



## Self-centered leadership and work alienation: A negative social exchange perspective

Hisham Hamid Hawass

Professor of Human Resource Management

Correspondence: [Hisham Hamid Hawass]; [Faculty of Commerce, Damietta university, and affiliated with Faculty of Business Administration, Delta University for Science and Technology]; Email : [hisham.hawass@gmail.com](mailto:hisham.hawass@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

This paper demonstrates that self-centered leadership behaviors negatively affect the quality of social exchange between the employee and the organization, thus affecting the employee's experience of work alienation. In particular, it proposes that the employee's perceived organizational obstruction and dehumanization sequentially mediate the association between self-centered leadership behaviors and alienation. It examines work alienation in the rarely tapped context of the Egyptian organization and takes into consideration the cultural specialties of the Arab leadership behaviors. This study has collected primary data through questionnaires and used valid and reliable measurement scales. It conducted confirmatory factor analysis, measurement invariance, common method bias test and structural equation modeling in order to analyze the proposed empirical model. The findings reveal that the personalistic and individualistic behaviors of the self-centered leaders are associated with perceived organizational obstruction, dehumanization and work alienation.

**Keywords:** *self-centered leadership, perceived organizational obstruction, organizational dehumanization and work alienation*

### 1. Introduction

In the past several decades, Western scholars have contributed to the investigation of the antecedents of work alienation. Some management scholars have empirically examined models which mainly focus on two paradigms, namely; the organizational leadership and the organizational structure. Sarros et al (2002) emphasized that the transactional leadership style increases the employee's sense of alienation as it encourages heavy work formalization and the centralization of decision making. In addition, they argue that the transformational leadership is negatively associated with alienation since it encourages work redesigns which induce a sense of pride and psychological ownership.

In a similar context, Chiaburu et al (2014) conducted a meta-analysis on 45 primary studies in order to investigate the correlates of work alienation in the management and psychology literatures. They found that the supportive and the individual consideration styles of leadership are negatively associated with alienation. Furthermore, they emphasized that some characteristics of job design (e.g. task variety and significance) are negatively correlated with alienation. Interestingly, they emphasize that formalization is weakly associated with alienation. Moreover, Shantz et al (2015) found that decision-making autonomy is insignificantly associated with perceived work alienation. These findings contradict the common assumption that employee autonomy is positively associated with work engagement (Ashforth, 1989; and Sarros et al, 2002).

Based on the previously mentioned findings, it should be noted that the Western models underline the role of visionary and humane leadership behaviors in reducing employee perceptions of work alienation. However, these models largely define the relevant leadership behaviors from the contextual perspective of the Western firm. Some scholars argue that leadership is a culture-bound behavior (Ali, 2009). In other words, the perceived characteristics of the successful leaders may differ from country to another (Sabri, 2012). For example, Resick et al (2006) found that the Middle Eastern and Nordic

European societies tend to endorse the characteristics of the ethical leadership in a partially different manner.

Hawass (2019) illustrated that leadership studies in the Arab world should carefully consider the cultural specialties of the Arab societies. He postulated that self-centered leadership SCL is a commonly adopted managerial practice in many Arab organizations. Moreover, he argued that the strategic vision of the Arab organization is highly dependent on the character of the Arab leader. In this context, self-centered leaders are dominant managers who consider participatory decision making as a sign of managerial weakness. Furthermore, self-centered leaders are personalistic managers. They actively engage in the formation of informal groups and allies. These groups are responsible for protecting the political status of the managers. Additionally, they help managers pass their decisions through decorative committees and marginalize the roles of the other independent organizational members.

The current study proposes that the SCL construct takes into consideration the cultural norms which describe the mechanism of social interaction between the leaders and their employees in some Egyptian organizations. It emphasizes that SCL strongly relates to the employee's perception of alienation because it tends to engage at discriminatory practices which intentionally exclude potential rivals from participative decision-making activities.

On the other hand, the current study emphasizes that Western scholars have not reached a consensus regarding the significance of the relationship between the organizational structure of the firm and alienation. The contradictory findings may be due to the social differences among the examined sample groups. Hofstede (2011) demonstrated that work values may affect the employees' perceptions of the suitability of some organizational characteristics. For example, the Middle Eastern societies are strongly oriented towards uncertainty avoidance. These societies tend to prefer formalized working systems because they help create a clear (i.e. less uncertain) work environment. Thus, formalization may not significantly predict work alienation in some Arab societies.

Based on the aforementioned arguments, the present study proposes that the Western findings concerning the relationship between organizational structure and alienation may not be applicable to the Arab context. This is because the characteristics of the organizational structure may be perceived in a different manner by different social groups (Michaels et al, 1996).

The current study hypothesizes that the negative social exchange between the employee and the organization is a viable theoretical framework which can effectively explore the mechanisms through which SCL affects the employees' perceived work alienation. Negative social exchange is measured by the extent to which the employees view their organizational system as detrimental to their job performance. Wegner (1975) emphasized that individuals feel alienated where there is incompatibility between the social structure and their personality. He postulated that "the particular interplay of social structure and personality must be examined as the basis of alienation" (P.183). In a similar context, Twining (1980) views alienation as a relational construct that involves an interaction between the individual and the social-structural conditions of specific social situations such as organizations. He argues that alienation is "an interactional consequence of a negative encounter of some duration which involves the degree of felt separateness" (P. 422).

The current study addresses the negative social exchange perspective by investigating the mediating effects of POO and organizational dehumanization OD on the relationship between SCL and alienation. POO and OD are forms of negative exchange between the employee and the organization.

Gibney et al (2009) argued that employees tend to personify organizations and establish concrete beliefs concerning the quality of treatment that is received from the organization. Employees may hold their organization responsible for negative or unfair treatment they have obtained depending on their experience with that organization. Negative organization-based experiences usually motivate the employees to perceive their organization as obstructive. Gibney et al (2011) emphasized that the quality of the interaction between the employee and the overall organizational system that really matters when examining the phenomena of organizational attachment and relatedness.

On the other hand, OD represents the extent to which organizations treat their employees as objects and merely means to an end. A dehumanized employee is a person who feels that the organization treats him or her as a machine that is programmed to routinely perform specific tasks. The current study argues that dehumanization deeply affects the employee's perception of work alienation for two main reasons. It neglects the employee's need for self-actualization. Moreover, it ignores the employee dignity which forms an essential component of the employee's sense of self-worthiness at work.

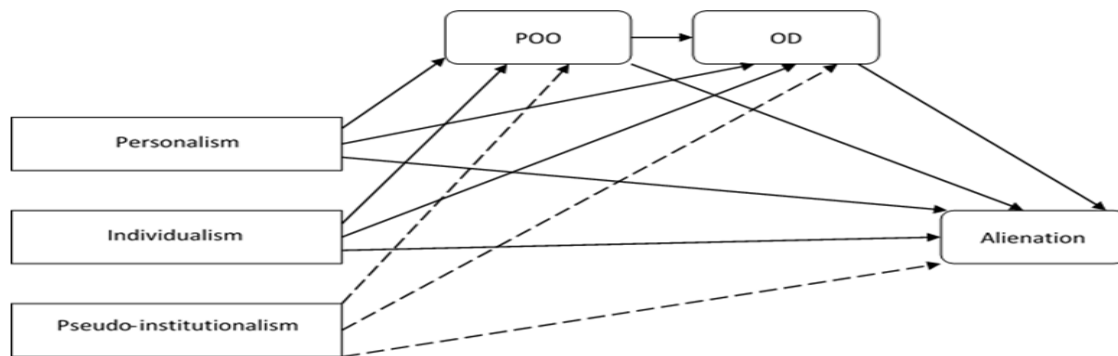


Figure1: The conceptual model  
 —————> Significant effect.  
 - - - - -> Insignificant effect.

The novelty of this paper is originally based on two points. First, it provides a framework for examining the antecedents of work alienation in the rarely investigated Egyptian context. It takes into consideration the cultural specialties of the organizational leadership. Kanungo (1990) argues that alienation research in the developing world is more meaningful when explanations of the phenomena are provided in terms of variables indigenous to the cultural context in which the research is organized. Second, the current study integrates the POO and OD frameworks within a serial mediation model of work alienation. Although both frameworks represent negative forms of social exchange between the employee and the organization, they have rarely been incorporated into empirical alienation research.

### Theoretical background and hypothesis development

#### Work alienation

Work alienation is a cognitive state of psychological separation (Kanungo, 1983). It occurs when the organization does not provide valuable opportunities to the employees to clearly express themselves, their capabilities and potentialities (Kanungo, 1979). The employee views the organization as an obstacle which limits his/her ability to achieve career objectives and satisfy salient needs. In this regard, work alienation is a perceptual state of mind through which employees usually suffer from negative affect and feelings of social isolation and apathy (Kanungo, 1992).

Seeman (1959) argues that the isolated "assign low reward value to goals or beliefs that are typically highly valued in the given society" (P. 789). In the organizational context, the isolated do not identify with organizational objectives. They regard work-related activities as boring, meaningless, and irrelevant (Nair and Vohra, 2010). O'Donohue and Nelson (2014) emphasize that work alienation occurs when the organization prevents individuals from enjoying a sense of wholeness and identity. The alienated feels that work fulfills the needs and ambitions of another person, but not his or her needs (Sarfraz 1997). Thus, the organization fails to motivate employees to consider work as an integral part of their social existence.

Nair and Vohra (2009) emphasize that the experience of estrangement and disconnect from work is the most common theme which underlies the conceptualization of work alienation. However, it should be noted that work alienation is a culture bound construct. Kanungo (1990) criticizes the over-reliance on Western models to investigate the antecedents of work alienation in Eastern cultures. He argues that the alienation research should investigate phenomena in terms of variables indigenous to the cultural context in which it researched. In this sense, he emphasizes that the developing nations care more about the values of equality and security than those of freedom and empowerment. Therefore, many Eastern organizations can help their employees avoid work alienation through providing more opportunities for financial security and fair rewards. In the same vein, Zaki and Alromeedy (2018) emphasize that job security strongly is closely related to the employee's perceived work alienation in the Egyptian travel agency sector. They argue that the Egyptian travel agency sector has undertaken major structural reforms and downsizing activities in order to respond to the economic challenges related to the 25th of January revolution. These major reforms have deeply contributed to

the Egyptian employee's sense of job insecurity. As a result, these employees felt powerless and unable to control the negative consequences associated with the rapidly changing tourism environment. They suffered from work disengagement and self-estrangement.

In a similar context, Tomeh (1974) argues that the poor economic condition of some Middle Eastern societies strongly affect their peoples' experience of social isolation especially when some organizational systems suffer from vicious cronyism and inefficient leadership behaviors. Dajani and Mohammed (2017) argue that the Egyptian employee's perceived organizational injustice is strongly associated with work alienation. They emphasize that the perceived procedural justice (i.e. how monetary and non-monetary rewards are distributed) and perceived informational justice (i.e. why the monetary and non-monetary rewards are distributed in a specific manner) are the strongest antecedents of alienation at work. They demonstrated that the negative economic conditions have further complicated the rivalry among competing employees and their concerns about the equitable distribution of rewards.

### **Organizational dehumanization OD**

From a social psychology perspective, Haslam (2006) argues that a dehumanizer is someone who denies humanness. He emphasizes a two-dimension model of dehumanization, namely; animalistic and mechanistic dehumanization. Regarding animalistic dehumanization, people are treated as incompetent, unintelligent, uncivilized and unsophisticated (Bastian and Haslam, 2011). Whereas, in mechanistic dehumanization, people are treated as an object and a means to an end, i.e. they are utilized as resources in order to accomplish the objectives of higher order institutions or individuals.

It should be noted that the current study is concerned with the mechanistic dimension of dehumanization because it is a more common phenomenon in modern organizations. Modern laws and organizational regulations prohibit discriminatory acts and protect the rights of equality among people.

The dehumanization phenomenon has received increased academic interest in organizational studies. Bell and Khoury (2011) postulated that the dehumanized feel they are objectified and denied personal subjectivity. Their behavior is controlled by the will and goals of another person (e.g., a business owner). The authors further emphasize that OD diminishes the individual and motivates him or her to dissociate from the organization. It restricts the employee's ability to maintain self-enhancement and actualization. Thus, OD is arguably associated with employee detachment and alienation. In the same context, the dehumanized employee perceives that the organization can easily replace him or her for the sake of achieving further economic gains.

The social experience of mechanistic dehumanization usually makes employees feel sad and angry about those who constantly degrade their identity (Bastian and Haslam, 2011). The dehumanized employee exerts great psychological efforts in order to be able to cope with these negative feelings and overcome their destructive effects on well-being. Caesens and Stinglhamber (2019) argue that OD thwarts the satisfaction of the employee's basic psychological needs (e.g., needs for relatedness). It increases the employee's sense of emotional exhaustion, anxiety and job dissatisfaction. In accordance with the previous findings, Nguyen and Stinglhamber (2021) emphasize that a dehumanized employee usually develops negative core self-evaluations which in turn leads to feelings of reduced job satisfaction.

The present study hypothesizes that the OD framework helps in understanding the employee's experience with work alienation. The dehumanized employee perceives that the organization strips of the individual from his or her true identity as human beings who wish to contribute to society through production and creativity (Healy and Wilkowska, 2017). It treats the employees as units that can be replaced or moved to different places without taking into account their personal desires.

### **Perceived organizational obstruction POO**

Gibney et al (2009) define POO as "the employee's belief that the organization obstructs, hinders or interferes with the accomplishment of his or her goals and is a detriment to his or her well-being" (P. 670). The employees with high POO tend to encounter strong feelings of psychological separateness from their organization's identity because they cannot satisfy their need for self-enhancement. In this context, Gibney et al (2011) emphasize that POO is positively associated with organizational dis-identification and detachment because the employees do not internalize their organization's values. The overwhelming organizational obstacles deteriorate the employees' ability to effectively achieve

their job-related objectives. It exposes the employees to situations where they feel that their image has been diluted. Consequently, it separates the employee's identity from that of his organization.

### **Self-centered leadership SCL**

SCL refers to "a personalized pattern of leadership which aims to enable the manager to put the whole organization under his/her thumb" (Hawass, 2019; P. 432). The self-centered leaders are strongly obsessed with the idea of dominating and controlling their employees in order to achieve their personal interests. These managers believe that superiors should be tough and distant in order to be respected (Shehata, 2003). In the context of Arab organizations, power is a zero sum game in which some leaders refuse to share or delegate authority in order to protect their organizational position (Sidani and Thornberry, 2010).

In many Arab organizations, self-centered leaders tend to follow the caliphal model of management (Khadra, 1990). The caliphal model of leadership emphasizes that the manager's character plays a decisive role in determining the mechanisms of decision making, conflict management and problem solving.

The international management literature lacks the operational scales which consider the distinctive cultural specialties of the Arab organizational leadership. In response to this lacuna in leadership research, Hawass (2019) designed the SCL scale. It represents a multi-dimensional pattern of leadership behaviors which involves personalism, individualism, and pseudo-institutionalism.

Personalism is "a subjective, egocentric view of the relationships of the individual to other people and things" (Khadra, 1990; P. 39). The self-centered leaders organize work tasks as if the organization is their personal property. Ali (1993) illustrates that the main characteristic of Arab organizations is the personalized nature of authority which motivates some leaders to subjectively handle managerial issues. In this sense, the personalistic view of management decisions inevitably creates a malfunctioning business environment which encourages personal conflicts and destructive divisions. The self-centered leaders routinely engage at the formation of informal coalitions *Tarbitat* within their organizations. These *Tarbitat* consist of highly trustful organizational members who help management to exchange reliable information and services which are beneficial to decision making and opportunity-seizing processes (Hutchings and Weir, 2006).

Individualism is "the tendency to make decisions regardless of the opinions of the group, or in spite of such opinions" (Khadra, 1990; P. 39). Hawass (2019) demonstrates that self-centered leaders do not prefer to delegate authorities to any employee. They are self-opinionated and do not care to consult their subordinates (Parnell and Hatem, 1999). Brown and Humphreys (1995) found that some Egyptian managers prefer the "quiet" employee who is strictly submissive to orders. That is, they view the employees who would like to share independent view about their organizational concerns as troublesome and quarrelsome.

Pseudo-institutionalism refers to the extent to which a leader manipulates organizational laws in order to serve his or her personal interests. For example, the manager may use formal committees/meetings as a cover to implement his or her personal objectives. In this context, he or she ensures that formal committees involve only those whose decisions comply with his or her opinion.

It should be noted that the pseudo-intuitionist practices of SCL intentionally create two paradoxical work environments. The first reflects the institutionalized environment in which leaders selectively use organizational laws in order to protect their image as the "corporate man". The second represents the informal environment where the managers adopt "behind the scenes" arrangements to handle organizational issues and fulfill their personal intentions. This paradoxical organizational reality may reduce the employee's faith in the credibility of the institutional system. It motivates the employees to resolve their own problems through informal communication channels (Shehata, 2003).

Personalism and work alienation: Explicating the direct and indirect associations.

The present study does not hypothesize a direct association between personalism and work alienation. The employee may form a state of cognitive engagement at work regardless of the personalistic behaviors of SCL. Job-related content plays an important role in keeping the employees psychologically connected to their work. For example, a devoted academic may love his or her profession because it intrinsically satisfies his or her needs for self-actualization regardless of the personal interests of school management.

The current study argues that personalism is associated with POO. The personalistic leaders are opportunistic managers. They seek interpersonal ties which can help them to accomplish their self-centered goals. An employee who explicitly shows signs of disagreement with leadership may encounter several organizational conflicts which hinder his or her ability to accomplish work-related

objectives. For example, the self-centered leader may excessively punish the disobeying employees for trivial mistakes in order to emotionally and mentally harm their sense of well-being. Personalism may negatively affect an employee's perception of organizational integrity because employees usually view the leadership character and behavior as strongly connected representations of the organizational identity (Mackey et al, 2018). Hence, a dysfunctional leader-member exchange is argued to be a strong sign of organizational obstruction.

In addition, the present study presumes that POO mediates the association between personalism and work alienation. Personalistic leaders make working life harder for the employees who do not comply with their personal objectives. They persistently use their power in order to put obstacles in the way of their disobeying employees. These obstacles badly affect the employee's perception of the manner in which organizations treat him or her (Akhtar et al, 2020). Therefore, the perceived negative employee-organization relationship (i.e. POO) is likely to lead to the employee's sense of cognitive separation from his or her organization (Gibney et al, 2011). This is because the employee notices that the organizational environment does not provide the opportunity to maintain self-actualization.

H1: POO mediates the association between personalism and work alienation.

Personalism is assumed to be associated with the employee's perception of OD. Self-centered leaders are highly concerned with using their managerial power to perform self-interest behaviors which may reduce employee satisfaction (Maner and Mead, 2010). They show less empathy and respect for their employees' interests and concerns (Magee and Langner, 2008). Nicol (2009) argues that leaders who are high on social dominance orientation (i.e. an individual's tendency to prefer disparity between groups) tend to value the interpersonal relationships which can help them to enhance their power and status. They discriminate against employees and categorize them according to their level of loyalty to leadership. Therefore, they create an opportunistic organizational environment in which some employees unfortunately perceive themselves as socially ostracized members whose main objective is to serve the desires of the leadership.

Based on the aforementioned arguments, OD is expected to mediate the association between personalism and work alienation. The personalistic behaviors of SCL are likely to influence the employee's perception of dehumanization, which in turn makes employees experience a cognitive separation from work. The discriminatory behaviors of SCL purposefully demean and humiliate some employees. The employees feel embarrassed and depressed because the management intentionally excludes them from relevant organizational events. They may exert tremendous emotional efforts in order to psychologically cope with the negative feelings of ostracism and neglect (Nguyen and Stinglhamber, 2021). This emotionally exhausting process badly affects the employees' sense of self-worthiness. They may blame themselves for their inability to relate to work groups and organizational events (Nguyen and Stinglhamber, 2020). As a result, the employees are likely to disengage from work because the organization represents a major source of distress and self-debasement.

H2: OD mediates the association between personalism and work alienation.

Drawing from the previous discussion, this study emphasizes that POO and OD serially mediate the association between personalism and alienation. The personalistic leaders exert every possible effort to take revenge against the employees who may not totally agree with their managerial style. They may excessively punish their rivals or enemies for trivial mistakes in order to emotionally harm their sense of well-being. The personalistic behaviors of SCL deeply affect the employee's POO. This argument agrees in substance with that of Mackey et al (2018). They found that the employees view leadership character and behavior as strong representations of organizational identity. Thus, the employee may perceive his or her organization as obstructive because of its dysfunctional leadership behaviors.

Furthermore, the current study argues that POO intensifies the employee's sense of OD. Organizational obstruction is a destructive force which obliges some Egyptian employees to believe that hard work is not rewarding, and that interpersonal relations are more valued at work. One survey respondent told the author that the subjective performance appraisal systems have treated her equally with lower-performing colleagues. Therefore, she decided to reduce her efforts at work in order to avoid emotional and physical exhaustion. In this sense, the perception of POO is dehumanizing to some employees because it creates a climate in which everybody is treated equally regardless of efforts expended and skills acquired. Consequently, the perception of OD leads to perceived work alienation because the organization does not provide employees with the opportunity to achieve self-actualization.

H3: The association between personalism and work alienation is mediated by two serial mediators: POO and OD respectively.

*Individualism and work alienation: exploring the direct and indirect relations*

Ramaswami et al (1993) argue that the employees tend to feel little control over their jobs when authority is heavily centralized within organizational management. They feel alienated because they are unable to express their thoughts and put their best effort at work. Schaubroeck et al (2017) argue that the authoritarian leadership (i.e. a leadership approach that emphasizes the use of authority to control followers) discourages the placement of the insider's status among their employees (i.e., the extent to which an employee perceives himself or herself as an insider within an organization). It curtails an employee's ability to develop psychological bonds with the organization and limits their potential to perceive themselves as truly engaged organizational members.

H4: Individualism is positively associated with alienation.

Moreover, the present study argues that the individualistic behaviors of self-centered leaders arguably increase the employee's POO. Li et al (2021) found that the authoritarian leadership increases employees' experience of perceived powerlessness (i.e. the inability to control job-related activities) and negatively affects their intrinsic motivation to accomplish professional goals. This is because the authoritarian leadership does not allow the employees to share power and engage in a constructive dialogue about alternatives to improve job performance. As a result, authoritarian leadership thwarts the employees' proactive behaviors which opt to bring about changes in the work environment.

In the context of the Egyptian organization, the individualistic leaders harm the employee-organization relationship because they do not wholeheartedly listen to the employees' work-related concerns. Therefore, the employee's inability to flexibly arrange various job duties may increase the perceived challenges and obstacles which curtail his or her effort to effectively tackle the required tasks.

On the basis of the above arguments, the current study hypothesizes that the individualistic behaviors of SCL increase an employee's perception of organizational obstruction, which in turn affects his or her sense of work alienation. In this sense, individualism influences the employee's experience of alienation as it deepens his or her experience of powerlessness or the inability to control job-related events. Accordingly, the following hypothesis emerges:

H5: POO mediates the association between individualism and work alienation.

In the context of OD, individualistic leaders treat their employees as tools whose sole purpose is the strict compliance and implementation of orders. These leaders do not care about others' opinions because they perceive themselves as the most competent among staff members. Moreover, they believe that the participative management style is a strong sign of leadership weakness and indecisiveness. Consequently, self-centered leaders usually adopt a coercive management style which pushes the employees to obey orders (Nicol, 2009). This threatening managerial style motivates the employees to experience a state of mechanistic dehumanization because they observe that the organization does not appreciate their humanistic input (i.e. creative ideas and constructive participation). Instead, it treats them as if they are robots that are entitled to perform specific routines.

This study emphasizes that OD mediates the association between individualism and alienation. The individualistic leaders tend to objectify their employees in order to prevent them from participation in strategy development and decision making. The objectification process inflates the employee's perception of OD, thus leading to work alienation. The employees feel alienated because they view their work as the product of someone else's directions and desires.

H6: OD mediates the association between individualism and alienation.

Drawing from the previous discussion, the present study theorizes that POO and OD serially mediate the relationship between individualism and alienation. The problematic work conditions presumably expose the employees to negative feelings of dehumanization because they do not have the strength to manage their own work and effectively participate in the decision making process. Therefore, the employee's perception of OD increases his or her feelings of work alienation. This is because dehumanization is a negative perceptual state of mind which diminishes the individual's definition of his or her self-worthiness.

H7: The association between individualism and work alienation is mediated by two serial mediators: POO and OD respectively.

*Pseudo-institutionalism, POO, OD, and alienation*

Although pseudo-institutionalism is merely a feudal organizational system which negatively affects the employee's attitude towards organizational regulations, it does not necessarily harm the employee's work performance. Alternatively, it may provide a more flexible alternative to some formal organizational procedures which the employees perceive as rigid, time-consuming and unproductive (Shehata, 2003).

Pseudo-institutionalism does not necessarily dehumanize or objectify the employees. It helps both the managers and the employees to avoid expressing organizational problems by using formal channels which may negatively affect the managerial or organizational image (Sidani and Thornberry, 2010).

Moreover, the present study emphasizes that pseudo-institutionalism is not associated with work alienation. An employee may perceive that the content of his or her job is engaging and satisfying despite being excluded from some organizational committees. In this context, the employee may enjoy work because its content (i.e. duties, responsibilities and intents) allows him or her to maintain self-actualization and self-enhancement.

## 2. Material and methods

### 2/1. Population and sample

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the target sample. The target respondents are employees who work in Egyptian public, private and business organizations. The target organizations are the administrative bodies of three Egyptian universities, three hospitals, five schools, a police station and the electricity authority. The target organizations are located in three Egyptian governorates, namely; Al-Dakahleyyah, Damietta, and Portsaid.

Table (1): The sample demographics (n=289)

Characteristics	%
<b><i>Gender</i></b>	
Male	47.4
Female	52.6
<b><i>Age</i></b>	
20-30 years old	32.5
31-40 years old	35.3
41-50 years old	17.6
51-60 years old	13.5
> 60 years old	5
<b><i>Work experience at the organization</i></b>	
< 1 years	8.3
1 : 5 years	28.7
6 : 10 years	26.3
11 : 15 years	15.6
> 15 years	21.1
<b><i>The type of the sector</i></b>	
Public	72.3
Private	19.4
Business	8
<b><i>The managerial position</i></b>	
Top management	6.9
Middle-level management	38.4
Front-line management	15.2
Non-managerial position	39.4



## 2/2. Measurement

The dependent variable: work alienation

This study depends on the work alienation measure developed by Nair and Vohra (2009). Several studies have confirmed the reliability and validity of the measure in different social contexts. It examines work alienation from a uni-dimensional perspective. The measurement scale involves eight questions. A sample of the measurement items includes "I feel estranged from myself", "I often wish I were doing something else", and "over the years I have become disillusioned about my work".

### **The independent variable: SCL**

The present study adopts the SCL measurement scale developed by Hawass (2019). The scale has been reliably and validly reproduced in the Egyptian context. It measures the SCL behaviors from a multi-dimensional perspective. The measurement scale involves sixteen items. A sample of the scale items involve "the manager keeps aside/postpones the proposals which contradict his/her personal objectives and policies", "the manager organizes work tasks as if the organization were his/her personal property", and "the manager, usually, prefers the quiet employee who does not bother him or her with suggestions which oppose his or her policies". The first item represents pseudo-institutionalism, whereas the second one measures personalism. The third item measures individualism.

### **The mediators:**

The first mediator in the hypothesized model is POO. It is measured using Gibney et al's (2009) POO scale. This scale examines the employee's perceived organizational obstruction from a uni-dimensional perspective. The scale has reliably and validly produced the proposed uni-dimensional factor structure in several organizational contexts. The measurement consists of four items. A sample of the scale items includes "My organization obstructs the realization of my professional goals", and "my organization is a detriment to my well-being".

The second mediator is OD. The measurement scale is developed by Caesens and Stinglhamber (2019). It measures the mechanistic form of dehumanization in organizational contexts. The scale has been extensively used in OD research. The measurement scale involves eleven items. A sample of the scale items includes "my organization considers me as a number", "my organization treats me as if I were an object", and "my organization makes me feel that one worker is easily as good as any other".

### **Controls**

This study uses "gender" as a demographic control. It has been measured as an ordinal variable where (0 = males, and 1 = females). Several studies found a significant association between gender, the perception of powerlessness and work alienation (Leiter, 1985). In addition, the current study uses "the managerial position of the respondent" as a demographic control. Logically, the employees with high managerial positions may better control their work-related circumstances than the employees who occupy lower managerial positions. This is because the employees who enjoy high managerial positions have more power which enables them to reduce the negative effects of the perceived organizational constraints. In this context, Abol-Ela (2013) emphasize that the managerial position of the Egyptian worker is negatively associated with the perceived work alienation. The managerial position is measured as an ordinal variable where (0 = non-managerial position, 1 = front-line management position, 2 = middle level management position, and 3 = top management position).

In contrast, the current study uses "negative ties with leadership" as a relational control. Labianca (2014) defines negative ties as "relatively enduring relationships inducing negative affect (feelings), judgments about others, and/or behavioral intentions directed towards others" (P. 240). That is, a negative tie is an emotionally distant relationship where two or more parties prefer to avoid each other. Labianca and Brass (2006) argue that negative ties with high status organizational members (i.e. leaders) are more detrimental to the employee's perception of organizational attachment, promotability and empowerment than those with low status colleagues. Negative ties with leaders may occur due to factors beyond the scope of the behavioral patterns of SCL (i.e. personalism, individualism, and pseudo-institutionalism). For example, one respondent explains that she tries to avoid her manager as much as she can because the manager is ill tempered. Therefore, the current study examines whether SCL can explain further variance beyond that of the negative ties. The negative tie with the manager is measured as an ordinal variable. The measure is adapted from Labianca et al's measure of negative ties (1998). The respondents were asked to respond to the following question "sometimes managers make us uncomfortable or uneasy and, therefore, we try to avoid interacting with them. Do you try to avoid interacting with your manager?" (0 = no, 1 = yes).

### **Procedures**

The present study has used a self-report questionnaire to collect primary data from employees at the Egyptian public, private, and business sectors. The self-report questionnaire is suitable for the data collection process because it helps the researcher to collect important information regarding the employee's personal experiences, perceptions, and attitudes regarding the examined organizational phenomena.

This study has used a snowballing-convenience sampling approach and distributed the sample to 500 employees in collaboration with a group of master degree candidates. The 12-week data collection process was closely supervised by the researcher. He contacted the top managers of the aforementioned organizations and asked them to motivate employees to complete the questionnaire. Totally, 289 filled out questionnaires were received, with a response rate of approximately 58%.

## Results

### Confirmatory factor analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood estimation has been conducted using AMOS statistical package in order to ensure the reproducibility of the six first-order factor structure (i.e. the hypothesized model) in the current sample. Table 2 shows the measurement model's fit index values. It reveals that the  $\chi^2/df$  value is below the threshold value of 3 (Bollen, 1989). Moreover, it indicates that the values of CFI, TLI, and IFI are much higher than the cutoff value of .9 (Bentler, 1992). It shows that the values of RMSEA and SRMR are well below the cutoff value of .08 (Browne and Cudec, 1993).

Table (2) : The confirmatory factor analysis of the measurement model:

The Model	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	SRMP	CFI	IFI
1. 6 first order factor structure (3-1 <sup>st</sup> order SCL and 3-1 <sup>st</sup> order factors of POO, OD and alienation)	2.165	0.064	0.0515	0.929	0.929
2. 1 higher-order factor (i.e. SCL) and three-first order (POO, OD, and alienation)	2.157	0.063	0.052	0.929	0.924
3. 2 higher-order factor structure (i.e. one for SCL, and one for POO, OD and alienation altos ether)	2.197	0.064	0.0554	0.926	0.927
4. 1 global factor structure (i.e. SCL) three first order (i.e. POO, OD and alienation)	2.84	0.07	0.0594	0.886	0.886
5. One higher order structure while contains the six first – order factors.	2.283	0.067	0.0674	0.921	0.921

Note. RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean squared residual, CFI = comparative, TLI = Tucker-Lewis index, IFI = incremental fit index.

Table 2 compares the hypothesized model with 4 other competing models. It should be noted that the six first-order factor structure model (i.e. model 1) fits the data better than the third, fourth and fifth models respectively. However, the second model's fit index values are merely identical to those of the first model. This is largely due to the fact that the SCL construct can be handled either as a three-first order factor structure or higher order factor structure (Hawass, 2019). The first model provides a more accurate picture of the nature of the relationships among the hypothesized constructs. This is because the current hypotheses emphasize that each dimension of SCL affects the examined dependent variables in a different manner. Thus, the current study chooses the first model in order to test the hypotheses and rejects the second model because it fails to depict the differential effects of each SCL dimension.

Furthermore, the current study excluded two questionnaire items from further structure equation modeling. These items are "I don't feel connected to the events in my workplace", and "my organization considers me as a tool devoted to its own success". The first item belongs to the work alienation measure, whereas the second one refers to the OD measure. The first item was excluded because it weakly loads into its respective scale. The item standardized regression coefficient was .35 and the squared multiple correlation was .12. The weak factor loading of the first item profoundly affected the discriminant validity of the work alienation construct. The decision to remove this item significantly improved the work alienation scale's convergent and discriminant validity (table 3).

The second item was excluded because the findings of some earlier exploratory factor analyses showed that the OD scale suffers from a Heywood case. The item is strongly correlated with another item in the OD scale. The factor loadings of both items are similar (1.047). The main reason for this strong correlation is that both

items merely represent the same meaning "i.e. my organization considers me as a tool to use for its own ends" and "my organization considers me as a tool devoted to its own success ". Removing the second item greatly improved the overall measurement model fit.

Correlation, reliability, convergent and discriminant validity

Table 3 shows the correlations between the hypothesized variables, the composite reliability, and the average variance extracted value of each scale. The scales' reliabilities are well above the threshold value of .7. In addition, The AVEs are higher than the cutoff value of .5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). This finding means that the examined scales have appropriate convergent validity levels. In a similar context, it should be noted that the squared AVE value of each scale is higher than its inter-construct correlation values. This means that the examined scales have reasonable discriminant validity.

Table (3): The correlation matrix

Variables	$\bar{x}$	SD	C.R.	AVE	Sq.AVE	Work alienation	OD	POO	Person	Individ.	Pseudo
Work alienation	32.8	12.34	0.904	0.576	0.759	--	0.746**	0.749**	0.619**	0.665**	0.593**
OD	49	17.4	0.941	0.621	0.787	--	--	0.638**	0.755*	0.771**	0.689**
POO	16.6	6.81	0.892	0.677	0.82	--	--	--	0.625**	0.618**	0.559**
Person	21.06	8.95	0.926	0.714	0.845	--	--	--	--	0.84**	0.812*
Individ	21.8	8.54	0.93	0.728	0.853	--	--	--	--	--	0.832
Pseudo	23.91	10.3	0.94	0.724	0.851	--	--	--	--	--	--

Notes:  $\bar{x}$  = mean, SD = standard deviation, C.R. = composite reliability, AVE= average variance extracted

\*\* P < 0.01, \* P < 0.05 (two-tailed)

### Measurement invariance

Measurement model invariance MI is a valuable validation test which enables researchers to investigate whether the examined model actually measures the same construct across the groups which constitute the target sample (Byrne, 2004).

The current study examines MI across the female and male groups (n1 = 152, and n2 = 137 respectively). The first step in MI test is to check for configural invariance, allowing the researchers to examine whether the original factor structure which is represented in the earlier confirmatory factor analysis can be validly reproduced across the two gender groups without constraining model parameters. The findings of the multi-group CFA show that the values of X<sup>2</sup>/df, CFI, IFI, and RMSEA are 1.85, .9, .901, and .054 respectively. These values support the configural invariance of the measurement model across the gender groups.

The second step in MI test is to examine the metric invariance of the measurement model. This test investigates whether the factor loadings do not significantly change across the two groups. In this test, the current author constrains the factor loadings to be equal across the two groups in order to examine whether the measurement model fit becomes significantly worse than that of the unconstrained model. The findings reveal that the measurement model fit index values of X<sup>2</sup>/df, CFI, IFI, and RMSEA are 1.822, .9, .901, and .054 respectively. Furthermore, the chi square indifference test was calculated in order to figure out whether changes in model fit between the constrained model and the unconstrained one are significant. The test reveals that the two models are indifferent (P = .858).

Finally, the final step in MI test is to examine scalar invariance. This step investigates whether the measurement intercepts and the structural covariance of the measurement model are not significantly different across the gender groups. The current author constrained the measurement intercepts and the structural covariance to be equal across the two groups.

With respect to the constrained measurement intercepts model, the fit index values of X<sup>2</sup>/df, CFI, IFI, and RMSEA are 1.795, .901, .901, and .053 respectively. Furthermore, the chi square indifference test revealed that the constrained model is insignificantly different from that of the unconstrained one (P = .869). In contrast, the fit index values of the constrained structural covariance model are 1.787, .9, .901, .052 respectively. The chi square indifference test reveals that the constrained model is insignificantly different from that of the unconstrained one (P = .684).

Based on the previously mentioned findings, the examined measurement model is invariant across the female and male groups.

### Common method bias CMB

This study applied the marker technique in order to statistically control for the potential impact of CMB on the predictive analyses (Simmering et al, 2015). The social desirability bias scale SDB (Paulhaus, 1984) is used as a

marker which helps to evaluate the extent to which the proposed model is badly affected by CMB. The Cronbach alpha reliability score of the scale is 78.3.

The first step involves a CFA of the measurement model while co-varying its six first-order factors with the SDB. The model fit values of the indexes X<sup>2</sup>/df, CFI, IFI, RMSEA, and SRMR are 2.074, .915, .916, .061, and .0574, respectively. The model fits the data reasonably well. The AVEs of the POO, OD, alienation, personalism, individualism and pseudo-institutionalism scales are .677, .62, .57, .713, .728, and .717 respectively. The six factors are above a threshold value of .5 which indicates a reasonable construct convergent validity.

The second step includes another CFA of the measurement model. However, the SDB functions as a common factor relating to all the indicators of the model. The model fit values of the indexes X<sup>2</sup>/df, CFI, IFI, RMSEA, and SRMR are 2.082, .918, .919, .061, and .0547, respectively. The new model fits the data better than the previous one. The AVEs of the POO, OD, alienation, personalism, individualism and pseudo-institutionalism scales are .677, .62, .571, .714, .727, and .708, respectively. The new AVEs have not significantly changed from those of the previous model.

The third step is to constrain the SDB indicators to Zero and conduct chi-square difference test between the unconstrained and the constrained models in order to investigate whether the SDB effect is insignificant. The chi-square difference test shows that the p-value is significant (.00345). This means that the measurement model is affected by SDB.

The final step is to investigate whether the SDB effect is evenly distributed across the factors. In this context, the SDB indicators were constrained to be equal. Next, a chi-square indifference test was conducted in order to compare the equally constrained model with the unconstrained model. The chi-square test shows that the p-value is significant (.0001). This means that the SDB effect is unevenly distributed across the factors of the measurement model. Therefore, the current study retains the SDB factor as a control variable in the next structural equation model. This should control for the potential effects of SDB on the hypothesized measurement model.

#### Structure equation modeling

Table 4 shows the direct effects of the hypothesized independent variables on the dependent variables. The findings support the earlier hypothesis H4.

Table (4): The results of SEM – direct effects:

Variables	POO				OD				Alienation			
	Estimate	LCI*	UCI*	SE	Estimate	LCI*	UCI*	SE	Estimate	LCI*	UCI*	SE
SDB	-0.009	-0.057	0.038	0.056	-0.044	-0.08	-0.007	-0.043	0.019	-0.025	0.056	0.05
Gender	0.107	0.074	0.154	0.048	0.088	0.054	0.116	0.037	-0.023	-0.056	0.009	0.04
Position	0.088	0.046	0.123	0.048	0.008	-0.025	0.04	0.037	-0.004	-0.037	0.031	0.04
NT	0.105	0.061	0.16	0.057	-0.053	-0.077	-0.011	0.038	-0.065	-0.099	-0.026	0.045
Personalism	0.322	0.194	0.42	0.121	0.33	0.21	0.392	0.111	-0.104	-0.195	-0.006	0.116
Individualism	0.306	0.201	0.421	0.129	0.388	0.298	0.483	0.104	0.133	0.013	0.223	0.124
Pseudo-instit.	0.003	-0.086	0.107	0.121	-0.017	-0.079	-0.07	0.085	0.044	-0.04	0.145	0.108
POO	--	--	--	--	0.203	0.169	0.28	0.062	0.468	0.404	0.524	0.069
OD	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.411	0.348	0.486	0.08

Notes: LCI = Lower confidence interval, UCI = upper confidence interval, SE = standard error. \* Bio-corrected percentile method.

Regarding the indirect relationships, table 5 shows that the hypotheses of the current study have been met (i.e. H1, H2, H3, H5, H6, and H7, respectively). Furthermore, table 6 exhibits the total effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. According to the APA dictionary of psychology (<https://dictionary.apa.org/total-effect>), the total effect is the total extent to which the dependent variable is affected by the independent variable, including any indirect effect through a mediator.

Table (5): The results of SEM – specific indirect effects.

The specific indirect path	Estimate	LCI*	UCI*	SE*
POO → OD → Alienation	0.081	0.037	0.144	0.026
Personalism → OD → Alienation	0.128	0.036	0.299	0.066
Personalism → POO → Alienation	0.142	0.021	0.273	0.063
Personalism → POO → OD → Alienation	0.025	0.007	0.063	0.013
Individualism → OD → Alienation	0.156	0.071	0.296	0.055
Individualism → POO → Alienation	0.14	0.021	0.297	0.067
Individualism → POO → OD → Alienation	0.025	0.005	0.067	0.014
Pseudo-institution → OD → Alienation	-0.007	-0.086	0.068	0.04
Pseudo-institution → POO → Alienation	0.001	-0.011	0.026	0.058
Pseudo-institution → POO → OD → Alienation	0.0001	-0.02	0.026	0.011

Note: LCI = lower confidence interval, UCI = upper confidence intervals, SE = standard error. Bias-corrected percentile method.

### Discussion

This study provides empirical evidence that an employee's perceived work alienation increases when the leadership adopts self-centered behaviors. It emphasizes that work alienation occurs as a result of a chain of mediation effects which put the employee in stressful work situations. These stressful situations involve the perceptions of organizational obstruction and dehumanization.

Table (6): The results of SEM – total effects:

The specific indirect path	Estimate	LCI*	UCI*	SE*
Personalism → Alienation	0.209	-0.062	0.492	0.14
Individualism → Alienation	0.461	0.197	0.718	0.133
Individualism → Alienation	0.039	-0.197	0.3	0.127
POO → Alienation	0.551	0.42	0.682	0.066

Notes: Lower confidence interval. \* upper confidence interval. \* SE = standard error, bias corrected percentile method.

Although personalism is indirectly associated with work alienation (table 5), it has an insignificant total effect on alienation (table 6). This is probably due to the insignificant direct association between personalism and work alienation (table 4). The Egyptian employee may cleverly tackle the personalistic behaviors of his or her leaders by trying to avoid their managers. The Egyptians are collectivist people who prefer to show in-group loyalty and agreeableness in order to improve their social life at work (Hawass, 2016). They may choose not to interfere with leadership objectives in order to avoid retaliatory leadership behaviors. In addition, the Egyptian employee may wholeheartedly choose to isolate himself or herself from the leader's tarbitat and engage more deeply at the positive aspects of his or her job. This employee tactic temporarily creates a comfortable work situation which may easily erode when conflicting interests arise between managers and followers. The erupted conflict motivates the SCL to use his or her power in order to obstruct the employee's performance, devalue the employee's role at work and consequently alienate him or her.

Interestingly, individualism has the strongest total effect on alienation compared to the other dimensions of SCL (table 6). Individualism is directly associated with alienation (table 4). In addition, it is indirectly related to alienation through the mediating effects of POO and OD (table 5). Although the Egyptian employee flexibly tolerates status differences and power inequalities (Parnell and Hatim, 1999), he or she perceives individualism as an exclusionary act which forcefully disengages the employee's mindset from the organizational identity. Individualism does not allow employees to control their jobs in the manner which they view suitable and efficient. Moreover, it eliminates the employees' right to express their thoughts, which in turn makes them feel like programmed machines. This finding is originally consistent with the well-established Western management

philosophy of autonomy and perceived employee engagement. However, it contradicts Kanungo's (1990) view that workers in Eastern societies are not very concerned about freedom and control in their jobs.

Furthermore, pseudo-institutionalism is insignificantly associated with POO, OD, and work alienation (table 4). Some employees may accept this managerial behavior because it helps them resolve conflicts outside the formally rigid organizational systems. It may represent the only organizational outlet through which some employees are allowed to freely express their own concerns (Shehata, 2003). However, unfortunately, this outlet does not necessarily allow employees to control their job duties. The manager carefully listens to his or her employees, nonetheless, he or she does not necessarily feel obliged to do what the employees desire.

Although pseudo-institutionalism is insignificantly associated with OD and alienation, it has a very weak negative relationship with both variables (table 4). This finding supports the study's argument regarding the role of pseudo-institutionalism in easing organizational tensions in a manner which enhances the manager's formal position at work.

Furthermore, table 6 shows that the total effect of POO on work alienation is stronger than that of the other dimensions of SCL. The employee may consider SCL as an obstructive work force. However, the organizational system may involve different other characteristics (e.g., strategies, policies, and rigid hierarchies) which have more devastating effects on employee performance and engagement.

Regarding the demographic controls, this study found that the Egyptian females are more subjected to POO than the Egyptian males. Metcalfe (2007) argues that the main challenge which faces working Middle Eastern females is the difficulty to maintain a balance between family concerns and the job-related obligations. She emphasizes that some Middle Eastern organizations do not embrace efficient human resource management practices which help females establish such a balance. Many working females choose to take extended vacations in order to devote more time to their families (i.e. children) rather than pursuing their career goals. This decision may delay her career prospects compared to her colleagues.

In addition, this study found that the Egyptian females are more affected by OD than their male colleagues. Heilman (2001) argues that gender stereotypes form the basis upon which gender bias occurs in organizational settings. She emphasizes that gender stereotyping is the main reason for the discriminatory treatment of women in organizations, which in turn badly affects their career advancement opportunities. In a similar context, Mousa (2021) investigated the obstacles faced by women in four Egyptian universities through semi-structured interviews. He found that some gender stereotypes deeply affect women's experience with discrimination at work. For instance, one of the participants emphasized that some of her male colleagues generally do not expect women to efficiently take on managerial positions. In this regard, few old Egyptian proverbs support this way of thinking. For example, "el set malhash ella betha" is a proverb which emphasizes that the home is the right place for a woman.

Surprisingly, this study found that the managerial position of the Egyptian employee is positively associated with POO. This finding contradicts the long-held proposition of the relationship between power and autonomy. The Egyptian organization is heavily centralized and bureaucratic institution. The employees who occupy high managerial positions may face extreme challenges from higher authorities which closely monitor their behavior and interfere with their decisions. In this sense, individualism overshadows the managerial system throughout the organizational hierarchy. It is not surprising to note that many Egyptian managers quote the phrase "according to the directions of the president" when they communicate political decisions to their followers (Shehata, 2003). This quotation strongly indicates that some Egyptian managers may not actually have the autonomy to make their own decisions.

Finally, table 4 shows that the negative employee ties with SCL are positively associated with POO. Logically, leadership forms the basis through which the employee obtains updated information and experienced advice. The inability to communicate with leadership certainly inhibits the employees from obtaining the resources necessary to effectively perform their tasks.

#### **Research implications and future directions**

From a theoretical perspective, the current study provided some insights to work alienation. It emphasizes that POO is a valuable theoretical framework which comprehensively depicts the impact of negative social exchange on perceived work alienation. POO explicates the mechanism by which SCL behaviors deeply affect



the employee's experience of alienation. In addition, it explains the nature of the interrelationships between the SCL behaviors and the employees' perceived OD.

In the same vein, this study demonstrates the importance of considering the OD framework in understanding the associations between SCL, POO on the one hand, and alienation on the other. It shows that personalism and individualism deeply affect the employee's experience of marginalization, which consequently leads to the employee's perceived alienation. Moreover, it shows that the negative member-organization exchange contributes to the employee's perception of objectification and alienation.

The current study has collectively integrated the POO and OD frameworks in order to investigate the chain of effects which link the SCL behaviors to work alienation. Although the Egyptian worker relatively tolerates power distance, he or she negatively responds to the self-centered leadership behaviors. Feelings of obstruction and dehumanization which are caused by the leader's selfish behaviors severely strip the employee's mind of the core of the organizational identity. They create a sense of employee boredom, dissatisfaction, and hopelessness. These negative feelings motivate the employee to consider the organizational system as non-representative of his or her true self.

From a practical perspective, the aforementioned adverse effects cannot be easily overcome. It is deeply rooted in the socio-cultural aspects of the Egyptian organizational system. Top management should evaluate the current state of human resource management HRM practices in the Egyptian firm. It should consider embedding formal HRM practices which strictly monitor the nonprofessional behaviors of some self-centered leaders. These formal practices should strongly communicate and regulate the values of justice, empowerment and professionalism in order to reduce the employees' potential perceptions of obstruction, dehumanization and alienation. Pseudo-institutionalism is sometimes perceived as an informal policy of resolving employee concerns. However, it cannot effectively replace a healthy organizational system which professionally regulates the leader-member relationship on the one hand, and the person-organization exchange on the other.

Future studies may investigate the conditions where some of the examined relationships can be moderated by the effects of other variables. For example, the author argues that the relationship between POO and alienation is moderated by continuance commitment (Meyer et al, 1990). According to the Oxford dictionary of Human Resource Management, continuance commitment occurs when " an employee remains with a particular organization either because there are costs of leaving (loss of friends, loss of pension benefit, loss of familiar environment, etc.) outweigh the benefits of taking a new job in a different organization, or because there is a lack of alternative employment opportunities (<https://www.oxfordreference.com>). In this context, employee perception of the paucity of alternative job offers may further intensify the negative impact of POO on work alienation. This is because the employee feels compelled to experience a state of organizational obstruction for an extended period of time.

It should be noted that the SCL literature on Arab organizations is still in the infancy stage. Further studies are needed to examine its potential negative effects on some employee outcomes which are particularly related to organizational attachment and identification.

#### **Research limitations**

The present study was based on a cross-sectional design to examine the hypothesized serial mediation model. Therefore, inferences about causality may be problematic. Moreover, the research model has been affected by social desirability bias. However, the current study has statistically controlled for the effects on social desirability on the hypothesized relationships. Table 4 shows that it is not significantly associated with any of the variables examined.

In conclusion, the current study provides preliminary insights into the potential negative effects of SCL on work alienation through the mediating effects of POO and OD. It indicates the importance of examining work alienation from a negative social exchange perspective at the individual (i.e. leader-member exchange) and the organizational (i.e. organization-member exchange) levels.

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