

## **Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Project Success: Does Emotional Intelligence Matters?**

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the connectedness between Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Project Success underpins Trait Theory. In doing so, additional investigation was made whether Emotional Intelligence (EI) strengthens or weakens the relationship of Conscientiousness, Extraversion as antecedents of a Project Success. A deductive approach was applied to validate a theoretically derived research model coupled with moderation impact as novelty. In this study convenient sampling technique was used; a self-administrated survey conducted and collected 279 useable responses for quantitative analysis. To test the hypothesized relationships PROCESS Macro v3.0 by Andrew F. Hayes Model 1 devised as a regression analysis methodology. The statistical results indicate Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Emotional Intelligence (EI) significantly predicting Project Success in direct relationships. Moderation Interaction terms for Emotional Intelligence (EI) with Extraversion and Conscientiousness both predicting Project Success significantly as conditional effect.

*Keywords:* emotional intelligence, project success, personality traits

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In today's competitive business world, corporate organizations tend to focus improving business performance hence taking more projects to keep on creating business value. The Project Management Institute (PMI, 2013) defines organizational strategic goals providing directions towards achieving business growth and development, in addition to performance metrics for business success. Project management practices have a strong influence on Project Success; practices evaluated are scope management, human resource management, project planning, project communication and stakeholder management (Fraz, Waris, Afzal, Jamil, Shah, & Sultana, 2016). This further endorsed by PMI (2013) under integration management that how all knowledge areas built and return successful completion of a project. Mir and Pinnington (2014) state that with antecedents like PM leadership, PM staff, and PM policy & procedures, project performance has an impact on driving Project Success. Organizations take up project management approach of doing business with different end goals in mind, this further endorsed in a study by Shenhar, Dvir, Levy and Maltz (2001) that project efficiency, impact on customers, business success and preparation for future are success dimensions achieved by organizations on a different timeframe.

The available academic literature on Project Success criteria and critical success factor (CSF) declared this variable of both uni-dimensional and multi-dimensional in nature. Project Success consists of time, budget and quality pretty much in-line with PMI's iron triangle as performance indicators for business along with client relationship, performance management system and perceived importance (Bryde, 2008). Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for any business are important way gauging business performance, which includes triple constraints of the project, business performance, people and environment (Mir & Pinnington, 2014; Ofori-Kuragu, Baiden & Badu, 2016). Another study claiming that benefit management practices and project management practices together reward in terms of Project Success (Badewi, 2016). This study of benefits realization is focused on a broader aspect if we see portfolio management definition according to PMI (2013) and the strategic importance of portfolios. Joslin and Muller (2016) introduced that governance has an impact in driving Project Success, whereas itself governance is a multi-dimensional variable tested with a deductive approach for agency and stewardship theory.

Alias, Zawai, Yusof and Aris (2014) identified 5 critical success factors for Project Success, which includes project management actions, project procedures, human-related factor, project related factor and external environment. Again emphasized is found on human factor on projects. With this importance of project management for businesses, it brings into focus leadership commitment and adherence to project management. The leadership of the organization has a strong influence on Project Success yet studying project team can be of area to avoid basis in research results (Aga, Noorderhaven, & Vallejo, 2016). With leadership in the spotlight for Project Success, it is of great importance that how project manager managing emotions of a team in globalized business environment driving job satisfaction, building trust and an ultimate goal of Project Success (Rezvani et al., 2016). Managing emotions in personality are importantly sought factor in research.

The success of a project is highly dependent on individuals' professional and organizational commitment, which emerges from personality and work motivation (Dwivedula, Bredillet, & Müller, 2016). Extraversion and Conscientiousness are personality traits driving professional commitment and Project Success (Dwivedula et al., 2016). Personalities in a project in different roles have different expectations to be met; sometimes they need to understand other's emotion and sometimes share emotions and feelings of own. Another study on same lines indicating Emotional Intelligence drives job satisfaction and project managers trust in others, which in returns give Project Success (Rezvani et al., 2016). Furthermore, this study indicates the direct relationship between Emotional Intelligence and mediator job satisfaction and trust. Project Success comprises multi-dimensions and few baselines for success from PMBOK ® 5<sup>th</sup> edition coupled with project management practices and leadership commitment paramount for ultimate success, additionally personality of project team members or project manager matters a lot for success. Available academic literature of personality trait has the support of Extraversion and Conscientiousness directly tested and driving success whereas Emotional Intelligence is a novelty to this research as moderator.

### **Project Success**

There has been a long debate in academic research defining Project Success, as there are several studies taking different definitions of projects being considered successful or fail. In line with defining

Project Success Pinto and Slevin (1988) argued that Project Success having more illusory and complexity involved in it driving through different constructs, Moreover it is of crucial importance to have effective project implementation because it deals with issues related to the project itself and the clients.

Project Success is seen from two perspectives, which are macro level for stakeholders and micro level for contractors and developers (Lim & Mohammad, 1999). Project Success criteria are measure of depended variable itself through which we can measure Project Success and it differs with respect to industry type, size of project and complexities involved in it (Muller & Turner, 2007). A study conducted for World Bank concluded with success criteria's comprises of time/cost efficiency, relevancy, objective, benefits impact and sustainability driving Project Success (Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2012). Mir and Pinnington (2014) contributed that PM performance can enhance Project Success and furthermore used PMPA framework baseline for research, which was never used earlier determining Project Success.

Shrnhur, Levy and Dvir (1997) explained Project Success should be aligned with strategic planning and management of organization hence measurement is of multi-dimensional in nature. In this research Project Success is operationalized as construct of project efficiency, impact on customers, business success and preparing for the future as success criteria to measure Project Success (Shenhar, Dvir, & Maltz, 2001). Additionally impact on the project team is added in construct as success criteria (Stefanovic, 2007). Construct of Project Success is considered single variable in this research model.

### **Personality Trait Conscientiousness and Project Success**

About 70 years ago Allport (1937) defines personality as “the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine the unique adjustments to his environment”. In addition, it is very famous definition of personality that “total number of ways in which an individual interacts and reacts” (Robbins, 2001). These academic definitions exhibit personality as measureable trait. This further in-line with PMI (2013, p.17) indicates that for a project manager personality trait, attitude and leadership are essential for Project Success. A meta-analysis on personality indicates out of Big 5 Personality traits Conscientiousness has given consistent results driving job performance because of planful, responsible, persistent, careful and hardworking as

characteristics (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Barrick and Mount (1993) articulated Conscientiousness driving job performance of managers with positive moderation of autonomy. John and Srivastava (1999) reshaped facets of Big 5 Personality traits and explain Conscientiousness as dutiful, orderly, efficient which requires lesser direction and disciplined enough to deliver what is expected.

Turner (1999) indicates for Project Success; important personality traits are problem solving ability and result orientation which corresponds with Conscientiousness. Additionally problem solving is endorsed by PMI (2013) as facilitation technique because project manager need to be facilitator in brainstorming and charter development discussion hence Conscientiousness expected to drive positive results. Moreover brainstorming is found to be in tools and techniques of knowledge areas. Literature has given mixed results of Conscientiousness as Cote and Miners (2006) reported Conscientiousness has negative correlation with driving task performance. Inconsistent results of Conscientiousness driving performance or gaining knowledge and skills (Martocchio & Judge, 1997; Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000). Moore and Vucetic (2014) concluded for IT projects Conscientiousness is important trait for success. Keeping in view importance of projects and what does individuals' with Conscientiousness personality consists of, this study hypothesize.

### **Personality Trait Extraversion and Project Success**

A Big 5 Personality Trait meta-analysis concluded that Extraversion found to be valid in case where social interaction is required more for managers and solid predictor of training proficiency (Barrick & Mount, 1991). This study further argued that for managerial tasks Extraversion and agreeableness are solid predictors but less concrete for predicting production worker job performance. For any project, role of Project Manager (PM) is of more of collaborator, negotiator among functional head hence being Extraversion PM shines in his/her role. Managers having strong autonomy delivered better job performance with Extraversion personality trait (Barrick & Mount, 1993). John and Srivastava (1999) provide insights that Extraversion personalities consists of excitement seeking, outgoing, assertive and energetic behaviors.

In context with PMI (2013, p.22) organizational structure of weak, strong and balance matrix organization; Project Manager's autonomy can drive better results. Cote and Miners (2006) reported Extraversion has positive correlation with task performance. Another study showing Extraversion personality trait drives Project Success as employees with strong organization commitment and professional commitment deliver best from client perspective (Dwivedula, Bredillet, & Müller, 2016). This commitment towards organization and profession is quite relevant to this study key variable Project Success because in this study Project Success is operationalized as construct which include client perspective as success criteria and Extraversion personalities as part of team or managing team drives better, what client's needed. Hence we can hypothesize.

### **Emotional Intelligence and Project Success**

Emotional Intelligence first time formally defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) stating that "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions". This term of Emotional Intelligence is taken from field of psychology as human at work generating lot of energy with positive and negative vibes; this research focuses in that direction and relating it to Project Success or job performance with personality interaction.

Projects are time bound having limited resource and project manager's job is to stabilize emotions of team and stakeholders, when any anomaly comes up during project operations causing delay or not meeting any of constraints. A study by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) indicates that as time goes on project, it's a requirement for a project manager to manage fluctuating emotions and behaviors of team members. Emotional Intelligence found to be important predictor of success at work and personal relationship in different domains (Salovey & Gerwal, 2005). People at work face both good and bad emotions, which are found in empirical and theoretical study and these responses have strong relationship of awareness and management of emotions of own and others (Lindebaum & Jordan, 2014; Jordan & Lawrence, 2009). Team level emotions intelligence being tested through shorter version of work-group Emotional Intelligence profile (WEIP-S), which is driving results of Emotional Intelligence at four levels (Jordan & Lawrence, 2009). Cote and Miners (2006) reported Emotional Intelligence has

positive correlation with task performance. Considering this importance of emotions intelligence at work in projectized environment, this study hypothesizes.

### **Emotional Intelligence, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Project Success**

Emotional Intelligence, personality trait and key variable Project Success are already explained in above sections. Research from Izard (2001) concluded that Big Five personality traits are conceptually related to emotions. Hence Conscientiousness and Extraversion are expected to have tendency working with emotions and driving Project Success. The focus of this study was to find moderating relationship of Emotional Intelligence with personality trait and then driving Project Success. Douglas and Ferris (2004) concluded conscientiousness has positive impact on driving performance, if Emotional Intelligence is high whereas opposite results are found for individuals having lower emotional intelligence. Unlikely with this support of having positive impact of conscientiousness on job performance, it's found inconsistency in results that having self-deception in conscientiousness personality lead towards negative relationship driving job performance (Martocchio & Judge, 1997). Shaffer and Shaffer (2005) found task performance and contextual performance has inconsistent results being derived from personality traits and Emotional Intelligence, it further concluding Extraversion has no positive relationship with task performance due to lack of interpersonal behavior and actions and Emotional Intelligence interaction with agreeableness was found significantly strong delivering task performance. With these results, this study hypothesize interactional term may be worth studying in current research settings.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To find the relationship between conscientiousness personality trait, extraversion and emotional intelligence on driving project success.
2. To study the moderating effect of emotional intelligence between conscientiousness, extraversion and project success.

**Hypotheses:**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Conscientiousness personality has a significant positive impact on driving Project Success.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Extraversion personality has a significant positive relationship driving Project Success.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive relationship driving Project Success.

**H<sub>4</sub> (a):** Emotional Intelligence moderates the significant positive relationship between Conscientiousness and Project Success.

**H<sub>4</sub> (b):** Emotional Intelligence moderates the significant positive relationship between Extraversion and Project Success.

**Method**

Data for this study was collected from projectized organizations working in twin cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad (Pakistan), where most of the nature of work is taken in form of projects and projects earlier explained in literature has strong relationship with strategic objectives of organization. Considering the fact that Project Success is highly dependent on individual's personality trait and emotions each individual holds at workplace. As projects driven organizations rely a lot on their project managers, project team members and their emotions and personalities together are considered worth researching.

**Participants**

This study using convenient sampling technique as from available projectized organizations in town it was only method suitable to run with considering time and ease of access as constraints. All responses are from private sector organizations of different sectors with few responses not disclosing information about organization, sector and role. Total of 250 surveys distributed and out of which only 191 found useable containing required information. Whereas PMI Islamabad Chapter has also provided responses from 88 professional's online using Google questionnaire, these respondents have membership of PMI Islamabad chapter, which makes total of 279 responses usable for this research.

For this study 57% of respondents are from Telecom/IT sector, 22% from Banking and Financial Services, 12% are from Construction and rest are from manufacturing, Oil & Gas either not disclosed. In terms

of gender 95% responses are from male and rest are from female's respondents. Respondents of this study are 80% in project leadership role, 16% are project team and rest have not disclosed their role or in any other role non-project based.

Over and above all research ethics were considered in mind and shared with respondents about aim and objective of this study. Their responses were volunteer activity and they are given corresponding contact to get in touch for any further queries in future, which create confidence that anonymity will be maintained. As this is merely an academic research generalizing outcomes for population related to study variable in this research, so it is not specific to industry or specific entity.

### **Instruments**

All study variables in this study are measured using likert scale, details for each variables scale and reliability given below whereas there was no translation or description required to be provided for respondent's clear understanding. Nunnally (1978) "In those applied settings where important decisions are made with respect to specific test scores, a reliability of .90 is the minimum that should be tolerated, and a reliability of .95 should be considered the desirable standard. (pp. 245-246)"

### **Project Success**

Project Success consists of 21 items measured on 5 point likert scale adopted from Shenhar et al. (2001). Sample item included "The project was completed on time". These items measuring from 5 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree and Cronbach's alpha reliability for this scale is found 0.90.

### **Extraversion**

Extraversion consists of 8 items measured on 5 point likert scale adopted from John and Srivastava (1999). Sample item included "I see myself as someone – who is talkative". These items measuring from strongly agree to strongly disagree and Cronbach's alpha reliability for this scale is found 0.71.

### **Conscientiousness**

Conscientiousness consists of 8 items measured on 5 point Likert scale adopted from John and Srivastava (1999). Sample item included "I see myself as someone – Does a thorough job". These items measuring

from strongly agree to strongly disagree and Cronbach's alpha reliability for this scale is found 0.81.

### Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence consists of 16 items measured on 7 point likert scale adopted from Jordan and Lawrence (2009). Sample item included "I can explain the emotions I feel to team members", "I respect the opinion of team members, even if I think they are wrong". These items measuring from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree and Cronbach's alpha reliability for this scale is found 0.92.

## Results

Table 1

*One-Way ANOVA*

Project Success		
Source of variation	F statistics	<i>p</i> -value
Organization	0.44	0.82 <sup>nm</sup>
Industry	0.25	0.91 <sup>nm</sup>
Gender	0.08	0.78 <sup>nm</sup>
Experience	0.61	0.55 <sup>nm</sup>
Role	0.28	0.89 <sup>nm</sup>
Education	0.07	0.98 <sup>nm</sup>

*p* value indicating; \* significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), nm = not significant ( $p > 0.05$ )

Result indicates no significant differences in mean value of Project Success (dependent variable) among factors organization ( $F=0.44$ ,  $p > .05$ ), industry ( $F=0.25$ ,  $p > .05$ ), gender ( $F=0.08$ ,  $p > .05$ ), Experience ( $F=0.61$ ,  $p > .05$ ), Education ( $F=0.07$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and role of respondents ( $F=0.28$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). With this said none of demographic qualifying as control variable for further analysis to be controlled for regression analysis.

Table 2

*Correlation Matrix of Study Variables (N=297)*

	1	2	3	4
Project Success	(0.90)			
Extraversion	0.59**	(0.71)		

Conscientiousness	0.53**	0.45**	(0.81)
Emotional Intelligence	0.62**	0.50**	0.57** (0.92)

*Note: Cronbach's alpha reliabilities for each variable given in parenthesis. Independent variable at  $r=.59$  (value of  $p \leq .01$  \*\*).*

It shows that there is strong relationship between Extraversion and Project Success,

Conscientiousness has also strong relationship with dependent variables i.e. Project Success ( $r=.53$  at value of  $p \leq .01$  \*\*). Emotional Intelligence has also strong relationship with dependent variables i.e. Project Success ( $r=.62$  at value of  $p \leq .01$  \*\*). Our all hypothetical variables are correlated with each other, which also shows acceptance of overall research model.

Preacher and Hayes (2013) PROCESS Macro v3.0 Model 1 for regression analysis was used to see impact of predictors' Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Emotional Intelligence on key variable Project Success.

H1: Conscientiousness personality has a significant positive impact on driving Project Success.

Results of the regression analysis show that the Conscientiousness has a significant relationship with Project Success having  $\beta$  value of 1.09 at significance level at value of  $p=00$  and fulfill the requirements that  $p$  should be  $\leq 0.05$ , which is acceptable range. *Thus the hypothesis is accepted.* This relationship is found significant with controlling demographic and without controlling demographic variable respondents' role.

H2: Extraversion personality has a significant positive relationship driving Project Success.

Results of the regression analysis show that the Extraversion has a significant relationship with Project Success having  $\beta$  value of .96 at significance level at value of  $p=00$  and fulfill the requirements that  $p$  should be  $\leq 0.05$ , which is acceptable range. *Thus the hypothesis is accepted.* This relationship is found significant with controlling demographic and without controlling demographic variable respondents' role.

H3: Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive relationship driving Project Success.

Results of the regression analysis show that the Emotional Intelligence has a significant relationships with Project Success having  $\beta$  value of .56 at significance level at value of  $p=0.00$  and fulfill the requirements that  $p$  should be  $\leq 0.05$ , which is acceptable range. *Thus the hypothesis is accepted.* This relationship is found significant with controlling demographic and without controlling demographic variable respondents' role.

H4 (a): Emotional Intelligence moderates the significant positive relationship between Conscientiousness and Project Success.

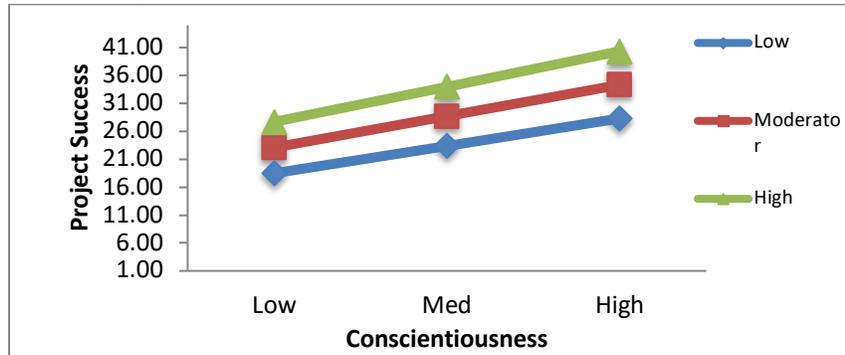
Results of the moderation analysis show that the interaction term of Conscientiousness with Emotional Intelligence has a minor but significant relationship driving Project Success. Thus the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 3

*Regression Analysis for Conscientiousness, Emotional Intelligence and Project Success*

Paths	B	SE	T	<i>p</i>	LL95 %CI	UL95%CI
Direct Effects						
Path $b_1$ IV to DV	1.09	.08	14.04	.00	.94	1.24
Path $b_2$ Mod to DV	.45	.04	12.52	.00	.38	.52
Path $b_3$ IVxMod to DV	.01	.00	10.74	.00	.01	.01
Conditional Effect of focal Predictor Conscientiousness at values of Emotional Intelligence						
					95 % CI	
Moderator E.I	Conditional Effect		SE	LLCI	ULCI	
-1 SD -11.09	.95		.09	.78	1.12	
Mean .00	1.09		.08	.94	1.24	
+1SD 11.09	1.23		.07	1.09	1.37	

Path  $b_1$  IV = Conscientiousness statistically “X”,  $b_2$  Mod = Emotional Intelligence statistically “M” Direct Effect to DV = Project success statistically “Y”. Path  $b_3$  statistically an Interaction Term of X\*M effect to DV=Project Success.



H4 (b): Emotional Intelligence moderates the significant positive relationship between Extraversion and Project Success.

Results of the moderation analysis show that the interaction term of Extraversion with Emotional Intelligence has a minor but significant relationship driving Project Success. *Thus the hypothesis is accepted.*

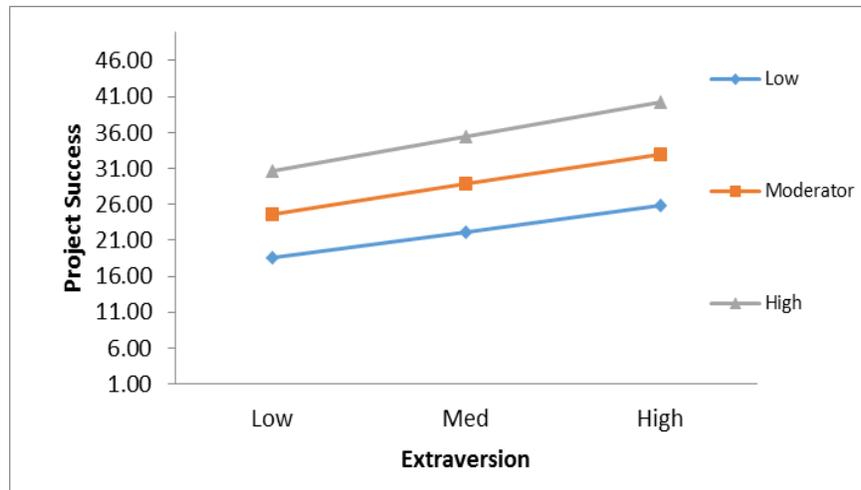
Table 5

*Regression Analysis for Extraversion, Emotional Intelligence and Project Success*

Paths	B	SE	t	p	95 % CI LL	95 % CI UL
Direct Effects						
Path $b_1$ IV to DV	.96	.13	7.21	.00	.81	1.11
Path $b_2$ Mod to DV	.56	.03	18.96	.00	.50	.61
Path $b_3$ IVxMod to DV	.01	.00	8.14	.00	.01	.01
Conditional Effect of focal Predictor Extraversion at values of Emotional Intelligence						
					95% CI	
Moderator E.I	Conditional Effect	SE			LL	UL

-1 SD -11.09	.82	.09	.65	.99
Mean .00	.96	.08	.81	1.11
+1SD 11.09	1.10	.07	.97	1.23

Path  $b_1$  IV = Extraversion statistically “X”,  $b_2$  Mod = Emotional Intelligence statistically “M” Direct Effect to DV = Project success statistically “Y”. Path  $b_3$  statistically an Interaction Term of X\*M effect to DV=Project Success.



### Moderation Graph Analysis

Table 4 reflect conditional effect of focal predictor Conscientiousness at Emotional Intelligence regressing Project Success with significantly ( $B=.01, p<.05$ ). Table 5 reflect conditional effect of focal predictor Extraversion at Emotional Intelligence regressing Project Success with significantly ( $B=.01, p<.05$ ). Overall it can be concluded from Figure-1 and Figure-2 that higher Extraversion and Conscientiousness with higher Emotional intelligence predicts Project Success “Y”; the lower it gets lower effect of moderation would be.

### Discussion

Results for the present study supports all hypotheses developed in context with previous literature. H1 was related to Conscientiousness and according to Moore and Vucetic (2014) it is predictor of job performance

in context of project success. This research studied projectized, matrix organizations and employees with Conscientiousness personality found predicting project a successful Endeavour.

H2 was related to Extraversion, which solidify existing body of knowledge that organization settings which we have studied tends to support that it is predictor of Project Success. Project Team and Managers more care about Stakeholders and in context with that Extraversion personality trait drives Project Success as employees with strong organization commitment and professional commitment deliver best from client perspective (Dwivedula, Bredillet, & Müller, 2016).

H3 was related to Emotional Intelligence, which has continued supporting the fact that it is an antecedent of Project Success. Projects have distributed teams with diverse culture, experience and other aspects; it is highly sought thing that Project Manager and Project Team should be emotionally intelligent enough to address issues arising on Project.

H4 (a) and H4 (b) are hypothesized because Project team are required to be outgoing as they are required to interact different stakeholders also Project team are required to be vigilant while business requirement gather hence with all these emotional intelligence be an ingredient which can result is project success.

Personality traits being tested widely for driving job performance hence in this study taken as independent variable to test for project performance, which was intended to let managers know about importance of human factor as CSF for key variable. Managers of project based organizations are recommended to understand emotions of team members, have certain corrective measures to develop Emotional Intelligence, self-efficacy in different personality traits. This has to do with leveraging their capacities in terms of understanding; managing emotions of their own and team of diverse nature or multicultural. Project Management Body of Knowledge 5<sup>th</sup> edition process under planning phase of project human resource “Manage project Human Resource” is integral part of success of project.

Respondent from industry can be studied for success each of them attaining through longitudinal research design as this is not found commonly in previous cited studies. Despite the findings of this study consistent with literature support, there are certain limitations applied, which can be catered in better way by future researchers. Sample of this study was comprised of mostly managers instead this should have better accommodate results of control variable through significant mix of

project team members. This can help avoiding biases based on making decision from managerial responses only. Additionally, sampling techniques if operationalized other than convenient sampling can give different results because respondent's industry, roles, experience and project management education stratify to see if this can impact our results of moderation and driving Project Success. Limitation of this study was lack of time, as moderator and dependent variable can be studied outside of developed constructs in this study. There is possibility that Conscientiousness and Extraversion provide different results, if Emotional Intelligence all dimensions are tested with each of these personality traits and also Project Success can be tested for independent variables used in construct driving Project Success.

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