

The dark side of leadership: A systematic review of creativity and innovation

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[Correction added on 28th March 2023, after first online publication: Abstract has been updated in this version.]

Abstract

It is believed that workplace creativity and innovation are fostered by positive leader behaviors and positive workplace relationships and hindered by the opposite. However, some challenge this view and argue that creativity and innovation can also be fostered when employees experience what is increasingly referred to as “the dark side of leadership”. Research in this area is sparse, contradictory, and overly confusing. We provide a comprehensive systematic review of 106 empirical studies on this topic. We review research on a broad range of constructs, including abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership, narcissistic leadership, and close monitoring. As might be expected, a larger number of the articles reviewed found a negative relationship, but there are important discrepancies and details. Our review reports the main effects, summarizes the results of the mediating and moderating variables, and highlights methodological shortcomings of the previous literature. On this basis, several recommendations are made to advance this field of research.

INTRODUCTION

Creativity and innovation are critical to the survival of many organizations, and leadership is thought to play a fundamental role in encouraging or hindering them (Amabile et al., 2004; George, 2007; Mumford et al., 2002). A substantial number of studies in recent decades have examined the relationship between leadership, creativity and innovation, and have generally found positive associations with concepts commonly referred to as constructive leadership, namely transformational, authentic and empowering leadership (for a review, see Hughes et al., 2018; Mainemelis et al., 2015). In contrast, little attention has been paid to empirical research on leadership concepts and approaches that have been grouped under the eclectic term ‘the dark side of leadership’ (Chatter-

jee & Hambrick, 2007; Conger, 1990; De Vries & Miller, 1985; Hogan & Hogan, 2001; Mackey et al., 2020; Peterson, 1997; Tepper, 2000). Perhaps because it was generally assumed that if positive social influences have been shown to enhance creativity, negative influences can only have negative effects. Thus, as early as 1993, in one of the earliest theoretical contributions to explaining creativity in complex social contexts, Woodman et al. (1993) argued that rigidity, punitive norms and autocratic leadership could be barriers to creativity. Consequently, several other scholars have also discouraged these behaviours, mostly on theoretical or anecdotal grounds, assuming that they would stifle creativity and innovation (Amabile, 1998; Edmondson, 2012; Gino, 2018: 78, 102–103; Hill et al., 2014: 83–84, 117; Mumford et al., 2002; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006: 115, 288; Shalley et al., 2004: 67–68).

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In parallel, there are alternative views and sometimes encouragement for the ‘dark side of leadership’ in academic research (Pfeffer, 2015, 2016). Kotter and Schlesinger (1989), for example, accentuate the practical benefits of coercive and manipulative tactics. Others suggest that coercive leadership should be utilized in certain situations (Goleman, 2017; Sims et al., 2009). Additionally, Schein (1999) mentions that ‘coercive persuasion’, colloquially known as ‘brainwashing’, is practically a fundamental part of organizational change. Maccoby (2000) emphasizes the strengths of narcissistic leaders, and some scholars even extol the tyranny of managers who achieve remarkable results (e.g., Ma et al., 2004). Bass (1997) appears to recognize the potential of autocratic behaviours and believes that transformational leadership is expressed in both participative and autocratic forms. Lastly, many scholars argue that authoritarian or directive forms of leadership are effective and may even be preferable, depending on the context and circumstances (Antonakis et al., 2003; De Hoogh et al., 2015; Hofstede et al., 2005: 61, 73; Meyer, 2014: 115–143; Schein, 2004: 192–193; Schein, 2009: 64; Yukl, 1999) and used as an alternative to the mainstream model of creative leadership (Coget et al., 2014).

Partly because of such views, the notion that ‘darker forms of leadership’ can also foster creativity seems to have gained traction (Acar et al., 2019; Anderson et al., 2014; Baucus et al., 2008; Coget et al., 2014; Dinh et al., 2014; Holten & Bøllingtoft, 2015; Mackey et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2019). This emphasizes the need to further investigate the mediating and moderating factors that impact this relationship. Consistent with traditional assumptions and expectations, several studies attribute the ‘dark side of leadership’ to a variety of negative outcomes for employees and organizations (Fischer et al., 2021; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Tepper et al., 2017), including creativity and innovation (e.g., Elenkov & Manev, 2005; Kwan et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2014). Yet, surprisingly, numerous studies show either no effects or even positive outcomes associated with these ‘darker’ characteristics and behaviours (Kashmiri et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2013; Schuh et al., 2013).

The current state of research in this field is characterized by a lack of integration, particularly in terms of its conceptualization and assessment of micro-behavioural mechanisms and contextual contingencies (Hennessey & Amabile, 2010; Hershcovis, 2011; Hershcovis & Reich, 2013; Mackey et al., 2020; Meuser et al., 2016; Naseer et al., 2016; Tepper & Henle, 2011). This has resulted in the literature on ‘dark leadership’ and creativity and innovation being riddled with ambiguities and difficult to access for researchers wishing to explore the topic further. While there are numerous reviews that illuminate and systematize the accumulated knowledge on the relationship between leadership, creativity and innovation (e.g., Ander-

son et al., 2014; Cortes & Herrmann, 2021; Hughes et al., 2018; Mainemelis et al., 2015; Shalley & Gilson, 2004; Zhou & Hoever, 2014), to our knowledge none of these works have explicitly addressed the ‘dark side of leadership’.

Our aim, therefore, is to complement the efforts of previous reviews of creativity and innovation in the realm of leadership studies by providing a fine-grained analysis of the relationship between creativity and innovation and the ‘dark side of leadership’. In doing so, we pursue the following objectives: (1) summarize the extant findings; (2) highlight mediating and moderating mechanisms; (3) bring order to the many different conceptualizations and empirical specifications of the relationship; (4) organize the previous literature into forms of ‘dark leadership’, outcomes, mediators and moderators by providing taxonomies and theoretical models; and (5) reflect on the theoretical and methodological limitations of previous research, identifying opportunities for future studies in this area. The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. In the first section, we provide a synthetic overview of ‘the dark side of leadership’, creativity and innovation. In the second section, we outline the method of our review. In the third section, we present the results by summarizing the ‘dark leadership’ variables and their effects on creativity and innovation, and provide an assessment of the moderating and mediating variables that influence these effects. The fourth section discusses managerial implications and makes recommendations for further development of the field. Finally, the fifth section concludes the paper.

OVERVIEW OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

The dark side of leadership

Leadership is a multifaceted and often ambiguous construct and is predominantly seen as a goal-influencing, contextually rooted process (Antonakis & Day, 2018: 5; Pfeffer, 1977; Yukl, 2013: 23). Some renowned leadership scholars are keen to reserve leadership as a concept for ‘forces of good’ and assume certain moral qualities in their definitions of leadership (Bennis, 2009: 33–35; Burns, 2004: 207; Burns & Sorenson, 2006). Others reject these narratives and assert that leadership is value-free (Kellerman, 2004: 12). Similarly, there is little consensus on how ‘dark leadership’ should be defined (Schyns & Hansbrough, 2010). In the search for an all-encompassing concept, many definitions have emerged, often resulting in glaring contradictions and inadequacies. For example, Schilling (2009) defines ‘negative leadership’ as a set of disliked and denounced behaviours, and Kelloway et al.’s (2005) definition of ‘poor leadership’ suggests that it includes passive and abusive forms of leadership.

The literature on the ‘dark side of leadership’ offers diverse definitions, with scholars divided into three main groups. The first group focuses on negative outcomes as the basis of their definition (Einarsen et al., 2007; Lipman-Blumen, 2006: 44; Padilla et al., 2007; Thoroughgood et al., 2018). The second group emphasizes the leadership process, without tying it to outcomes (Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Krasikova et al., 2013). The third group, on the other hand, considers both process and outcomes in their definition, with Kellerman (2004: 32) asserting that ‘bad leadership’ arises from both the ends and the means, while Ciulla (2012) defines ‘ethical leadership’ as being concerned with the morality of the cause, the ends and the means.

In addition to varying definitions, describing the research field and its boundaries is complicated by construct proliferation and construct redundancies (Banks et al., 2018; Derue et al., 2011; Hershcovis, 2011; Hershcovis & Reich, 2013; Shaffer et al., 2016; Tepper & Henle, 2011). For example, the significant positive relationship of abusive supervision with a variety of constructs in the field, including authoritarian leadership, aversive leadership, self-serving leadership, unethical leadership, leader psychopathy and leader Machiavellianism, is alarming and may indicate overlap and redundancy (Aryee et al., 2007; Camps et al., 2012; Mackey et al., 2017; Mathieu & Babiak, 2016; Kiazad et al. (2010); Zhang & Bednall, 2016). However, this does not mean that all constructs are similar or that there are no important nuances (Tepper & Henle, 2011). For example, laissez-faire and authoritarian leadership are distinctly different, while aversive leadership and abusive supervision appear to be much more similar.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to delve into the multitude of theoretical and methodological intricacies in the field, particularly as our review is confined to studies examining creativity and innovation. In exploring the concept of ‘dark leadership’, we sought to avoid the limitations imposed by provisional definitions that could have reduced the breadth of our search and potentially resulted in the exclusion of relevant studies. As a result, no explicit definition of ‘dark leadership’ is presented in this paper. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this review, a crucial distinction was made regarding ‘dark leadership’ constructs, namely that we focus on examining traits and behaviours rather than adopting the conceptualization of ‘dark leadership’ based on outcomes (Antonakis et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2016).

Creativity and innovation

The definition of creativity and innovation varies in the literature, with different opinions from researchers inside and outside of organizational behaviour (Amabile, 1988;

Batey & Furnham, 2006; Carson et al., 2005; Ivicevic & Mayer, 2009; Mumford & Gustafson, 1988; Runco, 2014; Scott & Bruce, 1994; Zhou & Shalley, 2011). Hughes et al. (2018: 551) provide definitions for both: ‘Workplace creativity concerns the cognitive and behavioural processes applied when attempting to generate novel ideas. Workplace innovation concerns the processes applied when attempting to implement new ideas. Specifically, innovation involves some combination of problem/opportunity identification, the introduction, adoption or modification of new ideas germane to organizational needs, the promotion of these ideas, and the practical implementation of these ideas.’ Creativity is the foundation and driver of innovation (Janssen et al., 2004; Zhou & Hoever, 2014). Creativity and innovation are value-free, but are often studied as positive outcomes for employees and organizations, while their potentially detrimental effects on individuals, teams and organizations are largely neglected (Amabile & Pratt, 2016; Anderson et al., 2014; Janssen et al., 2004; Mumford, 2003). Creativity does not necessarily lead to innovation outcomes (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2013), but innovation requires at least some level of creativity, and it is useful to consider both concepts in our analysis.

METHOD

Systematic reviews follow rigorous procedures to identify and analyse relevant data (Snyder, 2019). In our case, the conceptual fragmentation of the topic required extensive efforts to achieve saturation of the number of search terms (Oliveira & Lumineau, 2019). This was done through a snowball approach that began by examining previous reviews and foundational work (Ashforth, 1994; Conger, 1990; McCord et al., 2018; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Tepper, 2000). Consistent with previous research, we adopted a wider scope to capture studies focused on various downward-directed mistreatment to include, for example, supervisor incivility and ostracism (Mackey et al., 2020). This process led to the identification of a final set of 69 search terms (see Table 1), which were then combined with creativity or innovation (e.g., ‘abusive supervision’ and creativity or innovation).

As shown in Figure 1, we followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis) protocol (Shamseer et al., 2015). Scopus was used as the search platform, as it is one of the most comprehensive databases covering a comparatively wider range of relevant literature and has been used extensively in previous studies (Boon et al., 2019; Gusenbauer & Hadadaway, 2020). We began by searching for titles, keywords and abstracts of English-language articles published from

TABLE 1 Search terms used in Scopus

Search term		
“Abusive supervision”	“Exploitative leadership”	“Ostracism”
“Authoritarian leadership”	“Hubristic leadership”	“Overconfident leadership”
“Autocratic leadership”	“Incivility”	“Passive leadership”
“Aversive leadership”	“Ineffective leadership”	“Petty tyranny”
“Bad leadership”	“Information hiding”	“Poor leadership”
“CEO hubris”	“Interpersonal conflict”	“Psychopath”
“CEO overconfidence”	“Jeer pressure”	“Psychopathic”
“Close monitoring”	“Knowledge hiding”	“Psychopathy”
“Close supervision”	“Knowledge withholding”	“Relational conflict”
“Coercive leadership”	“Laissez-faire leadership”	“Relationship conflict”
“Controlling leadership”	“Leader bullying”	“Self-serving leadership”
“Controlling supervision”	“Leader overconfidence”	“Sexual harassment”
“Counterproductive work behavior”	“Machiavellianism”	“Strategic bullying”
“Dark leadership”	“Malevolent leadership”	“Supervisor aggression”
“Dark side of leadership”	“Management-by-exception”	“Supervisor undermining”
“Dark triad”	“Managerial derailment”	“Toxic leadership”
“Defensive silence”	“Managerial tyranny”	“Tyrannical leadership”
“Derailed leadership”	“Mobbing”	“Unethical leadership”
“Despotic leadership”	“Narcissism”	“Workplace aggression”
“Destructive leadership”	“Narcissist”	“Workplace bullying”
“Directive leadership”	“Narcissistic”	“Workplace deviant behavior”
“Dysfunctional leadership”	“Negative leadership”	“Workplace discrimination”
“Employee silence”	“Organizational politics”	“Workplace mistreatment”

Note: Terms were used in conjunction with ‘AND creativity OR innovation’.

1960 to September 2021. After deleting duplicates, 560 documents remained. We then added three studies to the sample, which we found by cross-referencing. Following Mainemelis et al. (2015), we considered both quantitative and qualitative studies that provided insights into the ‘dark side of leadership’ in relation to creativity and/or innovation as inclusion criteria. Quantitative studies had to have a zero-order effect between these variables of interest to be included (Lee et al., 2020). Retrieved records were first searched by title, abstract and keywords, followed by a full-text evaluation to determine the relevance of the articles. Two authors performed this procedure and independently coded all articles for relevance. We found strong agreement between authors (87%), and any disagreements were subsequently discussed and resolved. A total of 99 articles were selected, comprising 106 independent samples. The oldest study in our sample was by Oldham and Cummings and was published in 1996. The list of these articles, as well as a structured classification, can be found in the online [Supporting Information](#).

RESULTS

In this section, we present a survey of the literature on the relationship between the ‘dark side of leadership’ and creativity and innovation, with a focus on both the primary effects and the moderating and mediating mechanisms involved. Table 2 provides an overview of the literature reviewed.

Overview

Our review of 106 studies found that ‘dark leadership’ most often negatively impacts employee creativity and innovation. Sixty-four of these studies found negative effects on creativity and innovation. Abusive supervision was the most studied form of ‘dark leadership’, followed by authoritarian leadership, close monitoring and narcissistic leadership. While we identified other forms of ‘dark leadership’, there is limited research and only one to four studies

TABLE 2 Studied variables, definitions and study characteristics

Variable	Definition	Study characteristics												
		Creativity					Innovation							
		XS	EX	QL	TS	L	XS	EX	QL	TS	L			
Abusive supervision	'Subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact' (Tepper, 2000: 178).	20	1	0	8	0	6	0	3	0				
Authoritarian leadership	'Leader's behavior that asserts absolute authority and control over subordinates and demands unquestionable obedience from subordinates' (Cheng et al., 2004: 91).	11	0	0	2	0	8	0	1	0				
Aversive leadership	'Involves leader behaviors that primarily rely on coercive power, including the use of threats, intimidation, and reprimands' (Thoroughgood et al., 2018: 631).	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Close monitoring	'When supervisors engage in close monitoring, they keep close tabs on their subordinates to ensure that they do what they are told, perform tasks in expected ways, and do not do things that the supervisor might disapprove of. Under these conditions, subordinates often feel that they are constantly being evaluated, directed, and controlled' (George & Zhou, 2001: 515).	7	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	0				
Controlling supervision	'When supervisors are controlling, they closely monitor employee behavior, make decisions without employee involvement, provide feedback in a controlling manner, and generally pressure employees to think, feel, or behave in certain ways' (Oldham & Cummings, 1996: 611).	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Supervisor dark triad	Operationalized as aggregated scores for the dark triad of personality.	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0				
Despotic leadership	'Despotic leadership, which is based on personal dominance and authoritarian behavior that serves the self-interest of the leader, is self-aggrandizing and exploitative of others. Despotic leaders are domineering, controlling, and vengeful' (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008: 298).	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0				
Directive leadership	Attaining 'desired ends by telling {...} subordinates what to do and how to do it' (Bass et al., 1975: 722).	3	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0				
Exploitative leadership	'Leadership with the primary intention to further the leader's self-interest. Such leaders exploit others by (1) acting egoistically, (2) exerting pressure and manipulating followers, (3) overburdening followers, or, on the other hand, (4) consistently underchallenging followers, allowing no development' (Schmid et al., 2019: 1404).	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0				
Laissez-faire leadership	'The avoidance or absence of leadership and is, by definition, most inactive, as well as most ineffective according to almost all research on the style' (Bass & Riggio, 2006: 8-9).	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0				
Leader hubris	Hubris is a 'psychological state characterized by over-confident and over-ambitious judgement and decision making, associated with the acquisition of significant power and success, and invulnerable to and contemptuous of the advice and criticism of others' (Sadler-Smith, 2018: 80).	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0				1

(Continues)

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Variable	Definition	Study characteristics												
		Creativity				Innovation								
		XS	EX	QL	TS	L	XS	EX	QL	TS	L	XS	L	
Leader incivility	Use of '[l]ow-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others' (Anderson & Pearson, 1999: 457).	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leader Machiavellianism	Machiavellianism is 'a strategy of social conduct that involves manipulating others for personal gain, often against the other's self-interest' (Wilson et al., 1996: 285).	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Leader narcissism	Narcissistic personality is 'variable and vulnerable self-esteem, with attempts at regulation through attention and approval seeking, and either overt or covert grandiosity. Characteristic difficulties are apparent in identity, self-direction, empathy, and/or intimacy' (American Psychiatric Association, 2013: 767).	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	1
Leader ostracism	'Ostracism is typically defined as being ignored and excluded, and it often occurs without excessive explanation or explicit negative attention. Ostracism is often operationalized as a process that is characterized as an unfolding sequence of responses endured while being ignored and excluded' (Williams, 2007: 429).	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leader overconfidence	Overconfidence is defined as '(a) overestimation of one's actual performance, (b) overplacement of one's performance relative to others, and (c) excessive precision in one's beliefs' (Moore & Healy, 2008: 502).	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
Leader psychopathy	'Psychopathy is a socially devastating disorder defined by a constellation of affective, interpersonal, and behavioral characteristics, including egocentricity; impulsivity; irresponsibility; shallow emotions; lack of empathy, guilt, or remorse; pathological lying; manipulativeness; and the persistent violation of social norms and expectations' (Hare, 1998: 88).	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Management-by-exception	Combined active and passive forms of management by exception.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Management by exception (active)	'The leader arranges to actively monitor deviances from standards, mistakes, and errors in the follower's assignments and to take corrective action as necessary' (Bass & Riggio, 2006: 8).	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Management-by-exception (passive)	The leader 'waiting passively for deviances, mistakes, and errors to occur and then taking corrective action' (Bass & Riggio, 2006: 8).	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Passive leadership	Combination of laissez-faire leadership and passive management-by-exception (Den Hartog et al., 1997).	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-serving leadership	'Leaders who place their own well-being and interests above both their followers' needs and the goals of the organization' (Camps et al., 2012: 49).	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisor undermining	'Behavior intended to hinder, over time, the ability to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work-related success, and favorable reputation' (Duffy et al., 2002: 332).	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	Sum of articles	61	2	2	18	1	40	0	1	8	7			

Note: EX = experimental; XS = cross-sectional; QL = qualitative; L = longitudinal; TS = time separated.

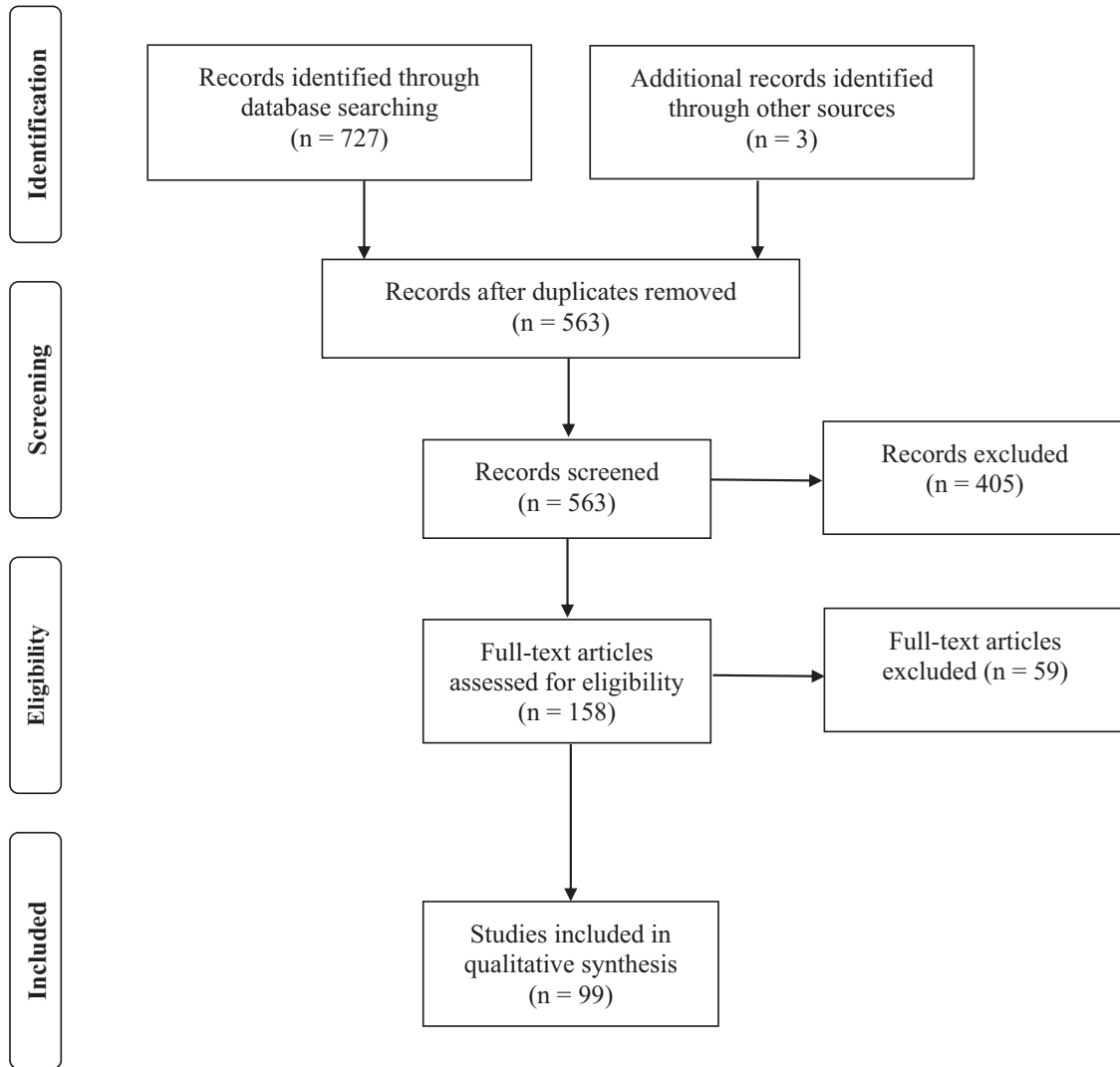


FIGURE 1 PRISMA chart

for each form. In our sample, about two-thirds of the studies focused on creativity as the dependent variable, while the remaining studies examined innovation or innovative behaviour.

Of the 106 studies we reviewed, 19 showed a positive effect, while 23 did not produce significant results. These studies with positive or non-significant effects fall into two main categories. The first category mainly deals with narcissistic or directive/authoritarian leadership in countries with high power distance (Hofstede et al., 2005), while the second category deals with studies of chief executive officers (CEOs). Researchers believe that culture plays a critical role in explaining why 'dark leadership' can foster creativity and innovation (Lee et al., 2013). It appears that certain negative behaviours are more acceptable or even expected in different populations, especially those with a large power distance (Den Hartog & Dickson, 2018; Dorfman et al., 1997; Javidan et al., 2006; Tepper, 2007;

Tsui et al., 2007). Interestingly, in the context of Chinese workers, research shows that excessive levels of ethical leadership can hinder creativity, while moderate levels can enhance it (Feng et al., 2018). Another study conducted in China has shown that empowerment can have a negative impact on innovation (Jung et al., 2003). However, it is important to exercise caution when considering the culture argument, as results on 'dark leadership' and positive leadership in countries with large power distance have yielded mixed results. Given the various shades of 'dark side', the lack of research and the possible inclusion of other factors and considerations, these results must be interpreted with caution.

The second category of studies shows a surprisingly positive trend, with implications for organizational innovation by CEOs with 'dark personalities', specifically narcissism (Kashmiri et al., 2017), hubris (Tang et al., 2015) and overconfidence (Chen et al., 2014; Galasso & Simcoe, 2011;

Hirshleifer et al., 2012; Wong et al., 2017). Research has shown that individuals with narcissistic traits are less risk averse and more likely to pursue bold strategies with high gains (Bromiley & Rau, 2016; Maccoby, 2000; Smith et al., 2018). Thus, when narcissistic leaders sit at the highest levels of decision-making, they can easily influence firm-level variables such as investment in research and development or the types of innovative projects undertaken. Remarkably, only one study that examined CEO psychopathy found a negative relationship with organizational innovativeness (Boddy, 2017). However, the author used a measurement tool for psychopathy that has recently come under heavy criticism (Jones & Hare, 2016). While certain 'dark personalities' and tendencies have their drawbacks, these findings suggest that they can also bring benefits in certain situations (Maccoby, 2000). However, it is important to note that these findings may also be attributable to methodological limitations, which will be discussed in greater detail later.

In addition to the two main categories discussed above, the remaining studies in the non-negative subsample lack clear patterns and are distributed across different forms of leadership and creative/innovative performance types. Apart from two studies on incivility (Liu et al., 2019; Sharifirad, 2016) and three studies on exploitative leadership (Costa et al., 2021; Syed et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2020), the studies in our sample on different types of leadership have at least one positive or inconclusive result. Among these studies, those on narcissistic personalities (with five positive relationships out of eight studies) and authoritarian leadership (with four positive results out of 19 articles) had the highest percentage of positive findings. However, methodological differences make it challenging to compare these 'outlier' studies with others in the sample, and to draw definitive conclusions. Even within the same 'dark leadership' constructs, the studies vary in terms of scales used, sources of information and types of performance assessed. We were only able to identify three groups of studies with comparable designs but divergent findings among all the studies in our sample.

The first group includes two studies that examined the effects of despotic leadership on individual creativity: Naseer et al. (2016) and Rasool et al. (2018). Both studies used the same scales and collected data from employees in Pakistani organizations. While Rasool et al. found a positive correlation between despotic leadership and individual creativity, Naseer et al. found a negative correlation. The main difference between the two studies is that Rasool et al. surveyed employees in the public sector, where despotic leadership may be more common due to open-ended contracts. The authors suggest that employees in such organizations may engage in activities such as impression management and creative work to improve

their prospects, such as seeking promotions to escape the influence of despotic leaders. Although it is commonly assumed that despotic leadership, characterized by domination and humiliation, suppresses independent thinking and inhibits the emergence of new ideas, it is worth noting that, theoretically, fear and anxiety resulting from negative reinforcement can also lead employees to avoid punishment and achieve goals (Hull, 1943; Podsakoff et al., 1982; Skinner, 1953).

The second group of studies, consisting of Liu et al. (2012), Lee et al. (2013), Zhang et al. (2014) and Rauniyar et al. (2017), examines the relationship between abusive supervision and individual creativity using Tepper's (2000) measure of abusive supervision and Zhou and George's (2001) measure of individual creativity. While Lee et al. found a curvilinear relationship suggesting that moderate levels of abusive supervision can enhance creativity, the other three studies found a negative relationship. The difference in results may be due to both the study context and the fact that the other three studies did not test for the presence of a curvilinear relationship. Lee et al. (2013: 725) conducted their study in the public sector of a country with high power distance (South Korea), where 'followers [can] better deal with a moderate level of supervisors' abuse'. On the other hand, Liu et al. and Rauniyar et al. conducted their studies in small and large power distance countries, namely the United States and Nepal. The results of the study by Zhang et al. are puzzling, as they refer to Chinese workers in the automotive industry and previous research conducted in China (including by Zhang himself) has generally found a positive relationship between authoritarian leadership and individual creativity. However, we could not find possible reasons for these contradictory results, despite a close reading of the study and a thorough evaluation of the methodology.

The third and final group of studies includes three articles on authoritarian leadership and individual creativity measured with similar scales. Pan et al. (2015) find a non-significant relationship, while Dedahanov et al. (2016) find a negative relationship and Gu et al. (2019) find a curvilinear relationship. The Gu et al. and Pan et al. studies were both conducted in China and are consistent with the other findings. The Dedahanov et al. study was conducted in South Korea and contrasts with Lee et al. (2013) and more generally with studies on countries with large power distance. Again, we could not find specific reasons to explain these results.

In contrast to the frequent negative effects of some active forms of 'dark leadership', passive leader behaviours (i.e., laissez-faire leadership and passive management by exception) do not appear to have significant effects on creativity or innovation (Derecskei, 2016; Elenkov & Manev, 2005; Moss & Ritossa, 2007; Sethibe & Steyn,

TABLE 3 Range and mean associations between variables

Leadership	Creativity			Innovation/innovative behaviour		
	N	Range	Average	N	Range	Average
Abusive (negative)	21	-0.59; -0.11	++	6	-0.09; -0.41	+
(positive)	1	0.14	+			
Active management by exception				1	0.17	+
Authoritarian (negative)	8	-0.36; -0.14	+	3	-0.15; -0.36	++
(positive)	1	0.30	+	2	0.16; 0.48	+
Aversive	2	-0.41; -0.11	+			
Close monitoring	7	-0.26; -0.19	+	1	0.17	+
CEO overconfidence				4	0.02; 0.85	++
Controlling supervision	1	0.09	~			
Despotic leadership	2	-0.45; -0.19	+			
Directive leadership	1	-0.24				
(positive)	1	0.42				
Exploitative leadership	1	-0.24	+	2	-0.13; -0.49	++
Hubristic				1	0.07	~
Incivility	2	-0.41; -0.19	+			
Narcissism				2	-0.67; -0.49	++
(positive)	2	0.25; 0.46	++	3	0.02; 0.10	~
Ostracism	2	-0.29; -0.08	+			
Psychopathic	1	0.15	+			
Self-serving	1	-0.35	++			
Supervisor undermining				1	0.13	+

Note: The column 'Average' indicates the magnitude of the average correlation based on Cohen's (1992) rule of thumb; ~ corresponds to an average correlation ≤ 0.10 ; + (small) average r is between 0.10 and 0.30; ++ (medium) average r is between 0.30 and 0.50. For the studies used to calculate the range and average effect sizes, please check the online [Supporting information](#), Appendix S1.

2017; Zacher & Johnson, 2015). This could be due to low leader-member interaction and interdependence, or the fact that passive leadership behaviours are an attempt to promote employee empowerment (Wong & Giessner, 2018). However, these findings are at odds with general expectations of passive forms of leadership and deserve further consideration (e.g., Skogstad et al., 2007).

To conclude this section, and following Hughes et al. (2018), Table 3 reports the range and average strength of correlations between different forms of 'dark leadership' and creativity and innovation. In our analysis, we considered only those studies that provided significant results. As can be seen from the table, most studies focused on creativity, and only a handful of leadership forms were examined as determinants of both creativity and innovation. Although innovation can be influenced by factors other than the relationship between an individual and his or her supervisor, the average impact found in the empirical studies is rather strong, with four leadership forms

showing a high impact. On the contrary, although creativity is the most frequently studied phenomenon, only three forms of leadership seem to have a strong impact. Abusive supervision is the most studied form of leadership and the one that seems to have the strongest negative impact on creativity (in addition to the only work on self-serving leadership), while narcissism is the form of 'dark leadership' that has the strongest positive impact on creativity. Regarding innovation, authoritarian, exploitative and narcissistic leadership have the strongest negative impact, while CEO overconfidence has the highest correlation.

Mediating mechanisms

The relationship between 'dark leadership' and creativity has piqued the interest of researchers, who seek to uncover the specific mechanisms that underlie this complex relationship. Through a comprehensive review of the

literature, we found that most studies on this topic explore mediation mechanisms, either directly or with moderation. These studies employ a range of mediation variables, but when a particular variable is examined across multiple studies, inconsistencies in its constructs make it difficult to compare results. Our analysis identified creative self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation and leader–member exchange (LMX) as the three most frequently studied mediating variables. Additional information, including definitions and study details, can be found in the online [Supporting Information](#). To provide a clear and organized summary of our findings, we employed Hughes et al.'s (2018) categorization of various mechanisms and present our discoveries in Figure 2.

Motivational mechanisms

Motivational mechanisms have been a longstanding topic of discussion in the fields of leadership, creativity and innovation, with researchers examining various factors that drive employee motivation (Amabile, 1993; Amabile & Pratt, 2016; Deci, 1972; Herzberg et al., 1959; Hughes et al., 2018; Vroom, 1964). Theoretically, leaders who provide clear objectives, establish a positive work culture and offer adequate resources and support are more likely to motivate their employees to higher levels of creativity and innovation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Bandura, 1986; Locke & Latham, 2002). When employees perceive that their efforts lead to positive outcomes that align with their personal values and interests, and have access to necessary resources and support, they are more likely to feel capable and confident in their abilities (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Bandura, 1986; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Empirical research has shown that positive leadership has a positive impact on employee creativity by influencing employee motivation (Gong et al., 2009; Mumford et al., 2022; Shin & Zhou, 2003).

Conversely, when leaders engage in behaviours that are perceived as controlling, demoralizing or undermining their subordinates' autonomy, competence or relatedness, it is theoretically expected to result in lower levels of intrinsic motivation and creativity (Deci & Ryan, 2013). The studies we reviewed examined several motivation-mediating variables, including intrinsic motivation, creative role identity, creative self-efficacy, psychological capital and psychological empowerment. Creative self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation were the most studied motivational mechanisms. Intrinsic motivation pertains to the innate desire to engage in an activity because of the inherent satisfaction and enjoyment it brings, rather than simply because of external rewards or incentives (Deci, 1972; Ryan & Deci, 2000). On the other hand, creative self-efficacy denotes an individual's confidence in their capability to

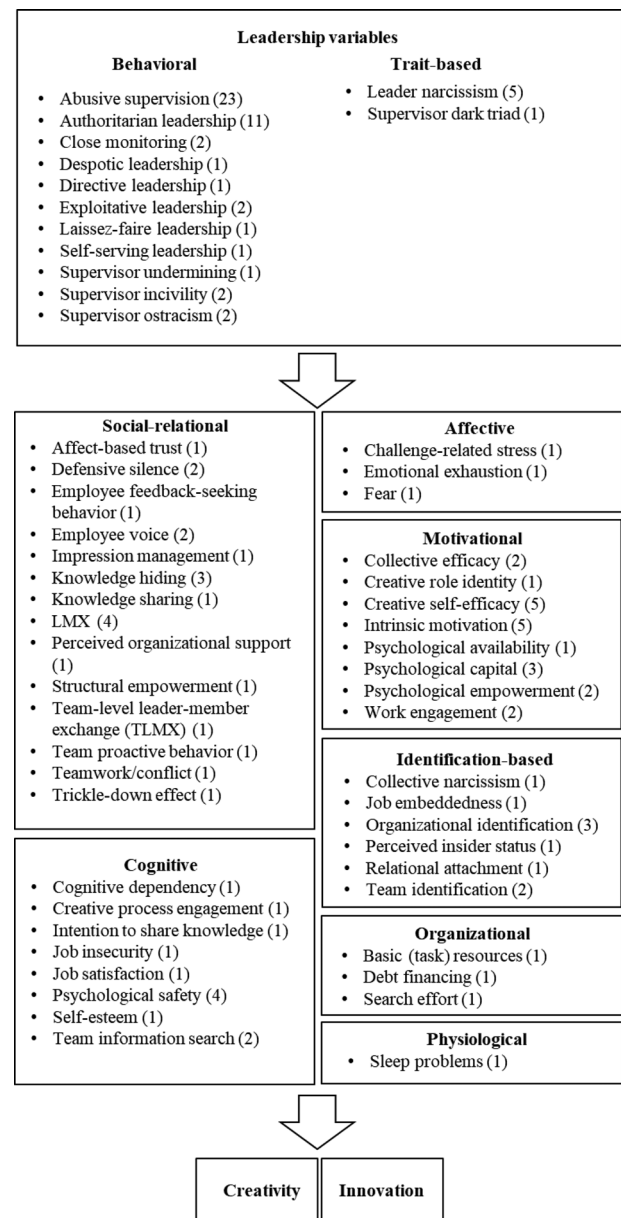


FIGURE 2 Summary of the mediating variable. *Note:* The number in brackets after each concept represents the frequency of its examination.

generate imaginative and innovative ideas and solutions (Bandura, 1997; Tierney & Farmer, 2002).

As anticipated, most studies in our sample revealed that 'dark forms of leadership' have a negative impact on creativity and innovation through the motivational mechanisms discussed earlier. Only two studies within the motivational category reported a positive effect. The first, conducted by Gu et al. (2017) on a sample of 216 Chinese university students, surprisingly found that directive leadership has a positive effect on intrinsic motivation and consequently on creativity. The second study, conducted by Xia et al. (2019) on a sample of 297 Chinese students, found

that a combination of authoritarian and benevolent leadership had positive effects on intrinsic motivation, which in turn had positive effects on creativity. The surprising outcomes of these two studies challenge conventional assumptions and underscore the necessity for further exploration into the impacts of autocratic leadership, as well as an examination of constructs that significantly differ from abusive supervision.

Cognitive mechanisms

The cognitive approach to the study of creativity provides an essential understanding of the cognitive processes underlying creative thinking (Eysenck, 1983; Gameda & Lee, 2020; Hayes, 1989; Jonassen, 2000; Mumford et al., 2007; Runco & Chand, 1995; Tian et al., 2020; Ward & Finke, 1995). To engage in creative thinking, individuals must utilize a range of cognitive processes, including mental representation, memory retention, semantic processing and comprehension (Ward & Finke, 1995). Employees solve problems by utilizing their previous knowledge and by integrating various elements and information (Amabile & Pratt, 2016; Ward & Finke, 1995). Drawing on theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence from positive leadership, it is well established that leaders can facilitate creativity and innovation within their organizations by actively engaging employees in critical activities such as problem identification, information gathering and idea generation (Amabile, 1997; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Moreover, creating a supportive work environment that promotes knowledge-sharing and risk-taking can further facilitate the exchange of innovative ideas and knowledge among employees (Bock & Kim, 2002; Edmondson, 1999; Mumford et al., 2022).

Our sample examined the impact of 'dark forms of leadership', particularly abusive supervision, on various cognitive processes among employees. These processes included psychological safety, knowledge-sharing intentions, job insecurity and creative process engagement. Except for two studies that showed positive relationships, all others reported a negative relationship mediated by cognitive mechanisms. Specifically, the positive relationships were found in studies conducted in China and Pakistan, respectively, examining the effects of supervisor narcissism on team creativity, with team information seeking as a mediator (Azam & Rizvi, 2021; Zhou et al., 2019). These findings highlight a cognitive mechanism that may explain how narcissistic leaders stimulate creative and innovative processes in their employees. However, future research is necessary to further explore this relationship, as well as those not involving hostile behaviours.

Affective mechanisms

Affect, which encompasses both emotions and moods, has been studied in the context of leadership and its effects on employee creativity and innovation (James et al., 2004; Watson & Clark, 1999). Existing research indicates that supportive leaders who provide autonomy and resources for their employees to pursue their ideas can elicit positive emotions that lead to increased creativity and innovation (Amabile et al., 2005; Ashkanasy, 2003; Baas et al., 2008; Fredrickson, 2001). Conversely, leaders who use fear-based tactics and engage in controlling behaviours can elicit negative emotions such as fear and stress and inhibit employee creativity and innovation (Berlyne, 1960; Hatfield et al., 1994; Hughes et al., 2018; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998).

Only three studies in our sample (Guo et al., 2018; Han et al., 2017; Zhu & Zhang, 2019) examined affect-related mediating variables. These studies reported that emotional exhaustion (a prolonged state of bodily and emotional exhaustion), fear (feeling apprehended in the workplace) and challenge-related stress were significant factors mediating the negative relationship between 'dark forms of leadership', that is, abusive supervision and authoritarian leadership, and creativity and innovation. A positive influence was not found in any study.

The use of affect-mediating mechanisms has largely been overlooked in the relationship between 'dark leadership', creativity and innovation. Future research in this area would benefit from considering affective variables, such as emotions and moods, and their impact on employee creativity and innovation. For example, emotional contagion may play a critical role in transmitting negative affective states from a 'dark leader' to followers, ultimately hindering creativity and innovation (Hatfield et al., 1994). Emotional dissonance created by faking emotions could be another affective mediating variable that plays a role in the relationship between 'dark leadership' and creativity. Employees who engage in emotional labour to meet the demands of their leader may experience emotional dissonance, leading to negative affective outcomes such as emotional exhaustion (Grandey, 2003). Future research should examine the impact of emotional dissonance on the relationship between 'dark leadership' and creativity and innovation, and how it can be mitigated (Grandey & Diamond, 2010).

Physiological mechanisms

The study of physiological mediating variables in the relationship between leadership and creativity or innovation is rare. To better understand this relationship,

theoretical frameworks such as the neurobiological basis of creativity (Arden & Chavez, 2019) and the role of neuroendocrine systems in leadership (Eisenegger et al., 2011; van der Meij et al., 2016) have been proposed. For example, effective leadership theoretically promotes psychological safety (Amabile, 1998; Edmondson, 1999), lowers cortisol levels (Ashkanasy et al., 2014) and enhances learning and development (Waldman et al., 2019), which in turn promotes creativity and innovation. However, stress hormones such as cortisol and sleep problems can increase because of certain types of 'dark leadership', which can ultimately impair cognitive functioning and creative problem-solving. Despite the potential importance of physiological mediating variables in leadership and innovation, research in this area is sparse. Only one study in our sample examined the mediation relationship between abusive supervision and creativity, showing that sleep problems mediate the negative association (Han et al., 2017). More research is needed to understand the complex relationship between physiological variables, leadership, creativity and innovation.

Identification mechanisms

The sense of self and identity of individuals is deeply intertwined with their membership in social groups, including work organizations, and it can greatly influence their attitudes, behaviours and performance (Tajfel et al., 1979). Employees form a sense of attachment to their work organization based on shared values, goals and identity with the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), with identification being a crucial component of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Therefore, leaders who effectively promote identification with the organization can also foster a sense of commitment and loyalty among employees, which in turn can positively impact creativity and innovation. Theoretically, 'dark leadership' behaviours such as abusive supervision can have negative consequences on identification with the organization and may reduce creativity and innovation (Tepper, 2007).

Our analysis of several studies examining identification-based mediators revealed that organizational identification (Gu et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2021), team identification (Gu et al., 2018), work engagement (Norouzinik et al., 2021), relational attachment (Wang et al., 2020), collective narcissism and perceived insider status (Fodor et al., 2021) are key factors that mediate the negative relationship between 'dark forms of leadership' and creativity and innovation. These studies examined abusive and authoritarian leadership, dark triad personality traits and exploitative leadership as independent variables. However, one article from this group found pos-

itive results. Zhang et al. (2021) suggest that in the Chinese cultural context, authoritarian leaders can have a positive impact on employees' perceptions of their insider status, which in turn can have a positive impact on their innovative behaviour. Our takeaway is that at least some forms of 'dark leadership' can reduce employee identification with the organization and the team, leading to a decline in creativity and innovation. Given that different forms of identification affect various types of employee performance, further research is needed to explore the effects of 'dark leadership' on this psychological process and identify mechanisms to mitigate the negative impact of 'dark leader' behaviour (Efraty & Wolfe, 1988).

Social relational mechanisms

Social exchange theory is the foundation of social relational mechanisms (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Hughes et al., 2018). According to this theory, individuals engage in relationships based on an assessment of costs and benefits, and will shape the relationship to ensure that the benefits outweigh the costs. The LMX model of leadership, which focuses on the quality of the leader–follower relationship (Hughes et al., 2018; Uhl-Bien, 2006), is based on this theory. In applying LMX to studies of leadership, the leader–follower relationship is essentially viewed in terms of the benefits and costs provided by the leader (Sparrowe, 2020). When the benefits outweigh the costs, employees are more likely to be creative and innovative in helping the leader achieve organizational goals. Theoretically, leaders who display 'dark leadership' behaviours, such as bullying, authoritarianism or micromanagement, can undermine social exchange and discourage positive behaviours, such as knowledge-sharing and voice (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Conversely, leaders who are perceived as fair and supportive can encourage positive behaviours and enhance creativity and innovation.

Many relationship mechanisms were used in our sample, ranging from defensive silence to employee voice, and including forms of impression management and knowledge hiding. LMX emerged as the most frequently studied mediator in this group. Several articles analysed LMX as mediators of abusive supervision, close monitoring, authoritarian leadership and dark triad personality. Most of these studies concluded that social relationship mechanisms mediate the negative effects of various forms of 'dark leadership', such as abusive supervision and authoritarian leadership on creativity and innovation (Arshad et al., 2021; Chen & Appienti, 2020; Echebiri & Amundsen, 2020; Fodor et al., 2021; Gu et al., 2018; He et al., 2021; Jahanzeb et al., 2021; Meng et al., 2017; Son et al., 2017; Syed et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2021). It has been shown that 'dark leaders'

burden their subordinates with their behaviour, thereby limiting their cooperation.

Organizational mechanisms

Three studies in our sample examined mediation variables that can be broadly categorized under organizational mechanisms (Azam & Rizvi, 2021; Kwan et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2021). Ostracism and narcissism are the two forms of ‘dark leadership’ analysed in the three studies. In a study of ostracism by superiors, Kwan et al. (2018) found a negative relationship with creativity in the availability of basic (task) resources. Zhang et al. (2021), on the other hand, emphasize the positive effect of CEO narcissism on firm innovation performance and explain the phenomenon through the mediating effect of debt financing, as narcissistic leaders appear to be less risk averse and more likely to undertake risky projects (Alicke, 1985; Larwood & Whittaker, 1977). Along these lines, Azam and Rizvi (2021) show that the positive effects of a narcissistic leader on employee creativity can be attributed in part to their more intense information seeking. Optimistically, it could be argued that narcissistic leaders can use their charisma (Rogoza & Fafouta, 2020) to motivate their subordinates and encourage them to collaborate and share knowledge and information, which is an essential prerequisite for individual creativity (De Vries et al., 2010).

Moderating variables

Under specific circumstances, the link between the ‘dark side of leadership’ and creativity and/or innovation can either be strengthened or weakened. There were a multitude of moderating variables used in the studies, and we utilized the classification presented by Hughes et al. (2018) to categorize them. The definitions of these moderating variables and the corresponding studies are available in the online [Supporting Information](#). A summary of the findings is presented below, and illustrated in Figure 3.

Follower attributes

In our systematic review, we found multiple studies that examined the influence of follower attributes on the relationship between ‘dark leadership’, creativity and innovation. The results indicate that this relationship tends to be more detrimental for individuals with lower levels of certain attributes, while it may be less negative or even insignificant when these attributes are high. Proactive personality (Shen et al., 2020), psychological capital

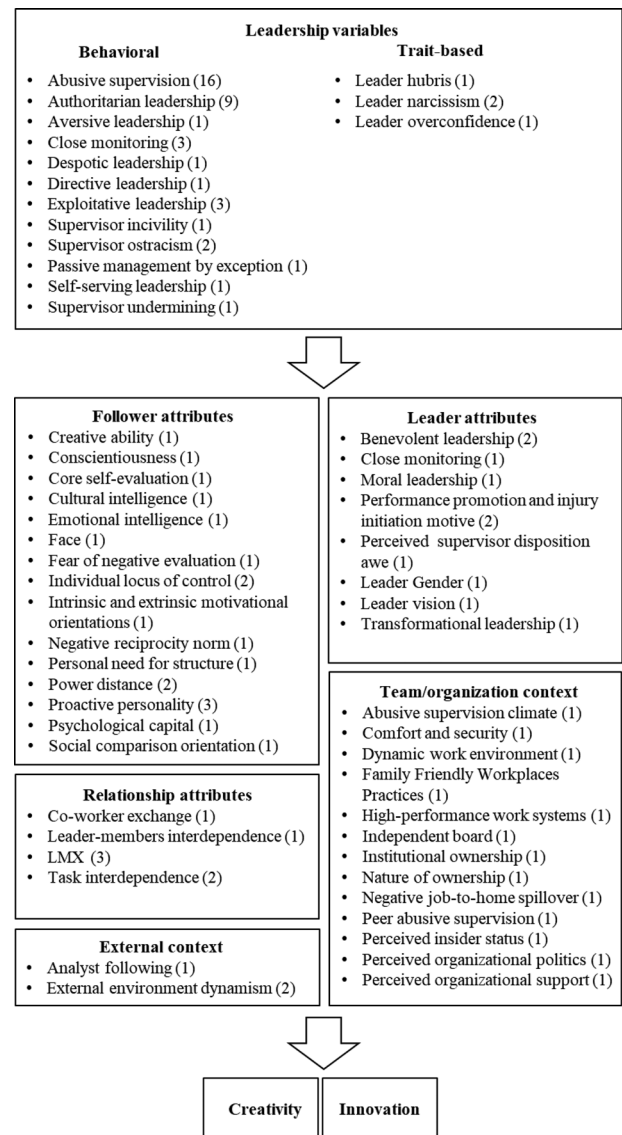


FIGURE 3 Summary of the moderating variables. *Note:* The number in brackets after each concept represents the frequency of its examination.

(Guo et al., 2018), psychological empowerment (Chenji & Sode, 2019), personal need for structure (Rietzschel et al., 2014), core self-evaluation (Zhang et al., 2014), fear of negative evaluation (Syed et al., 2021) and emotional intelligence (Hou et al., 2018) are among the moderating variables that have been identified. Most of the studies focused on abusive supervision, arguing that certain psychological resources or orientations can help mitigate the negative impact of ‘dark leadership’. Interestingly, our review also revealed that individuals with high scores on conscientiousness, negative reciprocity norm, social comparison orientation and intrinsic motivational orientation may have a more negative association with creativity and innovation in the context of ‘dark leadership’ (George & Zhou, 2001; Jahanzeb et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2019;

Tian et al., 2020). This finding is particularly unexpected since individuals with high levels of intrinsic motivation and conscientiousness are typically seen as positive contributors to creative and innovative outcomes.

It is worth noting that several variables were not found to moderate the associations between 'dark leadership', creativity and innovation. For example, Choi et al. (2009) found that creative ability did not moderate the association between close monitoring and aversive leadership with creativity. Similarly, Wang et al. (2019) reported that the direct and indirect association between abusive supervision and innovative behaviour via job insecurity was significant only for individuals with an internal locus of control, while no significant association was found for those with an external locus of control. Furthermore, Škudienė et al. (2018) found no moderating relationship between locus of control and innovation in the context of passive management by exception.

While it is rare for studies to identify follower attribute moderating variables that can change the effect of 'dark leadership' from negative or insignificant to positive, some research has found such variables. For example, Ng and Feldman (2013) reported that proactive individuals who are experiencing supervisor undermining are more innovative. Other studies have examined the role of national culture. For instance, Rauniyar et al. (2017) and Gu et al. (2018) found that authoritarian leadership has an insignificant relationship with team innovation among individuals with high power distance. Gu et al. (2016) also discovered that the negative relationship between abusive supervision and departmental identification is stronger for low face employees, while the effects are not significant for high face employees. Building on previous research findings, future studies could examine the moderating effects of proactivity and cultural factors on the relationship between 'dark leadership', creativity and innovation. Specifically, researchers could examine how different dimensions of proactivity may influence the relationship between 'dark leadership' and creativity/innovation.

Leader attributes

Leader-related variables have been found to play a significant role in either exacerbating or mitigating the effects of 'dark leadership' on employee creativity and innovation. Several moderating variables have been examined in past studies. For instance, benevolent leadership has been found to interact with authoritarian leadership, reducing the negative association with creativity and innovative behaviour (Tian & Sanchez, 2017). Similarly, the detrimental impact of abusive supervision on creativity can be mitigated when the supervisor is perceived as rever-

ential (Atamba et al., 2020). However, research on the moderating effect of leader vision on abusive supervision and creativity has yielded inconclusive results (Fiset et al., 2019). Moreover, perceived motive to improve performance has been found to decrease the negative association, whereas perceived motive to harm has been found to increase it (Liu et al., 2012). This finding is also supported by Wang et al. (2021), who reported the moderating effect of employees' attribution of performance improvement on the relationship between abusive supervision and creativity loss. Additionally, high moral leadership and benevolent leadership have been found to attenuate the relationship between authoritarian leadership and creativity, leading to higher levels of creativity in response to authoritarianism (Gu et al., 2019).

Research suggests that 'dark leaders' may be less damaging to employee creativity and innovation if they supplement negative behaviours with positive ones, if their negative behaviours are performance-motivated or if they exhibit certain desirable characteristics. However, some studies have produced unexpected results. For instance, Schuh et al. (2013) found that the negative relationship between authoritarian leadership and innovation was significant only when leaders exhibited high levels of transformational leadership, which the authors argued could resemble pseudo-transformational leadership. In another study, Wang et al. (2013) found that female leaders reinforced the negative relationship between authoritarian leadership and creativity. This finding is consistent with previous research on 'dark leadership' and workplace mistreatment, which suggests that negative behaviours exhibited by female leaders may be perceived more negatively than those exhibited by male leader, possibly due to gender role expectations. Future studies should explore these unexpected findings further and investigate the potential mechanisms behind them.

Relationship attributes

Social relationships are important themes of organizational behaviour (Campion et al., 1993; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), and leader-employee relationships can enhance or mitigate the effects of 'dark leadership' on creativity and innovation. However, few studies have examined these moderating mechanisms. For example, Peng et al. (2019) found that task interdependence buffered the negative relationship between self-serving leadership and team creativity. Similarly, Men et al. (2021) found that task interdependence reduced the negative relationship between abusive supervision and team creativity. These findings suggest that the loss of creativity is lower when team members are more interdependent and interact with each

other. In such cases, employees can support each other and understand that they are not singled out. However, Zhang et al. (2021) did not find a moderating effect for coworker exchange in a sequential relationship in the case of innovation, suggesting that further studies are needed in this area.

Several studies have explored the moderating effects of LMX and interdependence on the relationship between 'dark leadership' and creativity or innovation. Naseer et al. (2016) and Rousseau and Aubé (2018) found that high LMX and interdependence intensified the negative association between abusive supervision and creativity, whereas the relationship was not significant when LMX was low. In contrast, Zhang et al. (2021) found that high LMX weakened the positive relationship between authoritarian leadership and innovative behaviour mediated by organizational identity. Moreover, relational conflict between employees was found to exacerbate the negative relationship between abusive supervision and innovation, especially when interdepartmental social interactions were high (De Clercq et al., 2009). These findings suggest that 'dark leadership' may have a more detrimental effect on creativity and innovation when there is high leader-follower interaction, highlighting the importance of examining the contextual factors that moderate these relationships.

Team/organizational context

The impact of 'dark leadership' on creativity and innovation outcomes can be influenced by team and organizational context. Previous studies suggest that individuals are less likely to perform well if they are singled out and treated poorly, particularly in the case of abusive supervision. Our review supports this idea. For example, Jiang et al. (2019) found that workers with low peer abusive supervision had lower creativity (via creative self-efficacy). Similarly, Shen et al. (2020) found that the negative relationship between abusive supervision and employees' creativity (via creative role identity) was weaker when the abusive supervision climate was high than when it was low. On the other hand, Naseer et al. (2016) reported a slightly positive correlation between despotic leadership and creativity when the organizational politics climate was low, but a more negative correlation when it was high. However, Wang et al. (2019) did not find that the comfort and security climate moderated the negative relationship between authoritarian leadership and creativity. It should be noted that these constructs are sometimes related but not fully interchangeable, and the results are specific to the relationships studied, making it difficult to draw definitive conclusions.

The relationship between leadership and creativity/innovation outcomes can be moderated by the team and organizational context. Kwan et al. (2018) found that organizational support can buffer the negative relationship between supervisor ostracism and creativity, specifically through task resources (but not creative process engagement). Liu et al. (2019) demonstrated that the negative effect of supervisor incivility on creativity, through intrinsic motivation, is more significant when perceived insider status is low than high. Wang et al. (2020) found that the negative relationship between exploitative leadership and innovative behaviour, through relational attachment, is strengthened when 'high performance work systems' are present. Yang et al. (2020) discovered that the negative relationship between supervisor narcissism and innovation, through employee cognitive dependency, is not significant when the dynamics of the work environment are low. These studies suggest that creativity and innovation outcomes are less negatively affected when individuals have access to adequate work resources, a sense of belonging to the organization and are not part of an elite workforce. Additionally, the work environment should not be subject to rapid change for creativity and innovation to thrive.

The impact of CEO overconfidence on innovation outcomes can be moderated by organizational and institutional factors. For example, Wong et al.'s (2017) study found that the presence of an independent board and institutional shareholders weakened the positive relationship between CEO overconfidence and innovation, while transient institutional ownership strengthened the relationship. This is not surprising, given that the CEO's structural power (Finkelstein, 1992) may limit risk-taking and autonomy in resource allocation. Ownership also determines CEO power and behaviour and is a key element of agency cost theory. In another study, Zhang et al. (2021) found that CEO narcissism was positively related to innovation in state-owned enterprises in China. These findings highlight the importance of considering organizational and institutional contexts when examining the relationship between CEO traits and innovation outcomes.

External context

Three studies have explored the impact of external contextual variables on the relationship between authoritarian leadership, CEO hubris and innovation. These studies found that the positive relationship was weakened in firms with a dynamic external environment (Hou et al., 2018; Tang et al., 2015). Additionally, Wong et al. (2017) discovered that external monitoring, such as analyst following of managerial activity, weakened the positive

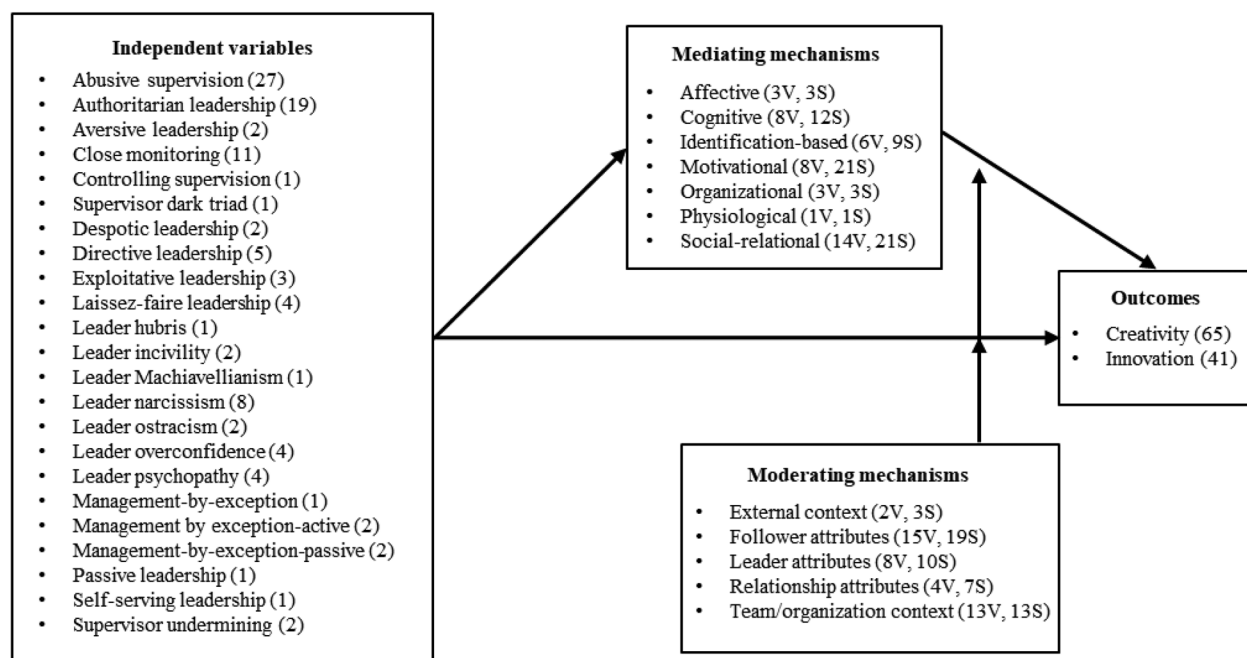


FIGURE 4 Integrative framework. *Note:* The number in brackets after each concept represents the frequency of its examination. V = variable; S = sample.

relationship between CEO overconfidence and innovation. This finding suggests that increased monitoring may hinder risk-taking and innovation. Given the limited research on strategic leaders, further investigation in this area is imperative. To summarize the findings, Figure 4 presents an integrative framework that categorizes the previous literature into dark leadership styles, outcomes, mediators and moderators.

MOVING FORWARD

In this section, we put forth suggestions for future research endeavours, encompassing the examination of main effects, mediations, moderations and methodology. Additionally, we delve into the practical applications of our review and its implications for managers and organizations in terms of ethical and effective leadership practices.

Main effects

Our review of the literature exploring the connection between 'dark leadership' and creativity and innovation yielded inconsistent results, with some studies exhibiting a negative association, while others showed no signifi-

cant relationship or even a positive association. These disparities are especially pronounced in studies of authoritarian and passive leadership styles, as well as in those focusing on narcissistic leadership. These inconsistencies may reflect methodological differences across studies, but they may also suggest that the impact of 'dark leadership' on creativity and innovation is more complex and nuanced than currently understood. Although there is general agreement that authoritarian and passive leadership behaviours are likely to have unfavourable consequences, there is still a lack of research in this area, indicating the need for further investigation.

The findings on narcissistic leadership are particularly surprising, given that this style is often associated with abusive supervision, and yet, most studies in this area have reported a positive relationship with creativity or innovation. Additionally, the literature proposes that the impact of 'dark leadership' on creativity and innovation should cascade and flow down the organizational hierarchy (Liu et al., 2012; Lyons et al., 2019; Waldman et al., 2018; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). Despite these findings, there is limited research on the personality traits of leaders, and given the conflicting results, further studies are needed to better understand this relationship (Antonakis et al., 2012; Hughes et al., 2018; Peterson et al., 2003). It may also be of interest to explore the possibility of curvilinear relationships in future research.

The examination of the 'dark side of leadership' encompasses numerous facets, and it would also be beneficial to broaden the scope to include concepts beyond those centred on 'hostile' behaviours. For instance, Mumford et al. (2007) have highlighted that a leader's lack of technical proficiency can significantly impact creativity, particularly by impeding the leader's capacity to provide guidance and feedback. Despite the abundance of research at the individual level of analysis, the field is still in need of studies that focus on the team and organizational levels (Amabile & Pratt, 2016; Hughes et al., 2018; Paulus & Nijstad, 2019; van Knippenberg, 2017). Additionally, the focus of the literature on creativity has overshadowed the study of innovation. Future studies could examine the differentiated impact of leadership on creativity and innovation. For instance, certain forms of 'dark leadership' may have a more pronounced effect on creativity (such as abusive supervision and narcissistic leadership), while others may impact innovation more significantly (such as authoritarian leadership and exploitative leadership).

Mediators and moderators

The study of mediating relationships has garnered significant interest and provides valuable insights into how leadership impacts creativity and innovation. Among the most widely investigated mediating variables are intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy and LMX. However, many other mediating variables have been studied only once or twice in the context of specific leadership concepts. Thus, future research should consider incorporating these variables and testing more than one mechanism to avoid construct overlap and obtain a comprehensive understanding of the effects. Additionally, examining multiple sequential mediating processes can sometimes shed light on opposing effects (Acar et al., 2019; Cortes & Herrmann, 2021). The studies reviewed in this paper indicate a disregard for extrinsic motivation, which is also a trend in other leadership studies examining creativity and innovation (Hughes et al., 2018). Given that extrinsic motivation holds significant sway in shaping employee behaviour in non-Western contexts such as China, it is a crucial aspect to consider in future studies.

In consonance with the findings of Hughes et al. (2018), it is highlighted that limited research has explored mechanisms beyond motivational factors in the context of leadership and its impact on creativity and innovation. It is imperative to examine other mediating mechanisms, such as cognitive (Runco & Chand, 1995; Ward & Finke, 1995), affective (Elfenbein, 2007; James et al., 2004; Watson & Clark, 1999) and physiological mechanisms (Ashkanasy et al., 2014; Butler et al., 2016; Ganster et al., 2018; Peterson

et al., 2015; Waldman et al., 2019) in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic. A comparison of the mediating variables identified in this study with those presented in Hughes et al. (2018) and Fischer et al. (2021) can be useful in identifying previously neglected alternative perspectives. These may include psychological strain (Francis & Barling, 2005), cognitive persistence (Nijstad et al., 2010), curiosity (Lievens et al., 2022), need for power (Fodor, 1990; Koberg & Chusmir, 1987; McClelland & Burnham, 1976) and positive affect at the team level (Pressman & Cohen, 2005), which have been understudied but hold relevance in explaining the effects of 'dark leadership' on creativity and innovation.

Regarding moderators, we should reiterate that most of these variables have only been tested once in the context of specific leadership concepts and thus require replication (Hughes et al., 2018). Future research should specifically re-examine the moderating effects of proactivity (Ng & Feldman, 2013) and those of LMX and interdependence. Cross-referencing the list of moderating variables in our review with those of Hughes et al. (2018) and Fischer et al. (2021) may prove useful in identifying untapped alternative perspectives. Future studies may consider, for example, rejection sensitivity (Downey & Feldman, 1996), perceived time pressure (Maruping et al., 2015), remote work (Bell et al., 2023; Thompson, 2021), cognitive fixation (Mehta & Zhu, 2016), CEO characteristics (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021), upward influence tactics (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1990) and family member support (Procidano & Heller, 1983). The studies reviewed in this paper utilized several influential theoretical approaches, which can serve as a foundation for future studies. However, it may be useful to consider trait activation theory, attraction, selection-attrition, regulatory focus, situational strength and social information processing (Newman et al., 2020).

In future studies of creativity and innovation, cultural factors should be considered (Cerne et al., 2018; Garud et al., 2013; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010; Koh et al., 2019; Newman et al., 2020; van Knippenberg, 2017). Studies should not be limited to power distance but should also consider, for example, collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance and indulgence (Tian et al., 2018). Our review of previous studies highlights the significance of culture in explaining the contrasting findings in this field of research (Lee et al., 2013). Leadership effectiveness can vary greatly across cultural contexts, and certain negative behaviours may be better tolerated, expected or even desired in different cultures (Chen et al., 2018; Whetten, 2009). For example, a study by Zhang et al. (2021) suggested that authoritarian leadership in Chinese management can help reduce perceived lack of management control and create conditions for employee innovative behaviour. However, not all studies conducted

in high power distance environments support this view, highlighting the need for further research in this area (Hughes et al., 2018; Keister & Zhang, 2009; Mainemelis et al., 2015; Watts et al., 2020).

Methodological aspects

The results of the studies we reviewed are strongly impacted by methodological limitations. Inconsistent use of measurement tools across studies makes it challenging to draw meaningful conclusions. There is a significant discrepancy in the use of instruments to measure abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership, creativity and innovation. The use of multiple, poorly designed instruments exacerbates these difficulties, making it challenging to draw consistent findings (Fischer et al., 2020; Harms et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2018). To enhance the robustness of future research, it is crucial to establish standardized measurement tools and approaches for these constructs.

Our sample of studies includes some that have limitations in accurately measuring the underlying concepts of interest. For instance, Choi et al. (2009) use a close monitoring scale that falls short in capturing the controlling nature of the construct. Measuring dark personalities, such as those in the dark triad literature, is often seen as problematic and suboptimal (Cragun et al., 2020; Jones & Figueredo, 2013; LeBreton et al., 2018; Spain et al., 2014). For example, Yang et al. (2020) use a flawed scale to measure narcissism. Additionally, some of the measurement tools used to assess negative behaviours include items related to creativity, such as 'belittled you or your ideas' (Duffy et al., 2002: 340) or 'tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid' (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007: 1168; Tepper, 2000: 189), which raises further concerns about the validity of the results. Therefore, it is imperative to enhance the psychometric tools used in these studies, which will require both improvement in methodology and clarity in theoretical foundations (Cronin et al., 2021; Hughes et al., 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2016).

In our review of the literature, leadership, creativity and innovation were analysed in various ways, including self-assessments, supervisor assessments and peer assessments. However, it is important to note that these evaluations may be influenced by personal and contextual biases (Calic et al., 2020; Kaufman, 2006, 2019; Mueller et al., 2012; Ng & Feldman, 2012; Paulus & Van der Zee, 2004; Podsakoff et al., 2012; Proudfoot et al., 2015). Self-evaluations of creativity and innovation have been shown to be inflated, while individuals who experience workplace mistreatment often report negative self-perceptions (Herscovis & Reich, 2013; Ng & Feldman, 2012). Additionally, the perception and value of creativity and innovation may

vary across different cultures (Shao et al., 2019). Studies have also revealed that narcissistic supervisors tend to rate their subordinates' idea generation more positively, unless the subordinate is also a narcissistic individual (Wisse et al., 2015). With regard to studies of CEOs, it is important to consider that measures of organizational innovation, such as new product introductions and patents, are limited by the numerous potential mediating or moderating factors that are not directly related to the CEO's personality or behaviour.

Most studies reviewed in this area cannot establish a causal relationship due to endogeneity bias, which constitutes a major challenge (Antonakis et al., 2010; Fischer et al., 2017). Implementing relevant and appropriate control measures is beneficial and recommended (Friedrich et al., 2009). However, to address issues related to confounding variables and endogeneity more effectively, future studies should focus on longitudinal and experimental study designs. Additionally, the current literature is lacking in qualitative studies, which could provide deeper insights and a wider range of perspectives (Conger, 1998; Mumford, 2003). It should be noted that participants in some qualitative study designs may be less willing to disclose sensitive information. For example, Amabile et al. (2004) did not observe negative experiences such as bullying, ostracism, sexual harassment, corruption and discrimination in their multi-month daily diary data.

Practical implication

Adopting a thorough approach that encompasses both positive and negative aspects of leadership, including potentially challenging traits and behaviours, is crucial in attaining a comprehensive understanding of the subject (Alvesson & Einola, 2019; Kellerman, 2004; Pfeffer, 2015, 2016). Moreover, although some forms of 'dark leadership' can nurture creativity and innovation in the workplace, managers and supervisors must still adhere to the principles of deontology and abstain from unethical behaviour, even when it may result in favourable outcomes (Alvesson, 2010: 51–75; Ciulla, 2012; Den Hartog, 2015; Micewski & Troy, 2007). However, this does not mean that managers should not align their actions with contextual and cultural expectations, but that they should, by and large, stay within ethical boundaries (Den Hartog & Dickson, 2018; Meyer, 2014: 115–143). Leaders should strive to create an atmosphere of support, respect and an environment conducive to employee well-being.

Organizations should note that creativity and innovation can be influenced and often hindered by a range of negative behaviours and practices. For example, it can take an overt and active form when the leader is

intimidating and humiliating, or it can take a passive-aggressive form when subordinates are ignored or excluded. When employees feel threatened and disrespected, as is the case with abusive supervision, strong negative effects on creativity and innovation are usually to be expected. On the other hand, a leader can sometimes wield a great deal of power, appear benevolent, avoid watching employees closely and still produce compelling results. The frameworks presented in our review provide managers with insight into how creativity and innovation are affected, but also what factors, including leader and employee characteristics, can mitigate or enhance these effects. With greater self-awareness and understanding of personal and contextual differences, managers would be better able to tailor their approach to individuals and teams and unleash the creative potential of the people they lead.

Our review, with some exceptions, underscores the adverse impact of abusive and disrespectful leadership practices on employee engagement in creative pursuits. In such hostile work environments, employees are likely to feel discouraged, unenthusiastic, unappreciated and undervalued. This type of mistreatment triggers feelings of injustice, negative emotions and stress; undermines trust, commitment and collaboration; and prevents the sharing of new ideas, resulting in a decline of creativity and innovation within the organization. To counteract the adverse effects, organizations must take proactive measures to create a work environment that fosters creativity and innovation. These include fostering a culture of respect and equality; formulating policies to address and prevent abusive practices; equipping supervisors with the training and resources they need to communicate effectively, resolve conflict and handle complex situations; and fostering a supportive atmosphere where employees feel comfortable to speak up and are recognized and rewarded for their contributions. Through these measures, organizations can reduce the occurrence of abusive behaviours and establish a work environment that nurtures creativity and innovation.

CONCLUSION

Scholars studying the effects of leadership on creativity and innovation have long focused exclusively on the bright aspects of leadership. This exclusive focus on positive social influences has prevented us from developing a more comprehensive and genuine understanding of leadership, creativity and innovation in the workplace. Despite the challenges posed by theoretical pluralism, we brought together the emerging literature on creativity and innovation that focuses on the 'dark side of leadership'. This review illuminated the many conflicting findings in

the extant literature, but more importantly, it summarized the findings of moderating and mediating variables, highlighting some crucial and delicate nuances. We have highlighted the limitations of previous research and suggested ways in which the field can be advanced. We hope that this systematic review will lead to more rigorous and consequential contributions.

CODE AVAILABILITY

Not applicable.

ETHICS APPROVAL

Not applicable.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Not applicable.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

We hereby give our consent for publication.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

We hereby declare that all authors are listed and that each author: (1) has made a substantial contribution to the research reported, either in design of the study, or acquisition of data, or interpretation of findings; (2) has drafted or revised the content of the manuscript; (3) has given approval for the submitted version.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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