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RESEARCH ON TOXIC LEADERSHIP

IN RELATION TO LEADERSHIP STYLES

(ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ТОКСИЧНОГО ЛІДЕРСТВА

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to comprehensively assess the landscape of toxic leadership both holistically and within specific industries. Additionally, it aims to scrutinize the interplay between established leadership styles and toxic leadership, thereby identifying requisite adaptations and practices susceptible to diminishing relevance in the dynamic business environment. The study's data were derived from survey results obtained from professionals across diverse industries.

This research embarks on an extensive exploration of toxic leadership through a three-chapter framework. Chapter 1 conducts a comprehensive literature review using bibliometric and content analyses. Chapter 2 delineates empirical methodologies, providing detailed descriptions of scales such as Schmidt and MLQ. Chapter 3 unveils the outcomes of a study on leadership styles across industries and the relationships between toxic, transactional, and transformational leadership. Notably, the investigation reveals that Management by Exception exhibits associations with toxic traits, hinting at a potential dark side. This observation, coupled with the negative correlation between authoritarian traits and transformational leadership, underscores the significance of leaders striking a balance between decision-making capabilities and collaborative, open, and supportive practices. The study offers valuable insights into the evolving preferences of employees, emphasizing collaboration, understanding toxic dynamics, and fostering healthier workplace environments, particularly in the context of a shift toward servant leadership.

Keywords: *toxic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, management by exception, followership.*

CHAPTER 1. SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON TOXIC LEADERSHIP PHENOMENON

1.1 Bibliometric analysis on publications for Toxic Leadership

Scientific publications indexed by the Scopus database from 2013 to 2023 were specifically chosen to scrutinize the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of "toxic leadership" through a meticulous keyword-based search encompassing titles and abstracts. Employing the VOSviewer toolkit for bibliometric analysis, the outcomes of the study were visualized through the construction of a thesaurus comprising 101 terms. This thesaurus served to elucidate the interconnections between the concept of "toxic leadership" and its associated categories.

Utilizing a destiny parameter of 8, a total of twelve distinct clusters, demarcated by red, green, blue, yellow, purple, turquoise, orange, brown, pink, light red, light green, and light blue colors, were identified. These clusters were designated as follows: Destructive Behavior and Job Satisfaction (red), Ethical Leadership (green), Empathy and Responses (blue), Masculinity Contest (yellow), Navigating Crises (purple), Precarious Labor (turquoise), Counterproductive Workplace (orange), Ambiguity (brown), Abuse (pink), Productivity (light red), Authoritarian Leadership (light green), and Financial Impact (light blue). Detailed lists of content in clusters are provided in Appendix 1

The bibliometric analysis results, specifically the network visualization depicting the relationships between the key concept and its associated categories, are graphically presented in Figure 1. The size of each circle in the visualization corresponds to the frequency of mentions of a particular concept as a keyword, providing a visual representation of the prominence of each concept within the studied literature.

The majority of identified clusters in the analysis predominantly concentrate on examining the ramifications of toxic leadership, with a noteworthy emphasis on job satisfaction, prominently represented as the largest bubble on the graph. Concurrently, several researchers have delved into the repercussions on productivity and organizational commitment. A distinct branch emerges, underscoring the financial implications of toxic leadership, encompassing pay expectations and satisfaction. Notably, this branch constitutes a separate and substantive component of the overall analysis. A significant portion of the clusters pertains to the exploration of traits associated with toxic leadership, encompassing characteristics such as authoritarianism, abuse, and ambiguity. This thematic grouping underscores the scholarly endeavor to comprehend the intrinsic features of toxic leadership. A separate and considerable branch of the analysis delves into the behavior of toxic leaders under varied circumstances, with a particular emphasis on their conduct during crises. The masculinity context, while somewhat peripheral, is discerned as a distinct branch, signifying its unique positioning within the overall framework. Additionally, there is a distinct cluster highlighting words related to ethical leadership, suggesting a scholarly endeavor to juxtapose and counterbalance toxic leadership traits with ethical dimensions. In essence, the comprehensive analysis reveals a multifaceted exploration of toxic

leadership, spanning diverse dimensions such as its impact on well-being, organizational outcomes, financial aspects, inherent traits, behavioral responses, and the ethical dimensions that serve as potential antidotes to its detrimental effects.

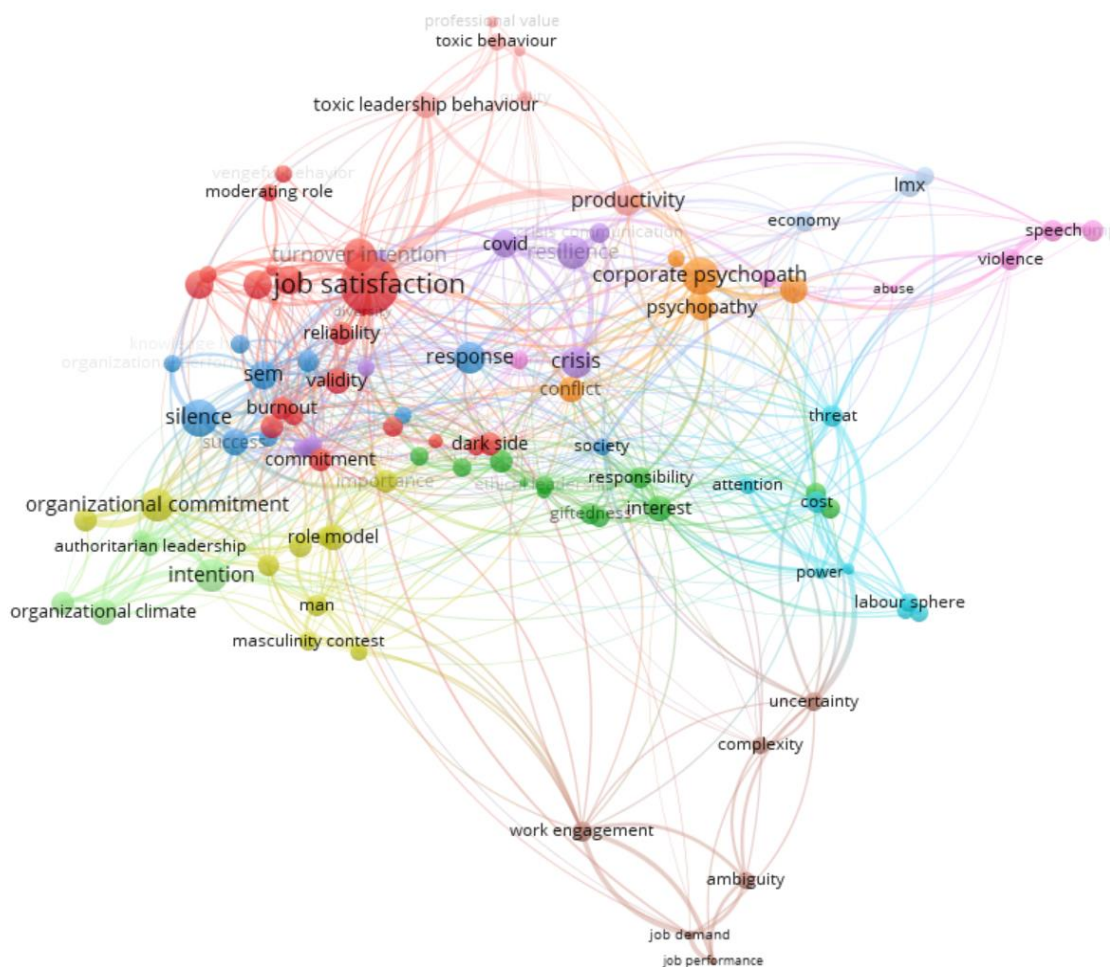


Figure 1. Network Visualization of Toxic Leadership Connected with Other Concepts and Phenomena (101 terms, frequency of appearance is 8)

Source: developed by the author using VosViewer v.10

Let's consider each cluster in more detail.

Cluster 1. Destructive Behavior and Job Satisfaction revolves around the adverse effects of toxic leadership on individuals and the work environment. It includes concepts such as burnout, destructive leader behavior, and workplace bullying, highlighting the strain and negative outcomes experienced by employees under toxic leadership.

Cluster 2. Ethical Leadership focuses on the reverse phenomenon of toxic leadership – ethical or servant leadership. It brings together words that can be potential outcomes of servant leadership, such as stability and innovation.

Focusing on interpersonal dynamics, **Cluster 3. Empathy and Responses** connects empathy, knowledge-hiding behavior, and organizational as well as project performance. It suggests that toxic leadership can erode empathy, leading to knowledge hiding and subsequently affecting overall organizational success.

Cluster 4. Masculinity Contest explores toxic norms within leadership, particularly abusive leadership and the culture of masculinity contests. It suggests that toxic leadership can be linked to gender dynamics, organizational commitment, and trust.

Cluster 5. Navigating Crises examines the impact of toxic leadership during crises, including COVID-19 (most recent publications). It connects abusive supervision, crisis communication, and resilience, highlighting how toxic leadership influences reactions to crises and role of proactive work behavior.

Focusing on the dynamics of attention and power, **Cluster 6. Precarious Labor** explores how toxic leadership can contribute to precarious labor relationships, social pollution, and threats in the workplace.

Cluster 7. Counterproductive workplace explores the dark side of workplace interactions, connecting bullying, and phenomena of corporate psychopathy, highlighting the toxic interpersonal dynamics that can emerge.

Cluster 8. Ambiguity discloses the impact of toxic leadership on job demand, performance, and work engagement in the face of uncertainty and complexity.

Focused on broader societal implications, **Cluster 9. Abuse** connects violence, speech, and political figures like Trump, illustrating how toxic leadership extends beyond the organizational realm, impacting larger societal narratives and discourse.

Cluster 10. Productivity delves into the repercussions of toxic leadership on organizational outcomes. The items within this cluster, including adverse events and toxic behavior, signify the detrimental consequences that unfold in terms of productivity, quality, and professional values under toxic leadership.

Focused on leadership style and organizational atmosphere, **Cluster 11. Authoritarian Leadership** explores the connection between authoritarian leadership and toxic climates. It emphasizes how toxic leadership behavior can contribute to negative organizational climates, affecting intention and overall organizational health.

Centered around economic aspects, **Cluster 12. Financial Impact** highlights the relationship between the economy, individual monetary expectations (IMX), and pay satisfaction concerning toxic leadership. It suggests that toxic leadership can have tangible effects on financial well-being and job satisfaction.

Upon scrutinizing the dynamic of clusters in Figure 2, it is evident that the utilization of the term "toxicity" in the context of leadership has emerged relatively recently. A decade ago, researchers more frequently employed the adjective "dark" to describe negative leadership attributes. Furthermore, an observation is made regarding the outdated nature of the context of masculinity concerning toxic

1.2 Content analysis on publications for Toxic Leadership

The literature on toxic leadership provides a nuanced exploration of its profound impact on organizational dynamics and employee well-being. Content analysis was performed using Harzing's Publish or Perish software: 15 articles that contained toxic leadership in their titles and keywords with the highest rank were selected from the database (books and monographs were not included). The table with the ranking of publications, authors, and a short description is presented in Appendix 2. Through an in-depth analysis of these studies, recurring themes emerge, shedding light on the intricate complexities surrounding toxic leadership.

The largest body of research has focused on examining the consequences of toxic leadership. Akca's (2017) study underscores the importance of comprehending the repercussions of toxic leadership on employee intention to leave. In the work of Bakkal et al. (2019), a probing examination of the model evaluating the effects of toxic leadership on job satisfaction and turnover intention unravels the mediating role of job satisfaction. This study provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between toxic leadership and organizational outcomes. Hadadian and Zarei's (2016) focus on the correlation between toxic leadership and job stress highlighting its relevance in the context of knowledge workers. The findings emphasize the need for organizations to address leadership styles impacting this specific workforce. Mehta and Maheshwari's (2013, 2014) delve into toxic leadership behaviors and their consequences for job satisfaction and organizational commitment. They stress the pervasive nature of toxic leadership and the necessity for organizations to identify and eliminate such behaviors. Future research should concentrate on traits of toxic leaders and develop a scale for toxicity. Indradevi's (2016) exploration into the phenomenon of toxic leadership underscores its detrimental impact on both individuals and organizational sustainability. The study calls for future investigations to unravel the intricate relationships between employee attitudes, perceptions, and personality interactions, contributing to a deeper comprehension of the toxic leadership dynamic. Dobbs and Do (2018) investigated the relationship of toxic leadership with organizational cynicism. The findings stress the importance of considering toxic leadership in military contexts and suggest implications for leader development. Finally, MacLennan's (2017) attempt to quantify the cost of losing employees due to toxic leadership emphasizes the importance of recognizing and addressing toxic behaviors. Future research is encouraged to consider diverse industries and sources for a comprehensive understanding of replacement costs.

Some researchers focused their attention on the study of followers and their role in toxic leadership. Lipman-Blumen's (2005) exploration through examples from politics unveils the intricate nature of toxic leadership and its impact on followers. The study suggests that accepting the uncertainty of leadership may be key to overcoming toxic leadership. Future research challenges involve understanding followers' acceptance of reality as a mechanism to counteract toxic leadership. Mergen and Ozbilgin's (2020) narrative review, drawing on Bourdieu's concept of *illusio*, positions followers as

active contributors to the toxic leadership phenomenon. The study suggests practical interventions to prevent susceptibility to toxic leadership, emphasizing systemic issues. Milosevic et al.'s (2019) theoretical model details the intent and outcomes of toxic leadership, prompting questions about the motives of dark leaders, findings illustrate that followers of toxic leaders may exhibit considerable agency in not just refusing to follow toxic leaders but also in actively working to minimize their harmful impact. On the other side, Bhandarker and Rai's (2019) exploration into the psychological distress and coping strategies of subordinates dealing with toxic leaders uncovers distinct patterns of distress intensity and corresponding coping responses. The research advocates for further exploration into the impact of leaders on subordinates' psychological states and their coping mechanisms.

Yavaş (2016), choosing a different direction of research, investigates toxic leadership, testing Çelebi et al.'s (2015) scale in the automotive and hospitality sectors. Confirmatory analysis misaligns with the model, leading to exploratory analysis, revealing five factors: Sector-specific differences emerge, with hospitality perceiving higher negativity and manufacturing more instability. Yavaş emphasizes adapting models to diverse sectors for nuanced insights into toxic leadership.

Green's (2014) study on toxic leadership in educational organizations identifies patterns and challenges associated with effective leader selection. The research underscores the paradoxical overlap between toxic and effective leadership qualities, emphasizing the need for nuanced evaluation. Future inquiries should navigate the complexities of leadership qualities.

CHAPTER 2. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF LEADERSHIP: METHODS AND DATA

2.1 Choosing Toxic Leadership Scales

Toxic leadership, a multifaceted concept, is characterized by leaders' behaviors that detrimentally affect both individuals and organizations. Despite the lack of a universally agreed-upon definition, it is increasingly recognized as leadership that inflicts harm upon an organization. Behaviors exhibited by toxic leaders encompass undermining, demeaning, seducing, marginalizing, intimidating, demoralizing, and disempowering their followers. They exploit power dynamics, engaging in workplace bullying, fraud, deception, and manipulation to maintain unquestioned authority. Distorting facts, competing with potential challengers, identifying scapegoats, and presenting unattainable visions are strategies employed by toxic leaders to control and foster dependency. These leaders may be characterized as micromanagers, pretenders, or egomaniacs, each embodying negative traits. Pelletier identified eight dimensions of leader toxicity, including breaking down self-esteem and fostering a divisive culture. Toxic leaders can range from "super-toxics," who harbor mistrust for everyone, to "sub-toxics," who are just beginning to exhibit negative behaviors.

The consequences of toxic leadership can be devastating for organizations. Researchers have identified a "toxic triangle," comprising toxic leaders, susceptible followers, and conducive environments, as responsible for negative organizational outcomes (Padilla et al., 2007). Toxic leaders exhibit negative charisma, personalized power, narcissism, and negative ideologies, while susceptible followers conform or collude due to unmet needs. Conducive environments lack ethical cultures and checks and balances, enabling toxic leaders to succeed in pursuing their personal agendas. Understanding the interplay of leaders, followers, and environments is crucial for addressing toxic leadership and its impact on individuals and organizations.

Several scholars, including Schmidt (2008), Pelletier (2010), and Çelebi et al. (2015), have contributed to the understanding of toxic leadership. Their empirical study methods have helped illuminate this detrimental phenomenon.

1. Schmidt's Concept of Toxic Leadership: Schmidt defines toxic leadership as behaviors having a detrimental impact on both individuals and organizations (Schmidt, 2008). His comprehensive study, conducted with a diverse professional participant base, identified five types of toxic leaders: (a) self-promotion; (b) abusive supervision; (c) unpredictability; (d) narcissism, and (e) authoritarian leadership. Utilizing the Schmidt Toxic Leadership Scale©, Schmidt outlined specific behaviors nested within each type, employing a questionnaire consisting of 30 questions, six for each factor.

2. Kathie L. Pelletier's Research: Pelletier's research (Pelletier, 2010) focuses on the impact of negative leadership behaviors on employee well-being and job satisfaction. Her work establishes a connection between toxic leadership and employee stress, burnout, and turnover. Emphasizing the emotional toll on employees, Pelletier's 5-factor model includes (1) abusiveness, (2) promoting inequity,

(3) indecisive, (4) divisiveness, (5) lack of integrity. Her questionnaire consists of 21 questions, ranging from 2 to 9 per factor.

3. Çelebi's Method for Empirical Study: Çelebi's research is dedicated to developing empirical methods for measuring and studying toxic leadership. Empirical studies on toxic leadership commonly involve surveys and assessments designed to collect data on leadership behaviors and their impact on employees. Çelebi's methods often integrate scales and questionnaires to assess the presence, frequency, and consequences of toxic leadership behaviors. This method examines five factors, including (1) egocentrism, (2) negative mood, (3) unappreciation, (4) instability and uncertainty, (5) autocratic management behavior. The questionnaire comprises 43 questions, ranging from 6 to 16 per factor (Çelebi et al., 2015).

While the Schmidt scale stands out as the most well-known and tested, focusing primarily on leader qualities, Pelletier's scale delves deeper into behavior, albeit with lesser testing. Peter's scale is widely used among researchers but has limited validation across various fields, primarily finding application in medical industry research. Considering these aspects, choosing the Schmidt scale for our research is appropriate, supplemented by additional factors to gain a comprehensive understanding of managerial behavior patterns.

2.2 Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), crafted by Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass, stands as a comprehensive psychological inventory featuring 36 items exploring leadership styles and 9 items delving into leadership outcomes (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Its primary aim is to evaluate a broad spectrum of leadership styles, categorized into three primary dimensions: transformational leadership (5 scales), transactional leadership (2 scales), and passive/avoidant behavior (2 scales). Furthermore, three scales measure leadership outcomes.

Transactional Leadership, in its constructive form, involves collaboration with individuals or groups, contract establishment for specific work objectives, individual capability discovery, and specification of compensation for task completion. In its corrective form, it actively sets standards, while its passive form involves reacting to mistakes. Both active and passive forms center on identifying errors. Contingent Reward (CR) and Management-by-Exception: Active (MBEA) are commonly labeled as Transactional Leadership, while Management-by-Exception: Passive (MBEP) and Laissez-Faire are identified as Passive/Avoidant Leadership.

Transformational Leadership, as described by individuals worldwide, transcends the transactional paradigm. Respondents attribute effectiveness to leaders who exhibit traits such as inspiration, intellectual stimulation, vision, development orientation, and a determination to maximize performance. This transformational paradigm, as articulated by James McGregor Burns (1978), encompasses a continuum from the least potent—Laissez-Faire leadership—to the most potent—

Idealized (charismatic) leadership. The MLQ, by incorporating this broader continuum, extends its assessment of leadership styles to encompass what is often deemed "exemplary" leadership.

The MLQ's effectiveness is underscored by meta-analyses confirming the positive impact of transformational leadership on outcomes, surpassing transactional and passive leadership styles. These findings hold true across organizational levels, reinforcing the MLQ's significance in leadership assessment and development. In this research, the MLQ questionnaire emerged as the instrument of choice to bridge the divergence between leadership patterns and qualities, rectifying the limitations evident in the Smidt scale. The deliberate utilization of the MLQ questionnaire facilitates a more comprehensive evaluation of the leadership style exhibited by potentially toxic managers. Specifically, it allows for a nuanced exploration of the qualities inherent in such leaders, drawing from both the Transactional and Transformational approaches.

It is essential to emphasize that this study exclusively incorporated questions linked to the two primary categories of leadership. For Transactional leadership, the focus was directed towards Contingent Reward and Management by Exception (Active). In parallel, Transformational leadership encompassed Idealized Attributes, Idealized Behaviors, Individual Consideration, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Contingent Reward, and Management by Exception (Active). Notably, the questionnaire intentionally omitted inquiries related to the Outcomes of Leadership group of traits and Passive Avoidant characteristics.

This methodological approach is designed to pinpoint specific leadership qualities associated with potentially toxic managers. By concentrating on the selected dimensions within Transactional and Transformational frameworks, the study seeks to unravel the distinctive leadership traits exhibited by managers in potentially toxic scenarios. This focused analysis aims to contribute valuable insights into the nuanced aspects of leadership styles, enhancing our understanding of managerial behaviors within organizational contexts.

2.3 Data collection and validation

The research was conducted through the distribution of an electronic questionnaire to professionals across diverse fields. Entitled "Investigation of the Nature of Leadership," the survey prompted participants to reflect upon the leadership style of their current or past managers. Respondents were then asked to evaluate the degree to which the statements in the questions aligned with the described characteristics of these individuals, utilizing a Likert scale for assessment.

Comprising a total of 59 questions, the questionnaire incorporated 4 introductory inquiries designed to elicit demographic information and the professional experience of the respondents. The remaining 55 questions constituted the core of the survey, with 28 emanating from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and 27 from the Schmidt questionnaire. Both instruments were meticulously translated into Ukrainian.

It is noteworthy that the MLQ questions were presented first in the questionnaire, maintaining the original sequencing in both instruments. This methodological consistency ensures the uniformity of the survey administration, allowing for a systematic exploration of leadership characteristics as gauged by the MLQ and Schmidt questionnaires.

A total of 38 responses to the questionnaire were received. However, during the data cleaning process, one response was identified as having less than 20% completion, while the overall average completion rate stood at 97%. Notably, 32 respondents completed 100% of the questionnaire, while the remaining respondents completed over 95%. Two responses exhibited a high correlation with each other, along with similar demographic characteristics, indicating a potential duplication issue. Consequently, these two responses were excluded from the subsequent analysis.

CHAPTER 3. KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic and work experience of respondents

In terms of occupational distribution, approximately one-third of the respondents were employed in the Information Technologies sector, with 19% each in Finance and Education. Additionally, around 14% worked in Retail and Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG), while the remainder belonged to a diverse array of industries ranging from Local Government to Creative Industries. A graphical representation of the respondents' distribution by industry is presented in Figure 3.

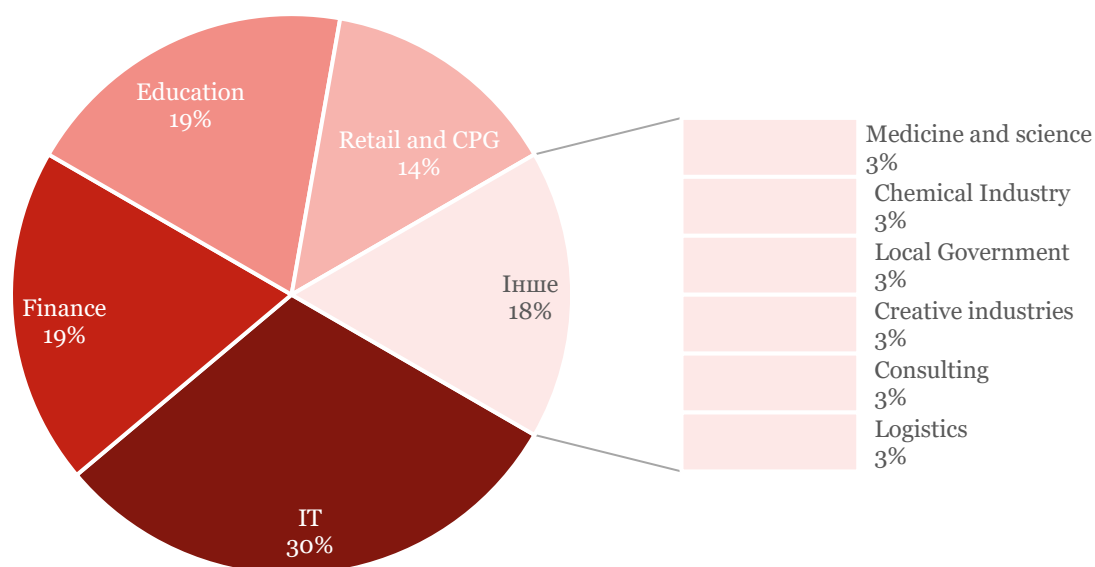


Figure 3. Distribution of respondents by industry

Source: developed by author

The study encompasses a broad age range, with professionals ranging from 24 to 55 years old. The median age of the respondents is 39, and further details are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Respondents' age and temporal characteristics of their work experience

	<i>Age</i>	<i>How many years in this industry?</i>	<i>How many years have you been working with the manager you are evaluating?</i>
Average	38,0	11,6	3,8
Minimum	24,0	2,0	>1
Quartile 1	33,3	5,0	2,0
Quartile 2 (Median)	39,0	10,5	3,0
Quartile 3	43,0	16,5	5,0
Maximum	55,0	32,0	10,0

Source: elaborated by author

On average, respondents reported more than ten years of experience in their declared industry and over three years of experience working with the manager they assessed. The upper quartile for the duration of working with a manager is five years, and the longest reported duration of working under the leadership of the same person is ten years.

3.2 Toxic Leadership and Leadership Styles

Analyzing the level of toxicity according to the Schmidt scale, it can be inferred that the majority of managers with whom the respondents work do not exhibit a high level of toxicity, as depicted in Figure 4.

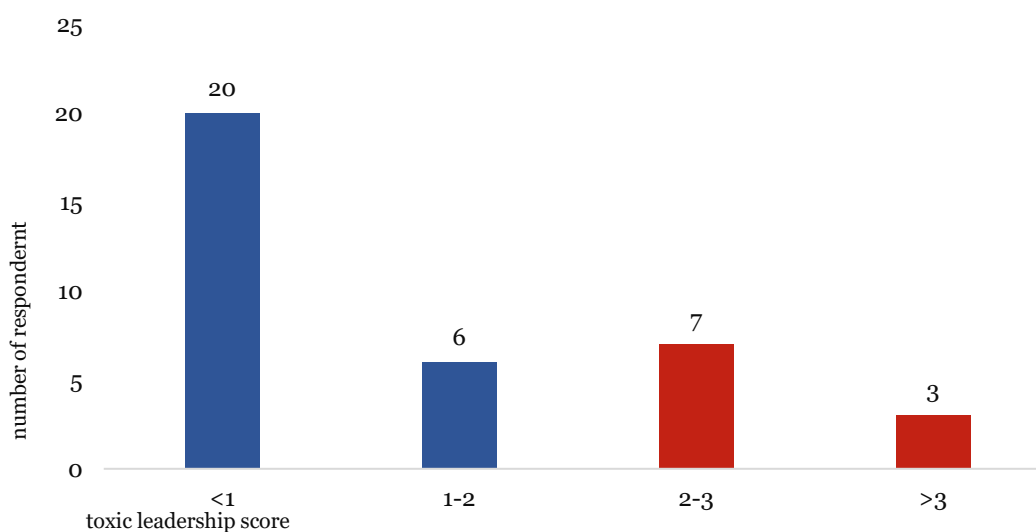


Figure 4. The number of respondents and the level of toxicity of their leaders where blue is number of respondents working with non-toxic leader and red color is number of respondents experiencing with toxic manager

Source: elaborated by author

72% of respondents encountered a rather low or below-average level of manager toxicity, 20% reported an above-average level, and only three respondents reported working with a genuinely toxic boss. Descriptive statistics for Toxic Leadership and its factors are provided in Table 2.

Table 2

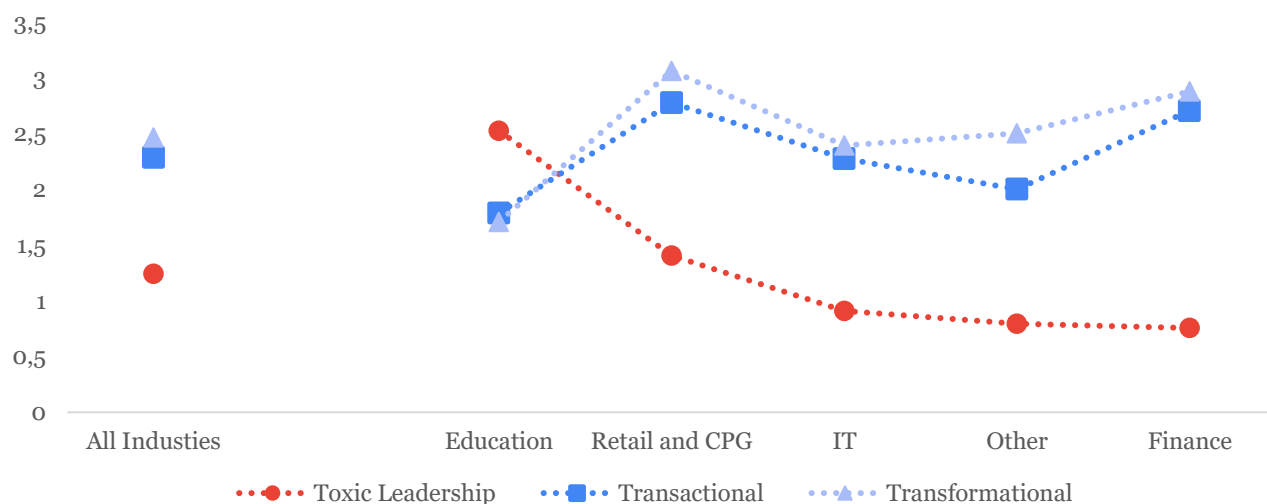
Descriptive statistics for Toxic Leadership and its factors

	Toxic Leadership	<i>Abusive supervision</i>	<i>Authoritarian leader</i>	<i>Narcissism</i>	<i>Self-promotion</i>	<i>Unpredictability</i>
Mean	1,24	1,09	1,28	1,52	1,03	1,22
Standard Error	0,18	0,19	0,16	0,21	0,19	0,20
Standard Error, %	15	17	13	14	18	16
Median	0,84	0,67	1,00	1,50	0,60	0,79
Mode	0,04	0,00	1,00	0,00	0,00	0,14
Range	3,57	3,67	3,20	4,00	3,60	4,00
Minimum	0,04	0,00	0,20	0,00	0,00	0,00
Maximum	3,61	3,67	3,40	4,00	3,60	4,00

Source: elaborated by author

In general, it can be observed that most factors exhibit similar values. The only trait that stands out slightly is Narcissism, with both the mean and the mode showing the highest values and one of the lowest Standard Errors as a percent of the Mean.

However, the situation varies significantly by industry, which is represented in Figure 5. Respondents from the education sector encounter toxic managers more frequently than in any other industry analyzed. The toxic score in this sector exceeds the industry average by two times. An interesting observation is that employees in this industry work with the same manager for the longest duration (6,4 years vs 3,8 years in average). Retail & CPG comes in second place, but in this industry, similar to others, the level of toxicity is below average. Representatives of the finance sector are the least likely to encounter toxic managers. So far, we may offer at least two explanations for this phenomenon (high toxicity in education): professional deformation and the ‘managerial tenure’. Both of these factors need to be investigated further.

**Figure 4. Toxic Leadership and Leadership Styles by Industries**

Source: elaborated by author

Considering leadership styles across industries, it is noteworthy to highlight the limited proficiency in both Transactional and Transformational leadership types among managers in the field of education. Simultaneously, these approaches are most prominently manifested in the retail & CPG, and finance sectors, with the information technology sector falling somewhere in between.

3.3 Results of the correlation analysis

An intriguing observation is the absence of a distinctly prevailing gap between Transactional and Transformational leadership in any of the industries. However, a noticeable gap is evident in the level of executive toxicity. Toxic leaders seem to lack both Transactional and Transformational approaches, whereas effective, or at least non-toxic, leaders incorporate elements of both Transactional and Transformational leadership. This hypothesis finds support in the correlation analysis presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Correlation Matrix for Toxic, Transformational and Transactional Leadership

	<i>Toxic Leadership (Tx)</i>	<i>Trans- formational (Tf)</i>	<i>Trans- actional (Ta)</i>
Toxic Leadership	1,00		
Transformational	-0,57	1,00	
Transactional	-0,15	0,69	1,00

Source: elaborated by author.

The matrix reveals a negative relationship between Transformational and Toxic leadership, along with a very weak negative correlation between Transactional and Toxic leadership, while Transformational and Transactional leadership exhibit a positive correlation.

Let's consider in more detail the relationships between the factors that make up these leadership styles. Examining presented in Table 4 correlation matrix, it becomes apparent that factors within the same group exhibit correlations, except one – Management by Exception. This style lacks interrelationships between «its» factors but demonstrates some correlation with factors of Toxic leadership, specifically Abusive Supervision and, to some extent, Unpredictability. This observation appears paradoxical, as Management by Exception involves granting autonomy to employees within defined policies, procedures, and operational standards, it seems that this practice has its dark side. Currently, it is challenging to pinpoint the exact factors causing negativity in this approach; potentially, it revolves around a focus on deviations and mistakes, which may create discomfort among employees. Investigating the weaknesses of Management by Exception could serve as a promising avenue for future research.

Table 4

Correlation matrix for Toxic, Transformational and Transactional Leadership factors

	<i>(Tx) Abusive supervision</i>	<i>(Tx) Authoritarian</i>	<i>(Tx) Narcissism</i>	<i>(Tx) Self-promotion</i>	<i>(Tx) Unpredictability</i>	<i>(Tf) Idealized Attributes</i>	<i>(Tf) Idealized Behaviors</i>	<i>(Tf) Individual Consideration</i>	<i>(Tf) Inspirational Motivation</i>	<i>(Tf) Intellectual Stimulation</i>	<i>(Ta) Mgmt by Exception</i>	<i>(Ta) Contingent Reward</i>
<i>(Tx) Abusive supervision</i>	1,00											
<i>(Tx) Authoritarian leader</i>	0,86	1,00										
<i>(Tx) Narcissism</i>	0,29	0,57	1,00									
<i>(Tx) Self-promotion</i>	0,71	0,78	0,74	1,00								
<i>(Tx) Unpredictability</i>	0,44	0,24	0,48	0,66	1,00							
<i>(Tf) Idealized Attributes</i>	-0,66	-0,79	-0,31	-0,64	0,06	1,00						
<i>(Tf) Idealized Behaviors</i>	-0,57	-0,75	-0,30	-0,46	0,20	0,86	1,00					
<i>(Tf) Individual Consideration</i>	-0,57	-0,75	-0,46	-0,70	0,00	0,88	0,77	1,00				
<i>(Tf) Inspirational Motivation</i>	-0,63	-0,70	-0,28	-0,57	-0,07	0,82	0,77	0,78	1,00			
<i>(Tf) Intellectual Stimulation</i>	-0,62	-0,79	-0,48	-0,70	-0,04	0,89	0,94	0,90	0,81	1,00		
<i>(Ta) Mgmt by Exception (Active)</i>	0,64	0,26	-0,15	0,33	0,50	-0,22	0,07	-0,17	-0,34	-0,02	1,00	
<i>(Ta) Contingent Reward</i>	-0,56	-0,66	-0,31	-0,70	-0,08	0,86	0,66	0,95	0,79	0,83	-0,29	1,00

Source: elaborated by author

Furthermore, a notable aspect in the correlation analysis is the robust negative correlation between Authoritarian leader and all facets of transformational leadership. Strikingly, Narcissism, identified as the most prominent toxicity factor among the surveyed leaders, does not exhibit a robust connection with any of the transformational leadership factors. In synthesis, these findings suggest a nuanced preference among employees. On one hand, there is a reluctance towards leaders who make solitary decisions and exert excessive control; however, on the other hand, a leader entirely detached from operational matters is also undesirable.

3.4 Discussion

In summary, the principal findings of this research are as follows:

1. The level of manager toxicity exhibits significant variation across industries, while no distinct demarcation exists between Transactional and Transformational leadership within the same industry.

2. On average, employees in the studied industries have encountered minimal exposure to toxic leaders, with the exception being the field of education. The prolonged duration of managerial relationships in this industry, twice that of others, underscores the need for further research into the dynamics of followership, building upon insights presented by Mergen and Ozbilgin (2020), Milosevic et al. (2019), and Bhandarker and Rai (2019). A more in-depth investigation is necessary to ascertain the underlying causes of this phenomenon.

3. Transactional and Transformational leadership styles demonstrate a direct positive correlation with each other and a negative correlation with toxic leadership. Generally, factors within each leadership approach exhibit intercorrelations, with the notable exception of Management by exception. This style deviates from the main leadership styles and exhibits partial alignment with characteristics associated with toxic leadership.

The last finding suggests a growing inclination towards Servant leadership, indicating an increased preference among professionals for leaders who provide support and coaching. The workforce appears to reject intrusive and authoritarian leadership, underscoring the importance of leaders not only possessing decision-making capabilities but also fostering open discussions, seeking advice, and providing constructive feedback before facing potential negative consequences or assuming responsibility for possible mistakes. This emerging trend highlights a heightened demand for leadership styles that prioritize collaboration, guidance, and shared decision-making.

CONCLUSIONS

The comprehensive exploration undertaken in this research encompasses a three-chapter investigation into toxic leadership, systematically covering literature review, empirical research methods, and insightful findings. In Chapter 1, a meticulous review of the literature through bibliometric and content analyses delineates the evolving landscape of toxic leadership research as well as main direction like outcomes of toxic leadership, followers of toxic leaders and toxic leadership nature. Chapter 2 transitions from theory to practice, focusing on empirical research methodologies. The selection of scales, including the Schmidt scale and Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, sets the foundation for an in-depth examination of toxic leadership. The methodology for data collection, involving an electronic questionnaire, ensures a comprehensive exploration across diverse fields.

Finally, Chapter 3 presents the outcomes of the investigation into toxic leadership and leadership styles. Analyzing toxic leadership through the Schmidt scale revealed that a significant majority of managers did not exhibit a high level of toxicity, with only a small percentage experiencing genuinely toxic leadership. The study uncovered an intriguing relationship between the duration of managerial relationships and the prevalence of toxic leadership, notably higher in the education sector. Further exploration is warranted to unravel the underlying causes of this phenomenon, delving into the intricate dynamics of followership within this industry. Furthermore, the examination of leadership styles across industries indicated variations in both Transactional and Transformational leadership types. Education stood out with limited proficiency in both types, while Retail & CPG and Finance demonstrated more prominent manifestations of these approaches.

The correlation analysis revealed compelling relationships between toxic, transactional, and transformational leadership, which was the main question of the research. Notably, toxic leaders were found to lack both transactional and transformational approaches, while effective leaders demonstrated elements of both. The correlation analysis reveals an intriguing aspect: Management by Exception, known for granting autonomy, lacks correlations among its factors but shows associations with Toxic leadership traits, notably Abusive Supervision and, to some extent, Unpredictability. This paradox suggests a potential dark side to this leadership style, possibly related to a focus on deviations and mistakes. Investigating the weaknesses of Management by Exception presents a promising avenue for future research, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of leadership dynamics and their unintended consequences. The negative correlation between authoritarian traits and transformational leadership suggests a clear preference among employees for leaders who balance decision-making capabilities with collaborative, open, and supportive practices.

In conclusion, this research contributes valuable insights into the evolving landscape of leadership preferences, shedding light on the need for leaders to adopt collaborative and supportive approaches. The study's findings underscore the significance of understanding toxic leadership dynamics, emphasizing the importance of leaders who prioritize open communication, guidance, and shared decision-making. As organizations navigate an ever-changing landscape, these insights can

inform leadership development initiatives and contribute to fostering healthier workplace environments. The emerging trend toward servant leadership signals a paradigm shift in leadership expectations, reflecting a growing demand for leaders who prioritize collaboration, mentorship, and shared responsibility.

**APPENDIX A. THE CLUSTERS AND THE CONCEPTS ACCORDING TO THE RESULTS
OF BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS**

Cluster 1. Destructive Behavior and Job Satisfaction	burnout commitment couch dark side destructive behavior destructive leader behavior diversity emotional exhaustion job satisfaction job stress mediating effect mediating role moderating role organizational citizenship organizational cynicism reliability turnover intention validity vengeful behavior workplace bullying
Cluster 2. Ethical Leadership	employee performance ethical leadership giftedness innovation interest kind readiness responsibility servant leadership sustainability toxic giftedness work motivation
Cluster 3. Empathy and Responses	empathy knowledge hiding behavior organizational performance practitioner project success response SEM silence society success
Cluster 4. Masculinity Contest	abusive leadership gender importance man masculinity contest masculinity contest culture organizational commitment organizational culture organizational trust role model

Cluster 5. Navigating Crises	abusive supervision conservation COVID crisis crisis communication narcissism proactive work behavior resilience safety performance
Cluster 6. Precarious Labor	attention cost labour sphere power precarious labour relationships revanchist leadership social pollution threat
Cluster 7. Counterproductive workplace	bullying conflict corporate psychopath counterproductive workplace marketing psychopathy
Cluster 8. Ambiguity	ambiguity complexity job demand job performance uncertainty work engagement
Cluster 9. Abuse	abuse death failure speech Trump violence
Cluster 10. Productivity	adverse event productivity professional value quality toxic behaviour toxic leadership behavior
Cluster 11. Authoritarian Leadership	authoritarian leadership intention organizational climate self promotion toxic leadership behaviour
Cluster 12. Financial Impact	economy IMX pay satisfaction

APPENDIX B. CONTENT ANALYSIS REGARDING THE TOXIC LEADERSHIP

#	Source	Number of citations	Year of publication	Research focus	Challenges for the future research
1	Green (2014)	113	2014	Explored toxic leadership in educational organizations, identifying prevalence, characteristics, and early indicators using mixed methods.	Researchers highlight the overlap between the qualities of toxic and effective leaders, emphasizing the need for nuanced understanding.
2	Indradevi (2016)	42	2016	Examined the phenomenon of toxic leadership, its attributes, and negative consequences, emphasizing the need to mitigate associated risks.	Future research should focus on understanding the interactions between employee attitudes, perceptions, and personality in the context of toxic leadership.
3	Lipman-Blumen (2005)	376	2005	Studied toxic leadership in politics, exploring followers' experiences and the conditions under which toxic leadership arises.	Suggests that overcoming toxic leadership may involve followers' acceptance of reality and a realistic view of leadership.
4	Milosevic et al. (2019)	129	2020	Proposed a theoretical model detailing the intent and outcomes of toxic leadership relative to other dark leadership styles.	Calls for investigations into the varying motives of dark leaders and the reasons for differences in their intent to harm.
5	Bhandarker and Rai (2019)	112	2019	Investigated the relationship between psychological distress and coping strategies employed by subordinates dealing with toxic leaders.	Future studies should explore the impact of current leaders on subordinates' psychological states and the hierarchical status of leaders and subordinates in determining distress and coping strategies.
6	Mehta and Maheshwari (2013)	195	2013	Explored followers' perceptions of harmful leadership behaviors and their impact on psychological and organizational well-being.	Advocates for industry-wide analysis, emphasizing the need for larger data sets from top management and employees across diverse organizations.

7	Tavanti (2011)	107	2011	Analytically reviewed studies on toxic leadership, providing interpersonal and organizational suggestions for addressing dysfunctional dynamics in top leaders.	
8	Mergen and Ozbilgin (2020)	43	2021	Utilized Bourdieu's concept of <i>illusio</i> to explore the dynamic system sustaining toxic leadership.	Calls for a theoretically grounded research program to systematically explore mechanisms and dynamics leading individuals to join and remain in toxic environments.
9	Yavaş (2016)	65	2016	Tested the compliance of a toxic leadership model in Turkey, exploring differences in validity across product and service sectors.	Calls for more research to determine the dimensions of toxic leadership, emphasizing the need for diverse sectoral practices in future studies.
10	Mehta and Maheshwari (2014)	106	2014	Examined the impact of toxic leadership on individual and organizational performance, tracing the origins and reasons behind toxic behaviors.	Urges exploration of traits of toxic leaders, development of toxicity scales, and detoxification strategies for organizations.
11	Hadadian and Zarei (2016)	123	2016	Correlation study determining the relationship between toxic leadership and job stress.	Future studies should explore the interactions between employee attitudes, perceptions, and personality in relation to toxic leadership.
12	Akca (2017)	72	2017	The study aimed to assess the impact of toxic leadership perception on employees' intention to leave.	Subsequent research should delve into the relationships between various dimensions of toxic leadership and job outcomes.
13	Dobbs and Do (2018)	113	2019	Applied a dark leadership framework to examine the link between perceived toxic leadership and organizational cynicism in a military educational setting.	Emphasizes the need for further investigation into the links between organizational cynicism, toxic leadership, and other workplace factors.
14	Bakkal et al. (2019)	57	2019	Investigated the relationship between psychological distress and coping strategies employed by subordinates dealing with toxic leaders.	Future studies should explore the impact of current leaders on subordinates' psychological states and the hierarchical status of leaders and subordinates in determining distress and coping strategies.
15	MacLennan (2017)	17	2017	Attempted to quantify the cost of losing an employee due to toxic leadership.	Acknowledges limitations in cost estimates and calls for industry-wide investigations.

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