A Moderated Mediation Model to Assess the Impact of Authentic Leadership on the Success of a Project Considering Trust as Mediator and Charisma as Moderator

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Article Info	Abstract
	The study aims to examine whether impact of Authentic Leadership on project success was mediated by trust. Additionally, a moderator (leadership charisma) was also tested using a moderated mediation approach. To address the primary aims, a questionnaire-based survey was used to measure the project manager's authentic leadership style, trust, charisma and project success in project-based organizations of Rawalpindi/Islamabad.The analyses suggest that increases in levels of authentic leadership enhance trust among team members and eventually contribute massively in project success. The results also indicate that charisma exhibits statistically significant influence on developing trust. Finally, the findings suggest that charisma has a moderating effect on the relationship between authentic leadership dimensions and overall project success. The new methodology as suggested by Preacher and Hayes "process" was used to study this impact, which would contribute in methodology advancement in variables testing in the specific context of project management and leadership.

Introduction

The success of an organization is dependent on a number of factors, but the key factor has always been the management of the human resource (Viitala,Vesalainen,& Uotila2020). Human resource management not only helps people to identify their true potential(Magrizos, & Roumpi, 2020), but also benefits the organization in extracting the maximum out of the manpower that ultimately leads to increased output of an organization (Das, 2018). The management of the human resource is often incorrectly associated with the human resource (HR) department of an organization(Gutierrez-Gutierrez, Barrales-Molina & Kaynak, 2018). The HR department may hire the best of the best employees(Sarode & Deore, 2017), but the project manager may not lead them to deliver the desired benefits for an organization(Ul Musawir, Serra, Zwikael, & Ali, 2017). The role of the project leader is therefore, very important to not only be able to provide an environment that is conducive to retain the highly qualified staff (Laschinger, Leiter, Gilin-Oore & Mackinnon, 2012), but also to use them optimally. The recent developments have made it incumbent on the leaders of organizations to be transparent, and guide the organization morally and ethically(Caesarius, & Hohenthal, 2018). The leading organizations of the world today are more focused on training and encouraging its employees to be innovative, creative and performing(Semedo, Coelho & Ribeiro, 2016)rather than being controlling and dominating to combat the distinctly competitive and challenging market environment(Burg, Cooper, Reed, Moreb, & Lynch, 2016). The role of leadership has thus suddenly become more important in the world(Dirani & et al (2020), necessitating the need for research in the area of the role of leadership in human resource expansion, management and managerial performance. Leadership has evolved from transactional leadership to authentic leadership. Authentic leadership is one of the major relative factors that impacts creativity and innovation(Mubarak & Noor, 2018) by ensuring the right conditions for all the employees to give their best each day(Roberts & David, 2017). There is a growing evidence that authentic leadership has a positive effect on the performance, creativity(Semedo, Coelho & Ribeiro, 2016), behavior, commitment(Delić, et. al, 2017), job satisfaction of the employee(Olaniyan & Hystad, 2016) and thus the overall success of an organization(Khan, 2020).

The success of a project is responsibility of the project manager. He needs to establish his key performance indicators (KPIs), be authoritative about those KPIs and then take his team to achieve those in a healthy working environment (Nixon, Harrington & Parker, 2011). As leader he needs to ensure that the team trusts him(Turesky, Smith, & Turesky, 2020), understands his priorities and work in the direction he wants, but at the same time should welcome inputs from his team with open heart(Harvey, Johnson, Roloff & Edmondson, 2019). Sincere inputs would only be rendered if the team leader has the charisma, authority and is trust worthy. Trust and charisma are important components of authentic leadership(Alvesson & Einola, 2019). A trusted and charismatic leader can ensure employees devote themselves to the work with passion and enthusiasm. Whenever

a new project is initiated, the team members prefer to have an authoritative and charismatic leader(Chiang, et. al 2020), so that he can provide more umbrella of authority and reliability (Sarin & McDermott, 2003). Trust and charisma leadership is a noteworthy construct in the leadership literature and research should continue to focus on its conceptualization, measurement, and role within organizations (Men, Yue & Liu, 2020).

The aim of this study is to test the impact of trust in leadership (mediator) and leader charisma (moderator) and on the success of a project. The new methodology as suggested by Preacher and Hayes "process" was used to study this impact, which contributed in methodology advancement in variables testing in the specific context of project management and leadership.

The paper has been constructed in a way that first literature review then methodology

2. Literature Review

Authentic leadership is the ability to motivate individuals to achieve project success (Henkel, Marion Jr & Bourdeau, 2019) through communication, trust, charisma, team work, hard work (George, Sims, McLean & Mayer, 2007; Aponte-Moreno, & Koulouris, 2017; Hirst, Walumbwa, Aryee, Butarbutar, & Chen, 2016) etc. Concerning the factors which may influence rank of an authentic leadership(Ribeiro, Duarte & Filipe, 2018;Vessey, Barrett, Mumford, Johnson, & Litwiller, 2014), trust (Davidson & Hughes, 2020)and charisma may be considered as amongst the key attribute to separate outstanding from those who are merely adequate(Alexander & Lopez, 2018; Karam, et. al 2017; Gatling, Kang & Kim, 2016). A considerable research has been carried out to study the impact of the various constructs of the different leadership styles on the success of a project. Trust, amongst numerous constructs, has generally been found to positively impact the productivity and success of a project (Sharkie, 2009; Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman & Fetter, 1990; Brink, 2020), similar to how it exponentially strengthens the relationship bond in personal lives(Park, Cho, Park & Shin, 2019). Authentic leadership plays an important role in developing the trust between the leader and the team members (Morgan, 2017; Černe, Batistič, & Kenda, 2018; Cerne, Jaklic, & Skerlavaj, 2013; Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013). Along with that Communication is a very important tool in developing trust (Henderson, Stackman, & Lindekilde, 2016)and achieving success of a project. Charisma on the other hand is sole solution in circumstances that could conceivably be described as an emergency(Arora, & Sharma, 2017; Vergauwe & et. al 2018).Attribution equivocalness is not really reminiscent of an emergency, and such circumstances donot really offer ascent to charismatic leaders(Rego, Sousa, Marques & Cunha, 2014; Walumbwa, et al., 2008)

Charisma impacts fundamentally attribution equivocalness is not really reminiscent of an emergency(Chughtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2015), and such circumstances don't really offer ascent to charismatic leaders(Koohang, Paliszkiewicz, & Goluchowski, 2017). This helps producing top leaders who are trusted by peers and subordinates alike. The influence that charismatic leaders' visions, projects in correspondence to shareholders and employees, have on a key external constituency in the project(Shenhar, Levy & Dvir, 1997; Varga, 2018). This helps producing top leaders who are trusted by peers and subordinates alike(Conger & Benjamin1999). The influence that charismatic leaders' visions, projects in correspondence to shareholders and employees, have on a key external constituency in the project. Studies show that the impact of charisma is most important when execution signs are ambiguous and project scope is not very clear(Ika, Söderlund, Munro, & Landoni, 2020). Although charisma matters most in uncertain execution conditions(Nadel, 2019)., our expectation that it would not make any difference under clear execution signs is not applicable(Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen, & Duangsaeng, 2014); charisma matters, however to a lesser degree.

While authors have generally examined the effect of the authentic leadership on the exhibition of organizations and project success, the number of studies dealing with the Authentic leadership style of project managers and its contribution to project success with trust and charismaare rather scarce.

Hypothesis

H 1: Authentic leadership has a positive impact on trust in leadership

H 2: Authentic leadership has a positive impact on project success

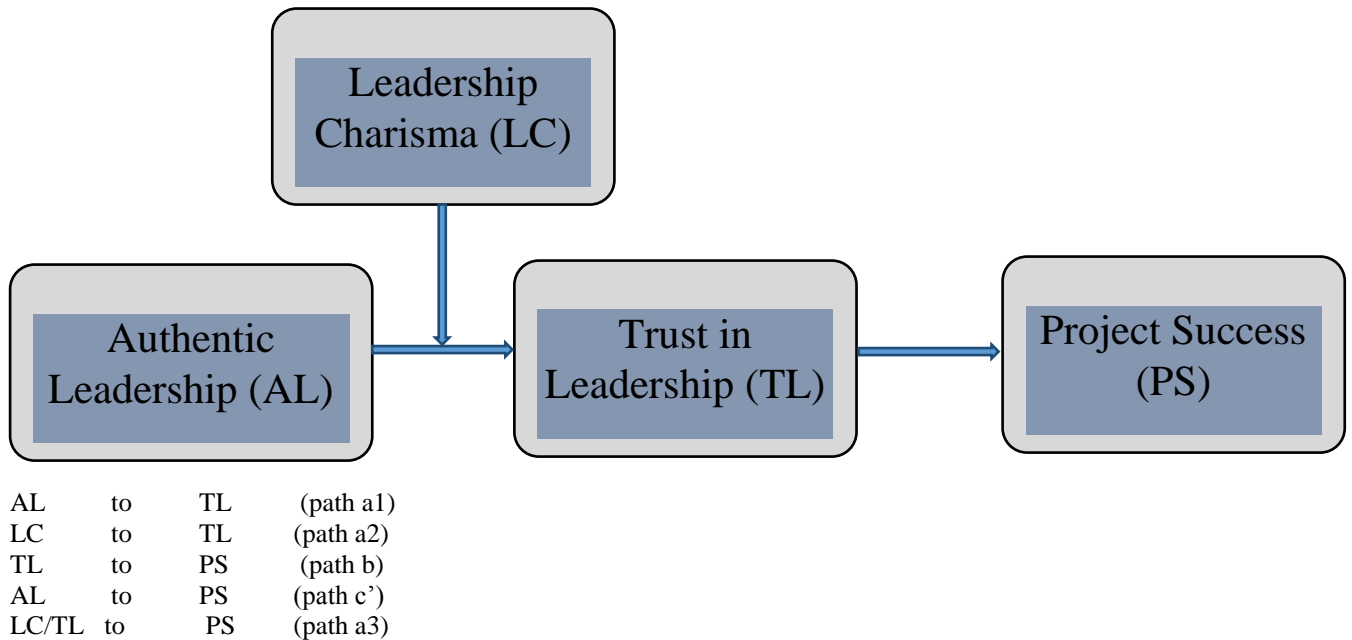**H3**: Trust in leadership has a positive impact on project success

H 4: Leader Charisma has a positive impact on trust in leadership

H5: Leader Charisma has a positive impact on project success with a mediating role of trust in leadership

3. Methodology
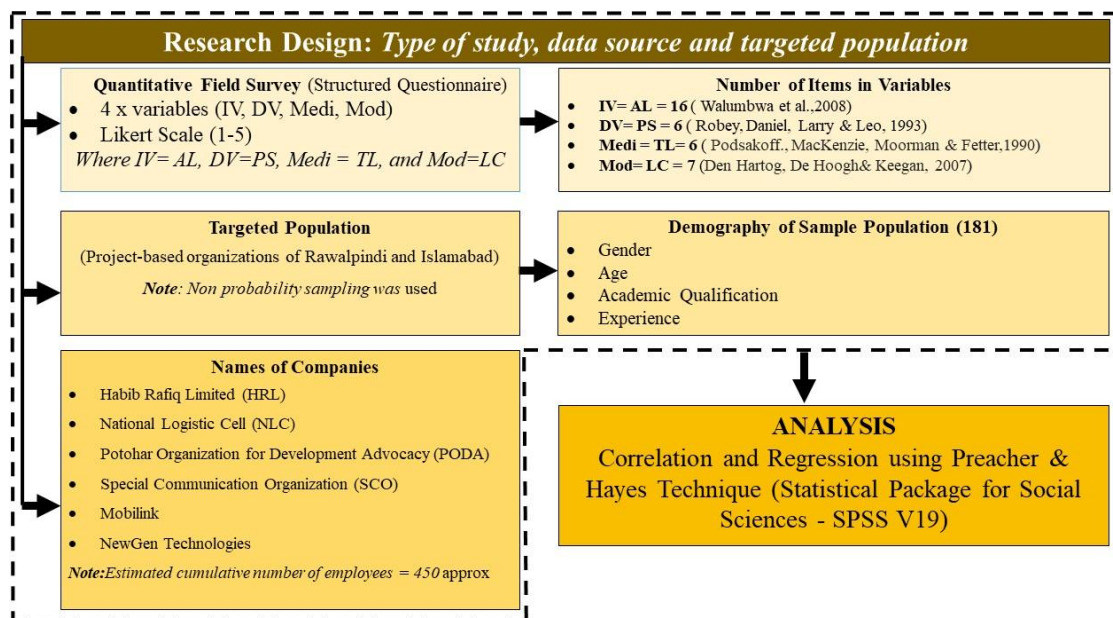
3.1. Research Model

In this thesis, trust in leadership was the mediator assumed in connection between, project success and authentic leadership; in other words, trust as the mediator, effects on authentic leadership and consequently on project success. The moderator of leader charisma gives strength to the relationship of trust in leadership and authentic leadership as it generally ensures the loyalty between leader and followers. Theoretical framework of this study is conceptual model based on theoretical relationships between variables is given below. Mediation will be moderated.

Figure 01

AL	to	TL	(path a1)
LC	to	TL	(path a2)
TL	to	PS	(path b)
AL	to	PS	(path c')
LC/TL	to	PS	(path a3)

3.1. Research Design

Figure 02

The methodology used in this research including the details of the population, the variables, the

demographic considerations, and the method of analysis are given in Figure 02. Questionnaires used for the data collection are adopted from previous researches. Responses to all questions were measured on a 5 point Likert scale: where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = strongly agree.

4. Results & Analysis

4.1 Cronbach's Alpha (Reliability)

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
AL	0.905
TL	0.911

PS	0.892
LC	0.917

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

	1	2	3	4
1. Authentic leadership	1			
2. Trust in leadership	.742[**]	1		
3. Project Success	.433[**]	.504[**]	1	
4. Leadership Charisma	.664[**]	.772[**]	.560[**]	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

N=208
Age= (1=18- 25 Years, 2=26-30 Years, 3=31-35 Years, 4=36-40 Years, 5=40+ Years)
Gender = (1=Male, 2=Female)
Experience = (1=<1 years, 2=1-3 years, 3=4-5 years, 4=6-10 years, 5=10+ years)
Qualification = (1=Matriculation, 2=Intermediate, 3= Graduate, 4=Post Graduate,
        5=MPhil/Phd)

Table 2 shows the relationship among variables authentic leadership, Trust in leadership, working environment and Project Success. The correlation between authentic leadership and trust in leadership is 0.742 which point towards a well-built positive relation between both variables. The correlation among authentic leadership and project success is 0.433 which means there is positive relation between both variables. The correlation between authentic leadership and leadership charisma is 0.664 which indicates shows a well built positive relation between the variables. The correlation between leadership charisma and trust in leadership is 0.772 which shows a well-built positive relation between both variables. The correlation between project success and trust in leadership is 0.504 which shows a well-built positive relation between the variables. The correlation between project success and leadership charisma is 0.560 which indicates a well-built positive relation between both variables. All the values of correlation are significant at 0.01 levels (99 %).

4.2 Regression analysis (on Mediator using Preacher and Hayes)

Independent, Moderator and Mediator Variables:
DV = PS,   IV = AL,   MED = TL,   MOD = LC,   Sample Size = n = 208

Table 3:Regression Analysis (Mediator)

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t-value	p-value
Effect of IV on Mediator (a1 path)				
AL	.5075	.1085	2.8117	.0054
Effect of Moderator on Mediator (a2 path)				
LC	.3375	.1580	2.1364	.0338

$p \leq 0.05$ (Significant)
AL: Authentic Leadership, LC: Leadership Charisma, TL: Trust in Leadership, PS: Project Success
Control variable is PS

Model Summary for Mediator Model

R	R-Sq	F	df1	df2	P
.5141	.2643	36.8227	2.0000	205.0000	.0000

Bias Corrected Confidence Intervals

	Lower	Upper
AL	.1516	.8633
LC	.0260	.6490

Level of Confidence for Confidence Intervals: 95
Number of Bootstrap Samples: 1000

The mediator (TL) is significantly influenced by both the independent variable (AL) and the moderator (LC) at 1% and 5% respectively (P-values respectively 0.0054 and 0.0338). Regression analysis was used to investigate the hypothesis that Authentic Leadership (AL) and Leadership Charisma (LC) positively affects the mediator Trust in leadership (TL). Table No 3 (path a1) indicated that Authentic Leadership (AL) was a significant predictor of Trust in leadership (TL), b = 0.5075, SE = 0.1085, p < .01, and (path a2) indicates that Leadership Charisma (LC) was a significant and moderating between Authentic Leadership (AL) and Trust in leadership (TL), b = 0.3375, SE = 0.1580 p < .05. These results support my **hypothesis 1 & 4.**

4.3 Regression Analysis (on DV using Preacher and Hayes)

Independent, Moderator and Mediator Variables:

DV = PS, IV = AL, MED = TL, MOD = LC, Sample Size = n = 208

Table 4:Regression Analysis

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t-value	p-value
Effect of Mediator on DV (b path)				
TL	.3366	.774	4.3477	.0000
Effect of IV on DV (c' path)				
AL	.1783	.1028	1.7334	.0845

p ≤ 0.05 (Significant)

AL: Authentic Leadership, LC: Leadership Charisma, TL: Trust in Leadership, PS: Project Success

Control variable is LC which impacts dependent variable (including mediator)

Model Summary for Mediator Model

R	R-Sq	F	df1	df2	P
.8032	.6451	123.6221	3.0000	204.0000	.0000

Bias Corrected Confidence Intervals

	Lower	Upper
TL	.1840	.4892
AL	-.0245	.3811

Level of Confidence for Confidence Intervals: 95
Number of Bootstrap Samples: 1000

The path b shows that Trust in leadership (TL) when introduced as a mediator has positive and significant effect on dependant variable Project Success (PS) (b = 0.3366, SE = 0.1453,p < .01). C1 (low) b = 0.20, C2 (average) b= 0.21, C3 (high) b= 0.22, B t(205) = 4.35, p<0.05, C prime t(205) = 1.73, p>0.05. We can see that the conditional indirect effects of AL on PS at different values of the moderator is not significantly different from one another i.e. C1, C2 and C3 is almost equal. But these three values are different from the direct effects i.e. C prime = 0.17 which indicates that there may be mediation, cementing my **hypothesis 3**.

When we check the direct affect of Authentic Leadership (AL) on DV, i.e. Project Success (PS) we see it positively or significantly affects the DV(b = 0.1783, SE = 0.1028, p< 0.0845) when checked on DV, hence approving my **hypothesis 2**,

4.4   Index of Moderated Mediation using Preacher and Hayes

Table 5:Bias Corrected Confidence Intervals

	Lower	**Upper**
TL	-.0077	.422

Level of Confidence for Confidence Intervals: 95
Number of Bootstrap Samples: 1000

Now the most important thing, the index of moderated mediation (path a3) shows that the value zero includes in between the lower confidence interval (-.0077) and upper confidence interval (.0422) which confirms that there is no moderated mediation. This was already indicated by the insignificance value of interaction term. So we conclude that there may be mediation but no moderated mediation. So my **hypothesis 5** is also rejected

Table 6:   Summary of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	**Description**	**Results**
Hypothesis 1	Authentic leadership (AL) has a positive impact on trust in leadership (TL)	**Accepted**
Hypothesis 2	Authentic leadership (AL) has a positive impact on project success (PS)	**Accepted**
Hypothesis 3	Trust in leadership (TL) has a positive impact on project success (PS)	**Accepted**
Hypothesis 4	Leader Charisma (LC) has a positive impact on trust in leadership (TL)	**Accepted**
Hypothesis 5	Leader Charisma (LC) has a positive impact on project success (PS) with a mediating role of trust in leadership (TL)	**Rejected**

5.   Discussion

The current focus of the study was to explore the relationship between authentic leadership (AL), leadership charisma (LC), trust in leadership (TL) and project success (PS) and moderated mediation model was used. As the purpose of this study was hypothetical deduction so regression analysis was used to check the impact of independent variable on dependent variables and to find out the possible moderation, mediation and moderated mediation. For this Preacher and Hayes (2008) method was used which is a nonparametric bootstrapping technique. Data analysis supported 4 of hypothesis H1, H2, H3 and H4 and rejected H5. Hypothesis accepted are with significant results and supported that authentic leadership (AL) has a positive impact on trust in leadership (TL), trust in leadership (TL) has a positive impact on project success (PS) and Leader Charisma (LC) has a positive impact on trust in leadership (TL), Authentic leadership (AL) has positive impact on project success (PS) and rejected hypothesis showed that and Leader Charisma (LC) has no positive impact on project success (PS) with a mediating role of trust in leadership (TL)

In hypothesis H1 we hypothesize that authentic leadership (AL) has a positive impact on trust in leadership (TL). Results extracted on the basis of data collected for this study from different project based organizations are aligned with previous studies. Authentic leadership affects representative work engagement through worker trust. authentic leaders epitomize high good gauges, respectability and genuineness, and their great notoriety encourages uplifting desires among employees, upgrading their levels of trust (Wang & Hsieh, 2013). Authentic leadership is identified with both execution and trust. At the point when employees see that their leaders are authentic, they will believe that they can trust their leaders. Trust has been recommended as an arbiter to

performance for many leadership speculation(Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009). Hence it is proved that authentic leader possess higher level of traits that develops a relationship of trust amongst his followers.

In hypothesis H2 it was argued that authentic leadership (AL) has a positive impact on project success (PS). Upon data analysis it was determined that this hypothesis was accepted as it was supported from previous studies conducted by different authors like (Beleiu, Crisan&Nistor, 2005;Laschinger & Fida, 2013;Mir & Pinnington, 2014). An authentic leader plays an important role in project success. He develops a highly motivated team, which works effectively and efficiently. This ensures high output, consequently contributing to project success (Geoghegan &Dulewicz, 2008). As a leader trusts his team, it has lesser communication gap. A strong relationship is developed within the organization ensuring better performance, resulting in higher output and project success (Staples & Webster, 2008).

Hypothesis (H3) proposed that Trust in leadership (TL) has a positive impact on project success (PS). It was also supported and concluded that higher the level of trust will result in greater probability of project success.Projects are dynamic frameworks in which discernments turn out to be "gentility". They can't be completed effectively without trust. Trust and communication are indistinguishable, and they are basic components of project success (Diallo & Thuillier, 2005). It is also determined that relational characteristic (like trust) in project teams (managers and employees alike) are of immense influence and ought to be given extra consideration by project members, managers, and others concerned with successful project outcomes. Hence it can be argued that if the employees have more faith in their leaders, they tend to put in an extra bit to make sure that their venture succeeds.

Similarly, hypothesis (H4) proposed that Leader Charisma (LC) has a positive impact on trust in leadership (TL). It was concluded through analysis that charisma does play a role in developing trust amongst the employees and the leader.The worker needs to feel that the supervisor is on 'their side' won't hurt them and will harbor positive goals towards them. This craving is connected to the workers' defenselessness towards the leader. The leader ought to show a certified worry for others which is a very important trait of his charisma(Mathews & Illes, 2015). Leaders charisma is a key use point for upgrading group level trust and mutual understanding. Discoveries additionally demonstrate that leaders charisma is decidedly identified with trust in the leader. To profit by leaders authority's beneficial outcomes, associations can utilize a few procedures to support charismatic leadership (Nohe & Michaelis, 2016).

Hypothesis (H5) was that Leader Charisma (LC) has a positive impact on project success (PS) with a mediating role of trust in leadership (TL). It was a moderated mediation model and the hypothesis was not accepted. When discussed with the respondents, their view was that charisma and trust don't really exist in combination in our society. Approach of our leaders is more autocratic then charismatic. Though when they find a charismatic personality, they do trust him but that's rarity for them. When it was discussed with the employees, they said that "in today's environment with so much less jobs available, we have to listen to our bosses whether they are authentic leader or not. Or else we will be fired and tens will be ready to replace us, so they do not take risk on their bread and butter." Along with that another reason which was generally given was that there is too much unemployment, that people are ready to the job at very less salary making almost everyone dispensable

5.2   Limitations of the Study

Some of the possible limitations also exist in this research like other studies. First, data was collected cross sectional from a very few organizations, so the total time allowed for the study was not sufficient to reach all possible respondents. Secondly, since data comprised on all variables was collected from self-reported and self-administrated questionnaire which at respondents' end may leads towards self-serving bias. It is also expected that there might be manipulation and exaggeration in data, during data collection phase, resulting in wrong statistical support of the study.

5.3   Directions for Future Research

In the light of above discussed limitations some directions for future research are also suggested. First, in order to confirm the authenticity of the study sample size must be increased to more respondents and population must contain on all the possible respondents based on different age groups, professions, social classes and income groups instead of focusing on originations of twin cities only. Hence it may result in change in conclusion. Secondly, since dependent variable is Project success (PS) which represents satisfaction as a whole of any project, so future research may be focused on outputs in different departments of a project, hence focusing on success in each department.

Finally, this study comprised of a moderated mediation model, where leadership charisma (LC) and trust in leadership (TL) are the variables respectively and the analysis showed that there is no moderated mediation, therefore it is recommended to see is LC if also selected as a mediator, how it will relate to authentic leadership in ensuring the success of a project.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript

Ethical Approval Statement

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee

Informed Consent

All the authors are informed and they have agreed with the final form of the manuscript

Data Availability Statement

Data is available if required

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