



The Role of Political Leadership Achieving Economic Growth and Project Success Through the Mediating Role of Political Stability: Investigation from Mega Project

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to understand the interdependency of political leadership, political stability, economic growth, and project success by applying the concept from the intuitional theory and Resource Based View - (RBV). This study addresses the relationship between political leadership in determining economic growth and the success of projects, arguing that leadership leads to stability of the political system that enhances economic growth and development and a conducive environment for construction projects. It also explores the mediating effect of political stability by proposing that the impact of political leadership on growth and project success is more strongly positive if the political system is stable. The data were collected from 240 professional's team member working in a mega project in Pakistan. The research employed partial least squares structural equation modelling to confirm the direct and mediated effects. The findings demonstrated that PL exerts a favorable and substantial influence on economic growth and project success. Moreover, the results further validated that political stability mediates the relationship between political leadership, economic growth and project success. Thus, this paper extends the current literature review by offering empirical findings on the importance of political stability in mediating between political leadership, economic development, and project success. The current study also supports development of an integrated model that integrates political, economic and management strategies in politically unstable context to enhance the sustainable marketing system towards sustainable development goals. This paper has developed the theoretical framework and hypotheses that point out the importance of policymakers, project managers, and researchers adopting and implementing a comprehensive framework of integrated political, economic, and management to solve challenges of sustainable development and project performance. The proposed findings of this study are most beneficial to those countries with unstable political systems, highlighting that investment in political stability results in substantial economic and project-related returns.



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1. Introduction

Political stability and economic growth are strongly interconnected. These are not constant they change from time to time due to the ups and downs of politics. Political instability is seriously impacting the economic growth of a country (Aisen & Veiga, 2012). It is argued that political instability generates an atmosphere of declined peace, which drastically decreases foreign investment. Apart from causing investment concerns, political instability can also cause disturbances to fiscal discipline and hinder the efficient execution of monetary policy (Tabassam, Hashmi, & Rehman, 2016). Besides the investment side, political instability can also affect fiscal responsibility and the control of monetary aggregates (Palley, 2020). Political stability results to an increase in economic growth. Political stability helps investors make long-term economic investments; for instance, political stability improves leadership outcomes. The favorable political stability also enables leaders to complete set policies without much interruptions leading to sustainable economic development (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2019). Because of the political stability, foreign investors invest money within a country. This is exactly what elected governance would accomplish. The significance of political stability for creating conducive investment climate which in turns enters foreign direct investment (FDI) and the pegs a nation at large has been never get shuddered and cannot be disregarded. For a country to achieve economic growth, political stability is essential (Acar, 2019). Some countries are completely stable, whereas others progress toward stability. Every country faces both local and global problems such as religious conflict, a weak legal system, diverse cultural civilizations, a weak democracy, and an ineffective bureaucracy.

This studies shows that political stability contributes to growth by creating favorable conditions while eliminating the unpredictability of policy changes relevant to growth (Uddin, Ali, & Masih, 2017). The literature on political governance illustrates that political stability effectively stable the economic growth rates of a country (Cox & Weingast, 2018). Some country is stable and some country claim to be absolutely stable. All though every have some domestic and international issues. It may be religious conflict, weak rule of law, different cultural societies, weak democracy, and incapable bureaucracy given that these challenges are intensely interrelated with one another, a clear understanding of the problems would be crucial to formulate strategies which could reduce their negative externalities on political stability and thus economic growth (Peksen, 2019).

The construction industry contributes significantly to the country's economy. The construction industry impacts several sectors, including manufacturing, employment, investments, infrastructure development, building materials, real estate as well as banking and financial services (Sui Pheng, Shing Hou, Pheng, & Hou, 2019). A project's success is dependent on multiple situational conditions and the chosen project management strategies. According to expanding research studies, leadership is considered one of the most impactful factors for the management and success of the project (K. F. Latif et al., 2020; Negash & Hassan, 2020). Stable political environment of a country has a positive impact on large-scale projects because the stable political environment provides continuity of progression and availability of resources (Radu, 2015). Project success can be defined in terms of "on time, within budget, to specification" delivery; success of the product delivered; or success in fulfilling business goals of the project. The construction industry in Pakistan to grow by 7% in real term in 2022, following 2.9% growth in 2021 (Van Der Eng, 2024).

Project success can be defined as the successful completion of the project on or before the expected time, within the planned cost and to the required standard or as the success of the

product developed or as the extent to which business goals of the project were met. Many companies apply the project-based approach to perform the daily operations of the organization (Momeni & Martinsuo, 2019). A project is a coordinated effort of a team of professionals in order to accomplish a pre-specified objective within a given time and cost constraint (Bond-Barnard, Fletcher, & Steyn, 2018). Success is the successful completion of a task through the effective allocation of resources (Hosseini, Soltani, & Mehdizadeh, 2018). Projects are strategic assets that enable organizations to establish competitive advantages and generate economic value. However, many organizations still see the conclusion of a project as complete and successful. More recently, however, success criteria have shifted to comprise sustainability and the extent to which the project aligns with the organization's context, which are also required for project success in addition to the time, cost, and quality features that have long been the key criteria (Sehgal & Dubey, 2019). The success in project management evolved over time; it is now impossible to refer only to delivering within scope, on-time and budget that satisfies stakeholders without including long-term sustainability alignment with high-level strategic organizational goals (Indelicato, 2012; Pollack, Biesenthal, Sankaran, & Clegg, 2018).

From the literature review, it is clear that the assessment of success is a central activity. It is also crucial to recognize that project success is a multifaceted concept. Project success is the ultimate objective of numerous project-oriented organizations and is regarded as a significant and indispensable area of project management research (Anantatmula & Rad, 2018). As in the majority of works in the field, the "cost, time, quality" triangle has been recognized as the major determinant of project success. However, despite the importance of the iron triangle, modern theories indicate other success factors including client satisfaction, environmental impacts, and others to guarantee comprehensive identification of the project's success (Montenegro, Dobrota, Todorovic, Slavinski, & Obradovic, 2021).

These series of additional dimensions reveal the call for a little extra width when looking at project outcomes, notably in intricate sectors as construction where the links between political stability and economy are fairly visible. Mavi and Standing (2018) categorized the critical success factors into four groups: project, project manager and team, business, and external environment. According to Korhonen, Jääskeläinen, Laine, and Saukkonen (2023), three primary success factors in project-based organizations are consumer influence, achievement of design objectives, and organizational benefits. Majeed, Ramayah, Mustamil, Nazri, and Jamshed (2017) identified that project success factors encompass effective leadership, a dedicated and motivated team, client engagement, and well-defined requirements and project goals. Political stability helps to establish political stability that enables project managers to depend on stability in the political environment to deliver on the project objectives and continue progress despite the odds (Hartono, Sulistyono, Chai, & Indarti, 2019).

Political stability has a core relationship with economic growth. This study aims to a wider conversation on how political stability affects sector-specific economic outcomes by examining this relationship in the construction industry (Andreoni & Chang, 2019). There is a need to investigate the relationship between political stability and construction sector. Understanding how this political stability mediates these relationships can help explain how sectoral success helps to achieve national economic objectives (Caous & Huarng, 2020). The literature clearly indicates that numerous factors may interact with these two. Further study is necessary to elucidate the role of political stability in economic growth and to clarify the mechanisms by which the construction sector contributes to project success (Bhatti & Khan, 2023; Fareed, Nawaz, Iqbal, Ummara, & Hamza, 2024; Fareed, Su, Almutairi, Munir, & Fareed, 2022; Khan & Bhatti, 2019). Batuo, Mlambo, and Asongu (2018) shown that political stability exerts a beneficial and considerable influence on economic growth.

Jahanger, Usman, Murshed, Mahmood, and Balsalobre-Lorente (2022) also highlighted on the political stability especially in the developing countries and its impact on investment and accumulation of human capital. Kristofano and Febriani (2024) highlighted the need for further

research in this area. Apart from both factors showing significant implications on economic growth (as can be seen in existing literature) along with limited attention given to the construction industry within project success research, however this research attempts clarifying a break through approach by narrowing down into political stability and how it may influence positive outcomes (Hysa, Kruja, Rehman, & Laurenti, 2020; Iqbal, Nawaz, Ali, Osman, & Hamza, 2024).

Political leadership implementing laws that support entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment. These developing infrastructures, offering tax breaks, and establishing a favorable regulatory environment (Masciulli, Molchanov, & Knight, 2016). Political leadership Focusing funds on education and skill development guarantees that the labor force is prepared to meet the needs of the modern workplace and new technologies. In the global market, this promotes innovation and competition (Bennister, Worthy, & Hart). Clear leadership direction helps to focus efforts and resources toward achieving specific outcomes. Political leaders set the vision and goals for projects that align with the larger strategic objectives of the government or organization (Teles, 2015). The underlying theoretical framework of this study is based on the consolidative concepts from political economy and project management, to gain a better understanding about how not only leadership affects but also governs with stability in both channelized streams (politics) for addressing holistic contextual impacts upon construction projects (Svejvig, 2021). Political leaders contribute resources to projects according to their importance and potential impact, including financial resources and human capital (Watanabe, Shafiq, Nawaz, Saleem, & Nazeer, 2024; Zaidi et al., 2019).

Policy and priority continuity in government is guaranteed by political stability. Projects are less likely to see sudden changes in direction or resource allocation when rules about infrastructure, development, or funding stay the same (Bisbey, Nourzad, Chu, & Ouhadi, 2020). Because of this regularity, project teams can plan and carry out their goals with few disruptions (Baker, Khater, & Haddad, 2019). Political stability encourages confidence among public and private investors. When they perceive a stable political climate, investors are more ready to commit capital to projects because the risks associated with uncertainty and prospective changes in legislation or government support are reduced (Okara, 2023). In return, this confidence increases the possibility of project success — especially in massive infrastructure projects that require high level-wise effective investments. Political stability reduces the possibility of delays brought on by demonstrations, government changes, or political turmoil (Dalyop, 2018). When there is political stability, projects may move forward as planned, avoiding expensive delays that could result from administrative hiccups or modifications to project approvals (Almeile, 2021). Effective governance and decision-making procedures are facilitated by stable political leadership. Without being sidetracked by instability in politics or emergencies, leaders can concentrate on project priorities, distribute resources effectively, and make decisions on schedule (Ottens & Edelenbos, 2018). Political stability benefits trust amongst enterprises, communities, and foreign partners involved in a project. This self-assurance promotes cooperation and project support, creating an atmosphere that is favorable for successful execution and results (Shehab & Som, 2020).

A nation's standing and credibility in the international world are improved by political stability. It draws foreign funding, assistance, and alliances with global institutions, which may offer extra resources and know-how to ensure project success (Shabbir, Anwar, & Adil, 2016). Effective governance, consistent policy, investment confidence, and stakeholder participation are all dependent on political stability and are necessary for the design, execution, and maintenance of successful projects (Li & Wang, 2023). It is hoped that the results would give a useful guideline for policymakers and project managers to reduce risks in relation to political instability as well. Political stability has a critical role in fostering beneficial outcomes for development projects at the local, regional, and national levels by mitigating uncertainty and enabling long-term planning (Moallemi et al., 2020).

Although the correlation between political leadership, stability, and economic prosperity is evident, less research has examined how these elements directly affect project success, especially in the construction sector (Biesenthal, Clegg, Mahalingam, & Sankaran, 2018). This research is pertinent from both a theoretical and practical perspective. Theoretically, it will enhance and address a gap in the research resulting from the inability to establish a connection between the variables in this study. This will facilitate future research on the relationship between political stability and the building sector. This study will significantly benefit construction project managers by enabling them to identify the impact of political leadership and stability on project success. Consequently, the results of this study may prove advantageous to project leaders, enabling them to get a more profound theoretical understanding of their role and its impact on the project.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Political Leadership

Political leadership is probably one of the most important factors for predicting a country's economic pathway and societal welfare. It is about what leaders can do to impact, guide and gather support for preferred strategies to realize any political, economic and societal vision (Busemeyer, De La Porte, Garritzmann, & Pavolini, 2018). Political leadership entails one's capacity to establish an agenda for the nation, determine policy directions and determine the political economy. Leaders always provide growth and development by regulating governance and security to foster sustainable growth and development (Kuye & Mafunisa, 2003). Political leadership responds to the global and domestic situations, and enacts strategic management change in the face of change. Political leadership is quite essential in shaping policy frameworks to promote sustainable development and innovation (Masciulli et al., 2016). The quality of political leadership is judged by its performances to ensure security, policy development and cope with national as well as international hazards (Glass & Newig, 2019).

The political governance has also given immense focus to leadership styles such as transactional and transformational leadership (Kalsoom, Khan, & Zubair, 2018). Transformational leaders move and nudge their follower's sense of mission, sometimes fostering revolutionary political-social- economic changes: "leadership is the essential precondition for real structural change in policy reform" (Rudalevige, 2002). Meanwhile, transactional leaders offer rewards for good performance and consequences for poor behavior to keep everything chugging along much like a machine that has very little dynamic capacity (Eğriboyun, 2019). Indeed, adaptive leadership is crucial in response to contemporary global challenges (e.g., climate change; economic inequalities and disparities on a world scale; geopolitical conflicts) that leaders have to cope with as well. Adaptive leaders are responsive to changing conditions, with adaptation suggesting flexibility in their behavior so that they can keep policies current and alive (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). In addition, there is a growing emphasis on ethical governance and accountability in political leadership. Leaders who practice transparency, inclusivity on and openness are more apt to breed long-term success rather than incurring conflicts (Alibašić, 2020). This shift prompts leadership scholars to explore how political leaders can facilitate international cooperation and crisis management through a more interlocked global situation (Kapucu & Ustun, 2017).

2.2. Political Stability

Political stability means that there is order, peace and continuity within the political system. It is characterized by stability of institutions and policies and respect for the rule of law (Hamdaoui, Ayouni, & Maktouf, 2021). Political stability creates favorable conditions for the economic activity indispensable for investors, and ensures stability to develop long term plans. Stability has a positive impact on the ability of governors to set policies for growth, attract foreign investors, and put into place stable structures for governance (Shittu, Yusuf, Houssein, & Hassan,

2020). Political stability enables countries to plan for long-term development so that they reap the advantage of predictable, less volatile environment. Political stability, according to Wojewnik-Filipkowska and Węgrzyn (2019), is a qualitative state of public advancement, which is described as public order, which ensures that stakeholders within a society are regulated and managed in order to attain certain goals, perception or objectives. It is also a good governance and the latter has been described as the process of monitoring the performance of the state bureaucracy. Political stability is the total of the actions of the government, legislative bodies and people who are entitled to shape the country's affairs in such a way that would support the political system and the principles and practices of the country in the long run (Khan, 2017). It is a management of a country's affairs within the volatile parameters of the law of the land provided in the constitution. Political stability supports an environment in which economic and social development can take place in the long-term with predictable governance, also meaning that so performing countries implement less of a Trust Fund initially (Tshuma, 2018).

2.3. Economic Growth

Economic growth is a complex concept with various perspective. Kuznets (2019) distinguishes between economic growth and development, with the latter encompassing qualitative aspects such as education, health, and living condition. Economic growth on the other hand, as seen through economic growth, mean economic development, improvement in a nation's capability for production or more production per head, frequently expressed in terms of gross domestic product, gross national product in a nation, and higher standard of living. Some of the factors include technology, and quality and availability of human capital, investment. Economic growth has a close relationship with boosting the quality of life and provides nations with the ability to develop capacities for future development (Tamura, Dwyer, Devereux, & Baier, 2018). Economic growth is a term that denotes the increase in a nation's real GDP. Growth is characterized as an augmentation of GDP or gross national product (GNP) during a specified timeframe (Tacchella, Mazzilli, & Pietronero, 2018). An increase in GDP, representing the entire worth of goods and services in a country, enables its citizens to afford greater consumption. To augment commodities and services, nations must enhance their manufacturing capability. In the recent studies, some of them suggested that innovation in technology are important drivers behind economic growth and they increase productivity which leads to more output size.

Thus, in a more profound way, economic growth is the study of factors that result in a continuing expansion of productive capacity. Economic growth directly impacts the quality of individuals' standard of living. The overall effect of an increase in production capacity is an increase in income and thus consumers are able to purchase more of the produced goods and services. They both help in increasing productivity with higher income and more production. The cycle persists as productivity in the factor of production swiftly elevates real GDP (Kim & Loayza, 2019).

The period after 2015 has been marked by a slowdown in global economic growth, particularly due to the deceleration of China's manufacturing sector and failure of many emerging markets to diversify their economies. This period has been marked by a mix of positive and negative economic indicators (Simonova, 2019).

2.4. Project Success

Project success is a complex and multifaceted concept, with different stakeholders having varying perspectives (Ika & Pinto, 2022). Project success therefore involves the accomplishment of planned goals and specific project outcomes within some set confines such as time, cost, or quality standards and or by standards specified by the stakeholders. The contingency success factors include strategic fit, utilization of resources, and management of risks. The concept of success also changes per project objectives and the contemporary elements of flexibility and sustainability initiatives (Kuchta & Mrzygłocka-Chojnacka, 2020). Watanabe, Shafiq, Ali, Nawaz,

and Nazeer (2024) presents a four-level framework for defining and planning project success, encompassing context, business, product, and project level. Lalic, Lalic, DeliĆ, Gracanin, and Stefanovic (2022) provides empirical data on project success criteria, revealing a divide between those who prioritize traditional project objectives and those who consider the effectiveness of the project's product. Research also shows that satisfaction with stakeholders and whether or not the project is aligned to strategic objectives are two critical criteria for a successful delivery. Project success criteria are changing all the time and so there is a need for project management to be more dynamic, adjusting not only what it does but also how that will work with increasingly demanding stakeholders in new market conditions (Gunduz & Yahya, 2015). Stress on the quality of the project, cost, and acceptability by the client, and explain the relationship between risk management and success of a project (Viswanathan, Tripathi, & Jha, 2019). Alruqi and Hallowell (2019) further underscore the role of contractors' attributes, such as safety, quality, and past performance, in determining project success.

2.5. Theoretical framework

Construct clarity and theoretical integration with the study hypotheses / objectives, a conceptual diagram is proposed. Theoretical framework will help in presenting the relationships between such variables as political leadership, political stability, economic growth and project success. This shows how political leadership affects economic growth and project success directly and political stability mediate the relationship between political leadership, economic growth and project success. There is also a mediating relationship between political stability and leadership such that while leadership enhances long term planning and resource mobilization, political stability strengthens the impact of leadership. This integrative approach supports the study objectives of comprehensively analyzing these relationships.

2.5.1. Political Leadership and Economic Growth

Influencing the direction and the effectiveness of economic policies, is politically leadership. The literature on the link between political leadership and economic growth is abundant, emphasizing how inefficient decisions of leaders could harm or promote economic performance (Jordan, Sterling, Pennebaker, & Boyd, 2019). Contemporary research highlights the importance of political leadership in achieving economic development. They argue that invested, stable politics with consistent policy contributions to the party in power in my rise (Beer et al., 2018). The research also proves that leadership quality indicates how well these leaders are able to make and enforce their policy decisions so, in this third switchboard image below the more Time Formidability individual will generate ever higher GDP growth (Trebeck & Williams, 2019). Political leadership also stabilizes to consolidate policies making environments, ensures that the necessary policies to support growth of investment provide a stable environment for growth of sustainable economy. This stability leads to foreign investment, boost innovation, and most importantly contributes resultant GDP growth (Kristofano & Febriani, 2024).

However, the evidence regarding the mediating effect of political stability on leadership and economic performance is quite general, lacking clear context to the sector in emerging economies (Elcock & Fenwick, 2012). This study addresses this gap by understanding the relationship between political stability and construction industry growth, an area that is mostly overlooked in literature on leadership. Previous studies often overlook to consider how various leadership styles including transformational and adaptive leadership impact on economic growth in different sectors of the economy (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2019). Thus, by focusing on the construction sector, we strive to reveal how stability with an emphasis on effective leadership may produce a sector-specific, and thus more efficient, approach to increased growth to boost a positive economic outcome. Consequently, the results of this research can build upon the existing body of literature through explaining failed experience of the SDP leadership styles that are designed for stable political environment and assuring that the on the other hand, the appropriate

leadership styles in low-risk political environment can lead to sustainable economic development particularly for the resource-based economy (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2019).

Empirical research shows that the reform-oriented leadership substantially increases economic efficiency and minimizes resource costs of transactions (Zhu & Lin, 2022). This is almost exactly what has been found by Acemoglu, Naidu, Restrepo, and Robinson (2019) who posits that inclusive institutions and leadership styles with policies promoting equity triggers economic growth, sustainably (Nawaz & Qayyum, 2022). Comparative work shows a significant influence of political leadership on economic growth. Evidence on the effect of dynamic leadership is mixed, but Prasojo and Holidin (2018) provide a recent example showing that countries with reform-oriented leaders have substantially higher rates of economic growth than those whose leadership acts as an obstacle to positive change. Research they conducted showed that more innovative leaders combined with governance structures to reduce transaction costs can produce large gains in economic performance.

Hypothesis 1: Political leadership positively associated with economic growth.

2.5.2. Political Leadership and Project success

Political leadership has an extremely strong determinant function in whether projects fail or succeed – especially if we are talking about public and mega-projects (Damayanti, Hartono, & Wijaya, 2021). Ongoing research further supports this link from political leadership to the success of projects. Goulet et al. According to Olsen (2019) policy making process and practicing management in such complex project there are bound with political decision to initiate, influence either through funding from public sector or within the administration part as well which help emphasized that strong political leadership have made conclusion necessities of navigating with complexity for each projects (Agafonov, 2024). Their research underscores the clarity of direction and support are crucial for leaders to reach this goal.

Political leadership also make sure that project objectives are in harmony with national development goals thus ensuring the project has a central direction that improves on stakeholder relations. Effective leadership in a project means that resources should be properly coordinated in order to achieve the project objectives (Bahadorestani, Naderpajouh, & Sadiq, 2019; Lin, Ren, & Ding, 2023). Strategic vision leaders encourage teamwork, which minimizes the chances of having miscommunication that may lead to project setbacks (Reuter & Floyd, 2023). The combination of such leadership and project objectives is crucial because it fosters continued success for both in intricate projects (Caruajulca & Khalilzadeh, 2024; Jitpaiboon, Smith, & Gu, 2019). Effective political leadership is believed to play a direct role in this, argue that political leaders enable stakeholder engagement with projects and mobilize critical project resources (Sørensen, 2020). Instead, they discovered that involving stakeholders and listening to their concerns played a key role in matching projects more closely with the public interest so that these were likely to enjoy success. According to their research, politicians who supervise projects a bit more can actually better manage and prevent risks creating project success. This is vital participation in order to keep project timelines and quality benchmarks (Lin, Liu, Joe, Chen, & Tsai, 2020).

Abodei, Norta, Azogu, Udokwu, and Draheim (2019) also depict politically transparent governance that provide trust in government by reducing corruption resulting projects be a success. The result or the finding of this research is by implementing transparent leadership practices we could able to improve our project performance and realize more with stakeholder satisfaction. Literature generally supports Hypothesis 2 – that is, political leadership can lead to project success. Political leadership will add value to the project outcomes by fostering strategic decision-making, stakeholder engagement and risk management; It delivers transparency for holdbacks great things about reach. All this contributes to the successful execution of projects and demonstrates how essential leadership is in project management.

Hypothesis 2: Political leadership positively associated with project success.

2.5.3. Mediating Role of Political Stability between Political Leadership and Economic Growth

Political stability and economic growth have a strong relationship between. Both the qualitative and quantitative studies are available in the existing body of knowledge. Contemporary research shows that not only does political stability directly contribute to economic performance but also moderates the effects of political leadership on economics (Cox & Weingast, 2017). However, up to the present, no consensus has been established on the link between political stability and economic growth. One of the reasons why economic development has been a challenge is due to constant change of government. Political stability makes an environment favorable for long term business investments which are greatly needed for the growth of the economy while improving leadership qualities (Çela & Hysa, 2021). Political stability enables that leaders to harmonize policies and implement them without constant interruptions, a condition that enhances sustainable economic development (Abdelhameed & Rashdan, 2021; Aisen & Veiga, 2012). Empirical evidence shows that political stability is critical in the process through which leadership undertakings transform to economic development by scale since it usually shields the economy from the risks associated with frequent government changes (Hasan, Haider, & Ullah, 2023). The uncertain condition severely affected the economic growth of the country. In the same year, Zeeshan et al. (2022) noted that due to inefficiency in economic policies by the newly formed government that came into power after political instability for a long time, Pakistan's performance had deteriorated (Naqvi, 2018). In Pakistan, there was never a transition from one government to another without any interruption. Empirical studies demonstrate that political instability sabotage economic policies and erodes investor confidence caters worsening to the existing problems.

Hypothesis 3: Political stabilities mediate the association between political leadership and economic growth.

2.5.4. Mediating Role of Political Stability between Political Leadership and Project Success

Political stability is also an important factor influencing the success of construction projects in the international environment, especially for Chinese construction enterprises (Khuwaja, Ahmed, Abid, & Adeel, 2020). This stability can be affected by the government attitude to the business, social support received by the business, and the general economic environment. In the UK, political support is one of the success factors of the PPP projects, and its identification is crucial in the development of the project (Eid, El-Kassrawy, & Agag, 2019). Political stability allows projects to maintain timelines and costs because of the stable conditions of the political status. Political stability enhances efficiency since working conditions are conducive, and since the stakeholders' focus to focus on core objectives, the projects deliver satisfactory results (Armenia, Dangelico, Nonino, & Pompei, 2019; Ninan, Mahalingam, & Clegg, 2019). In addition, political stability leads to improvement on cooperation between both government and the private sector to provide infrastructure which is critical in large projects (Olukayode, 2015). This enhances the efficacy of executing the project with little interferences and ensure that the project aligns with the interest of the nation (Fleta-Asín & Muñoz, 2020). Political stability and project success the use of the case study addresses this fundamental relationship by demonstrating that a stable political environment is necessary for large projects to proceed smoothly (Hussain et al., 2021). The relationship between political stability and project success is complex and multifaceted. Gemünden, Lehner, and Kock (2018) emphasize the importance of understanding and meaning organizational politics in achieving project success. Ahmadabadi and Heravi (2019) further explore this relationship in the context of public-

private partnership, with Galilea highlighting the influence of a country’s economic and political characteristics on project success, and finding that project technical characteristics have a great impact on performance then political factor. It is important to remember here that Political stability helps increase the chances of projects been successful but there are many other factors which will contribute largely such as Project planning, execution and risk etc. Jahan et al. (2022). The impact of political stability on project success is a complex issue, with various factors at play. These studies collectively suggest that while political stability is important, it is not the solo determinant of project success, and other factors such as technical characteristics, risk management, and national experience also play crucial role.

Hypothesis 4: Political stabilities mediate the association between political leadership and project success.

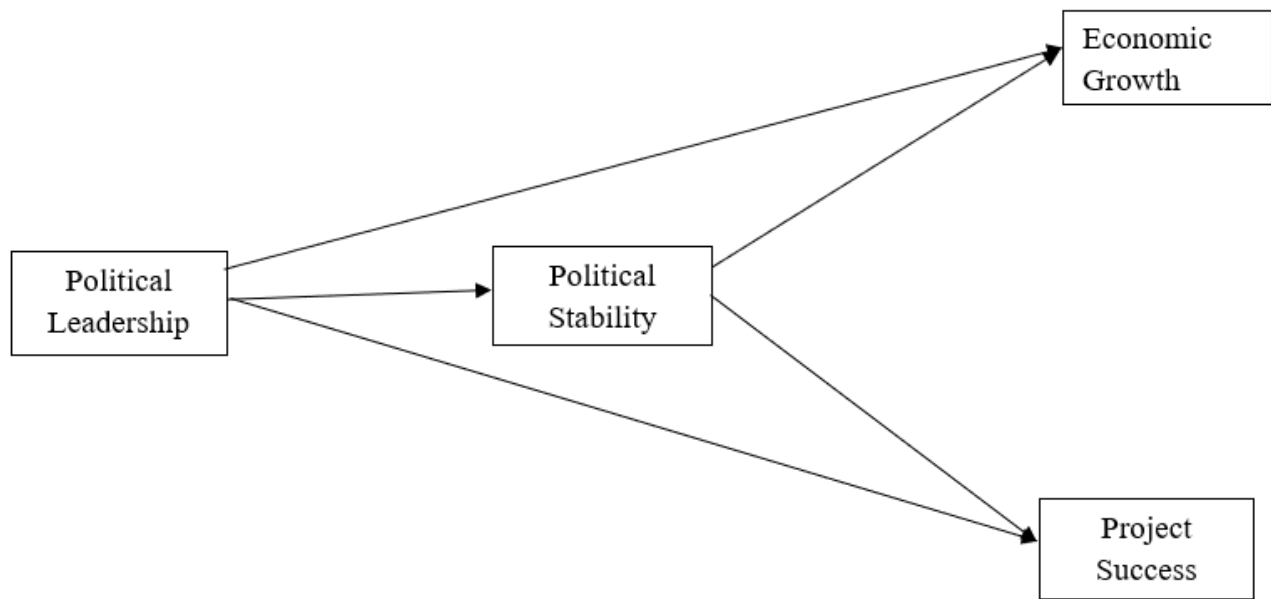


Figure 1: Theatrical Framework

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Sample And Research Design

This research will be quantitative in nature, cross-sectional and will use survey questionnaire. In this quantitative research, the researchers will be used two general research approaches, namely survey research and experimental research (Creswell & Zhang, 2009). Survey research method will be used in this study because this approach assists in providing standardized information to describe variables and to test the hypothesized relationships between the variables (Malhotra & Grover, 1998). This research will be a co-relational to establish the relationship between political stability and economic growth with project success as a mediator. The construction firms of Pakistan will approach to acquire the required data to generalize the result further. The participants of this research were project managers and project team members. Convenience sampling technique will be used in data collection since it is easy to use when collecting data from the respondents. The data will have been collected from project managers and team members working in Pakistani construction industries by developing a Google form (online), and by visiting the firms where necessary. Participants will appreciate to be assured that the information they offered for this research is accurate. The questionnaire will be divided into two major parts. The first question asked to the respondents was the demographic questions such as gender, age, qualification and experience. In the next section questions were

posed regarding the research variables of political stability, economic growth, construction sector, and project success.

3.2. Instrumentation and Measures

The research instruments were developed based on the measurement scales identified from the literature for the current study. There will be some changes made to fit some of the items into the current research as follows: The questionnaire items include the following three variables; the independent variable, which is political leadership, the dependent variable, which is project success, economic growth and one mediator variable which is political stability and construction sector. All variables' items will be measure using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Political Leadership: The scale for political leadership adopted from the research work of (Agafonov, 2024). All nine items will be adopted.

Political Stability: The scale for political stability adopted from the research work of (Huang & (Hsieh & Song, 2015). All four items will be adopted.

Project Success: The scale for project success used for this work is adopted from the research work of (Engelbrecht, Heine, & Mahembe, 2017). All six items adopted. The sample questions of project success are "the project is implementing and using by the business", and "the project is delivering within the allocated time and budgeted cost".

Economic growth: The scale for economic growth used in this research work is based on the research work of (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2003). All of the five items will be adopted.

3.3. Data Analysis Procedure

In this study, data was entered and screened using IBM SPSS version 21 and only filtered data was used for analysis. This research employs Smart PLS-4 software in model evaluation. In the analysis of the research data collected from the respondents, partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) will be used. PLS-SEM technique will be widely acknowledged in the social sciences studies for data analysis and generalization of the results (Aga, Noorderhaven, & Vallejo, 2016; Khawaja Fawad Latif et al., 2020).

3.4. Data Analysis Procedure

This study used IBM SPSS version 21 to enter and screen the collected data; only filtered data were used in the analysis. This study evaluated the models using the Smart PLS-4 software. The data collected from the study participants were analyzed using the partial least squares structural equation modelling technique (PLS-SEM). The PLS-SEM technique has been widely used in project management research to analyze data and generate results (Aga et al., 2016).

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Analysis

Quantitative analysis was performed on the dataset received from the project participants. Understanding the histories and personalities of respondents was aided by this division. In addition to the information regarding the distribution of demographic variables, such as gender, age, qualifications, and experience, quantitative data (mean, standard deviation, etc.) were also provided for other variables such as emotional intelligence, organizational culture, team cohesion, and project success.

The sample population for the survey comprised male and female team members from various Pakistani construction industries. The sex distribution of the sample is shown in Table 1. Of the 240 participants surveyed, only 58 were female. Men make up a disproportionately large audience. Age is an essential demographic variable. A construction company surveyed four age groups. Table 1 contains a description of each participant's eligibility requirements. There were 240 responses, with 61.40% possessing a bachelor's degree, 13.33% possessing a master's degree, 22.5% possessing an MS/MPhil, and 2.92% possessing a PhD. In contrast to the 12.92 percent of respondents aged 14–21 years, the majority of respondents (62.9 percent) had employment histories of five years or more (6–13 years). The response rate for the 21–29 age group was 5.83%. A total of 2.08% of the respondents reported that they had over 30 years of experience.

Table 1
Demographic Data of Respondent

Demographic Variable	Type	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	182	75.83
	Female	58	24.16
	Total	240	100.0
Qualification	Bachelor	147	61.25
	Master	32	13.33
	MS/MPhil	54	22.5
	PhD	7	2.92
	Total	240	100.0
Experience	5 and less	39	16.25
	6-13	151	62.92
	14-21	31	12.92
	21-29	14	5.83
	30 and above	5	2.08
	Total	240	100.0

4.2. Measurement Model

Using PLS-SEM, we created the measurement model illustrated in Figure 2. We examined the measuring model to assess the validity and reliability of the constructs. Loadings, alpha, composite reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were further examined as part of the evaluation process. Gefen and Straub (2005) indicate that a factor loading greater than .60 is considered acceptable, while Ringle, Sarstedt, Mitchell, and Gudergan (2018) assert that composite reliability should be .70, and alpha should also be .70. Convergent validity was assessed by Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which was above the threshold value of 0.60 (Ringle et al., 2018). Discriminant validity was tested using the HTMT ratio with a cut-off of less than .90. These results confirm the validity of the instruments as shown in table 2.

The results of these analyses add to the validity of the measurement model applied herein; these results are also consistent with theoretical works underscoring the significance of construct validity in empirical studies. Achieving results, acceptable and high factor loadings, and reliable composite measures foster theoretical constructs of organizational learning and sustainable leadership paradigms to decipher their roles towards the prescription of project success (Huynh et al., 2020). This theoretical focus means that the constructs are well-defined and the interrelations between variables are well-quantified, which helps to increase the reliability and validity of the findings of the study.

The subjective validity of the scales was thoroughly examined using a confirmatory factor analysis. In various investigations, researchers have used an advanced statistical method known as CFA to better investigate the correlations between variables. The primary purpose of this strategy was to increase or improve the number of scales for each variable. The results are

described in detail and are in compliance with the applicable criteria in the following paragraphs. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), none of these questions should have been deleted because of the low factor loading, as they all had a factor loading of .70. Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate both the developing and composite reliability, as indicated in Table 2.

The results provide empirical support to the theoretical framework used in the context of using CFA to validate the measurement scales. High factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha values that were used in this study show the internal consistencies and reliabilities of the measures; this is important since it enhances the validity of theoretical constructs in empirical research. This validation process ensures that the constructs measure what the theoretical concepts being used in the study represent, thus improving the credibility of the study.

Table 2
Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Variables	Items	Loadings	α	CR	AVE
Political Leadership	PL1	.589	.788	.840	.345
	PL2	.606			
	PL3	.583			
	PL4	.500			
	PL5	.608			
	PL6	.555			
	PL7	.564			
	PL8	.645			
	PL9	.517			
	PL10	.686			
Political Stability	PoS1	.597	.592	.765	.452
	Pos2	.763			
	Pos3	.613			
	Pos4	.702			
Economic Growth	EC1	.532	.736	.825	.491
	EC2	.735			
	EC3	.852			
	EC4	.705			
	EC5	.640			
Project Success	PS1	.659	.757	.831	.453
	PS2	.717			
	PS3	.520			
	PS4	.728			
	PS5	.685			
	PS6	.706			

Table 3
Discriminant Validity

	Economic Growth	Political Leadership	Project Success	Political Stability
Economic Growth	.701			
Political Leadership	.639	.588		
Project Success	.587	.536	.673	
Political Stability	.663	.688	.552	.672

Discriminant validity is a technique used in research to confirm that the variables under comparison are different. To further understand the differences in perceptions of the four variables, we calculated the discriminant validity of each measure separately to ensure the integrity of the research. According to the Fornell-Lacker criterion in Table 3, a suitable HTMT level is determined when all relevant variables have values of less than .85. The main goal of this investigation was to determine the ideal threshold value for assessing discriminant validity.

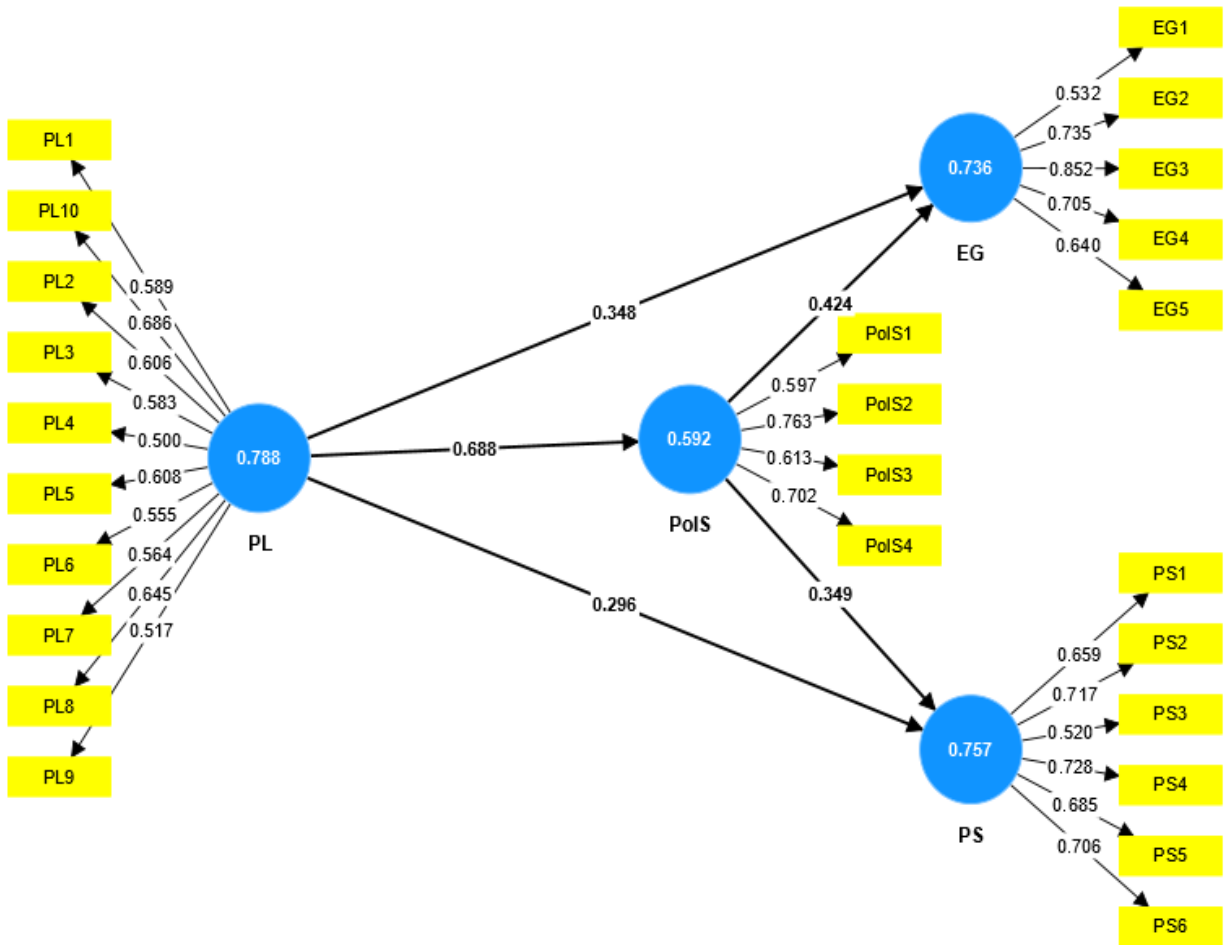


Figure 2: Measurement Model

4.3. Hypotheses Testing

We used PLS-SEM to create the structure model shown in Figure 3. The structural model depicts the flow of relationships between the constructs of the study as shown in table 7. The hypothesis is that political leadership is a determinant of economic growth. The results indicate that political leadership has a positive impact on economic growth ($\beta = .35, t = 5.390, p < .000$); further, H2 tests the importance of political leadership on project success. The results confirm that political leadership has a significant impact on project success ($\beta = .30, t = 4.277, p < .000$); therefore, H2 is supported. Mediating variables, specifically political instability, were chosen to evaluate their mediating role in the relationship between PL and EG.

H3 evaluated whether political stability mediates the relationship between PL and EG. The results proved that there was a significant indirect influence of PL on EG through political stability, and the impact of PL on EG was still significant after the mediating variable was included ($\beta = .294, t = 5.898, p < .000$). H4 analyzes whether political stability mediates the relationship between PL and PS. PL significantly influences ProS, even after controlling for political stability ($B = .240, t = 4.232, p < .000$). This finding suggests complementing partial mediation, which explains why H2 and H3 are acceptable. The findings of this study align with the suggested theoretical model reflecting the role of political leadership in improving project success and economic growth through political stability.

Table 4
Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	SD	t	p	Status
H1	PL→EG	.350	.064	5.391	.000	Accepted
H2	PL →PS	.303	.069	4.277	.000	Accepted
H3	PL→PoS→EG	.294	.049	5.898	.000	Accepted
H4	PL→PoS→PS	.240	.057	4.232	.000	Accepted

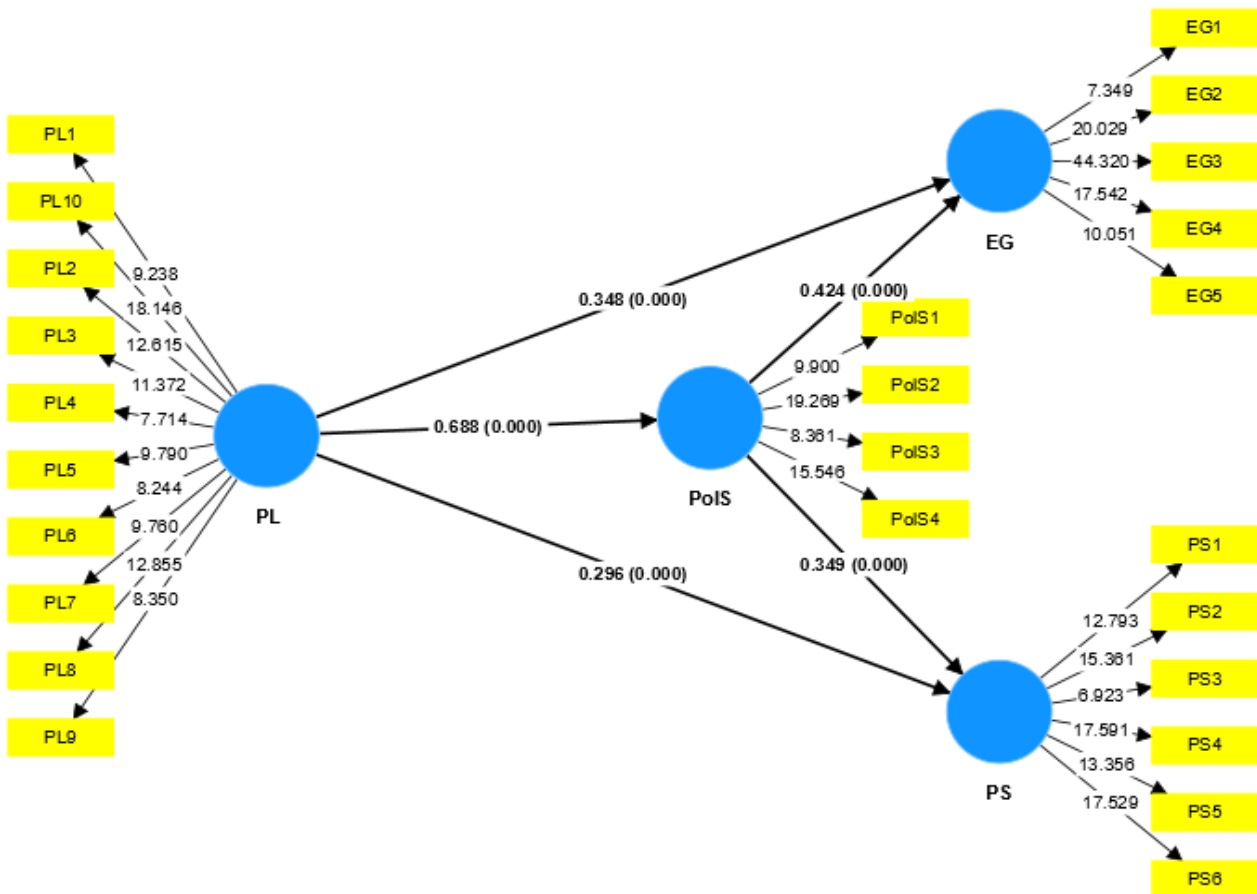


Figure 3: Structure Model

5. Conclusion and Discussion

5.1. Conclusion

This study sought to analyze the function of political leadership (PL) in achieving economic growth (EG) and project success (PS), with a special emphasis on the mediating effect of political stability (PoS) in these interactions. The findings showed that political leadership had a strong favorable effect on both economic development (H1) and project success (H2). Furthermore, the study found that political stability partially mediates the relationship between political leadership and both economic growth (H3) and project success (H4), indicating that while political leadership has a direct impact on economic and project outcomes, its effects are amplified in a politically stable environment. This study’s recommendation suggest that a stable political leadership and strong governmental structures are a key determinant to the success of projects and, hence, economic growth. For policymakers, these findings imply that political stability should be encouraged so as to support sustainable investment, permitting environments that address large scale projects. These findings can assist project managers in advocating for stable governance because it decreases risk and improves projects outcomes. From a theoretical

perspective, this research contributes to the literature in understanding leadership effects within construction sectoral environment. Finally, the findings highlight the importance of political leadership in maintaining a stable political climate, which is critical for obtaining good outcomes in large-scale projects and generating overall economic growth. The study provides evidence that strong and effective leadership can have a major impact on national development, particularly when combined with political stability.

5.2. Discussion

The results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Hypothesizing Testing provides rich insights into the interplay among political leadership, political stability, economic growth and project success. The discussion chapter sheds further light on these findings, discusses their implications and makes sense of them in the context of existing literature. H1: There is a positive association between political leadership and economic growth ($\beta = .350$, $t = 5.391$, $p = .000$). This finding aligns with the notion that effective political leadership is essential in promoting economic progress. Governments who implement stable and forward-thinking policies create a friendly economy for growth (Alon-Beck, 2018). The findings of this study go some way towards reinforcing that leadership is the critical factor which drives economic results, in line with empirical evidence (Iqbal et al., 2020b) indicating a positive association between good governance and levels of prosperity. The second hypothesis

H2: Politically leadership and project success positively supported, a (β of $.303$ with a t -value of 4.277 and $p = .000$). The point remains, however: poor political leadership = disastrous projects. Public leaders affect the outcomes on projects by deciding policies, allocating resources and engaging stakeholders. For example, some recent studies from Floricel, Abdallah, Hudon, Petit, and Brunet (2023) is that in order to accomplish the goals of a project, successful political leadership assists implementation through resource and policy convergence.

H3: Political stability mediates the relationship between political leadership and economic growth. The path coefficients show that Political stability is acting as a true mediator in presence of reliable value, ($\beta = .294$; $t = 5.898$, $p = .000$). This mediating mechanism underscores the key role of political stability in converting effective leadership into promoting economic growth. Political stability helps lower uncertainty, maintain investor trust and stabilize long-term policy making that is key to economic prosperity. This supports Acemoglu et al. (2019) who illustrated that longer-term political stability is beneficial for sustained economic development as chaotic change in government causes disturbance.

The confirmed hypothesis (H4) states that political leadership is related to project success through the mediating effect of political stability, showing ($\beta = .240$, $t = 4.232$ and $p = .000$) This mediation implies that in the presence of political stability, it is easier for a responsible politician to achieve project success. Stable political environments ease policy uncertainties related to project implementation and keep the risk of disruptions low. Adeleke et al. (2018) also agrees as their research emphasizes that lack of political stability may indicate a failure in international projects to survive, because companies always need regulatory and economic support.

5.3. Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to Institutional Theory by demonstrating that political leadership not only has a direct impact on economic growth and project success, but also acts as a mediator through political stability, emphasizing the importance of institutional frameworks in development outcomes. Furthermore, it promotes the Resource-Based View (RBV) by presenting political leadership as a strategic resource that, when combined with political stability, improves resource mobilization for megaprojects, hence driving economic and project success. Practically speaking, the findings suggest that politicians and project managers should prioritize strong political leadership and institutional stability in order to foster successful megaprojects

and long-term economic growth. Leaders in both the public and commercial sectors should work towards fostering political stability, which acts as a crucial enabler of growth, especially in emerging economies where instability often impedes progress.

5.4. Limitation and Future Research Directions

There are several limitations in this study that present future research possibilities. First, the research is mainly based on mega projects which may reduce the external validity of the results to other project sizes or to other industries. Future research could explore the role of political leadership and stability in different project types or industries to enhance broader applicability. Second, the study employs cross sectional data and hence may not capture dynamic features of political leadership and stability. Longitudinal studies are recommended to observe how these relationships evolve and influence economic growth and project success in the long run. Additionally, the study is geographically limited, and future research could benefit from examining the same variables in different political and economic contexts, especially in developing countries or regions experiencing high political volatility. Lastly, while the mediating role of political stability was examined, future studies could explore other potential mediators or moderators, such as economic policies or institutional quality, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms linking political leadership to national development outcomes.

Authors' Contribution

Shakir Iqbal: First author in this research, most contributing to the research, including topic selection, theory, data collection, data analysis, and writing of the research article.

Umme Ummara: helping to write the introduction and literature review chapter.

Muhammad Javid Nawaz: corresponding author helping in the review and data analysis section

Arshad Ali: helped in the review and quality improvement process.

Iram Fatima: helped in the review and quality improvement process.

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

The authors declared no potential conflict of interest w.r.t the article's research, authorship and/or publication.

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