Investigating the Mediating Role of Goal Clarify in the Relationship between Spiritual Leadership and Project Success: Evidence from Software Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose—The basic aim of the current study is to examine whether there is any relationship between Spiritual leadership (SL) and project Success (PS) through mediating role of goal clarity (GC).

Design/methodology/approach—This study used quantitative research approach and test the all statistical results through SmartPLS for 326 responded gathered from employs that were associated with software projects in the education and health care industries of Islamabad and Rawalpindi region, Pakistan.

Findings—All the proposed hypothesis were accepted and result validated that SL is positively and significantly backing to GC and PS. In addition to this, findings also show that GC is shown positive and significant impact on PS and GC is positively and significantly mediate the linkages between SL and PS.

Originality/value—There is a key evidence that research on SL and PS is too limited. Therefore, this study using the causal SL theory that identified that how SL is crucial for PS and provide a valuable extension to the SL in the project management literature.

Key words: leadership style, Spiritual leadership, goal clarity, project success and critical success factor

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the period of time critical success factors (CSF) of the projects are gaining the attraction of researcher’s due to the numbers of factors that involved in the successful compilation of the projects. In this context, a range of studies explored a variety of decisive CSF of projects that have a very crucial role during project life cycle (Ali et al.,...
The failure rate of software projects is too high because its embedded forcedly change in the overall process of the organizations that is very healthy task to manage (Kirmizi & Kocaoglu, 2020; Leu and Lee, 2017). Similarly, researchers highlighted that one of the CSF player of software projects as the leadership style (Alkraiji et al., 2020; Wanag et al., 2005). Because the leader conveys, directs and motivates subordinates for goal accomplishments (DuBrin Andrew, 2004; Koontz, 2010). Most recently, a number of studies have been discussed a variety of leadership styles such as ethical leadership by (Bhatti et al., 2021), (Network Governance Leadership, transactional leadership, Entrepreneur Leadership and transformational leadership style (J. Oh et al., 2019) humble leadership (Ali et al., 2020) Inclusive leadership (Khan et al., 2020) and Knowledge Oriented Leadership (Latif F et la., 2020) that have a very key role in the PS. Among these leadership style, SL might be a key factor of PS. However, spiritual was stated as a more spirit centered and value-based approach to leader (Yang et al., 2017; Fry, 2003). The empirical research is too limited that investigated the relationship between SL and PS in the software industry. Fry, (2003, p. 711) defined SL as “comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership”. Research validate that SL is a key factor for enhancing the both individual and team performance (Fry et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2019; M. Benefie, 2005), that ultimately lead toward success of the project team. Therefore, the current research aims to investigate the relationship between SL and PS. To investigate the linkages between SL and PS, it is a key to find how SL encourage and motivate their subordinates for successful achievement of a project. Existing study assume GL as a mediating variable among SL and project success. GC is two cognitions such as high GC and low GC by individual. According to the Tyssen et al., (2014) GC has a key role in the projects timely compilation. Raziq et al. (2018) emphasized to explore the role GC in the project setting. Past research study verify that hope/faith aspect of SL offer clarity to the people regarding their goals and how to achieve these goals (MacArthur, 1998). Addressing
these calls, existing study draw the causal theory of SL that is defined that “intrinsic motivation model that incorporates vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, theories of workplace spirituality, and spiritual survival” (Fry, 2003). Purpose that spiritual leader’s behavior enables GC mediation that are very key for PS.

Based on the above discussion, the existing research work draws a theoretical model based on casual theory of spiritual leadership, that spiritual leader is directly related to PS through intervening role of GC. By presenting the framework, authors aim was to contribute an important addition to the limited literature of SL, GC and PS. This research work was extended the past research works regarding the importance of leadership role in PS (MA Khan et al., 2019; Maqbool et al., 2017; Raziq et al., 2018; Aga et al., 2016; Turner and Muller, 2005) that will extend our knowledge regarding the human aspect importance in the project success. For this purpose, we purpose to examines the linkages between SL and PS. Further the study purpose GC as a mediating factor (in terms of top management, project and customer) in the linkages between SL (altruistic love, vision, hope/faith) and PS.

1.1. Research Justification

In the past decades a great numbers of software projects failures occurs due to the poor project management of project leaders (Law, 2019; Ke and Wei, 2008). Similar case is also found by other researchers where the authors emphasizes that the role of leaders as a key factor of project failures (Harrington et al., 2012; Steyn et al., 2018; Gupta et al., 2018; Raziq et al., 2018; Ali et al., 2020). In past, studies were conducted on the relationship between leadership style and PS through mediating role of GC and recommended to conduct study on the association between SL style and PS through mediating role of GC (Raziq et al., 2018; MA Khan et al., 2019). On the basis of these evidences, it is expected that SL will affect the PS through the mediating mechanism of goal clarity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Project Success

The term of PS is extensively elaborated in the past literature of project
management, where the aims of the mostly researchers on the dimensions of PS that how to measure it and what factors are backing to PS (Wang & Huang, 2006). Aga et al. (2016) argue that management of project is mostly related to the field of engineering and construction, where the measurement criteria of PS are well-accepted, objectives, and measurable, commonly by the traditional triangle criteria of budget, meeting the expectations of clients’ and time or quality. But now the measurement criteria of PS are expanded to the satisfactions of the key project stakeholders such as project team, end user and customer (M Podgorska & M Pichlak, 2019). In 2000s, the term of PS was related to the achievement of the organization strategic objectives and to meet the expectations of the sponsor (Ika, 2009; Jugdev and Muller, 2005; Kerzner, 2004). Research study discussed two types of PS criteria such as; macro & micro criteria (Lim and Mohamed, 1999). The indicators of macro criteria are actual benefit of project product in the operations phase, where the micro criteria the indicators are the cost, time, performance, quality and safety (Wang & Huang, 2006). Further Shenhar et al. (2001) highlighted four dimensions of PS including customer benefit, project efficiency, future potential to organization and organizational success. According to the A.G. Yu et al. (2005) it is very critical issue for various researchers regarding the consensus on the criteria of the PS.

2.2. Spiritual Leadership

Spirituality attract the researcher consideration rapidly (Biberman and Whitty, 2000). Basic reasons are both individual – rapid and fundamental changes in the economic, social and political areas builds a sensitivity of uncertainty in the lives of people – and organizational – due to the changing in the employee opportunities and work environment- firms need to be retain their employee to acknowledge their value (Twigg and Parayitam, 2007). SL emphasis on making “vision and value congruence across the strategic, empowered team, and individual levels” (Fry 2003, p. 693). In the SL theory, Fry (2003) discovered three dimensions of spiritual leadership; (a) vision, which states to “a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future” (Kotter 1996, p. 68); (b) in hope and faith, the belief regarding the expectations from vision, mission and purpose can be achieved
successfully; where (c) altruistic love have the sense of well-being through care, wholeness, harmony, love, appreciation of self and others (F. Yang et al., 2019). Operationally, for self and others intrinsically motivation SL is key predicator because it’s have the values, behaviors and attitudes as well as it’s also provide the sense of spiritual survival with the support of membership and calling (Fry & Cohen, 2009). Cultivating subordinates’ hope and faith, communicating the goals and vision and accepting the spiritual needs of subordinates for their well-being and goals are the key characteristics of spiritual leaders. (Fairholm, 1996; Butler & Modaff, 2008; Crossman, 2010). Similarly, spiritual leaders focusing on the inspiration and motivation of the worker with backing of transcended vison and altruistic love based on corporate culture (L. W. Fry et al., 2017)

2.3. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

2.3.1. Spiritual Leadership and Project Success

Recently variety of researchers examine a range of leadership styles and their impact on PS (see J. Oh et al., 2019; Raziq et al., 2018; Maqbool et al., 2017; Aga et al., 2016; Muredeni Liphadzi et al., 2015). But in case of spiritual leadership, research is too limited. Research highlighted that variety of successful organization introduced different types of programs to promote the spirituality at the work place like Tom’s of Maine, Ford, Du Pont, Hewlett-Packard, Motor Company, the World Bank, AT&T, Chase Manhattan Bank and Apple (Petchsawang and Duchon, 2012). According to the Duchon and Plowman (2005), leaders with spiritual practice have significant effect on life and success of the organization. MA Khan et al. (2019) argue that leaders need to adopt the SL behaviors for successfully achievement of PS. Similarly, Polat (2011), conclude that SL have a significant relationship with student success. Furthermore, employee who experience membership and calling and are focused to the success of the organizations show extra determination and cooperation which is mandatory for continuously improvement of the productivity as well as other important performance metrics (Fry 2003, 2005a; Fry and Slocum, 2008). On the basis of Causal SL theory this research study postulates the below hypothesis:

H₁: SL is positively and significantly relationship with PS.
2.3.2. Goal Clarity and Project Success

It is essential that scope, goal and objectives of the project are need to be clear to all the stakeholders (Kerzner, 2013). GC is crucial to achieve the targeted performance levels (Sawyer, 1992). High performance level of individual and groups are based on the GC (Anderson and Stritch, 2016; Dossett et al., 1979). If goals are not clearly defined than performance level of the individuals will be very low. (Bosselut et al., 2012; Bosselut, McLaren, Eys, and Heuzé, 2012). GC guided the project team’s members in determining what are their responsibilities, what are essential to be done are, and expectation from them particularly in the multiple project situations (P. Patanakul et al., 2016). An empirical research study conducted by Young & Samson, (2008) over 56 projects taken from 07 top economical countries, suggested that in project literature one of the common success factors as clear project goal. Indeed, clarity in goal, tasks, and predictable outcomes are all display significant relationship with project success. (Hong et al., 2004; Pinto and Covin, 1989). In the project environment, if the requirement of the management, client and goals are clear to all stakeholders, then the project can become successful (Aga, 2016). Target clarity of project between all team member requires common understand, unambiguous definition and rich communication of project targets (Gupta et al., 1992; Cooper and Slagmulder, 1999). Therefore, we postulate the below hypothesis:

\[ H_2: \text{GC is positively and significantly impact on PS.} \]

2.3.3. Spiritual Leadership and Goal Clarity

In the challenging situation spiritual leadership empower team to pursue excellence in accomplishing goals through its key values such as faith, hope and share vision (L.W. Fry et al., 2011). Therefore, it is the core task of project leader to define a clear role and responsibilities of each project team members and clearly define the overall objectives and goals of the project (Kerzner, 2013). So clarity in goal is a key feature of good project management and make assure that both short term and long term objective and goals of the projects accomplished, and the expectations of the end user should be meet effectively (Raziq et al., 2018). SL sharing belief and display faith by expectation
that other employees will work well in the organization goal or vision. (Pio J et al., 2020). Spirituality climate at the work is consider as a fundamental idea that focuses on number activates i.e compassion, personal development, learning and searching for a greater meaning and goal. (Salehzadeh 2015). Hence, one of the initial key aspect of project management in the project organization that clarifying the objectives and goals of the projects (Raziq et al., 2018). Therefore, on the basis of causal SL theory this research study postulates the below hypothesis:

H3: SL is positively and significant impact on GC.

2.3.4. Mediating role of Goal Clarity

Previous research study highlighted that mediating role of GC is varying against the nature of leadership style towards the PS (Raziq et al., 2018). Similarly, the SL style with values (hope/faith, vision and altruistic love) have the potential to clearly define the vision, goals and objectives of the end users. So, good manager of the project will discard all ambiguities through effective communication to their subordinates from the project goals, requirements and specifications for smoothly execution (Grant, 2012). According to the model of role episode which is process of role-related information (sending and receiving with in organization, managers and supervisors who are the role senders develop expectations regarding how roles and tasks should be performed. During multiple episodes, then these expectations are share with the employees (focal persons) by mangers (Kahn et al. 1964). If the ambiguity exists in the role of these episodes, then it will affect negatively on the work related behaviors and attitudes of the employee because ambiguity in role performs as role stressor (Onyemah, 2008). Because GC delivers a reason to which a member of the group understands why the problem is key or relevant to the agenda in the meeting of management, what is the bringing reason of the presenter, and what is the aim of he or she by directing the member of group to focus on it (H. Bang et al., 2010). Research on the mediating role of GC in the relationship between SL and PS is still prevailing. Therefor we postulate the below hypothesis.

H4: GC is positively and significantly mediating the linkages between SL style and PS
2.3.5. Method and Tools

Current study conducted cross sectional survey questionnaire and used the quantitative research method that based on the detective approach. SmartPLS were used to find the all statistical analyses. Mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentages are the statistical descriptions. Calculated and run the analysis of Pearson’s correlation for the spiritual leadership, GC and project success. Similarly, to determine the relationship between spiritual leadership, GC and PS current study run the multiple regression. Find the mediating role of GC in the relationship between SL and PS through structural equation modeling (SEM).

2.3.6. Procedural, Population and Sample

Employs of the software industry were the population and unit of analysis of the current study was the projects of the software industry, therefore current research study distributed survey questionnaire among 72 projects located in the Islamabad and Rawalpindi region of Pakistan. 25 Projects were selected from health care industry and 47 projects were selected from education industry. Survey questionnaire were distributed through email, WhatsApp and personal visits. Authors of this research study were share the purpose of the research with all the selected responded. Total 410 survey questionnaire were distributed among these projects and finally, 326 simple size were selected through simple random techniques. Responded included in the simple size are project leader, project director, supervisor and team members. Demographics detail of the
current study is given in the Table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above 51</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MS/MPhil</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor 16 years</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designation</td>
<td>Project leader</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project director</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Member</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>&lt; than 05 Years</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;16</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.7. Measures

To maximize the reliability and validity of the selected measurement tools, this study used existing scales published in Impact factor journals. A scale ranging 1 to 5 (total disagree to total agree) through five point Likert scale to measure each variable.

2.3.8. Spiritual Leadership

As discussed above, this study used the adopted scale to assess the SL from (Fry, 2005) that included 17 items for three dimensions. Vision dimension included 05 item, hope/faith 05 and altruistic love 07 items. A sample Like item is “My leader expresses his/her respect for his/her subordinates’ values.” (Cronbach’s alpha = .95).

2.3.9. Goal Clarity

Construct of GC is also adopted from (Hoegl, 2003) including 03 item and covering 02 dimension such as high clarity and low clarity. A sample Like item is “There were clear and comprehensible goals for this project.” (Cronbach’s alpha = .82)
and the previous research Raziq et al. (2018) (Cronbach’s alpha = .81) and the previous research MA Khan et al. (2019) (Cronbach’s alpha = .71).

2.3.10. Project success

Current study used 14 item scales to measure PS that adopted from (Aga et al., 2016). The scale is including six dimensions such as Time, Cost, Client Use, Performance, satisfaction and Effectiveness. A sample item is “The project was completed on time.” (Cronbach’s alpha = .95) and the previous research Aga et al. (2016) (Cronbach’s alpha = .92).

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this study SmartPLS3 was used for hypotheses testing. By applying the Structural Equation Modeling by using SmartPLS3 analysis was conducted in two steps. In first step measurement model analysis was done to establish the reliability and validity of data. Whereas in second step hypotheses were tested that is referred as structural model analysis.

3.1. Measurement Model Analysis

In measurement model analysis reliability and validity of measuring instrument is established. Reliability is measured through Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability. While discriminant validity and convergent validity are measure of construct validity. The acceptable range of reliability is 0.7. Hulland (1999) and Hair et al. (2013) are suggested that 0.7 composite reliability is sufficient for each constructs. In the (Table 4.1) composite reliability coefficients of each construct is given that ranging from 0.862 to 0.962, which is greater than 0.7. Hence, the reliability of the construct is confirmed. Hair et al. (2013) suggested if output of average variance extracted is greater than 0.500, than construct convergent validity should be accepted. In below (Table 4.1) all the values of average variance extracted (VAE) of each proposed construct is more than 0.500. Results shows that the AVE for current constructs ranged from 0.614 to 0.738. Hence, the validity of construct is confirmed.
Table 4.1 of CA, AVE and CR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha (CA)</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.614</td>
<td>0.962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic love</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.700</td>
<td>0.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.616</td>
<td>0.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.738</td>
<td>0.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td>0.962</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discriminant Validity is established through Fornell-Larcker criterion traditionally, while by using Smart PLS3 Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations is good measure of discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Discriminant validity is used to measure that to what extent criterion variables are different from each other. Threshold value for HTMT is 0.9 and more strictly 0.85 is followed (Henseler et al., 2015). Table 4.2 given below that shows all the variables were different from each other so discriminate validity was established.

Table 4.2 HTMT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Altruistic love</th>
<th>Goal clarity</th>
<th>Hope</th>
<th>Project Success</th>
<th>Spiritual leadership</th>
<th>Vision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic love</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal clarity</td>
<td>0.858</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>0.853</td>
<td>0.828</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>0.821</td>
<td>0.811</td>
<td>0.859</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual leadership</td>
<td>0.822</td>
<td>0.859</td>
<td>0.723</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>0.835</td>
<td>0.825</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study one variable SL is treated as a second order construct. Three dimension of SL are not tested separately. To establish the reliability and validity of second order construct redundancy analysis is done. All the dimensions of SL should have some weight on SL as it is a formative construct, and all weights should be significant. Figure 1 given below show the outer loading of all constructs and significant of weights of all formative measures.
3.2. Structural Model Analysis

Structural model analysis was done by using the bootstrapping technique. Bootstrapping is a technique in which sub-sample of sample are used for hypotheses testing. In present study 500 sub-subsamples were used for hypotheses testing. The result of study indicates that R2 value for PS is 0.95. R2 is measure of in-sample prediction power indicating that model is 95% fit. Further the outcomes of study indicate that SL has positive impact on PS with $\beta$, 0.849 and $P$-value 0.01. Therefore, H1 that SL is positively associated with PS was supported. As the H2 stated that SL has a positive impact on project success, $\beta$ is 0.764 and $P$-value is 0.01, therefore it was concluded that H2 was also supported. H3 stated that GC has a positive effect on project success, value of $\beta$ is 0.161 and the $P$-value is 0.01. Thus, H3 was also supported.

For mediation model, current study was tested both indirect and direct pathways. In table 4.4, $\beta$ is 0.123 and $P$-value is 0.01 that shows that GC mediates association between SL and project success. All the hypotheses were accepted at 95% level of confidence interval. As lower limit confidence interval and upper limit confidence interval...
interval both are non-zero figures and having same direction. F2 is measure of effect size. It has three levels i.e. low, medium high. Effect size less f 0.02 is small, 0.15 is medium and 0.35 and above is larger. This study result shows the medium and larger effect size. All the results are shown in table 4.3 given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.3 of Medial Model</th>
<th>β-value</th>
<th>t-statistics</th>
<th>p-values</th>
<th>05%</th>
<th>95%</th>
<th>$f^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GC -&gt; PS</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>6.956</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLS -&gt; GC</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>20.378</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.704</td>
<td>0.820</td>
<td>1.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLS -&gt; PS</td>
<td>0.849</td>
<td>42.214</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td>0.878</td>
<td>0.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLS -&gt; GC -&gt; PS</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>6.518</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.2. SL, GC and P

4. DISCUSSION

Current study tested a model through empirically results that add an important contribution to exploring the questions of the impact of SL on GC and PS, GC significant backing PS and GC mediating the association between SL and project success. Results validated H1 by highlighting that SL has positively impact on project success. In the extant literature, this association has only explored or tested by (MA Khan et al., 2019) in construction projects. Similarly, Rollins et al. (2013) argue that successfully applying SL
model enhance the performance of IT project as well as minimize the project failures. Similarly, some researchers also find through qualitative studies that well defined vision is essential for successfully compilation of projects (Christenson and Walker, 2004; 2008). Because it clarifies the key values, beliefs, encourage towards deeply commitment and provide a sense of direction to team members in the future (Z.H. Aronson et al., 2010). In addition to this Rollins et al. (2013) argue that from a four decades’ project management researchers have been conveying the message regularly that to be effective, managers need to “show respect, demonstrate fairness, listen attentively, appreciate others’ gifts and contributions, and treat others with love and compassion” (Reave, 2005, p. 657). So, spirituality may encourage leaders toward better behavior and attitude with well define vision, wisdom of hope and altruistic love through sense of member and calling to subordinates for successful achievement of project success. Result accepted H2 by showing that SL has positively backing the goal clarity. Because leaders can enhance subordinate motivation by removing obstacles from their path to obtainable rewards or enhancing valued subordinate rewards (Fry, 2003). Similarly, finding of H3 also supported by previous literature (Aga et al., 2016; Raziq et al., 2018; Hong et al., 2004; Pinto and Covin, 1989). H4 is shown that GC has significant mediate the association between SL and project success. In the extant literature, this association has also not been explored or tested. The current study follows the theoretical frameworks of Fry (2003; 2005), and suggested that spiritual leaders have the potential to motivate the subordinates through GC and this mediating is role supported by empirical result.

4.1. Practical Implications

Findings of the current study established multiple practical implications. First, current findings indicate the significance impact of spiritual leaders on the project success. Spirituality based on the motivational and inspirational qualities that can be developed and learned. Therefore, project managers must be trained with SL style, because Crossman (2010, 604) highlighted that SL “has the potential to emerge as a powerful and courageous innovative management paradigm for the twenty-first century”. Spirituality is vision, sense of calling and membership qualities that can be play a crucial role in the building a friendly environment of working between the team members that
may leads towards project success.

Second finding of the current study highlighted the significance of GC as a mediator between the SL and project success. Leader clarify project goal to the subordinates to perform their task efficiently and effectively that are very key to successfully achieve the project objective. One implication acmes the well define goal to each individual is the best way to involved, motivate him and clarify the role and responsibilities of each individual. That creates a greater probability that a project will become successful. According to Aga et al., (2016) & Raziq et al., (2018) such implementation in the organization create an environment where followers know their task very well, which ultimately leads to the success of the project.

4.2. Theoretical Implications

In a recent time, research in software project provide a valuable suggestion to the software industry, when the whole world has dramatically shift from barracks to click mode. Karadag et al., (2020) highlighted that SL as a key to clarify the role of individual and success of the academic schools. This work delivers early proof on the significance of SL style in the clarification of goal to the project team members for successfully compilation of project. This empirical study done the meaningful contributions to the prevailing gap in project management literature on the association among SL and PS (MA Khan et al., 2019; Raziq et al., 2018). This is the first research study that contributes to the literature gap on the importance role of project GC in the association among SL and project success.

5. CONCLUSION

In today world, software projects play a crucial role in the development of any organizations because it is integrated with number of key factors of the organizations therefore, the finding of the current research work extant the SL theory and highlighted the important role of SL in the successful compilation of software projects. Using the causal theory of spiritual leadership, this research helps to enhance understanding of how SL influence GC & PS of the software projects of education and health sector of Pakistan. In conclusion, current study finds all the proposed relationship significantly.
Result indicates that in software projects, SL style has shown direct impact on GC and project success. Finding also validated that GC have the significant impact on PS Result further demonstrated that as a mediator, GC as a critical factor of project success. Therefore, project Leadership must promote spiritual practices and must deliver a clear goal to all the key players of the projects for successfully accomplishment of project success.

5.1. Limitation and Future Recommendation

Include maximum number of health care projects of Pakistan, accuracy of finding was enhanced through validation of instruments and large sample size in such pandemic condition of COVID-19 are the strengths of this research study. Beside the strengths, the existing study have serval limitation which will creates the opportunities for further investigations in the sense of further exploration. First, the design that was used by this study as a cross-sectional which may create the chance of causality, to avoid this problem we recommend a longitudinal study on the effect of SL and GC on project success. Second this study used only one mediating variable such as goal clarity, future research as recommended to apply other mediating variables like trust, employee engagement, psychological empowerment and voice behavior etc. The third limitation as related to the selection of only health care projects, further exploration as recommended to validate the result in other industry such as (Service and banking etc). Fourth limitation as context of the study, this study was conducted only in Pakistani context, in future it should be extend to other countries to generalize the finds. Fifth limitation as the one predicator variable, future research may be extended to other leadership styles such strategic leaders, smart leadership and servant leadership. At the end it may be interesting to test the relationship between spiritual leadership, voice behavior, employee engagement and PS in the government sector.

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