essential for well-being and functioning.

2.3 Hypotheses Development

Here are statements that can be considered as research hypotheses,

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in the IT sector.

In the IT sector, there is a considerable positive association between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding. This assumption is consistent with prior research, which has linked exploitative leadership, typified by self-interested objectives and the exploitation of subordinates, to negative workplace outcomes (Schmid et al., 2019; Tepper, 2000). The Conservation of Resources (COR) hypothesis provides a theoretical underpinning, implying that when faced with resource risks, such as those posed by exploitative leadership, individuals may respond by participating in knowledge hoarding as a defensive mechanism (Hobfoll, 1989). According to Schmid et al. (2019), exploitative leadership has a negative impact on employee behaviors, and it is in this context that the hypothesis proposes a positive link between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in the IT sector.

H2: Psychological distress mediates the relationship between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in the IT sector.

According to the hypothesis, psychological discomfort acts as a moderator in the relationship between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in the IT sector. This argument is based on the knowledge that exploitative leadership, defined by self-interest and subordinate exploitation, can result in negative psychological repercussions for employees (Schmid et al., 2019; Tepper, 2000). Workplace stresses, particularly negative leadership practices, have been linked to psychological suffering (Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000). Schmid et

al. (2019) emphasize the role of psychological suffering in mediating the emotional toll imposed by exploitative leadership, suggesting that the emotional toll inflicted by exploitative leadership motivates individuals to cope through defensive strategies such as knowledge hoarding.

H3 : The impact of exploitative leadership on knowledge hoarding varies among employees based on their individual levels of psychological distress.

According to the hypothesis, the influence of exploitative leadership on information hoarding differs among IT personnel based on their levels of psychological distress. This approach is consistent with research stressing people's varied responses to leadership practices and workplace pressures (Schmid et al., 2019; Tepper, 2000). Employees who are subjected to exploitative leadership may experience increased psychological discomfort, making them more likely to engage in defensive behaviors such as information hoarding, according to Schmid et al. (2019). Tepper (2000) agrees that the impact of leadership actions on employees can vary depending on individual qualities. As a result, the hypothesis draws on previous literature to claim that the relationship between exploitative leadership and information hoarding is molded rather than uniform.

2.3.1 Relationship between Knowledge Hoarding and Variable Exploitive Leadership

The relationship between information hoarding and exploitative leadership is expected to be complex, with exploitative leadership serving as a key predictor of knowledge hoarding behaviors inside corporate contexts, particularly in Islamabad's IT sector. Exploitative leadership, defined as leaders emphasizing self-interest through the exploitation of subordinates, is thought to induce knowledge hoarding among employees. This arises from the idea that employees who feel exploited and face a significant stressor in the form of exploitative leadership may regard knowledge as a precious resource that must be protected. As a result, knowledge hoarding has evolved into a strategic response, allowing individuals to protect themselves against potential resource loss while yet maintaining control over vital information. The connection between knowledge hoarding and exploitative leadership is based on the concept that exploitative leaders can instill fear and mistrust in their subordinates. This climate of distrust, along with leaders' pursuit of self-interest, may inspire

staff to conceal information selectively. Thus, the relationship is hypothesized to be defined by a dynamic interplay between leadership style, organizational culture, and employee behaviors, defining knowledge-sharing dynamics within the setting of Islamabad's IT sector.

2.3.2 Relationship between Exploitive Leadership and Variable psychological Distress

The relationship between exploitative leadership and psychological distress is integral to understanding the impact of leadership styles on employee well-being within organizations. Exploitative leadership, defined as a leader's primary purpose to advance their own self-interest by exploiting subordinates, is seen to be a significant workplace stressor. Leaders that engage in exploitative behavior may create an environment characterized by unjust treatment, manipulation, and a lack of regard for employees' well-being. This, in turn, is predicted to contribute significantly to subordinates' psychological Issue. The relationship is based on the premise that employees who are subjected to exploitative leadership may experience increased stress, anxiety, and emotional weariness. Exploitative practices, including power abuse and disrespect for employees' needs, can produce a widespread sense of fear and vulnerability. According to the Conservation of Resources (COR) hypothesis, when faced with dangers, individuals attempt to protect themselves from resource loss, and in the setting of exploitative leadership, psychological discomfort occurs as an expression of this threat. As a result, the association between exploitative leadership and psychological distress is expected to have a direct and negative influence, with leadership style functioning as a powerful predictor of employees' psychological well-being within the firm.

2.4 Conceptual framework

```
┌─────────────────────────┐                          ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Exploitive Leadership   │─────────────────────────▶│  Knowledge Hoarding      │
└─────────────────────────┘                          └──────────────────────────┘
              │                   ┌──────────────┐          ▲
              └──────────────────▶│ Psychological│──────────┘
                                  │ Distress     │
                                  └──────────────┘
```
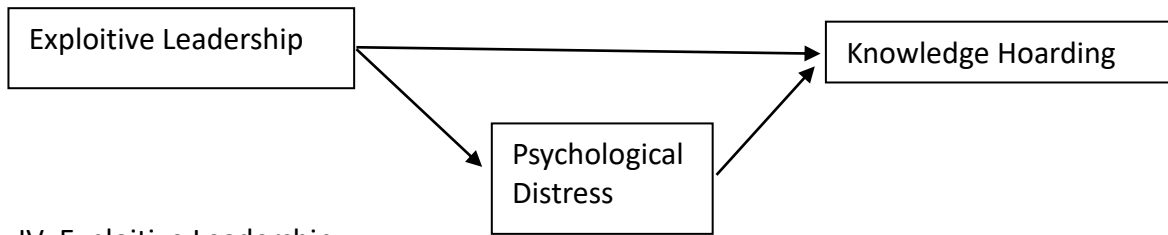
IV: Exploitive Leadership

DV: Knowledge Hoarding

Mediator: Psychological Distress

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is the fundamental framework that underlies the design, conduct, and interpretation of a research study. It gives the theoretical perspective and strategy that helps the researcher in comprehending the nature of knowledge and the methods for obtaining it. The choice of research philosophy is crucial in business research because it Molds the researcher's perspective, influences the study design, and ultimately affects the validity and dependability of findings. In business research, three research theories are often used: positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism.

Positivism assumes that social sciences may be investigated using the same scientific procedures as natural sciences. It focuses on quantitative data and strives for impartiality and generalizability. Interpretivism, on the other hand, contends that social phenomena are complicated and subjective, and that comprehension necessitates a thorough examination of the context, meanings, and perspectives. Interpretivism is frequently related with qualitative approaches. Pragmatism, a more flexible approach, blends positivism with interpretivism. It encourages choosing the best relevant methodologies to solve individual research issues, rather than sticking to a single philosophical perspective. The research philosophy chosen is determined by the nature of the research topic, the research questions, and the selected data collection methods. These philosophical perspectives are frequently carefully considered by researchers to ensure compatibility with the goals and nature of their business study.

Research Topic involves a commitment to an objective, scientific, and quantifiable approach. Positivism aligns well with the nature of this study for several reasons.

3.1.1. Quantifiable Nature of Variables

Positivism is especially appropriate when the goal of the research is to quantify and measure the impact of factors. Variables such as exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological discomfort can be operationalized and quantified in this study using structured surveys or other numerical methods.

3.1.2 Objectivity and Generalizability

Positivism promotes impartiality in study, with the goal of discovering universal patterns that can be generalized across situations. Adopting a positivist attitude in Islamabad's IT sector enables for the detection of broader trends and patterns connected to exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological discomfort.

3.1.3 Causality and Relationships

Positivism lends itself nicely to the investigation of cause-and-effect linkages. In this study, positivism allows us to look at how exploitative leadership relates to knowledge hoarding and how psychological discomfort may play a role in mediating this relationship. The idea is to use statistical analysis to establish empirical evidence of these correlations.

3.1.4 Data-driven Decision-making

Positivism advocates for the collection of empirical facts that can be used to inform evidence-based decision-making. Understanding the quantitative impact of exploitative leadership on knowledge hoarding and psychological discomfort might provide actionable insights for management and human resource strategies in the information technology sector.

While positivism has these advantages, it is important to recognize that other research philosophies, such as interpretivism or pragmatism, may provide diverse views and discoveries. The use of positivism in this context demonstrates a dedication to carefully examining relationships using methodical and scientific techniques, so bringing useful empirical evidence to the understanding of leadership dynamics in the defined sector.

3.2. Research Purpose

The overarching goal or aim that guides a research investigation is referred to as the research purpose. It specifies the motivation for undertaking the research and establishes the

overall direction of the research process. Understanding phenomena, addressing issues, testing ideas, or developing new knowledge to inform business practices and decision-making are all examples of research aims in the subject of business administration.

Based on purposes, there are generally three main types of research in the field of business administration:

3.2.1 Exploratory Study

The goal is to investigate a new area, obtain insights, and produce preliminary understanding. Frequently used when the topic is largely undeveloped or poorly defined. It aids in the formulation of hypotheses and the clarification of research issues for more in-depth studies.

3.2.2 Descriptive Study

The goal is to characterize the traits, behaviours, or patterns of a specific occurrence. This is Used we need to Observe, documents, and analyses existing conditions in a systematic manner. In descriptive research, common approaches include surveys, case studies, and content analyses.

3.2.3 Explanatory or Causal Study

The goal is to discover cause-and-effect links to explain why certain occurrences occur. This Approach Emphasizes hypothesis testing and analysing the impact of one variable on another. Causation is frequently established using experimental designs or statistical studies.

These research objectives are not mutually exclusive, and a single research study may include aspects from more than one. The researcher's objectives, the stage of knowledge growth in the field, and the specific research issues being addressed all influence the study purpose.

The wide nature of research aims in business administration enables researchers to provide useful insights to theory, practice, and policy, thereby improving the understanding and efficacy of numerous parts of the business sector.

Research Approached Used in This Study

In this study the Approach Used for research is Causal Approach because of Following Reason

- Establishing Cause-and-Effect Relationship:
    Causal research is well-suited for studies that seek to establish cause-and-effect links between variables. The goal of this study is to see if exploitative leadership is a cause of information hoarding and, if so, if psychological discomfort mediates this link.

- Testing Theoretical Frameworks and Hypotheses:
    The study adopts a theoretical framework that proposes a link between exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological discomfort. A causal approach enables the testing of specific hypotheses drawn from this theoretical underpinning, contributing to a better understanding of the dynamics at work.

- Enhancing Predictive Validity:
    Causal research improves the findings' predictive validity. Causation establishes the researcher's ability to make more accurate predictions about the probable results of interventions or changes in leadership behaviors, offering valuable guidance for organizational decision-making.

- Contributing to Practical Applications:
    The ultimate purpose of this study is to provide practical consequences for IT organizational executives and policymakers. A causal approach enables the identification of specific areas where interventions can be most effective in combating exploitative leadership, minimizing knowledge hoarding, and reducing psychological discomfort among employees.

In conclusion, the adoption of a causal method in this study is motivated by the need to move beyond descriptive or exploratory studies and delve into the complexities of cause-and-effect interactions. This methodology choice is consistent with the research objectives, theoretical framework, and practical consequences for the study in the context of Islamabad's IT sector.

3.3. Research Approach

A deductive and inductive research approach is a basic decision that influences a study's overall structure and technique. A deductive research approach begins with a well-defined theory or hypothesis and then collects and analyzes evidence systematically to test or confirm that theory. This method takes a predetermined and structured course with the goal of arriving at specified conclusions based on existing hypotheses. An inductive research approach, on the other hand, is more exploratory and open-ended. It starts with observations, patterns, or specific examples and then aims to construct bigger hypotheses or generalizations based on the data gathered. Inductive research enables a more flexible and iterative process in which emerging themes or insights influence the development of new theoretical views. The research topics, the existing knowledge base, and the depth of exploration necessary for the study all influence the decision between deductive and inductive methodologies. In hypothesis-testing research, deductive procedures are widespread, although inductive approaches are generally preferred when examining new or less-understood phenomena, encouraging a deeper knowledge of complicated situations.

 In this thesis Deductive Research Approach was Used for Several reasons

- Testing Existing Theories: Deductive research includes putting current theories or hypotheses based on past literature to the test.

- Establishing Causality**:** Deductive research is frequently employed to establish cause-and-effect relationships.

- Quantitative Measurement: Quantitative data is frequently collected and analyzed in deductive research.

- Objective and Generalizable Findings: Deductive research aims for objectivity and generalizability.

In conclusion, a deductive research technique is useful when the study's aims include testing specific hypotheses or theories, identifying causal linkages, using quantitative measuring methods, and seeking objective, generalizable results.

3.4. Research Strategy

3.4.1 Quantitative Research Strategy

Quantitative research is a methodical strategy that entails collecting and analyzing numerical data to make statistical inferences about a given event. Researchers start by precisely identifying the research problem and developing hypotheses, laying the groundwork for succeeding processes. A thorough examination of the literature informs the research design, where variables are identified, and appropriate procedures are chosen. Researchers must carefully select a representative portion of the population; therefore, sampling procedures are critical. Standardized instruments, such as surveys or experiments, are used to collect data, and statistical methods are used to analyze the data, offering objective and measurable findings. The statistical significance of the findings is used to interpret the results, and inferences are taken based on the findings. This method is frequently used in experimental investigations, surveys, and large-scale observational studies.

3.4.2 Qualitative Research Strategy

In contrast, qualitative research is a more interpretative and exploratory technique focused at understanding the underlying meanings and intricacies of human experiences. Researchers begin qualitative studies by clearly establishing an open-ended research topic, which is frequently driven by a literature review that aids in the design of the research. The qualitative design (e.g., case study, ethnography) guides participant selection through purposeful or theoretical sampling. To acquire rich, context-dependent information, data gathering methods such as interviews, focus groups, or observations are used. The process of analyzing data includes discovering themes or patterns in the data using qualitative methodologies, and interpretations are created within the context of the study. Conclusions are frequently nuanced and context-specific, allowing for a more in-depth knowledge of social occurrences, attitudes, and actions.

3.4.3 Rationale for Choosing Quantitative Research

Quantifiable Variables: The study attempts to assess and quantify characteristics such as exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological suffering. Quantitative research allows for the collecting of numerical data and statistical analysis of these variables.

Testing Hypotheses: Specific assumptions obtained from existing theories or literature may be used in the investigation. A quantitative method allows for the systematic testing of these ideas and the provision of empirical evidence to support or deny them.

Objective Measurement: Quantitative approaches provide objective measurement of variables, which reduces the possibility of bias and subjectivity. This is especially important when researching delicate areas like psychological distress.

Generalizability: Employees in Islamabad's IT sector may be diverse. A quantitative technique allows for the collecting of data from a representative sample, enabling conclusions to be generalizable to the larger population.

3.5 Time Horizon

The time horizon in business research refers to the period that the researcher intends to conduct the study, gather data, and assess results. In business research, there are three primary sorts of temporal frames.

3.5.1 Cross-Sectional Studies

A study methodology known as cross-sectional studies involves gathering data from participants at a particular period. Using this method, researchers can take a momentary picture of a phenomenon and get insight into its features, frequency, or status. When the objective is to comprehend the current state of variables or situations within a specific community, it is especially helpful. Consider, for example, gathering consumer preferences through market research. Data from a sample of customers at a certain point in time would be collected for a cross-sectional study, which would give a thorough picture of their preferences, actions, and attitudes. Cross-sectional research is useful for studying

organizational culture. Researchers can conduct surveys among stakeholders or employees of an organization to find out about their experiences, opinions, and views of the dominant culture at a particular moment in time. This approach provides a rapid and effective means of collecting data on several variables at once, enabling researchers to examine correlations, patterns, or trends without requiring an extended time of observation.

3.5.2 Longitudinal Studies

Longitudinal studies are a type of study design that lasts a long period and collects data from the same participants repeatedly throughout time. This method gives researchers a dynamic and comprehensive picture of how variables or situations change throughout the course of the study by allowing them to monitor changes, trends, or developments over a predetermined timeframe. Longitudinal studies have a longer period that facilitates an extensive analysis of the complexities related to the topic being studied.

Moreover, longitudinal research offers a refined understanding of the course of organizational transformations. Through long-term observation and measurement of variables, researchers can identify elements that either facilitate or impede organizational evolution, as well as uncover patterns and problems. For businesses looking to execute changes that are both durable and effective, this level of awareness is essential.

3.5.3 Retrospective Studies

Retrospective studies investigate historical events or conditions. To obtain an understanding of the factors that have led to current circumstances or results, researchers in these studies rely on previously collected information, documents, or participant recollections. This method is especially useful when it is not feasible to conduct a study prospectively or when researchers want to assess how decisions made in the past have affected the situation now, Within the field of organizational research, retrospective studies are frequently utilized to determine the cause of particular events or evaluate the consequences of previous choices. To examine the changes in organizational structures, regulations, or practices over time, for example, researchers can use a retrospective approach

to examine historical records, archival data, or speak with people who have institutional memory.

Each time horizon has various advantages and is chosen in the context of business research based on the research objectives, the nature of the phenomenon under examination, and the temporal dimension regarded most important to the study.

3.5.5 Approach Used in This Research.

A cross-sectional study is especially relevant and beneficial to the research. A cross-sectional technique is used in this study to provide a snapshot analysis of the status of variables in the IT industry, providing instant insights on the prevalence of exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding tendencies, and employee levels of psychological distress. This strategy is effective because it allows for fast data collection without the need for lengthy observations, which is critical in dynamic organizational situations. A cross-sectional study allows researchers to evaluate concurrent links between exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological discomfort as an early exploration of relationships, laying the framework for additional in-depth investigations. Furthermore, this approach permits the identification of patterns or correlations at a certain point in time, providing enterprises with actionable information.

3.6. Data Collection Method

3.6.1 Quantitative Data Collection Methods

Researchers might use a variety of data collection strategies when performing a quantitative study. One well-known tactic is the use of surveys, in which participants are asked standardized questions to help researchers gather data. Because they frequently use closed-ended questions with predefined response alternatives, surveys are especially useful for quantitative investigations because they make it easier to obtain organized, quantifiable data. When evaluating beliefs, attitudes, actions, or other quantifiable factors from a sizable sample, this approach is useful. Experiments are a commonly used method in quantitative research. Researchers modify independent factors in experimental research to see how they affect dependent variables. This methodology facilitates the determination of causative

connections and the identification of variables that impact certain results. In controlled environments, experiments are particularly useful for examining cause-and-effect linkages, which helps to establish insights that may be applied broadly.

3.6.2 Survey Method for Data Collection

The current study, "The Impact of Exploitative Leadership on Knowledge Hoarding: Exploring the Mediating Role of Psychological Distress in the IT Sector of Islamabad," has chosen a survey as the data gathering method. A personally administered survey will be used, including direct interaction between the researcher and participants. Surveys allow for the systematic collecting of responses from a large sample, which was motivated by the necessity for standardized data collection. The personally administered survey promotes clarity in questionnaire interpretation, prompt resolution of participant questions, and a greater response rate. Furthermore, the structured character of the survey corresponds to the quantitative aspect of the study, allowing for the collection of numerical data to assess the correlations between exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological factors.

The complete questionnaire created for this study consisted of two parts. The first section was designed to collect demographic information about the participants. Demographic data was critical in the study "The Impact of Exploitative Leadership on Knowledge Hoarding: Exploring the Mediating Role of Psychological Distress in the IT Sector." Understanding the participants' demographic information is critical for contextualizing and evaluating the study findings. Demographics, such as age, gender, education level, and years of IT experience, give a multifaceted backdrop to the dynamics of exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological Distress. These variables can influence how employees perceive and respond to leadership behaviors, their proclivity for knowledge hoarding, and their vulnerability to workplace psychological distress. while the second section was designed to measure the study variables. Variables are essential components in the process of data gathering as they represent the measurable elements or characteristics under investigation in a research study. The questionnaire development procedure was a collaborative endeavor that included the experience of MS scholars and university professors who contributed insights into the survey instrument's refinement. To assess the participants' perceptions and experiences with exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and psychological discomfort,

likert-type measures were used. Respondents were given a collection of statements or items related to each variable and asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement on a scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The Likert scale responses provide quantitative data that can be statistically examined to investigate patterns, correlations, and associations between the research variables.

.

3.7. Unit of Analysis

The term "unit of analysis" in research refers to the object or degree of observation that scientists focus on throughout the collection and analysis of data to make inferences. Individuals have been selected as the unit of analysis in this study, with a focus on Employees of Gaichu Managed Services Which Is an IT Firm in Islamabad. Understanding the subjective experiences, perceptions, and reactions of specific employees to exploitative leadership behaviors, knowledge hoarding tendencies, and the ensuing psychological anguish is the main goal of data collection and analysis. The study intends to investigate the complex dynamics of the workplace by using humans as the research unit. This method acknowledges that people—in this case, employees—are important players in the organizational setting and that the dynamics of the workplace are greatly influenced by the subjective experiences of those individuals. The study's objective of revealing the complex interactions among knowledge hoarding, psychological discomfort, and exploitative leadership is in line with the selection of individuals as the unit of analysis, using this makes it easier to conduct a thorough investigation of the human aspect of the organizational setting. It acknowledges the importance of personal experiences in adding to a more comprehensive understanding of workplace dynamics and offers a basis for deriving significant insights that can guide organizational development and employee welfare initiatives.

3.8. Population

The "Research population" refers to the total group of people or elements who share common features and are the subject of a research study. In the context of the study "The Impact of Exploitative Leadership on Knowledge Hoarding: Exploring the Mediating Role of Psychological Distress in the IT Sector of Islamabad," in this Research the population was the All employees of Gaichu Managed Service which were Around 200. These people reflect the group from whom the study's sample will be recruited. The selection of this demographic is based on the goal of investigating employees' experiences and responses within this unique

professional setting, allowing for insights into how exploitative leadership behaviors may influence information hoarding and psychological suffering in the IT workplace. The research intends to offer specific and practical findings to a greater knowledge of the impact of leadership dynamics on employee well-being and organizational outcomes in the IT industry by focusing on employees in Islamabad's IT sector.

3.9 Sampling Technique

Various sampling approaches are used in business research to pick a group of individuals or elements from a broader population for investigation. Simple random sampling, stratified sampling, systematic sampling, and cluster sampling are all common sampling approaches. Simple random sampling is selecting individuals at random from a population while guaranteeing that each has an equal chance of being chosen. Stratified sampling entails categorizing the population into subgroups or strata based on specific characteristics and then randomly choosing samples from each stratum. Following a random start, systematic sampling selects the kth individual from a list. Cluster sampling divides the population into clusters, selects entire clusters at random, and then samples from inside those clusters. Each of these techniques has its advantages and is chosen based on the specific research goals, characteristics of the population, and practical considerations.

A multi-stage cluster sampling technique will be used for the study on the influence of exploitative leadership in the IT sector of Islamabad. In the first stage, the total population of IT employees would be separated into various clusters. These clusters could represent different enterprises or organizations in Islamabad's IT sector. In the second stage, a cluster will be chosen at random. Finally, a random sample of individuals from the specified cluster will be drawn for the study. This multi-stage cluster sampling strategy provides a more manageable and efficient method of obtaining a representative sample from the larger population, providing insights into the influence of exploitative leadership on knowledge hoarding and psychological discomfort within the specific setting of the study.

3.10. Sample Size

In research, sample size refers to the number of individual participants or items chosen from a wider population for inclusion in a study. The choice of an adequate sample size is an

important part of research design since it has a direct impact on the reliability and generalizability of study findings. The general principles governing sample size frequently consider aspects such as the population size, the level of variability within the population, and the required level of precision in the study results. Larger sample numbers give more dependable estimates, lower the margin of error, and improve the study's statistical power. However, practical considerations such as time, resources, and practicality influence the calculation of an ideal sample size.

In accordance with best practices, the sample size for the study on the impact of exploitative leadership in Islamabad's IT sector was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, which provides guidelines for determining sample sizes based on population size. By consulting this established reference, the appropriate sample size for the specific context of the IT sector in Islamabad was identified as 100.

3.11. Data Collection Procedure

The journey to collect data for the study "The Impact of Exploitative Leadership on Knowledge Hoarding: Exploring the Mediating Role of Psychological Distress in the IT Sector of Islamabad" required a strategic approach that incorporated digital communication and collaboration with Human Resources (HR) departments. Instead of visiting each organization in person, I chose a more streamlined approach.

I contacted the HR departments of the Gaichu Managed Service, explaining the research aims and asking for their cooperation. When the HR teams agreed, I sent them a secure connection to the online survey site where the questionnaire was posted. I asked for their aid in forwarding this link to all personnel in Islamabad's IT sector.

To entice participants, I wrote a captivating email message outlining the significance of the study, assuring confidentiality, and emphasizing the potential benefits of the research findings for both individual employees and the business. The email served as an introduction to the study, describing the goal of the study and encouraging staff to participate.

As the responses began to stream in, I kept in regular contact with the HR departments to monitor the progress and handle any issues or queries from the participants. Regular follow-

up emails were sent, expressing gratitude for the participation and clarifying the survey where necessary.

The digital aspect of the data gathering procedure enabled rapid response tracking and reduced administrative burden on both organizations and individuals. As the survey deadline approached, I collaborated closely with HR representatives to guarantee a high response rate. HR departments were critical in issuing reminders and encouraging employees to participate in the study.

I worked with HR to securely retrieve the anonymized dataset from the survey platform when the data gathering period ended. This digital technique not only helped a smooth and effective data collection process, but also allowed for a thorough analysis of replies, adding depth and dependability to the study. The success of this strategy demonstrated the significance of digital cooperation and excellent communication in the workplace.

3.12. Ethical Considerations

Ensuring ethical concerns throughout the study process is critical, especially when investigating sensitive themes, and adhering to stringent ethical standards to protect participants' rights and well-being.

- Informed Consent: Participants were given explicit and thorough information regarding the research objectives, procedures, and potential risks and benefits prior to participation. Each participant provided informed consent, emphasizing their voluntary involvement and the freedom to withdraw at any time without penalty.

- Confidentiality and Anonymity: The privacy of participants was a primary consideration. All information gathered, whether through physical surveys or online platforms, was kept strictly confidential. To preserve anonymity, personal identifiers were removed from the dataset. For research and reporting, only aggregate, de-identified data was used.

- Data Security: Strict security procedures were put in place to protect the data obtained, especially when using online survey platforms. To avoid unwanted access or breaches, the data storage and transmission procedures adhered to industry standards.

- Honest Communication: Throughout the research procedure, participants were spoken with in an open and honest manner. The goal of the study, the usage of obtained data, and the potential ramifications of the research findings were all clearly explained.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

The process of data analysis becomes a vital phase in findings while investigating the relationship between exploitative leadership and information hoarding within the Information Technology (IT) business. This study dives into the experiences and perceptions of persons in the IT sector using a comprehensive questionnaire. We intend to breakdown the many linkages between exploitative leadership practices, knowledge hoarding tendencies, and their impact on organizational dynamics using statistical techniques and SPSS for analysis. The collected data incorporates employee sentiments, offering light on common trends and possible relationships. This analysis uses SPSS to look for patterns, connections, and key discoveries, providing a solid foundation for understanding the intricacies of leadership dynamics and information. In the ever-changing world of the IT sector, sharing is essential. This first investigation prepares the ground for a more in-depth evaluation of the data, providing vital insights into how exploitative leadership and information hoarding materialize in the IT workplace. The company I choose was Gaichu Managed Services which is a USA based IT firm in Pakistan/ Islamabad. The Total Number of respondents were 100.

Table 4.1 shows the demographic Characteristics of the Research Participants, in terms of Gender Male respondents contributed a considerable amount of our collected data, with a total of 53.8%, while females accounted for 46.2%. This indicates that men exceed women in the selected company. In terms of age distribution, most respondents were between the ages of 20 and 30. 40.2% were between the ages of 20 and 25, and 44.9% were between the ages of 25 and 30. According to their educational backgrounds, 65.4% of respondents had a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, a significant number of participants, 70 (or 37.4%), were in the early phases of their professions. Many respondents stated that they have 2-5 years of professional experience. The dataset included people from both the Technical and Administrative departments, with a clear majority of responses from the Technical Department making up 53.8% of the total. This demographic breakdown serves as a critical foundation for a more in-depth investigation of the linkages between exploitative leadership, information hoarding, and the different features of personnel inside the targeted organization. This Data shows that our Target Population was young and on Entry level of their career.

Table 4.1

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	57	53.8
Female	49	46.2
Age	Frequency	Percent
20-25	43	40.2
25-30	48	44.9
30- 35	8	7.5
35 - 40	6	5.6
40 above	2	1.9
Work Experience	Frequency	Percent
0 -2 years	35	32.7
2 – 5 years	40	37.4
5 – 7 years	26	24.3
7 – 10 years	3	2.8
10 years plus	3	2.8
Education	Frequency	Percent
Intermediate	1	0.9
Bachelors	70	65.4
Masters	34	31.8
Phd	2	1.9
Department	Frequency	Percent
Technical	57	53.8
Administrative	49	46.2

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis is a statistical technique for determining the consistency and stability of measurements or survey devices over many observations. It assists researchers in determining how well a group of items or questions evaluates the same underlying construct or variable over time. Cronbach's alpha, which assesses the internal consistency of a scale or group of items, is a regularly used statistic in reliability studies. Cronbach's alpha values

range between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating stronger dependability. A high alpha indicates that the items on a scale are highly connected and dependably measure the same underlying notion.

A reliability analysis was undertaken in the context of our research on exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in the Information Technology (IT) business to confirm the consistency of our survey instrument. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale employed in our questionnaire is 0.804, which represents an exceptional level of internal consistency. This suggests that the questions chosen to assess views of exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding are extremely trustworthy in evaluating the desired constructs. The fact that the Cronbach's alpha exceeds the usually accepted criterion of 0.70 indicates that the survey items form a reliable and internally consistent metric for our research. The scale has three items, and the calculated alpha, together with the tiny number of elements, emphasizes Our measurement tool's robustness in capturing the specifics of attitudes and experiences in the IT business.

Table 4.2

Reliability

4.2(a)

Processing Summary		
	N	%
Valid	107	100.0
Cases Excluded	0	0
Total	107	100.0

Table 4.2(b)

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N Of Item
0.804	**3**

4.3 Correlation Analysis

In the realm of our research examining the intricate dynamics of exploitative leadership, knowledge hoarding, and their potential impact on psychological well-being within the Information Technology (IT) industry, the calculated Pearson correlation coefficients offer intriguing insights. The correlation between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding stands at a robust 0.668, implying a substantial positive linear relationship between these two variables. Moreover, the associated two-tailed significance value surpasses the conventional threshold of 0.001, indicating a statistically significant correlation. This finding suggests that, within our sample of 107 observations, as exploitative leadership tendencies increase, so does the likelihood of knowledge hoarding, reinforcing the notion that these behaviours may coexist within the organizational context.

Furthermore, the correlation analysis extends to the relationship between exploitative leadership and mediator psychological distress, revealing a significant positive correlation of 0.613. This outcome suggests that as exploitative leadership behaviours intensify, there is a corresponding increase in psychological distress among employees serving as potential mediators. Simultaneously, the correlation between knowledge hoarding and psychological distress, although slightly less pronounced at 0.460, is also statistically significant with a two-tailed significance value of 0.01. These correlations collectively underscore the intricate interplay between leadership practices, knowledge-sharing behaviours, and the psychological well-being of individuals in the IT industry. As we delve deeper into these relationships, the findings prompt a nuanced exploration of the potential implications for employee welfare and organizational dynamics within the context of exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding.

Correlations

Table 4.4

		Exploitive Leadership	Knowledge Hoarding	Psychology Distress
Exploitive Leadership	Pearson Correlation			
	N	107		
Knowledge Hoarding	Pearson Correlation	.668		
	Sig. (2- tailed)	<.001		
	N	107	107	
Psychology Distress	Pearson Correlation	.613	.460	
	Sig. (2- tailed)	**<.001**	**<.001**	
	N	**107**	**107**	**107**

4.5 Regression Analysis

Model: 4

  Y: Knowledge Hoarding (DV)

  X: Exploitive Leadership (IV)

  M: Psychological Distress (MV)

Sample

Size: 107

TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y

Direct effect of X on Y			
Effect	se	t	p
0.6919	0.0948	7.3013	0.0000

Indirect Effect of X on y			
Effect	Bootse	BootLLCI	BootULCI
0.0579	-0.703	-o.736	0.2048

Total Effect of X on Y			
Effect	se	t	p
.7498	0.749	10.0160	.0000

confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

  95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

  5000

4.5.1. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical technique for modeling the connection between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable. The objective is to comprehend how the independent variables explain or predict the variability in the dependent variable. In other words, regression analysis aids in quantifying the effect of changes in one or more variables on others. To have a positive link between variables, the significance value, or P value, must be less than 0.05. A regression analysis was performed to evaluate the presented hypothesis (H1: There is

a significant positive link between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding in the IT sector). The findings show a significant association (p-value = 0.000) between exploitative leadership and information hoarding. The coefficient of determination, generally expressed as R-squared, suggests that changes in exploitative leadership may explain around 74.98% of the variability in knowledge hoarding.

The positive coefficient of 0.7498 suggests an important positive influence, confirming the expected relationship's directions. This shows that as exploitative leadership practices rise in the IT sector, information hoarding tendencies increase significantly. The statistically significant p-value adds to the credibility of this conclusion, indicating that the observed link is unlikely to be a coincidence.

Test(s) of X by M interaction			
F	Df1	Df2	p
1.3669	1.0000	103.0000	0.2451

H2 : Psychological distress mediates the relationship between exploitative leadership and knowledge hoarding .

The study we conducted went into the hypothesis (H2), with the objective of understanding the complex relationships inside the Information Technology (IT) sector. The regression analysis produced a p-value of 0.2451, indicating that, while the observed link is not statistically significant at the standard significance threshold of 0.05, it is still important for further investigation. Furthermore, the derived F-value variance of 1.3669 gives insight into the overall fit of the regression model.

Even though the p-value does not meet the conventional statistical significance threshold, the investigation of psychological distress as a potential mediator in the association between exploitative leadership and information hoarding remains critical. The relatively high F-value variance suggests that the model may still capture important parts of the underlying dynamics, which needs further investigation.

H3: The impact of exploitative leadership on knowledge hoarding varies among employees based on their individual levels of psychological distress.

To investigate these interactions quantitatively, we could utilize the Pearson correlation coefficients. The relationship between psychological distress and exploitative leadership is positively correlated (0.613), indicating that more psychological distress is associated with a higher likelihood of exploitative leadership actions. Concurrently, a higher propensity towards knowledge hoarding is linked to higher psychological suffering, as indicated by the positive correlation of 0.460 between knowledge hoarding and psychological distress.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Theoretical Implications

The study, which used the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory as a theoretical foundation, has substantial theoretical implications and contributions to our understanding of the dynamics of exploitative leadership, information hoarding, and the moderating influence of psychological stress. For starters, the research contributes to the theoretical underpinning of organizational behaviour by anchoring the study on COR theory, which states that individuals attempt to maintain and defend their valued resources in the face of stressors. The study applies COR theory to leadership, revealing how exploitative leadership can be regarded as a stressor, prompting employees to engage in information hoarding as a resource-saving strategy. This not only broadens our grasp of COR theory, but it also broadens its usefulness to leadership studies.

Second, the study's assessment of psychological stress's moderating function provides a nuanced layer to our knowledge of how individuals respond to exploitative leadership. According to COR theory, when people are stressed, they are more prone to engage in resource-preserving actions. The study presents empirical data to back up this claim, revealing light on the complex interplay of leadership style, psychological stress, and knowledge hoarding tendencies. This work adds granularity to COR theory by describing the variables that aggravate or reduce the influence of exploitative leadership on knowledge hoarding.

The findings of the study also have practical relevance for organizational leaders and policymakers. If, as the study suggests, exploitative leadership contributes to knowledge hoarding habits, firms might take proactive steps to eliminate leadership practices that may diminish employees' perceived resources. Furthermore, acknowledging psychological stress's moderating role emphasizes the necessity of boosting employee well-being and mental health as a strategy of mitigating the harmful consequences of exploitative leadership. In summary, the theoretical contributions of the study go beyond academia to guide organizational practices and tactics for building healthier and more productive workplaces.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research Implications

The research on the effect of exploitative leadership on information hoarding, using psychological stress as a moderator, has provided useful insights into the organizational dynamics of Islamabad's IT sector. However, it is critical to recognize certain limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. For starters, the study's concentration on a single industry and geographical location may limit the study's generalizability to other industries or regions. Furthermore, the study's cross-sectional approach offers a snapshot of interactions, but longitudinal research could provide a more nuanced picture of how these dynamics evolve over time. The use of self-reported data introduces the possibility of bias, and future study could benefit from a variety of data sources and approaches to strengthen the conclusions. In addition, the scope of variables studied in this study is restricted, and future research should investigate additional components to provide a more thorough understanding of the varied nature of exploitative leadership and its effects.

Looking ahead, there are interesting prospective research options that could build on the study's basis. Researchers may investigate the fundamental mechanisms that influence knowledge hoarding, considering cognitive processes, interpersonal dynamics, or organizational elements that mediate or modify these interactions. Comparative research across industries, cultures, and leadership styles could improve the generalizability and variability of the discovered connections. Furthermore, future study could investigate interventions and mitigation techniques to counteract the negative consequences of exploitative leadership, potentially leading to the development of leadership training programs or organizational policies that promote healthier leadership styles. Another area of investigation is integration with positive leadership styles, which investigates how a balance of positive and negative leadership affects employee results. Addressing these constraints and following these future study topics will help us gain a more complete and nuanced knowledge of the complex interplay between leadership actions, employee responses, and organizational outcomes.

5.3. Conclusion

This study, based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, explores the impact of exploitative leadership on knowledge hoarding in Islamabad's IT sector, with a particular emphasis on the moderating role of psychological stress. Based on the

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. The problem statement highlights the need to investigate the implications of exploitative leadership, particularly regarding information hoarding, due to the inadequate understanding of this practice and its widespread negative consequences on employees. The study's main goal, guided by COR theory, is to use a deductive research philosophy to examine the subtle ways in which exploitative leadership may affect knowledge hoarding tendencies. Data was collected systematically from Gaichu Managed Service which is an IT firm in Islamabad using a multi-stage cluster sampling process and a quantitative approach. The selection of a suitable sample size followed the recommendations made by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), and the use of a cross-sectional time horizon allowed for a snapshot analysis that offered a fleeting glimpse into the prevailing dynamics. The results of the study show a statistically significant positive correlation between information hoarding and exploitative leadership, with psychological stress acting as a substantial moderating factor. It highlights the need to address employees' psychological well-being and provides important insights into the possible consequences of exploitative leadership. Additionally, by extending COR theory to the leadership domain, the study adds something significant to the body of current literature. It highlights the complex relationships that exist between employee reactions, organizational outcomes, and leadership behaviors in the setting of the IT sector. The study's extensive methodology clarifies the complex function that psychological stress plays as a moderator in this relationship in addition to highlighting the direct effects of exploitative leadership on knowledge hoarding. These kinds of findings are crucial for organizational leaders because they provide practical advice on how to create a work climate that actively supports employees' psychological health while also acknowledging the problems caused by exploitative leadership. This research combines theoretical frameworks like COR theory with useful management implications, which constitutes a major advancement in our knowledge of the complex dynamics inside the IT sector. The study fills a research gap by revealing the complex relationships that exist between knowledge hoarding, psychological stress, and exploitative leadership. It also offers organizational leaders in the IT sector of Islamabad a road map for overcoming the difficulties presented by exploitative leadership and fostering a more resilient and encouraging work environment.

References

Adams, S.H. and John, O.P. (1997), "A hostility scale for the California psychological inventory: MMPI, observer Q-sort, and big-five correlates", Journal of Personality Assessment, Vol. 69 No. 2, pp. 408-424.

Baron, R.M. and Kenny, D.A. (1986), "The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations", Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 51 No. 6, pp. 1173-1182.

Bogilovic, S., Cerne, M. and Skerlavaj, M. (2017), "Hiding behind a mask? Cultural intelligence, knowledge hiding, and individual and team creativity", European Journal of Work andOrganizational Psychology, Vol. 26 No. 5, pp. 710-723.

Brislin, R.W. (1980), "Translation and content analysis of oral and written material", in Triandis, H.C.and Berry, J.W. (Eds), Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, pp. 349-444.

Adams, J. S. (1963). Towards an understanding of inequity. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 67(5), 422–436.

Connelly, C. E., Zweig, D., Webster, J., & Trougakos, J. P. (2012). Knowledge hiding in organizations. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 33(1), 64–88.

Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. American Psychologist, 44(3), 513–524.

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30(3), 607–610.

Pircher Verdorfer, A., Weber, W. G., & Gregori, G. L. (2019). Dark clouds on the horizon: A longitudinal investigation of workplace bullying and its outcomes. Journal of Business Ethics, 155(4), 1005–1019.

Schmid, E., Pircher Verdorfer, A., & Peus, C. (2019). Exploring the dark side of leadership: An overview and research agenda. Leadership Quarterly, 30(1), 101–121.

Tepper, B. J. (2000). Consequences of abusive supervision. Academy of Management Journal, 43(2), 178–190.

Sadler-Smith, E., Akstinaite, V., & Robinson, G. (2018). Learning through hubristic leadership. Management Learning, 49(4), 437–454.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. Annual Review of Psychology, 63, 539–569.

Scott, S. G., & Bruce, R. A. (1994). Determinants of innovative behavior: A path model of individual innovation in the workplace. Academy of Management Journal, 37(3), 580–607.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2018). Multivariate Data Analysis (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Podsakoff, N. P., Whiting, S. W., Podsakoff, P. M., & Blume, B. D. (2009). Individual- and organizational-level consequences of organizational citizenship behaviors: A meta-analysis. Journal of Applied Psychology, 94(1), 122–141.

Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions. Sage.

The effect of exploitative leadership on knowledge hiding:a conservation of   resources perspective

De Hoogh, A.H. and Den Hartog, D.N. (2008), "Ethical and despotic leadership, relationships withleader's social responsibility, top management team effectiveness and subordinates' optimism: amulti-method study", The Leadership Quarterly, Vol. 19 No. 3, pp. 297-311.

Derogatis, L.R. (1993), BSI Brief Symptom Inventory: Administration, Scoring, and ProceduresManual, 4th ed., National Computer Systems, Minneapolis, MN.

Dodge, K.A. and Crick, N.R. (1990), "Social information-processing bases of aggressive behavior inchildren", Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 8-22.

Edwards, J.R. and Lambert, L.S. (2007), "Methods for integrating moderation and mediation: a general analytical framework using moderated path analysis", Psychological Methods, Vol. 12No. 1, pp. 1-22.

Questionnaire

Survey - Exploring the Impact of Exploitative Leadership on Knowledge Hoarding and the Mediating Role of Psychological Distress.

- **Gender**
- Male   b) Female

- **Age**
- 20 – 25 years
- 25 – 30 years
- 30 – 35 years
- 35 – 40 years
- 40 years Above

- **Educational background**
- Intermediate
- Bachelors
- c) Masters
- d) Phd

- **Department**
- Technical
- b) Administrative

- **Experience**
- 0 – 2 years
- b) 2 – 5years
- c) 5 – 7 years
- d) 7 – 10 years
- e) 10 years Plus

Exploitative Leadership and Knowledge Hoarding

Exploitative leadership refers to a style of leadership characterized by a leader's primary intention to further their self-interest by exploiting or taking advantage of their subordinates.

knowledge hoarding in corporate culture refers to the intentional act of individuals within an organization withholding valuable information, insights, or expertise from their colleagues or the broader team.

- **Do you believe exploitative leadership behaviors are present in your workplace?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Have you personally experienced instances of exploitative leadership in your current role?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- **Do you think psychological Distress Mediates Exploitive leadership?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Does the perception of exploitative leadership contribute to your experience of psychological distress at work?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- **Do exploitative leadership behaviors affect your job satisfaction?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Does the fear of exploitation affect your openness to sharing innovative ideas or best practices within your team?**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- **Do you think addressing exploitative leadership behaviors could positively impact the culture of knowledge sharing within your organization?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Do you think exploitative leadership is the major contributor to workplace stress?**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Do you think exploitative leadership has an impact on team collaboration and cohesion?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **In your experience, have exploitative leadership practices led to an increase in turnover intention within your organization?**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Do you think that the presence of exploitative leadership impacts the willingness of employees to share their knowledge with colleagues?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Have you personally experienced instances where colleagues deliberately withheld valuable information or expertise from others in the organization?**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- **Do you think that lack of access to essential knowledge or information impacts your job performance and efficiency?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Have you experienced feelings of frustration or stress due to the unavailability of necessary knowledge or information for your tasks?**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- **Have you observed a correlation between knowledge hoarding behaviors and increased levels of psychological distress among team members?**
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

ttt

1   Limin Guo, Ken Cheng, Jinlian Luo. "The effect of exploitative leadership on knowledge hiding: a conservation of resources perspective", Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 2020
    Publication   2%

2   www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
    Internet Source   1%

3   Submitted to Australian Institute of Higher Education
    Student Paper   1%

4   www.diva-portal.org
    Internet Source   1%

5   www.mdpi.com
    Internet Source   <1%

6   Muhammad Farrukh Moin, Muhamad Khalil Omar, Ahsan Ali, Muhammad Imran Rasheed, Moustafa Abdelmotaleb. "A moderated mediation model of knowledge hiding", The Service Industries Journal, 2022
    Publication   <1%