

## **The Role of Transformational Leadership on Project Success: Moderating Role of Employees' Innovativeness (A Case Study of Project Based Organizations in Peshawar).**

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### ***Abstract***

*Researchers and practitioners are working hard to examine leadership through a wide variety of systems, strategies, and interventions. This study examined the impact of Transformational Leadership on Project Success with moderating role of Employee Innovativeness. In order to formulate and evaluate theories for the relation between all three variables, a research method has been developed. An accepted questionnaire was used to gather data. Population of the study was the managers and their subordinates working in different project based organizations (Public and Private) in Peshawar city. Convenience sampling technique was utilized to collect data from the target respondents. The gathered data was processed through various statistical tools and techniques that are reliability analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, descriptive statistics, and moderation analysis using Preacher and Hayes model. Data was analyzed using SPSS (25 version) to check the results of the above techniques. The results concluded that employee innovation has positive and significant relation with transformational leadership and project success. Limitations and future research are mentioned in the last.*

**Keywords:** Project Success (PS), Employees' Innovativeness, Transformational Leadership (TL).

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### **Introduction**

Project leadership has not been fortunate enough since its inception to capture researchers and practitioners' interest (Dong, 2016). Now, however, the discipline is easily accepted worldwide. The literature shows, however, that the importance of project management was recognized in the early 1990s by organizations and scholars in a number of disciplines (Fung, 2016). In addition, Gilbert (2016) claims that the project leadership area is not as literature-rich and comprehensive as the other management fields are. Nevertheless, project management and performance indicators were well studied from the last decade (Alderman, 2011). Project management has become omnipresent irrespective of the field (Cowie, 2003). Project management Dey (2009) strongly argued that the world's current economy is project-oriented, representing nearly 30 per cent of the world economy. In addition, researchers and practitioners have received attention from the failure rate of the project as a success rate of the project (Geoghegan et al., 2008). The probability of failure remains side by side due to the inherent function of individuality (Hassan, 2017). Projects likely contribute primarily to national economies (Ejdys, 2018) by triggering creativity and process change (Davies et al., 2011); a source of organizational performance enhancement. For these reasons, various organizations and project promoters have captured beautiful human and financial resources, despite risks of naked failure (Khan et al., 2017).

The taste for researchers has shifted over the last three decades from project failures to project success factors, and consequently, project success has become an important part of the overall project management (Balwant, 2019; Hassan et al., 2017; Scott, 2008). That's why researchers and practitioners began investigating the factors responsible for the project's complete success. Project leadership is characterized by these factors (Todorović et al., 2015). For Lee et al., (2010), lack of effective project leadership abilities can result in failure in which effective project success factor leadership skills exist at the top (Ngacho, 2014). Extended management literature, organizational components and management of entrepreneurship relies heavily upon leaders to achieve the desired results, but it is necessary to examine separately the critical role of leadership in the success of the project (Clarke, 2010; Zwikaelet al., 2010). There is definitely an excellent mix of literature for leadership, accessible since its discovery in numerous layers and sections. Suprpto et al., (2015) is among the theories of the next century for the theory of transformational leadership (TL). As such, a central leadership role for the success of entrepreneurial undertakings, organization's development exists seamlessly and for public and regulated institutions in Pakistan has not yet been explored. The study in hand aims to analyze project managers' transformational management efficiency and counteract the effect on project success factors in the project based organizations (public & private) in Peshawar, Pakistan.

The role of innovation capability on innovation performance provides valuable knowledge for better understanding of innovation (Park et al., 2004). TL has direct influence on innovative behavior, whereas organizational innovation climate has positive impact on worker's innovative behavior. (John et al., 2011). The accomplishment of construction projects is strictly connected to contractors who start their prime work when a project reaches at execution stage. Before moving to a new project, identifying pros and cons in a post construction evaluation, has proven to be an important factor in construction projects (Ozorhon et al., 2016). Innovation is strongly linked with newness, creativity and to theories like consistency, low patience and systematic process. The innovation value regarding products or services can be defined by using certain variables including quantity, competence, consistency, time, expenses and difficulty, etc. (Loosemore, 2015).

In order to inculcate innovation, the resource base of the organization needs to be redesigned the existing organization by hiring new technology or provide employees innovative schemes that further lead them with new ideas and procedures where ultimately their organizations as well as project flourished (John, 2011).

## **Literature Review**

### **Project Success (PS)**

Project is a temporary activity which is carried out to create a product, service or process that is unique in nature (Wilkinson, 2016). According to (Turner, 2014), "a project is a temporary organization to which resources are assigned to undertake a unique, novel and transient endeavor managing the inherent uncertainty and need for integration in order to deliver beneficial objectives of change". Projects are powerful strategic weapons, initiated to create economic value and competitive advantage" (Turner, 2014) and have become modus operandi of almost every organization (Wilkinson, 2016). According to (Turner, 2014), it has been forecasted that US \$ 20.2 trillion will be contributed to GDP by project-oriented industries.

Research has shown that projects act as a catalyst to bring about change in the business processes (Creasy, & Carnes, 2017). Hence, project-based organizations have come into existence where projects are considered as means to achieve organizational goals and strategic objectives i.e. profitability, market share or advancements in technology (Rezvani, 2015). Project success depends upon whether the results of the project are in line with the strategic objectives of the organization or not (Morris & Pinto 2010). The strategic objectives can be achieved with the selection of right projects (Wilkinson, 2016).

### **Transformational Leadership (TL)**

Despite the fact that the subject of leadership has been under scholastic investigation for quite a few years, there is a lack of observational work in project management settings (Mullen, 2017). Full-range leadership theory is one of the most widely recognized theories of leadership, and it encompasses transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire styles (Avolio, 2013). For our purpose, we focus on transformational leadership since studies have indicated its high relevance for project-oriented organizations (Dong et al., 2016).

There gives off an impression of being general understanding in the writing on four of the measurements that make up TL (idealized influence (II), intellectual stimulation (IS), inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration (IC)). II is conduct that stimulates solid devotee feelings and distinguishing proof with the pioneer. IS indicated when a pioneer passes on a dream that is engaging and rousing for subordinates and gives them trying tasks and expanded desires. Inspirational motivation is conduct that builds supporters' familiarity with issues and impacts them to create imaginative as well as inventive ways to deal with comprehending them. IC incorporates offering help, consolation, and instructing to adherents (saryam et al. 2020).

### **Employees' Innovativeness (EI)**

It is the ability of a firm to support newness and promote creativity by implementing new practices and technologies (Yesil, 2013). Innovativeness enables a firm to survive in a competitive environment as it leads to generation of novel ideas and a source of growth for firms (Christensen, 2006). The generation of new ideas through experimentation results in the creation of new process, product or service (Ordaz et al., 2011).

In service based industries, innovation has shown strong effect on performance as compared to other dimensions (Wong, 2013). Hence, it is considered as fundamental concept of EI (Husseini, 2015). Innovation can either be incremental (i.e. to exploit prevailing information and skills to make process, product or service more efficient) or radical (i.e. departing from established practices and technologies to acquire new skills for making new products or formulating new processes) (Rennings, 2010).

### **Transformational Leadership (TL) and Project Success (PS)**

Studies show that Transformational Leadership (TL) significantly affects work environment results, including venture achievement (Creasy, and Carnes, 2017; Mullen, 2017). Be that as it may, chip away at authority in venture settings remains moderately scant (Gilbert, 2016; Turner, 2014), and TL in venture settings may work uniquely in contrast to with regards to lasting associations (Hassan, 2017).

The writing shows that suitable practices by venture directors assume a urgent job in getting more noteworthy Project Success (Avolio, 2013). TL therefore motivates adherents to perform past their desires. They additionally encourage sound working connections (Dong, 2016). Such sorts of undertaking chiefs upgrade group attachment and shared comprehension, encourage the open trade of thoughts and scientific point of view across venture groups, and underline the improvement of supporter self-administration or self-authority aptitudes. This thusly can make an environment where colleagues apply proceeded with exertion to acknowledge PS (Creasy, and Carnes, 2017).

### **Transformational Leadership (TL) and Employees' Innovativeness (EI)**

Numerous researchers, e.g., Mullen (2017), Dong (2016), Yesil (2013) and Husseini (2015), concur that leadership is a key factor for encouraging innovation in development. Leadership has a vital job in framing the soul of a task (Gilbert, 2016). TL ordinarily center on meeting their devotees' higher-request inborn

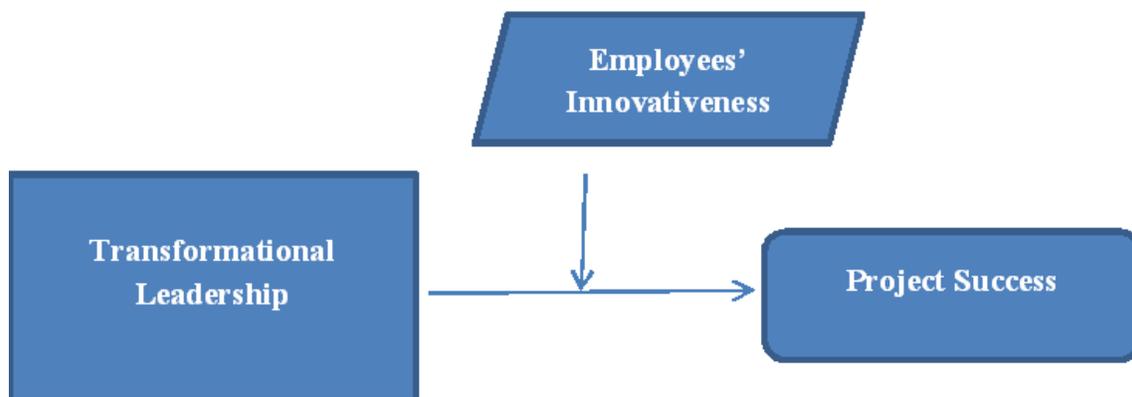
necessities (Ordaz, 2011), including vision stimulation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Wilkinson, 2016). Groundbreaking initiative of a group may frame a more profound comprehension and gratefulness from all colleagues (Balwant, 2019). Leaders will impact the proactivity of colleagues, and cultivate their dynamic commitment in formative or innovative exercises (Ika, 2015). Venture chiefs can go about as pioneers to make a dream or spur venture individuals to accomplish venture objectives (e.g., innovation) (Yesil, 2013).

### **Employees' Innovativeness (EI) and Project Success (PS)**

Balwant (2019) stated that innovativeness has different effect on organizational performance depending upon the circumstances in which organization operates. Innovation, either product or process innovation, is fundamental for firms to achieve sustained competitive edge (Ejdys, 2018). In the context of projects, organizational innovativeness represents the willingness of an organization to develop novel products, processes, services or technologies; thereby augmenting organizational performance (Christensen, 2006). Proactiveness can also lead to project success by anticipating customer's latent needs and developing quality products accordingly to satisfy their needs (Wong, 2013). This is similar to project success dimension 'preparation for future' which was proposed by (Wilkinson, 2016). The successful execution of the projects can develop strong relations with the customers and enable the organization to develop its infrastructure for future projects; hence enhancing the performance of the organization.

These entrepreneurial strategies may be a panacea to achieve higher standards of performance (Husseini, 2015) and enable them to sustain competitive advantage over their rivals (Hassan, 2017).

### **Research Model**



*Figure 1 Research Model*

### **Methodology**

The current study was based on the cross sectional and causal study. Population of the study was all the managers and their subordinates working in project based organizations in the Peshawar city, KP, Pakistan. Due to time and resource constraints it was very difficult to obtain data from all the population members. So for this purpose sample size was drawn from the population to test the fact that whether TL has any impact on project success or not with the moderating role of Employees' Innovativeness. The data was gathered through an adopted questioner (the details sources and items are given in below table 2). The questionnaires were distributed among 200 respondents, out of which only 195 questionnaires were returned where 5 questioners were found incomplete which were removed accordingly. The convenient

sampling technique of non-probability technique was used to collect data from the desired respondents. The collected data were then tested using various statistical techniques that were descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis and preacher and Hayes (2004) for moderation analysis.

### Demographics of the Respondents

Table 1

| <i>Demographics</i>    | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Valid %</i> | <i>Cumulative %</i> |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>          |                  |                |                     |
| Male                   | 174              | 91.9           | 91.9                |
| Female                 | 16               | 8.1            | 100                 |
| Total                  | 190              |                |                     |
| <b>Age (years)</b>     |                  |                |                     |
| 20-30                  | 86               | 45.6           | 45.6                |
| 31-40                  | 60               | 32             | 77.6                |
| 41-50                  | 33               | 17.4           | 95                  |
| above 51               | 11               | 5              | 100                 |
| Total                  | 190              |                |                     |
| <b>Education level</b> |                  |                |                     |
| Matric                 | 0                | 0              | 0                   |
| Intermediate           | 0                | 0              | 0                   |
| Bachelor               | 79               | 41.2           | 41.2                |
| Master                 | 64               | 33.4           | 74.6                |
| MPhil/MS               | 45               | 24             | 98.6                |
| other                  | 2                | 1.4            | 100                 |
| Total                  | 190              |                |                     |
| <b>Organization</b>    |                  |                |                     |
| Public                 | 128              | 67.8           | 67.8                |
| Private                | 62               | 32.2           | 100                 |
| Total                  | 190              |                |                     |

Table 1 shows the gender composition of the sample in which males were 91.9% while the female appears to be only 8.1%.

Table 1 shows the age-wise composition of the sample in which 45% of respondents 20-30 years of age, 32% were of 31-40 years of age, 17.4% in age group of 41-50 years and 5% of the respondents were in age group above 50.

Table 1 explains that (41.2%) respondents were bachelor degree holders, (33.4%) possesses master degree, (24%) were MPhil and (1.4%) with PhD level degree.

Organization is also an important element of demographic as the type of organization delineates the availability of resources and infrastructure to carry out innovative activities. In the current study, three different categories were made to reflect the type of organization. Here table 1 depicts that 67.8% of the respondents are working in public organizations while 32.2% are working in private organizations.

### Reliability Analysis and Instrumentation of the Constructs

Reliability ensures that the researcher can show reliable findings by using the scale again and again. Trust is calculated by Cronbach alpha, which offers confidence or inner continuity. Inner continuity implies that the same definition applies to all components in a construction. Its value ranges from zero to one. While the proposed variables were measured using a closed ended questionnaire on five Likert scale.

Table 2

| Constructs                  | Source                 | No. of Indicators | Cronbach Alpha Value |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Project Success             | Aga et al., (2016)     | 14                | 0.920                |
| Transformational Leadership | Wang and Howell (2010) | 10                | 0.929                |
| Innovativeness              | Wang& Wang (2012)      | 14                | 0.906                |

Project success was assessed using a 14-items scale used by (Aga et al., 2016). Transformational Leadership was assessed using a 10-items scale used by Wang and Howell (2010) and Innovativeness was assessed using a 10-items scale used by Wang& Wang (2012). Table 2 reveals that the Cronbach alpha value for all frameworks is greater than 0.7, which shows that a system for gathering data for each element is accurate and can be used in Pakistan's contextual settings.

### Descriptive Statistics of Transformational Leadership, Employees' Innovativeness and Project Success

The researchers should arrange descriptive statistics and summarise the data they can analyse (Holcomb, 2016). Descriptive statistics are typically seen through average, median, mode, standard difference, range, etc.

Table 3

|                    | N   | Min  | Max  | Mean   | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------|-----|------|------|--------|----------------|
| PS                 | 190 | 1.00 | 4.79 | 4.1752 | .50226         |
| EI                 | 190 | 1.00 | 4.70 | 4.0963 | .48972         |
| TL                 | 190 | 1.00 | 4.80 | 4.0063 | .71348         |
| Valid N (listwise) | 190 |      |      |        |                |

TL=Transformational Leadership, PS= Project Success, EI=Employees' Innovativeness,  $p < 0.05$ , N=190

Table 3 displays that mean values of PS, EI and TL are 4.1752, 4.0963 and 4.0063. The standard deviation is that data are distributed over the mean value. The standard deviation of PL, EI and TL are .50226, .48972 and .71348 respectively.

Minimum and maximum value represents the highest and lowest value in the dataset.

As shown in table 3, minimum value for all the variables are 1 while the maximum values for PL, EI and TL are 4.79, 4.70 and 4.80.

Table 4 depicts that transformational leadership (TL) was found positively and significantly correlated with PS ( $r=.223^{**}$ ,  $p=.002$ ). Employees' Innovativeness was also found significantly correlated with Project Success (PS) ( $r = .163$ ,  $p=.025$ ) and TL was also found positively and significantly correlated with Employees' Innovativeness ( $r = 0.186$ ,  $p = .010$ ).

**Correlation matrix of Transformational Leadership, Project Success, Employees' Innovativeness**

Table 4

|    |                     | PS     | Inno  | TL     |
|----|---------------------|--------|-------|--------|
| PS | Pearson Correlation | 1      | .163* | .223** |
|    | Sig. (2-tailed)     |        | .025  | .002   |
|    | N                   | 190    | 190   | 190    |
| EI | Pearson Correlation | .163*  | 1     | .186*  |
|    | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .025   |       | .010   |
|    | N                   | 190    | 190   | 190    |
| TL | Pearson Correlation | .223** | .186* | 1      |
|    | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .002   | .010  |        |
|    | N                   | 190    | 190   | 190    |

TL=Transformational Leadership, PS= Project Success, EI=Employees' Innovativeness,  $p < 0.05$ , N=190

**Moderation Analysis of Transformational Leadership, Project Success, Employees' Innovativeness**

Moderation is a phenomenon when a third variable, refers to as moderator, moderates the relationship of independent and dependent variable or even changes the strength of the relationship between the aforementioned variables(Hair et al., 2016). In this current study, Hypothesis states that Employees' innovativeness moderates the relationship of TL and project success; such that if top management support is high, the relationship of technological orientation and project success would be strengthened.

Table 5

| Path Relationship            | Path Coefficient | Std. Deviation | t-value | p-value | Bootstrap Results |       |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------|---------|-------------------|-------|
|                              |                  |                |         |         | LLCI              | ULCI  |
| <b>Moderating effect →PS</b> | .3046            | .1361          | 2.2384  | .0246   | .5731             | .0361 |
| <b>EI→PS</b>                 | 1.3406           | .5462          | 2.4544  | .0150   | .2630             | .4182 |
| <b>TL→PS</b>                 | 1.3115           | .5256          | 2.496   | .0135   | .2746             | .3485 |

TL=Transformational Leadership, PS= Project Success, EI=Employees' Innovativeness,  $p < 0.05$ , N=190

From Table 5, the study can observe that the value of interaction term ( $b = 0.3046$ ,  $t = 2.2384$ ,  $p$  value  $> 0.0246$ ) is significant while path coefficients of EI-PS and TL-PS are also significant. The bootstrap confidence intervals for interaction term does not contain zero between upper limit and lower limit which signifies that moderation is happening. Hence, our Hypothesis 4 which states that innovativeness moderates the relationship of TL and PS is accepted.

**Discussion**

As TL is believed to maximise the likelihood of a project progressing, it is important that any project be completed successfully. The leadership style is different but transformative leadership is one of the most relevant leadership types. In order to transform the organisation, these leaders are seen as more influential and efficient. These leaders are often looking for significant systemic changes and often take decisions of their members. Transformation leaders have been an embodied perspective that is appealing and desirable in subordinate eyes. Transformation leaders contribute to the progress of the company in many respects, such as providing vision and ways to do so by educating and empowering people and creating organising and promoting working cultures (Aga et al., 2016). TL improve the stability of the group by many

strategies such as inspiration, work success and contextual performance. Such leaders promote the identity of the party and help followers to give up their identity (Balwant, 2019).

TL works as a role model for the followers of the group, encouraging them in the best cause of the project, supplying their followers with a sort of psychological awareness by considering their desires and abilities (Dong et al., 2016; Gilbert et al., 2016). The pioneer in reforming leadership further notes that the relationship between these leaders and their supporters is built on solid ethical and moral values, which motivates all workers to work together as resulting in the best interest of the company (Hassan, 2017).

By articulating an enticing mission, Team Emphasis TL will empower their followers by transforming their actions, attitudes and behaviours against the shared purpose of the organisation (Mullen et al., 2017). It does not rely on economic and transactional exchanges like any other form of leadership, but TL will transform employees' character by the implementation of a demanding challenge and a vision.

Another objective of this study was focused on the moderating role of innovation between TL and PS, that's how innovation moderates between TL and project success. The results found that Innovation strongly and positively associated with TL and PS. Through innovation projects become more successful. When organizations bring innovation in their projects, then they become more successful. Through different innovation opportunity organization achieves better outcome (Ozorhon et al., 2016).

For innovation project manager should focus on the customer's needs, customer's wants are more important for project success. The project manager should give value the team members, and support their ideas and encourage flexibility. New projects are the way business leaders formulate strategic moves and create new business ventures, in facing the future, firms need to understand how and why the innovation environment is driving them to build project-based businesses to cope with changing markets and technologies (Rennings, 2011; Wong, 2013).

Innovation is strongly associated with project success. The project manager should keep alignment with market, product and technology strategy. The manager should also keep focus on market and customer attractiveness, manufacturing and supply chain feasibility and also give importance the ideas of other team members for different innovative ideas for the organization.

Innovation is essential for success of any project. For innovation in project based organizations, innovative culture is necessary where everyone can give their innovative ideas independently. Management used suitable source for production of new products or services, for innovation management can bring little change or some addition in the existing products or services (Park, 2004).

When organization brings an innovation in the project must focus on the needs of customers, it is important that what customers wants, change project according to the needs of customers. Employees increase productivity by creating a new process which increases competitive advantages. Innovative employees are more motivated and creative and bring new ideas for project success.

### **Practical implications**

The present study has numerous practical implications that offer good ideas for organizations to elaborate in developmental and constructional project.

This present study is suggesting many practical nature involvements to managers, organization and employees. Such as most of organization in developmental industry and constructional industries are based on project, the TL is grace of the leadership style which is well-suited to cultural principles in developmental industry and constructional industry of Pakistan. The inspiring and teamwork aspect of transformational leaders are boosting progress and expansion in developmental industry and constructional

industry whereas the trustworthiness is satisfying in cultural viewpoint. This study inspires practitioners to improve TL grace in their team leaders, managers in direction to confirm the success of projects.

### Limitations and Future Research

The one of the main limitation of present study was time bound because data was gathered from various sources but in two time. Upcoming studies should deliberate multisource data at different time lags in direction to find healthy results in future studies.

This present study takes TL, as an independent variable, upcoming studies would deliberate different dimension of TL individually with success of project.

This Present study was conducted in developmental industry, constructional industry and data was collected from different project based companies and housing societies, that question generalizability of study. In future scholar should collect data from the multiple industries in direction to discover out the effects of team focus TL in different segments. Due to time constraint, only one mediator and moderator were tested. Future researchers can improve the model by checking other mediators like motivation and job involvement. They can also check other moderators like communication and personality traits. Secondly, the data were collected once. The future researchers can use time lag for data collection. Thirdly, the data were collected only from only one city of Pakistan so it was very limited. The future researcher can improve the data collection method and collect data from different cities and countries. They can also check other traits of knowledge like knowledge management, knowledge transfers and implicit or explicit knowledge impact on project success.

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