

THE INFLUENCE OF ETHICAL AND AUTOCRATIC E-LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE OPPORTUNISM AND VALUE CREATION: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCES FROM SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

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Abstract: *Although a considerable attention has been paid to project leadership in prior literature, but the concept is still debatable. However, it is more critical for the leaders to deal with their team members where projects are managed through geographically dispersed teams. The employees of such teams are more likely to practice opportunistic behavior. Therefore, the objective of this study is twofold; one to create value through effective E-leadership in software development projects, and second to decrease the employee opportunism in the team members. Data were collected from 191 employees of software houses of Pakistan. For data analyses, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) through Smart PLS 3 have been used. Findings have shown that employee opportunism has negative impact on value creation, but effective E-Leadership styles have significant impact on value creation. The findings will help software firms to add value to their software development projects which are managed through virtual teams.*

Keywords: *Electronic leadership; Autocratic leadership; Ethical leadership; Employee opportunism; Value Creation; Software Development Projects; Virtual Teams*

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1. Introduction:

Value Creation is the process of creating novelty and focusing on how the value is generated (Lepak, 2007). Value Creation is the legal status of market-based economy. Benefit of the value creation leads towards the progress of the organization. The status of the project management can be improved with value creation process with in discipline way. (Green, 2019; urRehman, 2016). Less productivity is the result of the employee behavior that leads towards the loss of the value creation. (Byun, 2018). Therefore, it is important to curb opportunism in organizations as it can create negative impact on the organizational performance. Erin Anderson defines opportunism as “Opportunism is self-interest seeking with guile, synonymous as misrepresentation, cheating, and deception” (Anderson, 1988). Opportunism leads towards the failure of the project (Orlandi, 2020) and for successful project accomplishment value should be created through optimizing opportunism with leadership styles (Boukendour, 2007; Xia, 2018). The use of communication channel can leads towards opportunistic behaviors of employees (SandipTrada, 2020). In the perspective of leadership, most of the leaders are focusing on both electronically and traditional styles for different perspective (Wart, 2017). As the researchers accepted the definition of e-leadership is “a social influence process embedded in both proximal and distal contexts mediated by AIT that can produce a change in attitudes, feelings, thinking, behavior, and performance” (Avolio, 2014). Leadership style inspires and improves creativity of employees (AtishreeBhardwaj, 2020;

MohsinShafi, 2020; Lia, 2020). Autocratic leader decided that which person has to perform which task and order them to do that without asking any person in decision making. Autocratic groups are more productive then democratize group (Vugt, 2004). Ethical leadership leads towards the accomplishment of the vision and mission of the organization goals by providing direction (Mihelič, 2010). Ethical leader conveys clear ethical values through message for avoidance and deceitful which leads towards the opportunistic behavior that can harm the value creation of software development project (Ko, 2018).

For achievement of the organizational performance ethical values are needed to be identified, so that ethical leaders can do commitments for value creation (Meral, 2012). Ethical leaders need to be applied the problem-solving competencies among the employee. Integrity of the ethics need to be part of the moral values among individuals and attitudes of the work are defined by the ethical leaders to be developed (Byun, 2018; Pies, 2010). For the improvement of the subordinate’s autocratic leadership need to be develop. According to the developed countries autocratic leadership seems to be less practiced by the leaders.

Fairness in the work place is the need for the employee so that the cultural nature can support to curb the misconduct impact due to accountability so that work environment needs to be nonviolent (Ahmad, 2018). Activities need to performed in the ethical environment for providing the ethical standards that can leads towards the value creation of the products and produce more output (Schwepker, 2015). The purpose of

our research to illuminate leadership to decline employee opportunism and increase value creation in software development project. Ethical leaders do not worry about the charity purposes they only need to follow their rules and regulations that will be implemented on employee so that will be effective or not for employee (Alshammari, 2015).

Value Creation becomes very important to meet the need of today era and challenges which will be faced tomorrow (Morris, 2013). It is the legal status of market-based economy (Green, 2019). Effective E-Leadership style haven't yet studied by researchers which need to be study to curb the impact of employee opportunism. Opportunism generates negative effect on performance improving factors (Haq, 2019). Such as Jan Potters studied opportunism among teams and team leaders enhance the performance of the employees and it generates more earning and found a positive direct relationship (Potters, 2005). Value creation become a legal status of the today era for the project based organizations (Green, 2019). According to studies opportunism becomes an situational factors that can create impact on value creation. Opportunistic behavior may act as negative impact among employees that can decrease the value creation in the software development project (Ertimur, 2010; Trada, 2020). Ethical leaders do not worry about the charity purposes they only need to follow their rules and regulations that will be implemented on employee so that will be effective or not for employee (Alshammari, 2015). Value creation needs to be developed in various forms such as the possibility of

creating social values. Stakeholders and partnership who do output have done a value creation collaboration in the company such as that employee becomes the most important factor for the project of value creation. Value is created on the employee's behalf of self-interest (Pies, 2010). Employee opportunism need to be identified so that for the creation of value for the software development project. As per studies value generated haven't yet identified from the perspective of employee opportunism. Employee behavior need to be identified with in the organization because it becomes the most important factor.

As no previous studies has increase value creation by governing the employee opportunism in software development project. The findings of the study will be useful to curb employee opportunism by using leadership style and to generate value creation for the project-based organizations. This study will generate understanding with value creation by using leadership style and it will discuss opportunism in to different categories regarding to employee. Effective E-leadership styles has been used as independent variable for the analysis of their significance impact on employee opportunism. Effective E-leadership styles will also show the significant impact on value creation for the software development project. Autocratic E-Leadership and Ethical E-Leadership has been used an effective E-Leadership styles. Ethical leadership need to be identified with in the organization. Organization of the today era need the ethical values and moral values for the perfect work flow. The current study is important for the organizations to create

values within the organization and need to be enhance. In this research study two effective leaderships styles have been identified as effective E-Leadership styles and need to be implement for the value creation. Leadership styles have direct relationship with employee opportunism. In today era, opportunistic behavior among the employee is at peak. Because employee need opportunities to move forward. But this opportunistic behavior is a threat for the organizations. If a single resource which is holding the whole organization workload and leave at that moment can create a lot of disturbance among the organization.

Opportunistic behavior of the important resource within the organization can leads towards a huge loss for the organizations. Organizations in Pakistan haven't yet aware of the leadership style and implement it into their organization. Organization need to implement the best practices of effective E-Leadership style with in the organizations. In Lahore there is lot of competition among the organization a single resource has importance for the value created product. The current study is aimed at answering two main research questions: What is the impact of leadership style on value creation? What is the impact of opportunism on value creation? How to decrease employee opportunism using effective leadership style? For that purpose, this study is elaborating the leadership styles for tackling this issue. Strick leaders with quick decision making need to be part of the organization so that in case of emergency leaders can take decision for the better of the organization to create value. Autocratic leader is the quick decision maker without

thinking about the emotional dilemmas they take their decision in this study the researcher has used autocratic leadership for creating value within the organization to create value. Therefore, the objective of this study is twofold; one to create value through effective E-leadership in software development projects, and second to decrease the employee opportunism in the team members of these software development projects. The current study is aimed at answering, "what is the impact of ethical and autocratic leadership style on employee opportunism and value creation in geographically dispersed software development projects"?

1 Theoretical Background:

According to Brown's study, ethical leadership express "The demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (E.Brown, 2005). A relation with positive traits generates develops by ethical leaders and group of socialization is developed among the subordinated and leaders (Schwepker C. H., 2017). Ethical leadership retain fairness in the workplace among the employee according to their nature of culture and it supports to tackle misconduct at work because it is the accountability of employers to deliver all with vigorous and nonviolent work environment (Ahmad, 2018). Ethical leaders generate values by accepting the rules, principles and follow the values because they do not worry about charity (Alshammari, 2015). As the business rises,

virtual teams grow into the part of the organization and ethical leaders offers the e-business morals for belief and inspiration. For the job gratification and providing productivities among the employee for the enhancement of organizational skill ethical leadership become effective among virtual teams (Lee, 2009). Leaders with the authority of decision making and is holding directive power with the clearly defined hierarchal intra team building is defined as autocratic leadership. It provides precision within the team by categorization of struggles done by the employees. It provides the both positive and negative effect on the performance and safe nature of the employees (Hoogh, 2015). Opportunistic behavior mostly leads towards the failure of the project because it exists in most of the industries like employment contracts, political election and many more (Boukendour, 2007). Employees plays an important role in achieving the organization goals and leadership style considered an important factor to achieve them (McColl-Kennedy, 2002). The purpose of the study is how to curb employee opportunistic behavior in the organization and it became a biggest challenge in all over the world how to engage the employee within the organization. According to studies the most of the employee engaged to their duties are US employees. Employee can be engaged in many ways in the organization as scholar defined from different occupation. Cognitive expression needs to be check of the employee what they are thinking at that time and what is the thing of employee regarding to its leader. The expression can be also physical that can tell about the

behavior of employee towards the opportunity. Different type of engagement techniques can be performed by leaders like ethical leaders need to implement moral values and ethics within the organization (Men, 2020). Opportunism can be in different forms. Employee is doing overtime and not paid well, laws are not followed by employers, lot of manipulations in the salary, activities performed that are not related to employees' skills and fraud with blackmail within the organization can leads towards the employee opportunistic behavior (Popov, Institutions for Decreasing of Employee Opportunism, 2016).

2.1 Hypotheses development and research model

2.1.1 Ethical E-Leadership and Employee opportunism

Growth in the ethical behavior leads toward on focusing on positive and negative impact on the behavior of organization employee (Byun, 2018). Employee takes the instruction of ethical leader as a role model within the organization. Ethical leaders provide a symbol of achieving the goals of the organization through a proper guideline and development of the interest within the employees (Meral, 2012).

Cooperation is always an increasing factor among ethical leaders and employees. Ethical leaders show the behavior of openness and provides a positive relationship. Different situations are provided by the leaders in which the growth of the employee skills becomes an enhancing factor (Walumbwa, 2011). Employee moral identity develops as an output of ethical leadership (Pasricha, 2018). Ethical leadership help in the

positive response from the employee and decreased the employee opportunism related factors. Task performance is increased by the implementations of ethical values by ethical leaders within the organization (Byun, 2018). Study elaborates that help in the reduction of the stress among the employees and curb employee opportunism (Meral, 2012).

H1: Ethical E-Leadership has significant impact on employee opportunism.

2.1.2 Autocratic E-Leadership and Employee Opportunism:

Autocratic leaders have authority of the decision making to take their own decision without consulting to anyone they have right to control employee and take decision for them (Hoogh, 2015). Decision can be taken when the ratio of accountability become high and ration of ambiguity become low it can lead towards the positive decision-making procedure and according to O'Reilly! Person who can take their own decisions with the justification of their action and their impression can be managed by themselves can leads towards the decision of success and failure (Fandt, 1990). Opportunistic behavior needs to be control by that person who can take decision by own. Leaders need to be led voluntarily for achieving the organization goals in different perspective and need to direct the follows to achieve the same goals. Leaders need to be implemented the best decision and not to involve employee in the decision-making procedure (Bhatt, 2012).

H2: Autocratic Leadership has significant impact on employee opportunism.

2.1.3 Ethical E-Leadership and Value Creation

Most of the leaders behave unethically which result in the negative impact on the value of the firm or organization. Unethical behavior leads towards the example of rotten egg within the organization (Byun, 2018). Organization performance is achieved by conducting of ethical value by ethical leaders. A pleasurable environment is created by the employees and ethical leaders at work due to the decrease in opportunistic behavior and commitments among them (Meral, 2012). Problem solving competencies need to be developed by the ethical leader within the organization because it generates a primary focus on ethical values of the employee. For value creation the ethics integrity among individuals is the important chunk of the project ethics (Pies, 2010).

Standards defines by ethical leaders are always implemented among the subordinates. Work attitudes are developed ethical leaders for the outcomes generated by the employees (Byun, 2018). Innovation in the social tendency is developed by ethical leader because it generates direct and indirect effect by the influence of the employees. Ethical leader holds the morality in two aspect as person and manager to take decisions with honesty with are based on moral values. For generating capital for the organization ethical managers are known to managerial practicing (Pasricha, 2018).

H3: Ethical Leadership plays a significant role in project value creation.

2.1.4 Autocratic E-Leadership and Value Creation

For the productivity among the organization autocratic leadership provides the effective leadership style and good morale can be maintained by it (Bhatt, 2012). Autocratic leaders have concern with the productivity of resourceful group and it can lead towards the personal outcome that he needs (SARGEN, 1971). In perspective to employee autocratic leaders have full control on them. The interest of the team does not make any value in front of autocratic leader, employee have to follow the decision of the leaders. On the working scenario of the autocratic leadership no one can raise any kind of query because they take the decision as soon as possible without consulting with any one and makes the decision-making process faster (ElKhouly, 2014).

Studies elaborates about the comparison of leaders; some leaders take actions because they work with their subordinates more closely and they have authority to work for taking decisions. For the improvement of the subordinate's autocratic leadership need to be develop. According to the developed countries autocratic leadership seems to be less practiced by the leaders. According to wealth niche autocratic leaders are always the part for the poverty and harshness (Vliert, 2006).

H4: Autocratic Leadership plays a significant role in project value creation.

2.1.5 Employee Opportunism and Value Creation

Behavior of the employees leads towards the less productivity of the products that can decreased the value creation of the software development project (Byun, 2018). Investigation becomes the part of organizational behavior so that behavior of organization can be understandable. A factor is developed of self-interest is developed with generated the opportunistic behavior within the organization. Effort for the organization can also leads towards the consequences and a political nature of behavior developed within the organization. The rewards can be awards to the employee on the behalf of accountability and it can lead towards the motivation for the protection of self-image (Fandt, 1990). Ineffective management for the valuable outcome due approach used for the production. Service can't be part of value creation. Resource can be enhancing the value creation for the better outcomes for the customer and it generate an advantage wit lot competitive edge. Early stage value creation can't be clearly understandable as it can be understandable in the advanced stages (Fuentes, 2019).

H5: Employee Opportunism has negative impact on value creation.

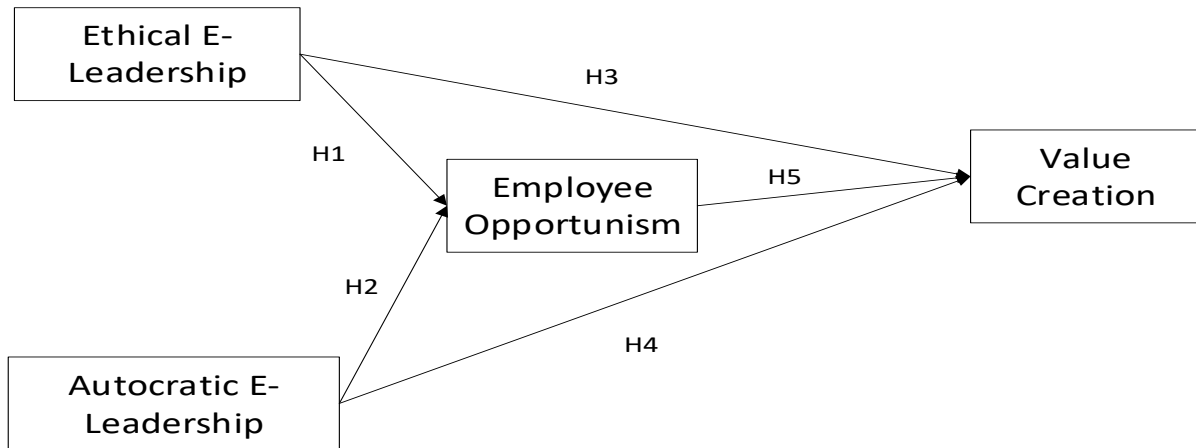


Figure 1: Hypothesized Model

2 Methodology:

This study is conducted to measure influence of E-Leadership on employee opportunism and value creation in software-based projects of Lahore. Research design has been discussed below in this section. This section is based upon multiple sub sections step by step. In the first sub section population has been identified. In the third section of this study is based upon measurement scale of every variable.

3.1 Data Collection

Pakistan software export boards is collaborating with international standard to meet the requirement and more than one hundred and ten companies from Pakistan IT sector have got the ISO certification with the collaboration of PSEB. More than 4000 software firms are registered by Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) (PSEB, 2019). According to rule of thumb, out of total companies, 170 companies (33%) are selected for data collection. PSEB recognized the registered firms at national and international level. Approximately more than 350 companies are registered through

PSEB (PSEB, 2019). Pakistan software export board is the trustworthy body of listed software houses connected with Pakistan Government. PSEB follow the rules and regulation for the development of the infrastructure. Registered software house from PSEB have been selected only for the data collection procedure. After selecting the firms, questionnaire has been distributed between different software firms. The questionnaire is based on different measurement scales that have been elaborated in next section. Different key position has been identified for serving the questionnaire to the firms. As the questionnaire composition is in printed form and as well as google form. Different key position holders have been asked to fill the questionnaire from different software houses. 300 questionnaires have been distributed in different software house.

Measures:

6-items for the measurement scale will be adopted for ethical leadership developed by Michael E. Brown (Brown, 2006). 5-items for the measurement scale will be adopted

for autocratic leadership developed by David E. Rast (Rast, 2013). To measure value creation a five items scale was adopted originally developed by Rajinish (Rai, 2016). Employee opportunism was measured by using 4 item scale developed by (Heide, 2007).

2.2 Data Analysis:

SEM application are increasing with in few years because of its methodologies of validity and reliability with statistical power approaches (Jr, 2017). In the present era Smart PIs is that software application which becomes the most prominent for the Smart Equation Modeling after it was launched in 2005. Due to user friendly interface it becomes the most usable software application for the analysis of the results. Due to it user friendly functionality it is widely used for the results of visual representations of the data. For tackling the problems related to business, the novelty is generated by PLS-SEM. In case of inner model, the dependent and independent variables become the part of inner model and creates a relationship and the indicators that are observed with the relationship of latent variable becomes the part of outer model (Kwong, 2013). For the examination of measurement of quality scientist are working from decades. As the application is based upon the explanation of the variance among the dependent variable at its maximum level and the variance that are unexplained is minimized with lot of advantages. PLS-SEM provides consistency in the results (Afthanorhan, 2013).

Data Analysis and Results:

Measurement Model:

Reliability:

In Cronbach alpha if the value is greater than 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978) then it will direct that model measurement is reliable but it can be satisfactory if the values are between 0.70 and 0.90 regarding to advanced research. If the values are below to 0.60 then it will show that it lacks reliability (Afthanorhan, 2013). In this study according to Cronbach's Alpha of Autocratic Leadership is 0.784 that is satisfactory internal reliability. Ethical leadership is 0.838 that is good internal reliability and meeting the threshold reliability. Employee opportunistic falls in satisfactory internal reliability with value of 0.729 and meeting the threshold. Value Creation falls in outstanding internal reliability with value of 0.916 meeting the threshold requirements.

Validity Testing:

Average Variance Extracted:

After checking the reliability criteria of the data, validity needs to be checked in which the analysis will be done through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) so validity can be ensured. According to validity checking, the measurement needs to be done according to what is going to be measured. Factor loading values need to be done the measurement for AVE and all the errors need to be addressed. The acceptable value for AVE must be 0.50 or above (DohyunLee, 2019). As autocratic leadership is 0.537 that is above then threshold of 0.5. Ethical Leadership is above then threshold that is 0.557. Employee opportunism is above then 0.55 that is also above then threshold. Value

Creation is 0.748 that is above then threshold. So, all the value is meeting the requirements of threshold.

Study elaborates that the amendment of the one factor model can do examination of the discriminant validity over CFA. Other elements need to be lower in correspondent to correlation. Elements correlation should be lower than $r=0.85$ for the presence of factor in the same structural model as a distinct variable (DohyunLee, 2019). The present data that I have collected is

fulfilling the requirement of discriminant validity. Not a single value is violating the threshold of discriminant validity. All the elements correlation is showing values less than 0.85. The correlation of AL is 0.651 that is fulfilling the threshold value. The correlation of EL is 0.686 is fulfilling the threshold values. The correlation of EO is 0.642 is fulfilling the threshold values. The correlation of VL is 0.829 is fulfilling the threshold values.

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and Discriminant Validity

Variable	AL	EL	EO	VC
AL	0.651			
EL	0.104	0.686		
EO	-0.583	-0.371	0.642	
VC	0.061	0.821	-0.248	0.829

Note: AL = Autocratic Leadership; EL = Ethical Leadership; EO = Employee Opportunism; VC = Value Creation;

3.3 Evaluation of Structural Model:

For the testing of hypothesis model fit is used in the current section:

3.3.1 Evaluation of Structural Model:

Standardized root mean square has been used for the model fitness by the research for this research. Validation of the model can be found out through SRMR. The acceptable range for SRMR is less than 0.8. The main SRMR need two factors i.e. model implemented correlation and observed variable correlation for finding the

root mean square (Reinartz, 2009). Model has been accepted because it has been quite close to the threshold defined. As the current study is showing that the SRMR is 0.081.

3.3.2 Results of Hypothesis testing:

Sample of 191 is used for the examination of the hypothesis testing via bootstrapping using path coefficient. PLS-SEM is used for the outcome generated for the hypothesis testing and structural model.

Table 1: Hypotheses Decision Table

Sr. No.	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Effect Size f ²	Hypotheses Decision
1	Ethical E- Leadership→ Employee Opportunism	-0.260	3.621	0.000	0.093	Supported
2	Autocratic E- Leadership→ Employee Opportunism	-0.431	6.781	0.000	0.253	Supported
3	Ethical E- Leadership→Value Creation	0.726	13.299	0.000	1.007	Supported
4	Autocratic E- Leadership→Value Creation	0.237	3.691	0.000	0.225	Supported
5	Employee Opportunism->Value Creation	-0.005	0.094	0.925	0.000	<i>Not Supported</i>

4 Discussion:

Electronic leadership grasp more attention in the present era for the creation of the value in a software development project to curb the impact of opportunism (Wart, 2017; Boukendour, 2007). As per study five hypothesis has been tested under the consideration of this research. According to the first hypothesis, “Ethical E-Leadership has a significant impact on employee opportunism” has tested and findings support the proposed hypothesis. Employee opportunism needs to be a curbed by using ethical leadership. According to the result which has Ethical E-Leadership has been a significant impact due to moral values, and it is beneficial to curb the effect of employee opportunism. According to second hypothesis “Autocratic E-Leadership has a significant impact on employee opportunism” that tests successfully with the correct supported results. Autocratic leaders make their own decisions according to the detailed literature review; it has a significant impact in curbing employee opportunism. According

to the hypothesis “Ethical E-Leadership plays a significant role in project value creation” has been supported with positive results. The novelty of the software development project can be attained with the help of moral and ethical values. Relating from the hypothesis “Autocratic E-Leadership plays a significant role in project value creation” has also been accepted. When the leaders have decision making power they make good decisions and ensure their employees to put their efforts to achieve the goals. As a result, the value is generated in the project-based organizations. On the authority of the interpretation, “Employee Opportunism harms value creation" has not been argued with negative consequences and but results are not significant. So, results showed that out of five hypotheses, four are supported by the result, and one is insignificant. Current study favors the Ethical E-Leadership style for curbing the impact of employee opportunism and also plays a vital role for the generation of value within the organization.

Prior studies have not shown any significant relationship among employee opportunism and value creation and that was the need of today era. Ethical and moral values require for the generation of the value and have not significant relationship defined in prior studies (Pies, 2010). This study has found positive result from software-based industry for the creation of value among geographically dispersed teams. Autocratic E-Leadership becomes the need of the need of the organization for the productivity and worth for the productivity can be created (Puni, 2015). In this study the software development project has not any significant positive impact for the value creation by autocratic E-Leadership and it is conflicting due to results can vary from industry to industry. Opportunistic behavior leads towards the negative impact of the productivity and can generate negative results which may leads towards the less productivity (Boukendour, 2007). It may have negative results in different industries, but results show that it has not any negative impact on geographically dispersed teams. Values creation have not been decreased in the organization with respect to opportunistic behavior in geographically dispersed teams.

4.1 Implication

According largest cities of Pakistan, Lahore is leading as the largest city in population. Software becomes the need of today era and lot of software houses are registering and opening with large number of ratios for fulfilling the demand technology. Lahore has leading software industry with more than 300+ software houses registered and people from different cultures are working

here. Effective styles of E-Leadership are the need of the software-based projects to curb employee opportunism from their organization. The aim of the research was to create value in software project-based organization to curb the impact of opportunistic behavior of the employee.

4.1.1 Theoretical Implications:

Research have work on the opportunistic behavior of the employee but there was for the creation of value through effective leadership styles. According to our result leadership styles are effective for the creation of value but it also shows that employee opportunism does not generate the negative impact on the value creation. As autocratic leader has authority to take their own decisions without asking anyone in the organization but according our current study this stated is rejected in the hypothesis testing. But autocratic leaders can curb the employee opportunism regarding to our current study it can be done. Employee opportunism creates a negative impact for the creation of value in the organization, but this statement is neglected according to current study, employee opportunism has not such significant impact on the value creation. Values can be created by the implication of ethical and moral values in the organization by the leader with the skills of ethical leadership. Current study shows that autocratic and ethical leadership styles have significant impact on the employee opportunism.

4.1.2 Practical Implications:

Ethical Leadership (EL) can be used for implications of the moral values in the organization. In software project-based

organization, ethics and moral values should be enhanced to remove the employee opportunism and also help in the creation of the value. Ethics is a part for the creation of the value in the software project-based organization.

Autocratic Leadership (AL) have the authority to make their own decision and employee must follow that decision. This implication has significant impact on the employee in the practical life because they know that the leader is decision maker without taking pressure of any person and therefore, employees work hard to achieve their goals.

Employee Opportunism (EO) play a negative role for the success of the project. The project managers of software development projects may use autocratic and ethical leadership to curb opportunism and generate value for their projects.

4.2 Conclusion:

Previous studies have studied the various leadership styles as a critical success factor in project-based firms, but the concept is still debatable. Most of the studies investigated the role of transformational and transactional leadership styles in the context of project management. The overarching contribution of current study is to study the impact of different leadership styles i.e. autocratic and ethical leadership styles on employee opportunism and value creation. Furthermore, another salient contribution of the current study is that the context of current study is geographically dispersed teams where leaders lead their teams electronically by using various IT tools.

Five hypotheses were proposed to fulfil the objectives and answer the research question. Findings showed that ethical leadership and autocratic leadership styles play a significant role in restraining employee opportunism and generating value in the software development project. However, the negative role of employee opportunism in generating value has not proved to be significant. The findings of our study provide significant insights for the leaders working in software development projects to lead their projects through geographically dispersed teams. The project managers can use the findings of current study to curb employee opportunism and generate value in software development projects.

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