

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-54919

Title: The Hidden Mechanisms of Toxic Leadership: A Multilevel Analysis of How Leader Dark Traits Create Fear, Silence, and Reduced Psychological Safety in Organizations

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality	✓			
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr. M.Devaki

Detailed Reviewer's Report

1. Overall Evaluation

The manuscript offers a comprehensive qualitative exploration of toxic leadership using a multilevel framework (individual–team–organizational). It effectively investigates how dark traits in leaders create fear, silence, and reduced psychological safety. The study is theoretically grounded, methodologically appropriate, and provides substantial insights for both researchers and practitioners. The writing is clear, the structure is consistent, and the findings are well connected to the research objectives. The study adds value by focusing on the underexplored Bangladeshi organizational context. Overall, the paper is of good quality, but requires minor revisions for publication.

2. Strengths of the Manuscript

A. Strong Conceptual Foundation

- Rich and up-to-date literature review with a balance of classical and contemporary references.
- Clear articulation of research gaps and justification for the study.

B. Robust Multilevel Framework

- Well-constructed conceptual model linking leader dark traits to outcomes across levels.
- Integrates psychological safety, silence, fear, and destructive leadership literature effectively.

C. High-Quality Qualitative Methodology

- Phenomenological design suits the aim of uncovering hidden mechanisms.
- Triangulation (interviews, observations, documents) enhances trustworthiness.

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- Strong use of coding, themes, participant quotes, and NVivo-supported analysis.

D. Detailed and Meaningful Findings

- Insightful presentation of fear, identity threat, burnout, silence, favoritism, trust erosion, and HR weakness.
- Clear alignment between findings and theory.

E. Practical and Theoretical Contributions

- Well-developed recommendations.
- The multilevel model is a notable academic contribution.

3. Areas Needing Improvement

A. Overly Lengthy Sections

Some sections especially in the Literature Review and Discussion—contain repeated ideas.

Recommendation: Remove overlapping explanations of fear, silence, burnout, and dark traits.

B. Methodology Needs More Precision

- Clarify how many documents were analyzed.
- Specify how themes were validated (peer review? inter-rater reliability?).
- Explain whether theoretical or inductive coding was used.

C. Sampling Explanation Needs Strengthening

- Provide a justification for sample size in phenomenology (saturation argument).
- Clarify distribution of respondents across sectors.

D. Figures/Tables Formatting

- Ensure uniform numbering and caption style.
- Some tables interrupt flow move them after paragraphs or into appendices.

E. Cultural Context Needs Deeper Integration

- The manuscript would benefit from linking findings more explicitly to Bangladesh's hierarchical culture, power distance, and organizational norms.

F. Minor Editing Required

- Correct spacing, long paragraphs, occasional grammatical errors.
- Ensure APA 7 consistency in references (some URLs and formatting are inconsistent).