

# **Impact of Authentic Leadership on Project Performance: Roles of Psychological Empowerment, Project Citizenship Behavior and Individual Innovative Behavior**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose:** This study aimed to highlight the impact of authentic leadership on project performance by investigating how a leader can improve employees' individual innovative behavior and extend citizen behavior through psychological empowerment. Non-governmental organizations in Pakistan face numerous issues regarding project performance, with many staff members unable to make decisions on their own for the betterment of the organization and its projects. These staff members require the freedom to work independently and bring about productive change in the organization's output. Additionally, organizations are often unfamiliar with project orientation as well.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** To achieve our research goals, we used quantitative survey methods with employees of national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Pakistan as the study population. Based on 250 responses which were gathered from the NGOs sector.

**Findings/Results:** It was founded in our study that to induce successful progress from representatives, there must be a more friendly and cooperative working environment and a high level of trust between leaders and their employees. And the study also founded that the psychological empowerment and individual innovative behavior serially mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and project performance. And the mediation between authentic leadership and project performance also calculated through psychological empowerment and project citizenship behavior but it does not support the serial mediation.

**Practical Implications:** We highlighted the important theoretical implications of authentic leadership literature and establish that the authentic leadership construct significantly impacts project performance through psychological empowerment and individual innovative behavior, which is a new relation in the literature, and full mediation exists here as well. our study highlighted that enhancing project performance in NGOs requires more than just authentic leadership. Employees need more organizational support, empowerment, and resources. It is also crucial to ensure that they are not overburdened, as this can hinder their ability to collaborate and exchange help with each other.

**Originality/Value:** This study underscores the transformative impact of authentic leadership on project performance, revealing how it fosters individual innovation and empowers employees, essential for NGO success in Pakistan's challenging landscape.

**Keywords:** *Authentic Leadership; Psychological Empowerment; Project Citizen Behavior; Individual Innovative Behavior; Project Performance*