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Research Article

Impact of the Democratic Leadership Style of Project Manager on Project Success: The Mediating Role of Innovative Work Behavior

[*1]Qudsia Arshad | [2]Shabeena Ashraf | [3]Uzma Pervaiz

[1,2,&3]Department of Management Sciences, Comsats University, Islamabad Pakistan
Email: Qudsia_arshad@comsats.edu.pk
Email: Shabeena.Ashraf47@gmail.com
Email: Uzma.pervaiz@comsats.edu.pk

Correspondence
[*1]Qudsia Arshad
Department of Management Sciences, Comsats University, Islamabad, Pakistan
Email: Qudsia_arshad@comsats.edu.pk

ABSTRACT
The project manager has a great responsibility to their subordinates and achieves the organizational objective and allocates resources to meet the project objective and motivate the project team by providing a vision of an ideal outcome. Project management skills are very crucial to the success of a project. Many projects have failed due to the ineffective leadership style of the project managers in such a way that insufficient planning, lack of authority, and poor communication forest the lack of transparency. This study aims to analyze the impact of democratic leadership style of a project manager on project success by analyzing the mediating role of innovative work behavior. The research strategy for this study is quantitative. 300 questionnaires were distributed to established project-based organizations to collect data. Statistical software for social science research, SPSS, and PLS, was used to analyze the data. The findings show that democratic leaders have a positive impact on project success. Innovative work behavior can help to boost project success in a complex situation within an organization.

KEYWORDS
Leadership Style, Democratic Leadership Style, Innovative Work Behavior, Project Success, Job Satisfaction

1 | INTRODUCTION

In this era of constant development, leaders are a vital component for the growth of every organization. A leader is the person who is responsible for individual performance which ultimately leads to organizational performance. Some firms are having difficulties identifying effective leaders who possess the required attributes and abilities, expertise, intelligence, and experience (Alvarenga et al., 2019).

A project team leader or a project manager must have leadership expertise, which includes initiative, commitment, management, and achievement-oriented skill, and must be able to guide subordinates toward a vision (Alkadash et al., 2020).The leader's role as the team builder is to improve individual knowledge, promote mutual understanding, and enhance the skill. When a project manager involves the subordinates in the developing plan and decision-

making, they realize their contribution is sought and appreciated and it helps to achieve the objective (Gajendra Kumar, 2022).

To ensure the success of their projects, project managers use a particular leadership style, and they are constantly seeking ways to do so. This study aims to ascertain how a project manager's democratic leadership style affects a project's success. Project leaders adopt a democratic leadership style and include team members in decision-making in situations it shows that this kind of interaction boosts employee performance. Many projects have failed because of the project manager's ineffective leadership style, which causes insufficient planning, a lack of authority, poor communication, a lack of transparency, low productivity, high operating costs, and an uncooperative attitude among employees all of this led to the project failure (Ibrahim et al., 2019).

When members of a team are collaborate with one another, share their objectives and work together to ensure that their actions are coordinated in a manner that contributes to the project's overall success (Bhatti et al., 2021). The project manager must be competent to develop the team to achieve the objective in changing contexts. Project managers are more likely to focus on the specification, timeline, and budget parameters. It is necessary for project managers to deal with people and to be productive in terms of tasks, processes, and goals (Alvarenga et al., 2019). Many studies show that the project success may decline under the ineffective leadership style, because of the lower work quality and less motivation to complete the task and 80% of projects fail because of the style of the project manager (Fareed et al., 2021; Ibrahim & Daniel, 2019). However, other studies have found mixed results when examining the relationship between leadership style and project success. When these two concepts are combined, team members are empowered to use their creativity and knowledge to contribute to project outcomes. By involving team members in the decision- making process and creating a positive work environment, democratic leadership can foster a sense of ownership and motivation among the team, leading to better project outcomes

Leaders must inspire employees' motivation, interest, and passion (Iqbal et al., 2022). A leader must learn the appropriate social skill whenever working with subordinates (Ibrahim & Daniel, 2019). Team performance declined under the ineffective leadership style, leading to lower work quality and less motivation to complete the task. An ineffective leadership style prevents the management from developing new ideas and finding a solution (Ahmad et al., 2022). There is a need to comprehend how democratic leadership style affects the project's success. While considering the impact of how leadership style influences team innovative behavior on project success. The purpose of this research is to determine the impact of a project manager's democratic leadership style on project success. However, the leaders are encouraged to practice a democratic leadership style and involve team members in decision-making because this relationship has been shown to boost employee performance.

1.1 | RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To examine the impact of the democratic leadership style of project managers on project success.
- To examine the impact of democratic leaders encouraging teamwork, and team innovation performance that leads toward project success.
- To investigate that the team innovative work behavior mediates the relationship between the democratic leadership styles of the project manager on project success.
- To examine role democratic leaders on project success through innovative work behavior.

1.2 |RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: What is the impact of the democratic leadership style on project success?
RQ2: What is the impact democratic leadership style on Innovative work behavior?

RQ3: Does team innovative work behavior mediate the relationship between the democratic style of the project

manager and project success.

RQ4: This study contributes to determining how democratic leadership style influences project success. This study guides project managers to be encouraged to adopt the democratic leadership style of innovative work performance that leads to increased performance and productivity.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE

Democratic leaders are famous to motivate employees which help them to perform better and their views and opinion matter (Hilton et al., 2021). The democratic leader encourages team member in decision-making, where workers' ideas and thoughts will be collected, the leader decides on behalf of everyone, and numerous benefits acquired from the democratic style such as innovative and new ideas are the trigger. The strategy outlines the four basic principles of democratic leadership, which include mobilizing workers, developing staff, delegating authority, enforcing control mechanisms, and granting employees greater autonomy and the ability to speak up (Oussible et al., 2022). Employees engage in organizational activity and involvement in decision-making that makes an employee feel a sense of belonging and try their best to achieve the organizational objective (Sané et al., 2021). Manager with the democratic leadership style establishes a better relationship with the staff by giving freedom and reducing the work tension which leads to directing their subordinates toward their thoughts and ideas regarding establishing ability to achieve the objective (Kabore et al., 2021; Nawaz & Tian, 2022).

2.2 | INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR

Innovative team performance refers to employees introducing new ideas, processes, and procedures to complete the task. Innovative employees come up with new ground and provide solutions for the problem. The literature provides extensive evidence about influencing employees to participate in innovation (Liu et al., 2021). To create a work environment where leaders support innovative work behavior, managers should indeed motivate their employees to do so that enhance employee performance. Access to information and emotional support both help people come up with new ideas and use their creativity more successfully in various projects (Botha et al., 2022). Project base organizations empower the employee to be more innovative to expand and endure and it is beneficial for the project to attain the objective (Khan et al., 2022). Employees are encouraged to be innovative in their approach to their work if they have more opportunities to interact with superiors, discuss novel concepts, receive feedback, and take advantage of their supervisor's knowledge (Ali et al., 2020).

2.3 | PROJECT SUCCESS

For a project to be successful, it is necessary to complete it on time, within budget, and with the required quality, which is defined by project management tools and techniques (Ahsan, 2019). If a project is finished on schedule, under budget, and with minimal disruption to other parties, it is deemed successful (Khan et al., 2022). Many researchers describe the project's success, but it remains unclear about what should do or not succeed. Project success is the endpoint of achieving the goal and meeting the planned targets and stakeholder expectations (Van Assen, 2021). Effective leadership requires communication skills, commitment, and technical background. Competencies and leadership style are the key factors to a manager's success and performance correlation with project management. Conventionally project success refers to the iron triangle (cost, time, and scope) that is used to measure success (Ahmad et al., 2022).

2.4 | THEORY

Social exchange theory is the most important theory to explain the relationship between leader and subordinate behavior. Employees tend to perform better when the leader consult the employee before making a decision and employee are inspired by the leader and perform better in term of job success (Wang et al., 2022).The idea behind the social exchange theory is a relationship between the individual is formed through the process of cost-benefit analysis. It influences how much effort the individual put to establish the relationship. According to this theory trust and dependency are two specific elements of an organization and the existence of trust could increase the member motivation and ability to respond in changing environment. Once the trust has been established organization recognizes the employee Collaborators effect is required to achieve the organizational goal (Al Wali et al., 2022). Because leaders consult employees before making decisions, there is a positive social exchange relationship that encourages people to perform better at work (Meira & Hancer, 2021).

2.5 |HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The democratic style of a leader is also considered a participative style because it encourages the employee to take a part in decision-making. This leadership style motivates the employee to know what to do and how to do it. The leader creates a strong spirit, motivates the staff, and increases employee satisfaction. Depending on the complexity of the project leadership abilities have a greater impact on project success (Podgórska et al., 2019). The democratic leader supports the staff's efforts to express their creativity and maximize their potential for productivity so that their work is completed more successfully and effectively. Employee performance is positively and significantly impacted by democratic leadership style (Hariyati, 2022). The effective project manager's leadership style gives workers the impression that they can contribute to decision-making and that they have the power to carry out their duties, which can be advantageous for the success of IT projects (Khan et al., 2022).

Hypothesis 1: Democratic leadership style of the project manager has a positive impact on project success.

The supervisor's assistance and encouragement raise the probability of employee IWB. When leaders involve others in decision-making, they encourage interaction with their followers and confidence in high performance, which encourages the development, promotion, and implementation of new, practical concepts that leads to achieve the goal (Ali et al., 2020). Employees can make the most of these benefits by demonstrating innovative behaviors that lead to even more creative solutions. Innovative workers are more likely to enhance the importance of their work and believe that their actions will improve their performance and goal-setting (Ali et al., 2020).

Hypothesis 2: Democratic leadership style of the project manager has a positive influence on the team innovative work behavior.

Employees' innovative work behavior includes inventing new and moving forward while executing tasks, and it is a factor that is linked to organizational performance. (El-Kassar et al., 2022). Employees that are innovative assist the firm achieve its goals and satisfy deliverables. Project-based companies enable employees to be more innovative to expand and endure, which is advantageous to the project's success. Team members who are innovative help the firm achieve its goal and deliverables. The software industry enables the employee to be more innovative which is beneficial to the project's success (Al Wali et al., 2022). Every project is distinct, and many times it begins with little knowledge and a high degree of uncertainty, which will progressively decrease as the project progresses. So improving project performance requires moving the project forward and taking on new processes and tasks. Previous studies emphasized the importance of employees' innovative work practices and provided evidence that doing so is essential to the success of IT projects. A key element in the success of an IT project is the innovative work style of the employees (Khan *et al.*, 2022).

Hypothesis 3: Team innovative work behavior is positively associated with project success.

The Project Manager and Team Leader should have the power, resources, and capability to make the best decisions in the context of democratic leadership and project success. Democratic leader has an impact on employee performance and through democratic leadership; an employee's creativity improves over time (Ali *et al.*, 2020). Many scholars feel that personality traits like openness and conscientiousness are important indicators of project success (Al Wali *et al.*, 2022). Employees who exhibit innovative behaviors can come up with innovative ideas and apply their creative skills to turn these benefits into team performance. Employees who exhibit innovative behaviors are more likely to elevate the value of their work and increase their perception that these behaviors have a positive effect on their performance and ability to meet objectives. The earlier discussion made clear that a leader encourages innovative behavior in staff members, which favorably impacts project success (Ali *et al.*, 2020).

Hypothesis 4: Team innovative work behavior mediates the relationship between the democratic leadership style of the project manager and project success.
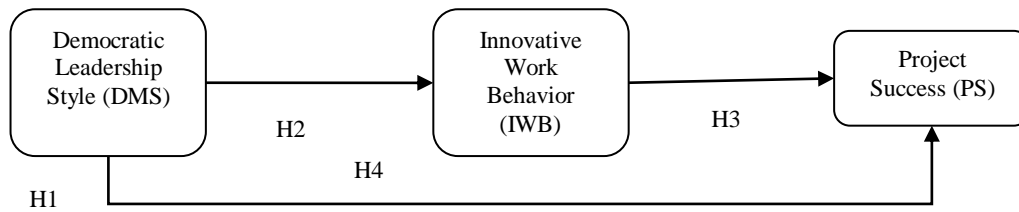
Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

3 | METHODOLOGY

The research approach that is used in this study is the quantitative approach. The population of this study consists of workers from various IT/Software organizations in Pakistan's twin cities (Rawalpindi and Islamabad). To acquire data, this study covers numerous Software/IT organizations working on a variety of projects that filled out the survey questionnaire. Respondents included Project Managers, Engineer Managers, Project Leaders, Team Lead, Advisors, and Experts. In the present study, 315 questionnaires were distributed in March by using Google Forms in the software/IT industry and 209 were returned and this reflects a response rate of approximately 66%. For this study, the targeted industry was a project-based Organization. For this study, the targeted industry was Project-based Organizations.

3.1 | VARIABLES AND THEIR MEASURES

The research gathered data and information using an accepted Likert scale because it is the best tool for this quantitative investigation.

3.1.1 | Democratic Leadership Style

The research gathered data and information using an accepted Likert scale because it is the best tool for this quantitative investigation. This instrument consists of a series of questionnaires distributed to respondents, with the questions rated from (5) for strongly agree to (1) for strongly disagree. A survey questionnaire with ten factors for democratic leadership style (Moneva & Pedrano, 2019).

3.1.2 | Innovative Work Behavior

Janssen's study (2012) based on Scott and Bruce's study develop the scale for employee innovative work behavior which has a total of 9 items with three dimensions already discussed in the literature review including idea realization, generation, and promotion. So, for this study, I adapted this scale with minor changes. The item of IWB is related to creating, brainstorming the idea, and implementing the new idea into a valuable solution (Khan et al., 2022).

3.1.3 | Project Success

Based on past research (Khan et al., 2022) applied the same scale in the IT industry. It comprises 14 total items, each of which is scored on a 5-point scale with 5 being strongly agreed upon and 1 strongly disagreed about. The items of project success cover quality, time cost, and scope. Sample items include "Is the project complete within the budget".

3.2 | DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical software for social science research, SPSS, and PLS is used to analyze the data. Interactive and statistical analyses are both possible with the help of SPSS software. The comparative and correlational statistical tests are carried out by this statistical program in the context of univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analysis, using both parametric and non-parametric statistical techniques (Ong & Puteh, 2017). The division of representation between

men and women in society depends on gender. The demographic section of the survey form thus also includes it. About 76.6% of the data was acquired from men, while 23.4% came from women. Of the 209 respondents, young people made up the majority. They made up 80.4% of all replies in the current survey since those between the ages of 18 and 33 were regarded as young. 18.7% of the sample, or 39 respondents, were between the ages of 34 and 41, while 2 were between the ages of 42 and 49. According to their response, 64.1% are those who have experience of 1 to 5 years. The experience ranged from 6-10 years with a proportion of 24. 9%. There were two responses with more than 16 years of experience making up 1% of the total.

4.1 │ Correlation Analysis

The table 1 below presents the results of the Pearson correlation coefficient, which shows how an independent variable and dependent variables are related. The correlation table shows that the independent variable i.e., Democratic leadership, and dependent variable i.e., Project Success along with mediators i.e., Innovative work behavior and moderator Self Efficacy building are positively correlated. The degree of correlation between democratic leadership and project success is (r =.562, p<0.01) which shows that DL is significant and positively related to PS. The correlation coefficient between DL and IWB is (r =.631, p<0.01) showing that DL is significant and positively correlated to IWB. The correlation between DL and SE is significant and positive (r =.434, p<0.01). In the same way, the correlation between IWB and SE is (r =.437, p<0.01) which represents a significant positive relationship between them. The value of correlation between IWB and PS is (r =.512, p<0.01), which shows that IWB and PS are significant and positively correlated to each. Moreover, the correlation value between SE and PS is (r =.649, p<0.01) which shows that SE is significantly positively related to PS.

Table 1
Correlations

	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Gender	1								
2	Age	-.173*	1							
3	qualification	.185**	.395**	1						
4	Experience	-.166*	.624**	.236**	1					
5	Designation	-.243**	-.050	-.124	-.013	1				
6	DL	.063	-.139*	-.148*	.048	.091	1			
7	IWB	.006	.029	.002	.039	.125	.631**	1		
8	PS	.083	-.102	-.119	-.083	.158*	.562**	.512**	.649**	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Note DL=Democratic leadership, **IWB**=innovative work behaviors, **PS**=Project Success

Table 2
Hypothesis Testing

	β	T statistics	P values
DL -> IWB	0.481	5.555	0.000
DL -> PS	0.51	8.481	0.000
IWB -> PS	0.292	3.779	0.002
DL -> IWB -> PS	0.141	2.579	0.005

IWB=innovative work behaviors, PS=Project Success

This table 2 demonstrates a substantial direct relationship between democratic leadership and project success (=0.51, t=8.481, p=0.00), and because H1 is accepted, the p-value is less than 0.05 and the t-value is more than 1.96. The second hypothesis, that democratic leadership fosters creative work behavior, is supported by the high positive connection it shows with IWB (r=0.481, t=5.55, p=0.00). The results also indicated that creative work practices had

a positive impact on project outcomes (p-value 0.05, = 0.292, t = 3.779, p=0.0011). This helps H3 by providing support. The table demonstrates that the project manager's democratic leadership style has a substantial beneficial influence on project success through creative work practices (=0.141, t=2.579, p=0.005), supporting H4.

4.2 | REGRESSION

Table 3 reported values of R square and adjusted R square, which identifies that 51% of the variance in IWB is explained by DL and 36.4% of variance in PS is explained by DL. It means 1% change in democratic leadership style, 51% change in innovative work behavior and 36% change in project success.

Table 3

R Square

Variables	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
IWB	0.514	0.507
PS	0.364	0.357

*Note: **IWB**=innovative work behaviors, **PS**=Project Success*

Table 4

Hypotheses Decision

S#	Hypotheses	Decision
H$_1$	The democratic leadership style of the positive impact on project success	Accepted
H$_2$	The democratic leadership style of the project manager has a positive influence on the employee's innovative behavior	Accepted
H$_3$	Project employee innovative behavior is positively associated with project success	Accepted
H$_4$	Employee innovative behavior mediates the relationship between the democratic style of the project manager and project success	Accepted

5 | DISCUSSION

The research study contributes to a better understanding of democratic leadership and has implications for successfully completing projects. This study is about the considerable influence of DL on PS. Innovative work behavior (IWB), which functions as a mediating variable to predict project success (PS).The effects of DL on PS can be increased when team members are shows innovative work behavior (IWB) acts as a mediating agent between DL and PS, as evidenced by results. The impact of leadership behaviors on project success is also a key concern for both industry and academics, as empirically demonstrated in various studies. Project manager must adopt a unique approach to building and maintaining relationships within the team (Pichlak & Szromek, 2021).The project manager's leadership style can influence the PS. Understanding the leadership style of the project manager is essential because ineffective management makes it difficult to lead the chances of project success (Haider, 2021). It is also more challenging for a project manager to lead a project team than it is to lead teams in traditional businesses. This is owing to the project's peculiarities: a more free-form work style, more frequent revisions, pressure to meet the project deadline while staying within budget, and limited resources. Because of the project's ephemeral nature and interpersonal linkages, the project manager must adopt a unique approach to building and maintaining relationships within the team - project completion means the end of the project team and the start of a new project and team (Podgórska & Pichlak, 2019). . IT project failure is common in Pakistan, necessitating an investigation of the traits that can lead to IT project success, such as extravagant personalities. IT project-based businesses are following suit by employing innovative project management practices to improve their performance. Unfortunately, many initiatives continue to fall short of their objectives in terms of scope, timetable, and budget (Khan et al., 2022). Researchers propose that enterprises drive growth limits to improve competitiveness in a rapidly changing and innovative corporate environment by transferring management capabilities focused solely on managers to team members for measuring growth (Oh & Choi, 2020). We propose that enterprises drive growth limits to improve competitiveness in a rapidly changing and innovative corporate environment by transferring management

capabilities focused solely on managers to team members for measuring growth (Oh & Choi, 2020). . IT projects are typically delicate and challenging. As a result, they must exhibit new behaviors to execute the work successfully. Employees' innovative work behavior is an important aspect of IT project success (Khan et al., 2022). Leadership has lately emerged as another effective leadership technique that has the potential to drive innovative activities (Newman et al., 2018).

6 | THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study has important theoretical consequences, notably in information technology and project management literature. First, we gained a better knowledge of how democratic leadership contributes to project success. Democratic leadership style has undoubtedly been studied in organizational behavior and its association with employee performance, yet the project management literature has not yet looked at it. The research also explores how team member behavior, such as creativity and project success, may be influenced by a leader's approach. Academics should concentrate on the requirement to recognize additional personality qualities that are directly related to IT endeavors. The research explores how a leadership style may influence team innovative work behavior and its impact on project success. Team members who are innovative help the firm achieve its goal and deliverables. Innovation can be a successful strategy for resolving issues at the workplace. Organizations should foster a culture where employees feel comfortable sharing their original ideas. The software industry enables the employee to be more innovative, which is beneficial to the project's success.

7 | PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

A good workplace requires the project manager to collaborate with subordinates. Democratic leaders encourage subordinates to generate ideas and begin conversations in which constructive problem-solving solutions are shared. Information technology initiatives must embrace a democratic leadership style to accomplish projects on schedule, with defined features, and under budget. Information technology initiatives must adopt a democratic leadership style because it allows every employee to voice their opinions and promotes team effort and collaboration that help accomplish project objectives. A project manager is more likely to inspire confidence in their team members if they are confident in their ability to lead and manage the project successfully. A project manager is also more likely to encourage and support their team members' creative risks and novel problem-solving techniques when they are confident in their own abilities. Democratic leaders have an influence on employee performance because they foster a sense of trust and creativity among their workforce and allow people to work in ways that they believe in. This leader encourages staff to follow established processes to uphold required standards while also experimenting with new ideas. A democratic approach results in better employee performance. Because it has been demonstrated that this leadership style boosts worker performance, leaders are urged to embrace it and include their teams in decision-making. In the workplace, leaders should encourage innovation, teamwork, and creativity since these traits boost morale, output, and performance in the long run. Leaders who adopt a democratic leadership style can foster a culture of open communication and teamwork, which will raise team members' motivation and engagement. Policymakers can use these findings to create standards and guidelines for leadership practices in project management to raise the success rate of projects across a variety of industries.

8 | LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

Each study has some limitations, which are listed below:
1. The sample size was relatively small and consisted of project managers, team lead, and engineer manager in the software development industries. The current study has some limitations.
2. This study only targets the software industry and responses collected from Islamabad and Rawalpindi software companies.
3. Time and resource limitations are crucial to achieving the project's objectives. Studying does have certain restrictions, though. The established goals of the software development sector and the IT industry may be supplemented with those from other sectors (NGOs, INGOs, IGOs, and project-based organizations) to generalize the findings.

9 | FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE RESEARCH

In the current study, the participated decision-making theory is used to investigate how DL influences PS. The results of this study suggest that future research should use other hypotheses, such as the Leader member exchange theory. To better understand how democratic leaders affect the project's success, longitudinal studies may be conducted in the future. Research from all over the country can be conducted to validate results or may discuss different behavior due to different dynamics of the project and location.

10 | CONCLUSION

The study's findings indicated a strong relationship between a democratic leadership style and the contributions of the workforce to the accomplishment of project success. It was discovered that leadership philosophies play a significant role in maintaining and fostering workforce motivation. To communicate with people and get the intended results, a leader must use the right leadership style (Suri, 2016).In Pakistan, the software development industry is rapidly expanding. The primary goal of the study is to identify any relationships between DL and PS in the Pakistani setting, particularly in the software development industry. For this purpose, information is gathered from software companies and the IT sector in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Software projects have a variety of elements, including managerial, business, legal, and ethical considerations.

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