

Impact of Despotic Leadership on Organisational Citizenship Behaviour and Employee Performance: Interactive Effect of Islamic Work Ethics

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Leadership is said to be the attitude of an individual to influence their followers who are the source of an organisation's performance. The intention of this study was to check the impact of despotic leadership on employee performance and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) with the moderating effect of Islamic work ethics (IWE). The researchers collected data from various organisations operating in the banking and education sectors located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The study sample consisted of the 300 employees and respondents belonging to different managerial levels which ranged from entry-level clerical staff to high management positions. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires by using the convenient sampling technique. The results indicated that Islamic work ethics moderated in despotic leadership and performance relationship. Whereas in case of organisational citizenship behaviour no moderation was observed. It is recommended that practitioners may add a personality test in the process of selection and recruitment and the organisation also can find out the efforts of employees which ultimately assert the job satisfaction among employees.

Key words: *Despotic Leadership, Organisational Citizenship Behaviour, Employees Performance, Islamic Work Ethics*

1. Introduction

In business success, leaders participate with leading roles to expand the background of enterprises. In recent years heads of the institutions capture great recognition in the achievement and development of institutions. They also lead their employees to institutional success. Leaders are capable of creating a positive stress in employees which ultimately increases the firm's performance (Darling & Heller, 2011; Sahaya, 2012). Leadership enables constructive change within the organisation which influences performance, development of particular skills, or a broader sense of personal growth (Harper 2012). The occurrence of leadership takes in an individual's capability to lead or influence other factors that help to achieve organisational objectives. The concept of leadership has shown its effects not only on its followers but also on the organisation (Glaso, Einarsen, Mathiesen, & Skogstad, 2010; Schilling, 2009). Though most of the positive side of leadership has been discussed by the researchers, still, the literature lacks the ugly side of leadership (Conger, 2000; Frost, 2004; Kellerman, 2004; Schaubroeck, Walumba, Ganster, & Kepes, 2007). For instance, according to Karakitapoglu-Aygun and Gumusluoglu (2013), there would be a negative effect of a leader over their subordinates. They are self-centred, morally corrupt and also have very low ethical standards (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008), so that followers are not performing well and efficiently under their supervision which ultimately lowers their performance and citizenship behaviour in an organisation. The despotic leadership style lacks a concept of norms and ethical values so followers become less effective to contribute toward an organisation. Because despotic leaders use their power to fulfill their personal goals and objectives, under such circumstances followers show less interest toward the work. In our study we are going to use two variables which are organisational citizenship behaviour (and employee performance. Organisational citizenship behaviour is a positive construct which assists coworkers and the well-being of the organisation.

Organ (1995) explained that organisational citizenship behaviour is a “performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance take place. Organisational citizenship behaviour refers specifically to employees. While, a lot of studies have been conducted on despotic leadership, organisational citizenship behaviour and employee performance but previous studies lack the inclusion of Islamic Work Ethics, so it also needs to be examined. The focus of our study was to check the impact of despotic leadership on organisational citizenship behaviour and employee performance with the moderating effect of Islamic Work Ethics. This work is backed by the Social Exchange Theory (Blau,1964). In several views of researchers that social exchange is a process of give and take which creates a common commitment (Emerson, 1976). Following is a brief description of the review of the related literature which laid the foundation of the research hypotheses of the current study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 *Despotic leadership*

A despotic leadership style is moreover measured as disreputable and such leaders lead themselves by utilising their power and authority (Howell & Avolio, 1992; Aronson, 2007; Simões, 2016). Despotic leadership also falls on self-seeking motives considering employing, ruling, and by getting advantage of supporters for confidential development by focusing on their personal gain and in acting in a wrong way with other people; also by using unconstructive methods that are deceiving for attendants; they also make effort against the favour of lawful benefit of the association by engaging in fake and ethically inaccurate autocratic behaviours (Aronson, 2001).

Despotic leaders want unquestioned tameness as well as backing down by their dependents, imposed by their use of extra vigorous and unequivocal leadership style, such as being challenging, predominant, working meanly and self-interestedly in the direction of the supporter's desires and interests (Schilling, 2009). Brown and Mitchell (2010) documented that "behaviours conducted, and decisions made by organisational leaders that are illegal and/or violate moral standards, and those that impose processes and structures that promote unethical conduct by followers". Remoteness exists among influential and subordinates; the despotic leader operates with a self-regarding approach with less integrity and having immoral values (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Despotic leadership comes near to commanding ideology; at times it takes to mean as a dictatorship approach and all those leaders having such a persona focus to supervise, inquire from their subordinates, are self-centred, are a favourite of their own self, ignore the followers, and are miserly (Howell & Avolio, 1992; Schilling, 2009; Simões, 2016).

In the previous research the characteristics of despotic leaders are unforgivable, demanding, with a lack of integrity, arrogance, and meanness (Naseer et al., 2016; Howell & Avolio, 1992; McClelland, 1975). Moreover, self-interest, ignorance of other ideas and abusive power are commonly observed in a despotic leadership style (Simões, 2016; Naseer et al., 2016). Hence, there is a dire need to study the effects of this variable on employees' performance.

2.2 *Despotic leadership and employee performance*

Leadership literature repeatedly makes the entitlement that transformational leaders show energising emotions to motivate their followers. Literature also proposes that the intellectual excitation encourages the followers for creative thinking (Avolio, 1999). It is likely to have a direct positive effect on cognitive vitality. However, despotic leaders are manipulative, exploit their subordinates and behaviour-wise are egoistic and mean. Their main focus is to attain personal objectives and usually are materialistic; for achieving their desired targets their practices are unethical and illegal. They also damage the society by involving the business in

fraudulent activities (Aronson, 2001,2007; Schilling, 2009). Simões (2016) conducted a study on “The impact of Ethical and Despotic Leadership on the emotions and teamwork engagement perceptions of individual members within work teams” and found that there was a significant and negative correlation between despotic leadership and task affectivity. Such leaders negatively impact the positive affectivity of employees related to work which reduces their positive experiences, drain their energy level and liveliness. Furthermore, it is believed that such leadership style impacts the employee and results in a decrease in employee performance (Naseer et al., 2015). It creates fear in employees in communicating with their supervisors because they perceive that it may offend them and , they will take their work burden as punishment. Employees under such paradigms feel insecure, unworthy, question the ethical and social values, their stress level increases, and their performance also decreases (Kanungo, 2001; Naseer et al., 2015). Lower members of staff performance resulted from the despotic leader's weak motivational force on the employees. The literature led towards following hypothesis.

H₁: Despotic leadership has a significant negative impact on employee performance

2.3 Despotic leadership and organisational citizenship behaviour

Naseer et al. (2015) conducted a study to identify the impact of despotic leadership on performance and organisational citizenship behaviour in Pakistan and found that there was a significant and negative correlation between despotic leadership and performance. Similarly, significant negative association was observed between despotic leadership style and organisational citizenship behaviour. Also, leader subordinate interaction impacts the employee through the leader’s practice and behaviour (Tumasjan, , Strobel, & Welpe (2011).

Despotic leaders are those who hold absolute power, have control over strategies, and limit contribution indecision execution (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2011; Aronson, 2001). They unfairly treat their followers, so it is not expected from followers that they did not spoil citizenship behaviour. According to Sims and Brinkmann (2002), leaders who are aggressive in nature, value short-term outcomes and display bossy style ultimately influence the long-time interacting employee in same way, and this impact will be the same in case of a leader who values his subordinates and is polite and constructive in nature (Kelman, 1973; Brief, Buttram & Dukerich, 2001; Ashforth & Anand, 2003). The social exchange theory supports this arguments, as despotic leadership style may generate an opposite behaviour pattern among employees, and sometimes it may be negative and creates retaliation in an organisation (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). This literature leads to following hypothesis.

H₂: Despotic leadership has a significant negative impact on organisational citizenship behaviour

2.4 Islamic work ethics and employee performance

The thought of the Islamic work ethics (IWE) referred by the Quran and from the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), addresses the whole of humanity about hard work. The sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) assist us to know that what are Islamic work ethics and one of them is that "no one eats better food than that which he eats out of his work." The Quran over and over again speak around integrity and fairness in trade. The Quran inspires all individuals to obtain proficiency, and it's much admired by those who struggle to earn for a living in a particular sequence. The Quran condemned those people who waste their time in idleness by attracting and involved in some rubbish or unhealthy activities. The ethics of Islam give advice against begging and the income of such labours (Abeng, 1997). As stated by Moorman et al. (1993) the organisation who deals their workers with justice tend to have high performer employees. Islamic work ethics are the moral actions which automatically benefit the organisation and the other employees in the organisation and as well as the performance of employees. Islamic work ethics play a very important role to improve employee performance; employees with moral value and faith believe that the work done with loyalty will lead them to paradise, as according to Islamic prospective, because in Islam work with integrity is equal to worship. So, on theses bases this hypothesis has been developed.

H₃: Islamic work ethics has a significant positive effect on employee performance

2.5 Islamic work ethics and Organisational citizenship behaviour

Islamic work ethics are ethical values which differentiate right from wrong and goodness from evil. i.e. any type of job which exploits or harms others; however, it gives advantage to those who carry it, and is measured as against the Islamic law (Ali & Al-Owaihah 2008). Prophet Muhammad's knowledge stressed that the finest persons are those who care about the problems of others and are helpful to nearly everyone. In the study of Alhyasat (2012), there is a significant effect of IWE on organisational citizenship behaviour. According to Lepine et al. (2002) when an employee is cooperating with his fellows that means he is involved in organisational citizenship behaviour. There is more commitment toward organisation when there exists Islamic work ethics in the organisation (Yousef, 2001; Jalal, Zeb & Fayyaz, 2019). Satisfied and committed employees are one of the reasons of the success of the organisation and by practising Islamic work ethics in an organisation this can be achieved. Organisational environments with Islamic work ethics or norms lead to an increase in the level of organisational citizenship behaviour. So, the following hypothesis has been developed.

H₄: Islamic Work Ethics are positively related to organisational citizenship behaviours.

2.6 Islamic work ethics moderate the relationship of despotic leadership and employee performance

Islamic work ethics are the basic attitude of work which are defined by the Quran and the Sunnah (sayings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)) in Islam that communicate integrity related to work principles. The Islamic deed education has multi-dimensional associations with various phases of life. Islamic work ethics are based on the Quran and al-Sunnah (Ahmad, 1976), and they desire that there must be a stability among human beings and society. Life with no work has no significance and commitment in economic actions is a responsibility claimed by the Islamic work ethic. It's an assumption that all managers are leaders; leader's behaviour has sound effects on subordinate actions and perception, ultimately resulting in some type of desired outcomes (Hunter, Bedell-Avers & Mumford, 2007). Information idea exchange relationship within the organisation is also affected by this authoritative style which is known as despotic. It creates fear in employees in communicating with their supervisors because they perceive that it may offend them and they will ultimately increase their work burden as punishment. Employees under such paradigms feel insecure, unworthy, question the ethical and social values, their stress level increases, and their performance also decreases (Kanungo, 2001; Naseer et al., 2015; Zeb et al., 2020; Butt & Zeb, 2016). Employees with Islamic work ethics are more satisfied and perform well by having a lower turnover rate (Yousef, 2001). This literature leads to the following hypothesis.

H₅: Islamic Work Ethics moderate the relationship of despotic leadership with employee performance.

2.6 Islamic work ethics moderate the relationship of Despotic leadership and Organisational citizenship behaviour

IWE is originally based on the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet and the heritage of the four Caliphs of Islam (Ali, 1988; Debeljak, Krkač, & Rizk, 2008). But if reward is not given on merit bases and leader behaviour is unethical, all these things matter a lot to them. They cannot keep working with same commitment for the organisation. According to Tepper (2000), abusive supervision involves hostility, rudeness and public criticism. It causes a low perceived organisational justice and a high level of turnover. Additionally, abusive supervision has been found a reciprocal effect on work behaviour in organisations (Jones 2009).

As stated by Alhyasat (2012) Islamic work ethics has a strong capacity to develop organisational citizenship among the employees. When leaders are despotic in organisations, they stop exhibiting citizenship toward organisations, but when these employees have Islamic work ethics they do not stop exhibiting organisational citizenship behaviour. This leads to the following hypothesis.

H6: Islamic Work ethics moderate the relationship of despotic leadership with organisational citizenship behaviour

Research model

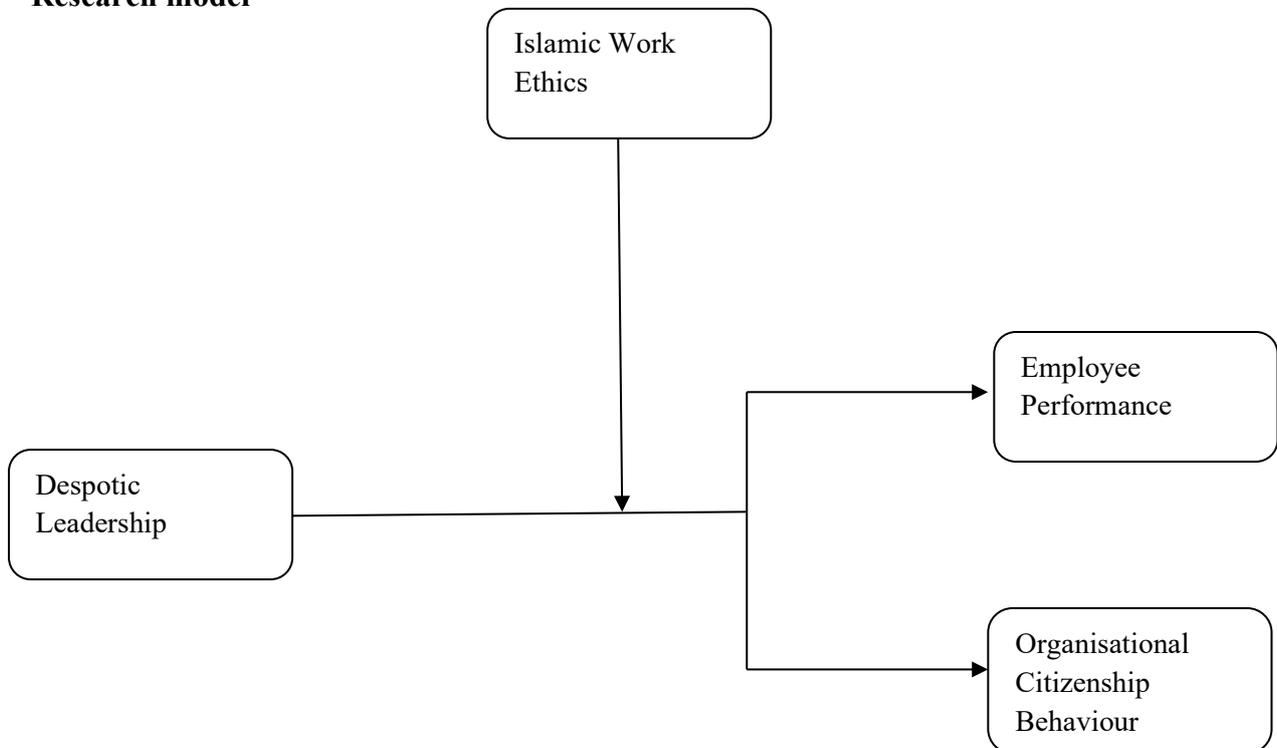


Fig. 1 Impact of despotic leadership on employee performance and organisational citizenship behaviour with the moderating effect of Islamic work ethics

3. Methodology

The intention of this study was to check the impact of despotic leadership on employee performance and organisational citizenship behaviour with the moderating effect of Islamic work ethics. The research method used to conduct the study was as follows:

3.1 Data collection and sample

Data were collected from various organisations operating in the banking, and education sectors located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The study sample consisted of the 300 employees and respondents belonging to different managerial levels which range from entry-level clerical staff to high management positions. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires by using the convenient sampling technique. Another thing is that English is an intermediate language which is taught in Pakistan from the very start of school time so it's easily comprehended by almost all the job holders so there was no need to convert the questionnaires into the native language for the given sample. A cover letter was attached with the questionnaire describing the purpose of study and ensuring confidentiality and anonymity

and volunteer participation was requested to fill the questionnaires. Moreover, a 95% confidentiality interval was used for the study. The participants voluntarily took part in the study and gave their feedback. A total 300 questionnaires were distributed and after 3 weeks of data collection, 285 responses were received, from which after sorting, 250 were useable for the data analysis. The overall response rate was 80%. The demographic profile of respondents consisted of age, gender, designation, and work experience.

In this study, data pertaining to the demographics of respondents was collected to carry out demographic analysis. The demographics of the sample revealed that 6% of total respondents lay in the age group of 20-25 years, 80% of the respondents fell under the age group of 25-30 years and 14% of the respondents were in the age group of 30-35 years. The research data of gender group indicated that the frequency of male participants was 119 and their percentage was 59.5% while the frequency of female participants was 81 and their percentage was 40.5%. Data about designation reflected that the frequency of upper-level employees was 47 and their percentage was 23.5%. The middle level employees' frequency was 94 and their percentage was 47% and the frequency of lower-level employees was 59 and their percentage was 29.5%. The research data of experience showed that 29.5% of respondents had experience in their job for 1-5 years, 49.5% fell in the range of 5-10 years of experience while 21% of them were within 10-15 years of experience. In the data analysis it was found that approximately sixty eight percent (68%) of the respondents were male and their average age was 31.09 (SD = 7.01) years. Meanwhile respondents had an average experience of 4.90 (SD = 5.93) years in the current organisation and a total work experience of 7.07 (SD = 6.82) years. It is also clear that all the respondents had at least an undergraduate university education, with 71.3% having graduate degrees.

3.3 Measure Used

Data for all study variables was measured using the 5-point Likert scale where 5 represents a high level of the construct and 1 represents a lower level of the construct. There were two dependent variables which are employee performance and organisational citizenship behaviour and there was one independent variable which was despotic leadership and this study was conducted with the interactive effect of Islamic work ethics.

3.4 Despotic Leadership

A despotic leader refers to that leader who governs with an iron fist, caring little for the welfare of the people. Despotic leadership was measured using the 6 items scale of Hange and Dickson (2004). Authenticity of data was assured by conducting a reliability test and Cronbach's alpha value was .73 checked through SPSS.



3.5 Employee performance

Employee performance is defined as a person who executes their job duties and responsibilities very well. Employee performance was measured using 4 items from the scale of Reio and Callahan (2004). The reliability of this scale was calculated as 0.81.

3.6 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Organisational citizenship behaviour (organisational citizenship behaviour) is a person's unpaid dedication for the company that is not his or her legal obligation. Likewise, organisational citizenship behaviour was measured using 4 items from the scale of Piccolo, Ronald and Colquitt (2006). The internal reliability of this variable was .71.

3.7 Islamic Work Ethics

Islamic work ethics means that work according to the preaching of Islam with full integrity. Islamic work ethics was measured using 17 items scale adopted from Ali (1988). The value of Cronbach's alpha reliability of this variable was 0.76 measured through SPSS.

3.8 Control Variable

Age, gender, education and experience were used as control variables because of their possible effects on employee performance and organisational citizenship behaviour. The one-way ANOVA test was conducted to compare the employee performance and organisational citizenship behaviour across gender, education, age and experience and this revealed that no demographic was needed to control.

4. Results

4.1. Correlation Analysis

The results listed in Table 1 indicate that despotic leadership has a significant positive association on employee performance ($r= 0.356$, $p<0.01$), but this association is weak, but still hypothesis 1 is not supported initially. Further, the same pattern of association has been observed among despotic leadership and organisational citizenship behaviour ($r= 0.172$, $p<0.01$) and this association is also weak and not aligning with the hypothesis, thus it is concluded that hypothesis 2 is not initially supported.

Table 1
Mean Standard Deviation, Correlation and Reliabilities

	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4
1. DL	3.86	0.78	1(.73)			
2. IWE	3.83	0.37	.339**	1(.76)		
3. EP	3.93	0.58	.356**	.414**	1(.81)	
4. OCB	3.83	0.54	.172**	.346**	.286**	1(.71)

Where ** $p < 0.01$, $n = 250$. DL= “Despotic leadership”, IWE= “Islamic Work Ethics”, EP= “Employee Performance” OCB= “Organisational Citizenship Behaviour”

Moreover, Islamic work ethics has a significant positive correlation with employee performance ($r = 0.141$, $p < 0.01$) and organisational citizenship behaviour ($r = 0.346$, $p < 0.01$); the level of associations of Islamic work ethics with these two factors are weak, but aligned with hypothesis and literature, it can be said that hypothesis 3 and 4 are initially supported.

4.2 Regression Analysis

To identify the impact of despotic leadership and Islamic work ethics on employee performance and organisational citizenship behaviour regression analysis has been performed. The results are listed in Table 2.

Table 2
Regression Analysis

Predictors	Employee Performance			Organisational Behaviour		Citizenship
	B	R ²	ΔR^2	B	R ²	ΔR^2
<u>Step 1</u>						
DL	.181ns	.224**	.218**	.043ns	.123**	.116**
IWE	.513**			.471**		
<u>Step 2</u>						
DL x IWE	-.331**	.253**	.244**	-.053ns	.124**	.113**

Where ** $p < 0.01$, $n = 250$

DL= “Despotic leadership”, IWE= “Islamic Work Ethics”, DLx IWE= “Interactive Term”, ns= non significant

Table 2 indicates that the predictive power of employee performance focusing model is 22.4% and the model is fit for study as the F-stat is 27.80 which is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level and similarly the predicting power of organisational citizenship behaviour focusing model is 12.3% and the model is fit for study as F-stat is 17.371 and is significant. Despotic leadership has no significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = .181$, $p = ns$), which means hypothesis 1 is not supported. Also, despotic leadership has no significant impact on employee performance ($\beta = .043$, $p = ns$), which means hypothesis 2 is not supported.

Further, the moderating variable i.e. Islamic Work Ethics also has a significant positive effect on employee performance ($\beta = .513$, $p = 0.01$) and organisational citizenship behaviour ($\beta = .471$, $p = 0.01$), which leads towards support of hypothesis 3 and 4.

Moreover, to analyse moderation, the Cohen and Cohen (2013) moderation technique has been used. The results of the moderating analysis indicates that Islamic work ethics only moderates on employee performance as the interactive term effect in employee performance case is significant; thus hypothesis 5 is supported. However, in the organisational citizenship behaviour case, Islamic work ethics do not moderate the relationship; thus we can conclude that hypothesis 6 is not supported. Moreover, Figure 1 also indicates that moderation is occurring.

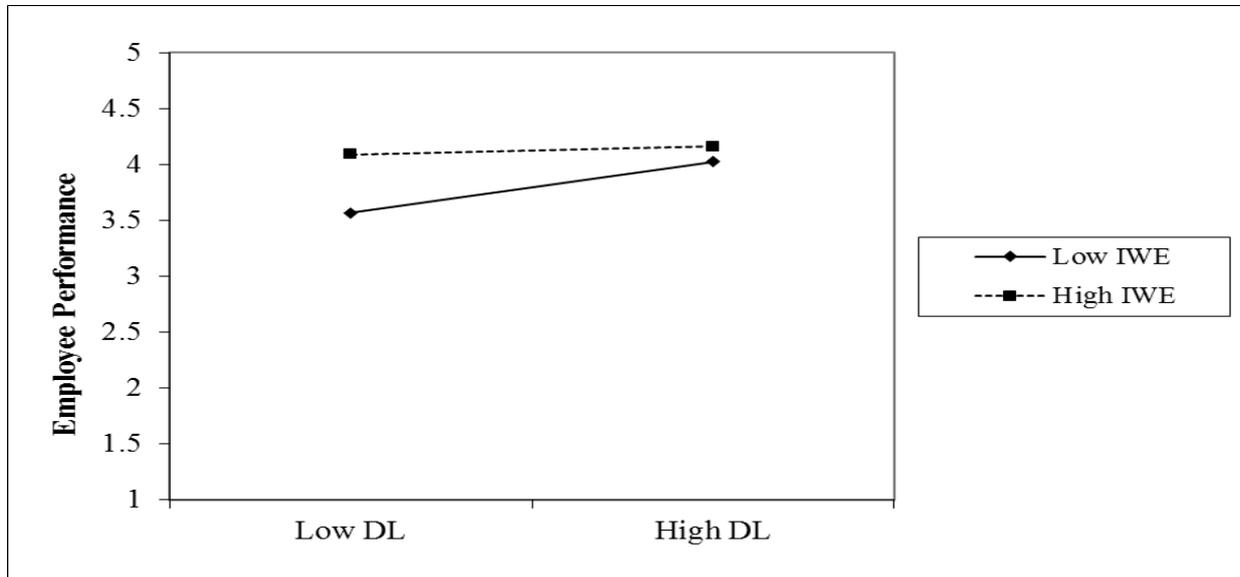


Fig 2. Interactive effect of DL and Islamic work ethics on employee performance.

5. Discussion

Results indicates that despotic leadership has no significant effect on employee performance and ocb which leads towards the rejection of Hypothesis 1 and 2. Also, these results are not aligned with studies conducted by Kanungo (2001), Mitchell and Ambrose (2007), Strobel et al. (2010), and Naseer et al. (2015). This insignificant relation may be due to the dynamics of

the sample as the majority of data have been collected from private sector banks and educational institutions which have a prescribed centralised work behaviour practices, employee work is monitored online, and supervisors have no direct impact on their work activities. In such a scenario, the leadership style of managers has a minimal impact on their performance. Further, in the private sector, employees move from one organisation to another when they find a better and more sound opportunity and career-oriented individuals rotate in industry for quick career growth. Leadership style in such cases, have minimal impact on their citizenship behaviour.

Similarly, Islamic Work ethics have a significant positive impact on employee performance and citizenship behaviour, which indicates that hypothesis 3 and 4 are supported by the results. Also, these results are aligned with the past studies results of Moorman et al. (1993) and Yousef (2001). However, the results of moderating effects indicates that only IWE moderates in the despotic leadership and performance relationship. Whereas in the case of organisational citizenship behaviour no moderation is observed. As it is stated above that most of the data was collected from the financial sector and education individuals move in the industry when they find a better opportunity and pay. So the IWE impact in such cases is zero or minimal.

6. Practical Implication

It is recommended that practitioners must add a personality test in the process of selection and recruitment. It is the responsibility of an organisation to find out the efforts of employees which ultimately assert job satisfaction among employees. It is also important for the management to involve such kind of employees who are rational decision-makers. Risk-taking personalities should be a part of the management (Zeb, Zeb & Zafar, 2020) who strengthen the organisational decisions and also increase the performance. It is also important for the organisation to hire employees with Muslim faith who influence the working environment with their Islamic values which significantly impact the performance of the organisation.

7. Limitations and Future Research Directions

For this study the data were collected from various financial and educational sectors. Future studies can be conducted by collecting the data from other sectors like health, telecommunication, and defense sectors for more generalisability of findings. In this study respondents were selected by using convenience sampling techniques. So, researchers are recommended to use other sampling techniques. It is also suggested that researchers can use multi sources for the data collection which will minimise the chance of common error bias. This study can also be made more generalised by adding other variables like personalities, self-esteem, organisational commitment and self-efficiency.



Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that they have no known conflicting financial interests or personal relationships that may affect the work reported in this article.

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