

Impact of Inclusive Leadership on Project Success with Mediating Role of Employee Motivation

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ABSTRACT

The impact of inclusive leadership on project success has been discussed widely in project management literature and the relation between them have been always supported. Although, little is known about the phenomena that make this mechanism effective. To explore it, we introduce employee motivation as mediator that can impact the project success, with the implementation of inclusive leadership. This study will try to investigate the mediating role of employee motivation and its impact on project success.

Keywords: *Employee motivation; Inclusive leadership; Project Success*

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays an important role in achieving project goals and creating required changes for effective project management. (Kim, 2012) leadership style helps project managers to achieve the project goals by implementing the leadership style by practicing inclusiveness at different levels of work environment. Leadership role is very complicated at organizational level especially on project. As project teams are comes under the umbrella of specific project which is time bound and have limited scope. (S. U. Rehman, 2020) As project employees comes under the project with the short passage of time having limited scope employees' losses their focus and get demotivated. Leader needs to motivate their employees by motivating them. Motivation can be provided through various means by providing financial coverage, health packages (Shahzadi et al., 2014a). In contrast, there are many other ways to motivate employees by giving them space to take initiatives within projects, in addition providing space to let them speak and take the major role in decision making. Thus, leadership style has a prominent role to motivate their employees. (Tehnia 2017) investigate the mediating role of person job fit between the associations of inclusive leadership and project success and found its positive impact on project success. Thus, within different leadership styles one of the unique ways to find the

project success is project manager leadership style and that is leadership which is based on inclusion. Nembhard and Edmondson were the first to propose the idea of inclusive leadership (2006). Inclusionary leadership is a relatively new concept in the literature, and few research have looked at its impacts in the workplace setting. (Tehnia 2017). Project success is complex term that how can a project can be rated to be successful as there is no fix standard. However, traditionally project success is measured on the basis of its triple constraints (Time, Scope, and Budget). Thus, the above constraints are considered to be achievable with the employees are motivated. (S. U. Rehman, 2020) motivate researcher to investigate inclusive leadership affects the project success with mediating effects of variables like motivation of the employees.(M. A. U. Rehman, n.d.) Also emphasis work more on leadership style especially in Pakistan.

1.2 Research Gap

As the ultimate goal is project success for an organization-based company or project base company. (S. U. Rehman, 2020) motivate researcher to investigate inclusive leadership affects the project success with mediating effects of variables like motivation of the employees.(M. A. U. Rehman, n.d.) Also emphasis work more on leadership style especially in Pakistan. Project management leadership style literature is yet limited. Thus, it will be found in this study whether inclusive leadership impact the project. Moreover, the other leadership styles like transformational are implemented to analyze the result on project success.

1.3 Problem Statement

The literature of project management especially the leadership style is in developing stage. Thus, very few studies have been done to test the leadership style at organizational level in software and hardware development projects. Inclusive leadership style, most to test the leadership style on project success. It focuses on the characteristics of the leader, as well as the characteristics of the employee-leader relationship. Because of this collectivist nature, inclusive leaders demonstrate a more comprehensive approach to leadership, in which employees have a high-quality relationship with the leader, and as a result, they perform better, enhancing project success.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bass and Avolio stated that there is no specific definition of the leadership as it is very complex task because the study always varies so there is no acceptable leadership definition, yet few researchers found the definition of leadership as it is an act of influencing or the persons trait qualities(Crispen et al., 2013). There are several theories are studied and stated on the literature to support the argument of leadership theory.

The social exchange theory defines the relationship that is developed between two individuals through a cost benefit analysis. In other words it can be stated as the relationship can be measured on some mathematical metrics. (*What Is Social Exchange Theory?*, n.d.). In contrast with the leader member exchange the is emphasis on the quality of relationship between two individuals that are the leaders and their followers (Erdogan & Bauer, 2015). The core concepts lie within this theory is how the relationship is established between member and manager goes through multiple stages to access the abilities of the member. (*The Leader-Member Exchange Theory*, n.d.) In first stage the member join the team and accessed by the leader in a time frame while in second phase role making in which leader gives maximum time to the team members and facilitate them via various development activities to share a good bond of relationship.

The current study will be based on Leader Member Exchange theory (LMX). The LMX theory is interduce by Fred Dansereau, George Graen, and William Haga in 1975 also known as Vertical Dayad Linkage. (Erdogan & Bauer, 2015). The relationship is based upon the exchange of relationship between leader and team members. High quality relation exchange is developed between employee and manager and the characteristics are **trust**, liking, and mutual respect, and the nature of the relationship quality has implications.

2.1 Inclusive Leadership and Project Success

The topic of project success has been discussed widely in the literature of project management. However there is no single definition can be stated as project success, the researchers findings show that it is a multidimensional model that varies as per the project (Albert et al., 2017).

Project success is become the center of attention for researchers in literature as it helps to identify the project objectives. (Irfan et al., 2019). Project success is defined by Project management institute as balancer that meets the challenging requirement of project scope, quality, and time and it helps to address the rising project stakeholder needs. (Bannerman, 1997). Furthermore, project success is impacted by the leadership style, inclusive leadership style, enhance the success when leader is available for the followers, show openness, and having interaction with the followers (Carmeli et al., 2010).

Workforce management over a project is a hard task for the manager. The management become harder when the project team is attaching for a specific project. Likewise in organizational structure this job is more laborious task as different teams

with different background are attached for the project for the limited time. (Tehnia et al. 2017). Thus, the effective leadership style is to be chosen by the manager that assures the success factors of the project. Inclusive leadership enhance the project success in many ways as, everyone matters, that says that every employee is respected, employees are encouraged to take decisions and resolve the problems arising during the project(Khan et al., 2020). Inclusive leadership style assures the productivity through which a leader assures the openness from his/her side, collaborating with the teams, that leads to achieve the project goals.

Thus, Inclusive Leadership assure the project success due to its characteristics that helps to achieve the success criteria for the project

H1: Inclusive leadership positive impact on project success

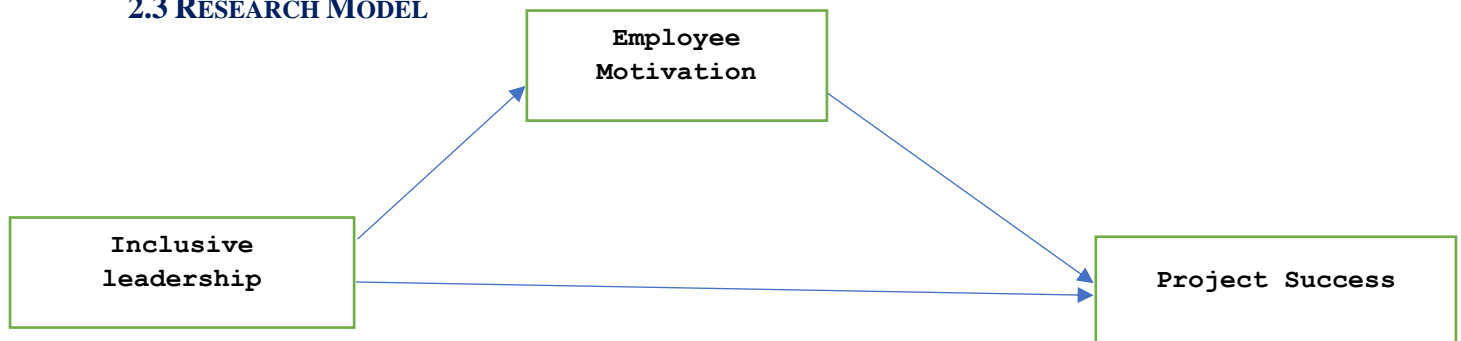
2.2 The Mediating Role of Employee Motivation

To start with, employee motivation is considered as mediating variable. Motivation is the force which drives an individual behavior, such that to obtain a goal or work for a particular objective. Furthermore, some researchers proposes that: it is the process of arousing and sustainable goal directed behavior(Aga et al., 2016). In addition, motivated employees are more self-driven, as compared to less motivated employees. In result, the motivated employees are tend to avail the development opportunities(Shahzadi et al., 2014b). to examine the relationship leader member exchange theory where high LMX relation lies the managers provide more support to the teams in terms of work support, additional work-related information, guidance and participation in decision making. (Xie et al., 2020) . Thus, high LMX relation leads to employee motivation to meet the project success. Recognizing the relationship between employee and leader specially between within In-group member can enhance the employee performance, and directly impact the project success. (Woods, n.d.). Researchers pointed that, the role of leadership may contribute the employee creativity and motivates them towards work. (Carmeli et al., 2010). Furthermore, inclusive leadership style focuses on that let employee solve the problems their own way. By providing they secure environment, to achieve the project objectives. In addition, Inclusive leadership always available for consultation and to remove the glitches that they may face during the project. (Khan et al., 2020). Thus, such type of initiatives motivates the employee towards work, and help the managers to accomplish

the project success through a motivated team. Thus, we postulate our hypothesis;

H2: Inclusive leadership style mediates the relationship between employee motivation and project success

2.3 RESEARCH MODEL



3 METHODOLOGY

The research design defines the strategy of the researcher, that which techniques and process for data collection will be used. (Jalil, n.d.). The following research design is including, purpose of study, time horizon, Population and sampling, and unit of analysis.

Projects can be categorized into different categories; the software IT and hardware development companies. The IT based companies are selected as, it is as vast field and with the passage of time technology is continuously updating. (Khan et al., 2020). Thus, in such times, it is very dire need of leadership style that impact the product that leads to customer satisfaction. In addition, within this era of fast pace development it is much need of both IT and Hardware development companies to optimize the success with the challenges. (Khan et al., 2020). Thus, leadership style of the manager leads to success factors that helps the organizations, Inclusive leadership assures the openness through which the project team member feels motivated through its several traits, that may help to achieve the project success.

3.1 Population and Sampling

The research study is considering Research & development projects-based companies of software (IT) and hardware development across Rawalpindi and Islamabad. We will use probability sampling technique and further type would be Convenience sampling, such that ease of access is make sure. Questionnaire will be distributed software IT and hardware design organization of both sectors, 200 questionnaires in the different organization will be distributed. In addition, the

targeted audience is selected that they must be working on some project. Project Managers, Engineering managers, Product Owners, Quality leads, and the member of project team will respond on the above-mentioned questionnaire. Total two hundred questionnaires will be distributed among the target population organizations who established our sample structure.

The purpose of this study is descriptive in nature and secondary data is considered to be chosen for this research. Adopted questionnaire will be used for data collection to investigate our hypotheses. Furthermore, the data will be collected from December 2021 to January 2022 and the nature of data is cross-sectional that will be collected once in a time. Furthermore, the unit of analysis for this study is projects and project-based organization employees of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Table 1: Demographics:

Item	Frequency	%
Project Employees		
Gender		
Male		
Female		
Total		
Education Level		
Bachelor Degree		
Master's degree		
Total		
Management Staff:		
Technical Staff:		
Total		

3.1.1 Scales and Measures

The 5-point Likert scale is used within this project "Strongly disagree=1", "Disagree=2", "Neutral=3", "Agree=4", "Strongly agree=5".

3.2 PROJECT SUCCESS (DEPENDENT VARIABLE)

Project success is used as dependent variable in this study. Project successes the main goal of the organization to achieve throughout the project duration. The scale is developed by (Aga et al., 2016). Presently project completed studies is used for measuring of project success. The study used 10 measure items, which include different aspects of project success. A five-

point Likert scale is used for assessing the response of the respondents.

3.3 INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP (INDEPENDENT VARIABLE)

To begin with, the 5 point Likert scale will be used that is developed by (Carmeli et al., 2010) will be used to access the three dimensions of the leader, that are openness, availability, and accessibility and similarly used by (Khan et al., 2020). The researcher suggest that the alpha value result is satisfactory to claim the validity.

3.4 EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION (MEDIATING VARIABLE)

Employee motivation is used a mediator in this study and its effect will be tested accordingly. Adopted questionnaire developed by (The Mckinsey Quarterly, 2006) and cited by (Shahzadi et al., 2014c) is used for research. Employee Motivation is an element that comprehensively determines the final result of a project. (Yudhvir, 2012) There are total eight number of measurement items are used for collecting the respondents of the study. The data is collected from the development organizations and the unit of analysis used for the study is individual.

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