

Unpacking The Influence of Coaching Style Leadership on Startup Performance: The Serial Mediation of Entrepreneurial Passion and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction

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In an ever-changing environment of entrepreneurship in the current society, leadership is a key factor that dictates the destiny of startup success. The projected paper will analyze the relationship between Coaching Style Leadership (CSL) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Goal Setting Theory (GST) and Startup Performance (SUP). Particularly, it is concerned with the successive mediating effects Entrepreneurial Passion (EP), and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction (ES) in the correlation between CSL and SUP. Taking information on 272 new business starters at different incubation centers in Pakistan, the research uses quantitative methods to ensure that the model proposed is correct. The results demonstrate that CSL has a great role in boosting SUP, with the EP and ES playing a key mediating role. It is worth noting that the findings are congruent in ascertaining that EP and ES sequentially mediate the relationship between CSL and SUP, where the use of coaching style by leaders will ensure that the entrepreneurs demonstrate greater passion and satisfaction, which ultimately leads to better performance. The study adds to the existing body of literature on entrepreneurial leadership, indicating the associated psychological processes, in which the leadership behavior affects startup performance. Practical implications of using incubators, startup founders and policymakers are mentioned.

1. Introduction

Startups have become important forces behind innovation, technological advancement, and economic growth in the dynamic global economy. Startups have a high failure rate despite their increasing significance because of the unpredictability of the environment, a lack of funding, and the requirement for quick adaptation. For startups to overcome these obstacles and maintain long-term success, leadership is essential (Ghasabeh et al., 2021). Coaching style leadership has become popular among new leadership philosophies because it places a strong focus on helping people grow via direction, criticism, and empowerment. Navigating the complexity of startup ecosystems requires autonomy, goal alignment, and personal development, all of which are fostered by this leadership style (Ali et al., 2022).

Two moderating psychological variables that have been identified and that help in explaining the connection between coaching style leadership and startup performance includes, Entrepreneurial passion and Entrepreneurial satisfaction. The meaning of entrepreneurial passion can be described as the positive and strong affective response that the entrepreneurs develop with regard to activities that encapsulate their entrepreneurial role (Cardon et al., 2009). It provides motivation and determination, which are so crucial in start-up Ventures especially when executing new ideas (Kaplan, 2022). Another considerable factor linked to the process of venture creation, its further growth, persistence, and access to investments are passion (Biraglia & Kadile, 2017; Drnovsek et al., 2016; Murnieks et al., 2016; Breugst et al., 2012).

Studies on empirical literature that shows the effects of accelerators and other factors like Venture Capital (VC) on the performance of startups has been provided by Chan, et al., 2020; Goswami, et al., 2018; However, there is still much that needs clarification when it comes to internal leadership practices particularly the coaching leadership practice that affect growth or acceleration in the startups. Moreover, while accelerators are explored at least several times (Cohen et al., 2019; Crişan et al., 2021), leadership within the startup itself, as well as its role in addressing the main problems of startups during the initial stages such as ‘valley of sore’ (Beard et al., 2009), remains an understudied area.

Startup performance has been a matter of concern for entrepreneurs since its inception. Pakistan is among those countries where startup culture has flourished during last decade. The factors affecting startup performance, however could not receive much attention by academic researchers. The current study is conceived to contribute in this regard. Specifically, it investigates how coaching style leadership contribute towards startup performance. Furthermore, it examines the underline mechanism that how entrepreneurial passion and satisfaction serially mediate this relationship. Understanding these dynamics can provide insights and ways to understand and optimize startup performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Coaching Style Leadership and Startup Performance

The coaching style leadership is a style of leading that involves assisting each member of the team to develop his abilities, potential and performance through providing each a tailor-made guidance, feedback and support (Goleman, 2000).

The emergence of coaching in the way leaders and managers operate has been one of the most crucial developments in the past three decades (Hawkins, 2012). Coaching leadership is aimed at the development of every employee as an individual and it serves the entire workforce well in more general perspective. This form of leadership is one that fosters believability among both the leaders and the employees in that it considers the long-term success compared to short-term benefits. Leadership takes various forms, e.g. Autocratic Leadership. Two characteristics that identify the autocratic form of leadership are centralized decision-making and a high amount of power involved by a leader (Chukwusa, 2018; Van Vugt et al., 2004). Autocratic leaders decide alone with few contributions of the dependents who keenly observe what their patrons are doing. This is the way of thinking of a system of leadership where a top-down system believes that subordinates should follow instructions and must not ask questions (Lorinkova et al., 2013). Such style is not ideal in business operations which requires creativity in a group of people and collaboration. entrepreneurs operating under fast moving environments, often require a flexible leadership which promotes open communication and increased employee power (Hmieleski & Ensley, 2007).

To understand the relationship between innovation ambidexterity and startup performance it is crucial to understand the impact of external environmental conditions (Wiratmadja, Profityo, and Rumanti 2020). They tend to specialize on introducing one product or service and with immature business strategies and minimum necessary financial requirements for further stages of operations (Santisteban et al., 2023). As by the Dynamic Capability View (DCV) theory introduced in Teece & Pisano (1994), startups are to generate new, idiosyncratic and inimitable goods or services and continuously transform knowledge into capabilities in the form of business.

H1: Coaching style leadership has direct and positive impact on startup performance.

2.2 Coaching Style Leadership and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction

The term entrepreneurial passion is defined as positive affective states that the entrepreneurs are aware of when performing entrepreneurial tasks. These activities cannot be privy from roles that have meaning in life and are identity-related roles to the entrepreneur (Cardon et al., 2009). Due to the positive effects that entrepreneurial passion could have on the development of SMEs, academic interest in the concept has slowly grown in the field of entrepreneurship (Kreiser et al., 2012). This passion is pivotal to a number of aspects of entrepreneurship, including formation of new commercial ventures, growth of such ventures, sustaining endeavor in the face of adversity, raising of Angel and Venture Capitalist funding, the encouragement of employees to commit to entrepreneurial firms and entrepreneur's motivation to engage in their work (Biraglia & Kadile, 2017; Drnovsek et al., 2016; Cardon & Kirk, 2015)

In the last twenty years, the business model has emerged as a powerful idea in strategy, innovation, and entrepreneurship research domains (Foss & Saebi, 2017; Snihur & Zott, 2020; Teece, 2010). The growing trend with reference to business model underlines their significance as for the identification of the role of passion and entrepreneurial identity for successful entrepreneurship. Such a passion and business strategy concern are characteristic modern

entrepreneurial and emotional involvement in the process of leadership; hence it defines the changes of the contemporary entrepreneurial activity.

Entrepreneurial passion is defined as positive self-generated emotional states of the entrepreneurship form, which is manifest in cognitive and behavior with respect to deeply personal importance. As Chen et al. (2009) noted it is a vivid sign of an entrepreneur's passion and desire for creation as well as development of business. It will also be useful to view entrepreneurial passion as a set of mental, neurological, and physical phenomenon that is powered and maintained by enthusiasm. As a result, it is recognized as a central aspect of enterprise initiatives (Cardon et al., 2009). In addition, the aspect of passion ensures that the entrepreneurs are motivated and begin searching for opportunities to create new ventures thereby playing a central role in the motivation of business (Shane et al., 2003; Cardon et al., 2009).

People's interactions with their businesses and larger business settings are the source of entrepreneurial happiness (Wang & Brower, 2019). It displays a favorable emotional reaction brought on by assessing one's experiences or function as an entrepreneur (Locke, 1976). Georgianna et al. (2016) highlighted the importance of individual initiative in determining entrepreneurs' well-being by finding a positive correlation between self-leadership and contentment. Entrepreneurs' willingness to stay involved in their enterprise may be influenced by the satisfaction they receive from creating and growing their own businesses. Furthermore, given that plans to leave the company are strongly correlated with satisfaction levels, the relationship between entrepreneurial commitment and satisfaction becomes clear (Cole & Castro, 2023; Faliza et al., 2023). This relationship holds true for both entrepreneurs and traditional work environments.

While entrepreneurial satisfaction can be viewed as a directory of performance, it determines critical choices made by the entrepreneurs whether to extend time and more efforts, reduce them, or else shut down their business. Csikszentmihalyi (1999) has put the following argument of flow which strongly captures happiness level, 'the ability to enjoy the activity and to satisfy the contingency at the same time is a fundamental factor that helps determine happiness in life'. According to the flow theory, it has a relationship with subjective well-being and there were studies on flow experience and well-being within large-scale organizations (Peifer et al., 2020) and entrepreneurial (Lee & Ha, 2015). Nevertheless, literature regarding the relationship between flow, on one hand, and the level of subjective well-being in street entrepreneurs is less developed. It is therefore necessary to highlight the flow in relation to job satisfaction because flow is directly connected with intrinsic factors that help to improve job performance (Maeran & Cangiano, 2013).

H2: Coaching style leadership has positive and direct impact entrepreneurial satisfaction

2.3 Coaching Style Leadership and Entrepreneurial Passion

Such characteristics are rather similar to the inborn desire people possess to open their businesses. According to Wang et al. (2022), the coaching leadership approach makes entrepreneurs far more emotionally engaged and dedicated and transforms the workplace into a situation where they can be independent persons and evolve as individuals. The authors

discovered that when their bosses apply a coach-approach, entrepreneurs get more excited to work (Li, Zhang, and Yu 2021). The reason behind this is that this adds more reasons that motivates them to achieve their goals and makes them feel they have a purpose. According to Nguyen et al. (2023), the non-directive, growth-oriented approach to the leadership role in coaching can enable individuals to be more engaged in the process, which incorporates the inner drive and creative force within them, as two of the most obvious states of passionate desires to start a business.

H3: Coaching style leadership has positive and direct impact on entrepreneurial passion.

2.4 Coaching Style Leadership and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction

Coaches encourage creativity, flexibility and teamwork as opposed to controlling, which is essential to succeed in a rapid-paced startup environment. Zhao et al. (2023) believed that coaching leadership is beneficial in enhancing startup performance because it promotes learning and accountability cultures. It promotes decision-making and resource use as well since it promotes joint efforts in solving problems. The researchers state that CEOs who have a coaching style motivate people and enhance team work advancing business faster and becoming more responsive to the market (Song and Heo, 2024). With the support of the coaching leadership approach, which stimulates open communication and personal guidance, startups can unmask uncertainty and record long-term performance advancements.

H4: Coaching style leadership has positive and direct impact entrepreneurial satisfaction.

2.5 Entrepreneurial Passion and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction

It encourages the entrepreneurs to struggle through tough periods, come up with new ideas and inspire their employees. Emotional investment makes the passionate individual business owners commit more, be more creative and have a strategic orientation, which are essential to succeed with the new business. Muoz et al. (2022) describe two important elements of business development: proactive behavior, and recognition of opportunities, and say that they are also greatly influenced by the passion of the entrepreneurs. Locke and Baum (2014) suggest that driven individuals in business also tend to establish higher goals and work harder that leads to enhanced performance. Long-term planning and perseverance require passion, and this helps the startups to survive the market turbulences and retain their growth

H5: Entrepreneurial passion has direct and positive impact on the entrepreneurial satisfaction.

2.6 Entrepreneurial Passion and Startup Performance

The thing is that passion that is described as strong positive feelings towards entrepreneurial activities and strong personal identification with the role of an entrepreneur (Cardon et al., 2009) comes as a natural result to the deeper fulfillment and satisfaction in work. The most recent studies prove that passionate entrepreneurs are less likely to be crushed, less goal-oriented, and more emotionally committed, which has a positive effect on their general satisfaction (Murnieks et al., 2020; Breugst et al., 2022). The Self-Determination Theory (Self-Determination Theory, 2000) states that, the activities that people engage in based on their intrinsic interests and identity are highly likely to cause increased satisfaction to them.

H6: Entrepreneurial passion has direct and positive impact on startup performance

2.7 Entrepreneurial passion mediates between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.

The findings of this research do indicate serious support of the seventh hypothesis, as the entrepreneurial passion mediates relationship between the coaching-style leadership and startup performance substantially. This mediation implies that the type of coaching leadership is also beneficial because its effect on entrepreneurs is not only external through coaching presence and advice but also through an internal form of drive, a sort of emotion, calling to the entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial passion, and finally, through the contribution of this driver to their performance levels. Self-Determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (2000) posit that individuals tend to be more intrinsically motivated and passionate when their psychological needs, including autonomy, competency, and relatedness, are met through coaching practices as executed by their leaders. This level of emotional involvement is very important to entrepreneurial pursuits, durability, and the achievement of objectives, particularly in warm working conditions in startups that are risky and high-stress. This pathway, indeed, has empirical support as it demonstrates that leadership through coaching increases the sense of purpose and motivation of entrepreneurs, which subsequently improves strategic orientation and venture performance (Huang et al., 2021; Gao & Wang, 2023). Moreover, Cardon et al. (2009) stressed, that entrepreneurial passion is not only an individual characteristic, but also a dynamic process which is determined by the social interactions, such as leadership. Coaching-style leadership could be considered a psychological stimulus which kindles passion that leads towards enhanced performance of entrepreneurial efforts especially in a Pakistani context because resource crunch and institutional issues are prevalent there. This result can inform the theoretical knowledge of the interaction of internal emotional states as chief transmission objects between a leadership style and the results of a startup.

H7: Entrepreneurial passion mediate the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.

2.8 Mediation of Entrepreneurial satisfaction between mediate the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.

Rather than change emotional commitment into ENDURING SUPPORT and tactical success, entrepreneurial satisfaction establishes a close relation between startup performance and the passion of entrepreneurs. Sometimes there are passionate business owners who have a lot of vigor and resolve but when they are not happy then that vigor not necessarily bear fruit to success. Fernandez-Perez and colleagues (2023) review states that entrepreneurial pleasure leads to an enlargement of the positive effects of passion because they can increase goal congruence, perseverance, and well-being. Liu and Fang (2022) also found out that enthusiasm also contributes to enhanced decision-making and innovation and sustainable growth of business through the psychological channel of satisfaction. The drive to hard work demands passion, but the desire to work in the long term is motivated by contentment, which enhances the operation of the startups because people become more resilient and focused.

H8: Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediates the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance

2.9 Mediation of Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediate the relationship between Entrepreneurial passion and Startup performance.

The connection between the coaching-style leadership and startup performance is entrepreneurial pleasure. It does it by turning leadership support into meaningful business success. The entrepreneurs are also satisfied when there is a coach-type CEO who makes them become self-reliant, insightful criticism and makes them feel wanted and growing. This satisfaction enhances commitment, motivation and perseverance all of which are the contributors of the success of the startup. As Nguyen, G. T., Matoškova, J., Pham, N. T., and Nguyen, M. T. (2025) report, happy and supported entrepreneurs will have a better chance of being inventive and strategic planners, which enhances business performance. Kiani, Ali, Biraglia, and Wang (2023) mention that happiness also strengthens the mental resilience needed to help overcome the adverse conditions in busy startup environments. Entrepreneurial satisfaction is the mental and emotional kinship between the enhanced success of startups and coaching leadership.

H9: Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediates the relationship between Entrepreneurial passion and Startup performance.

2.10 Mediation of Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediate the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.

Entrepreneurial excitement and satisfaction has a strong relationship with the connection between coaching-style leadership and startup performance. Coaching-style leadership allows people to feel empowered as well as presents constructive criticism and the necessary support, which leads to a growth-oriented environment at work. Through aligning the tasks with values and goals of people, this adds entrepreneurial momentum. This excitement drives people closer to the work they are doing; this way, it makes them happier as business owners and makes them feel accomplished and thus remain strong and inspired. Leadership is a subject that builds passion resulting in satisfaction hence vital to making a business successful (Hassan, M. A. and Mohamed Jakuula, H. A. 2024). The serial mediation route explains how leadership influences performance by finding an indirect route through psychological empowerment as Yingying, Z., Mei, W., and Dwen, S. (2023) point out. Thus, enthusiasm and achievement slowly make the leadership practices turn into better commercial performance.

H10: Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediates the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.

2.11 Mediation of Entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial satisfaction serially mediate the relationship between coaching style leadership and startup performance.

Recent research has begun to pay greater attention to the contribution of coaching-style leadership (CSL) to the promotion of entrepreneurial outcomes based on psychological and affective processes. CSL focuses on direction, encouragement, and development support which increases the emotional involvement of entrepreneurs in the business. It is hypothesized that entrepreneurial passion is a determining factor bridging leadership actions and entrepreneurial achievement since passion reinforces psychological capital, perseverance, and creative endeavor (Li et al., 2022). In addition, passion tends to be more associated with increased entrepreneurial satisfaction, as emotionally invested entrepreneurs are associated with higher levels of fulfillment and start-up devotion (Cardon et al., 2023). In its turn, satisfaction is positively correlated with the performance of the venture since the more satisfied entrepreneurs are, the more resilient and willing to continue running the business they become (Nguyen et al., 2024). Although the direct evidence about the serial mediation of entrepreneurial passion and satisfaction is still in its infancy, related literature confirms that leadership often exerts its

influence via the sequence of psychological processes, including motivation, satisfaction, and embeddedness, which ultimately influence the improved performance outcome (Zhang and Chen, 2022). Therefore, it can be plausibly assumed that entrepreneurial passion and satisfaction has a serial throughput of the interaction between coaching-style leadership and startup performance and offers a theoretically-based approach to explain the relationship between leadership and entrepreneurial success.

H11: Entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial satisfaction serially mediate the relationship between coaching style leadership and startup performance.

3. Methodology

The research strategy was used here is survey form. The survey research method is applicable in this study as it enables the collection of structured data from the respondents originate from different domains, that is Incubations centers. According to the time period being examined, the researcher was collected cross-sectional data to meet the study's requirements. Because every observation was made in a single round, the data was referred to as cross-sectional (Campbell, Machin, & Walters, 2007). The Target population was the employees of Incubation Centers. The sampling Process and design includes the steps which are closely related and are important to all aspect of the research. Following the steps were defining the target population, sampling procedure, determining the sample size. In this research, nonprobability and purposive sampling method of data collection was applied.

3.1 Instruments

The instrument to be used to collect data in this study was that of using a structured questionnaire, although the questionnaire was formulated in such a manner that the responses of CSL practices was measured via adopted questionnaire that consist of sixteen items developed by Peláez Zuberbühler et al. (2023), SUP practices was measured via adopted questionnaire that consist of four items developed by Assenova and Amit (2024), EP CSL practices was measured via adopted questionnaire that consist of fifteen items developed by Anjum et al. (2021) and the mediating role of ES practices was measured via adopted questionnaire that consist of ten items developed by Kautonen and Palmroos (2010). A Likert 5-point scale was adopted in the response in order to facilitate a quantitative analysis of the data collected. Smart-PLS is used in the study.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Analysis

The population characteristics of the study participants is given in the table above. These are factors like age, gender, level of education, type of industry, experience in being an entrepreneur, size of startup, the age of the startup and where the startup is located. Frequencies and percentages were reported each category to give an explanation of the sample composition.

Table No 1: Demographic analysis

		Frequency	Percent
AGE	18-29	132	48.5
	30-39	116	42.6
	40-49	23	8.5
	60 and above	1	.4
GENDER	Male	227	83.5
	Female	44	16.2
EDUCATION	Intermediate	1	0.4
	Graduation	22	8.1
	Masters	22	8.1
	mphil/phd	151	55.5
	Others	76	27.9
TYPE OF INDUSTRY	Technology	89	32.7
	E-commerce	59	21.7
	Technical Education	84	30.9
	Health	24	8.8
	others(please specify)	16	5.9
ENTERPRENEURIAL EXPERIENCE	1 to 5 years	216	79.4
	6 to 10 years	51	18.8
	11 to 15 years	4	1.5
	16 to 29 years	1	0.4
STARTUP SIZE	1-20	217	0.4
	21-40	45	0.7
	41-60	10	21.0
STARTUP AGE	Less than 1 year	127	46.7
	1 to 3 years	127	46.7
	4 to 6 years	9	3.3
	more than 6 years	9	3.3
LOCATION	Islamabad/Rawalpindi	249	91.5
	Lahore	17	6.3
	Peshawar	3	1.1
	Quetta	3	1.1

After the demographic analysis, most of the respondents are young businesspersons in the 18-39 years age bracket (91.1 percent) and mostly male (83.5 percent). Most of them had postgraduate degrees where majority had an MPhil/phd degree at 55.5 percent. The technology and technical education types comprized mainly of the startups (32.7% and 30.9%, respectively). The participants were mostly (79.4%) with 1 to 5 years of entrepreneurial experience and running a small startup of 1 to 20 employees. These startups were mainly less than 3 years old (93.4%) since the ecosystem is relatively new. Geographically, almost all the respondents were clustered in Islamabad/Rawalpindi (91.5%), in terms of creating startups in Pakistan and therefore the region represents one of the central hubs in terms of startups in the country.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

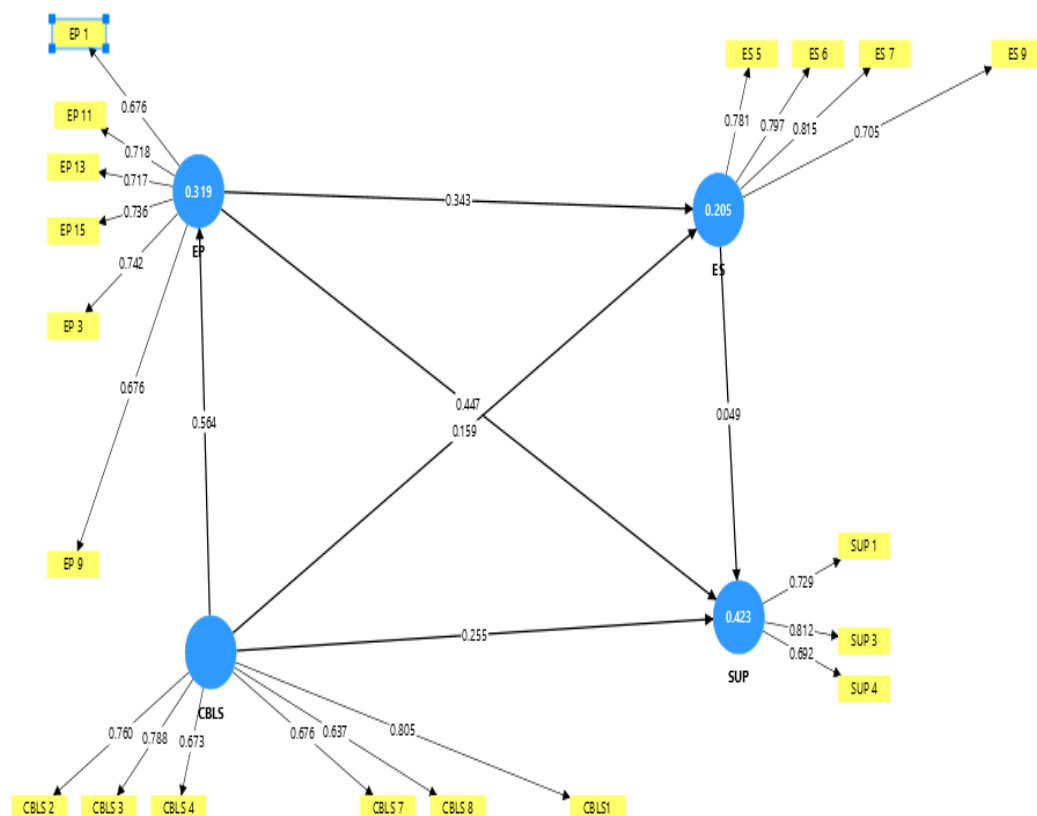
Table No 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
CBLS1	272	4.49	0.828	-1.997	4.391
CBLS 2	272	4.46	0.758	-1.873	4.785
CBLS 3	272	4.42	0.730	-1.536	3.522
CBLS 4	272	4.34	0.752	-1.338	2.717
CBLS 5	272	4.33	0.769	-1.528	3.624
CBLS 6	272	4.41	0.708	-1.465	3.673
CBLS 7	272	4.39	0.736	-1.555	4.011
CBLS 8	272	4.30	0.741	-1.417	3.723
CBLS 9	272	4.43	0.710	-1.391	3.094
CBLS 10	272	4.44	0.634	-1.120	2.669
CBLS 11	272	4.32	0.711	-1.351	3.600
CBLS 12	272	4.38	0.687	-1.342	3.677
CBLS 13	272	4.24	0.794	-1.426	3.313
CBLS 14	272	4.32	0.657	-0.990	2.542
CBLS 15	272	4.40	0.686	-1.413	3.886
CBLS 16	272	4.38	0.649	-1.298	4.421
SUP 1	272	4.29	0.677	-1.005	2.360
SUP 2	272	4.28	0.634	-0.747	2.084
SUP 3	272	4.32	0.702	-1.127	2.666
SUP 4	272	4.28	0.700	-1.227	3.391
EP 1	272	4.25	0.772	-1.344	3.046
EP 2	272	4.27	0.781	-1.492	3.707
EP 3	272	4.33	0.739	-1.214	2.126
EP 4	272	4.30	0.751	-1.446	3.674
EP 5	272	4.33	0.692	-1.479	4.937
EP 6	272	4.20	0.763	-1.263	2.969
EP 7	272	4.31	0.704	-1.227	3.157
EP 8	272	4.16	0.729	-1.230	3.448
EP 9	272	4.25	0.750	-1.284	3.163
EP 10	272	4.25	0.670	-0.866	2.032
EP 11	272	4.26	0.749	-1.150	2.319
EP 12"	272	4.26	0.729	-1.419	4.073
EP 13"	272	4.27	0.691	-1.019	2.273
EP 14	272	4.29	0.735	-1.480	3.811
EP 15"	272	4.31	0.748	-1.577	4.562
ES 1	272	4.25	0.748	-1.358	3.779
ES 2	272	4.14	0.901	-1.370	2.252
ES 3	272	4.23	0.730	-1.307	3.642
ES 4	272	4.17	0.764	-1.247	2.941
ES 5	272	4.09	0.775	-1.311	3.509
ES 6	272	4.15	0.788	-1.271	3.185
ES 7	272	4.16	0.792	-1.320	3.041
ES 8	272	4.30	0.668	-1.175	3.769
ES 9	272	4.16	0.668	-1.171	4.049
ES 10	272	4.57	0.720	-2.066	5.254

All the descriptive statistics have the mean value that spans a range of 4.09 to 4.57 on a 5-point Likert scale, with the values of means showing that overall, participants were in agreement with the statements (CBLS, SUP, EP, and ES). The standard deviations are at the moderate level (the range is mostly between 0.63 and 0.90), which means that the level of consistency in responses is fair. Skewness values are decomposed into the negative range, indicating there is left skewed distribution, i.e., the majority were well rated. Additionally, the values of kurtosis are turned to be mostly above 2 and items above 4 suggesting a leptokurtic distribution response is peaked with heavy tails as in comparison to normal distribution. ES10 had the largest value of skewness (-2.066) and kurtosis (5.254), which means that the level of positive agreement and responses on this item is more concentrated than to any other. The measured constructs do not appear in the data to be favorable but with a positive perception and consistent in general.

4.3 Assessment of Final Measurement Model

Figure No 1: SEM



Measurement model addresses the criteria of convergent validity and discriminant validity. Further, it also explains average variance extracted and composite reliability for each construct.

Table No 3: Measurement Model

Constructs	Indicators	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	AVE
Coaching Based leadership style	CBLS 2	0.760	0.835	0.82	0.527
	CBLS 3	0.788			
	CBLS 4	0.673			
	CBLS 7	0.676			
	CBLS 8	0.637			
	CBLS1	0.805			
Entrepreneurial Passion	EP 1	0.676	0.807	0.805	0.506
	EP 11	0.718			
	EP 13	0.717			
	EP 15	0.736			
	EP 3	0.742			
	EP 9	0.676			
Entrepreneurial Satisfaction	ES 5	0.781	0.791	0.78	0.602
	ES 6	0.797			
	ES 7	0.815			
	ES 9	0.705			
Start Up Performance	SUP 1	0.729	0.606	0.599	0.557
	SUP 3	0.812			
	SUP 4	0.692			

The entire constructs in the measurement model have good reliability and validity. Due to the combination of more than 50 percent of the variance being measured by the construct (average variance extracted 0.527), and the good level of internal consistency (composite reliability 0.835, Cronbachs Alpha 0.82), Coaching-Based Leadership Style (CBLS) demonstrates good levels of internal consistency. Convergent validity can be observed in all factor loadings which are greater than 0.6. Likewise, Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) also passes the levels of reliability with CR of 0.807, Alpha of 0.805, and AVE of 0.506 indicates that the indicators provide a good representation of the construct. Entrepreneurial Satisfaction (ES) also possesses good loadings and reliability levels (CR = 0.791, Alpha = 0.78, AVE = 0.602), this indicates internal consistency and convergent validity. Finally, more or less with lower reliability (CR = 0.606, Alpha = 0.599), the Startup Performance (SUP) demonstrated the minimal acceptability (AVE = 0.557, loadings on 0.69), which means that the construct is measured sufficiently. In general, the constructs have adequate psychometric characteristics that can be used.

The table 4 indicates the discrimination validity of Fornell-Larcker criterion. The diagonal (in bold) shows the square root of each constructs AVE and are greater than the inter-construct correlations in the same row and column. This supports the fact that all the constructs (CBLS, EP, ES and SUP) have good discriminant validity as the construct has more variance with its indicators than with other constructs.

Table No 4: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Indicators	CBLS	EP	ES	SUP
CBLS	0.726			
EP	0.564	0.711		
ES	0.352	0.433	0.776	
SUP	0.524	0.612	0.332	0.746

Table No 5: Hetero Trait and Mono trait (HTMT)

Indicators	CBLS	EP	ES	SUP
CBLS				
EP	0.671			
ES	0.45	0.525		
SUP	0.737	0.875	0.489	

The table 5 shows the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait) ratio of correlations which is applied to evaluate the discriminant validity. No HTMT exceeds the conservative criterion of 0.85 (EP-SUP 0.875) and all are smaller thus satisfying the conclusion that the constructs are adequately distinct with each other. In this way, discriminant validity is considerably proven, but one should be cautious of the EPSUP relationship because it is too highly correlated.

4.4 Assessment of Structural Model

According to Duarte and Raposo (2010), in SEM, the structural model is the representation of the hypothesised relationship. After assessing goodness of measurement model in the first stage, the second stage provides the evidence supporting relationships hypothesized in the model in the model for the current study (Chin, 2010).

Figure No 2: Values of R Square

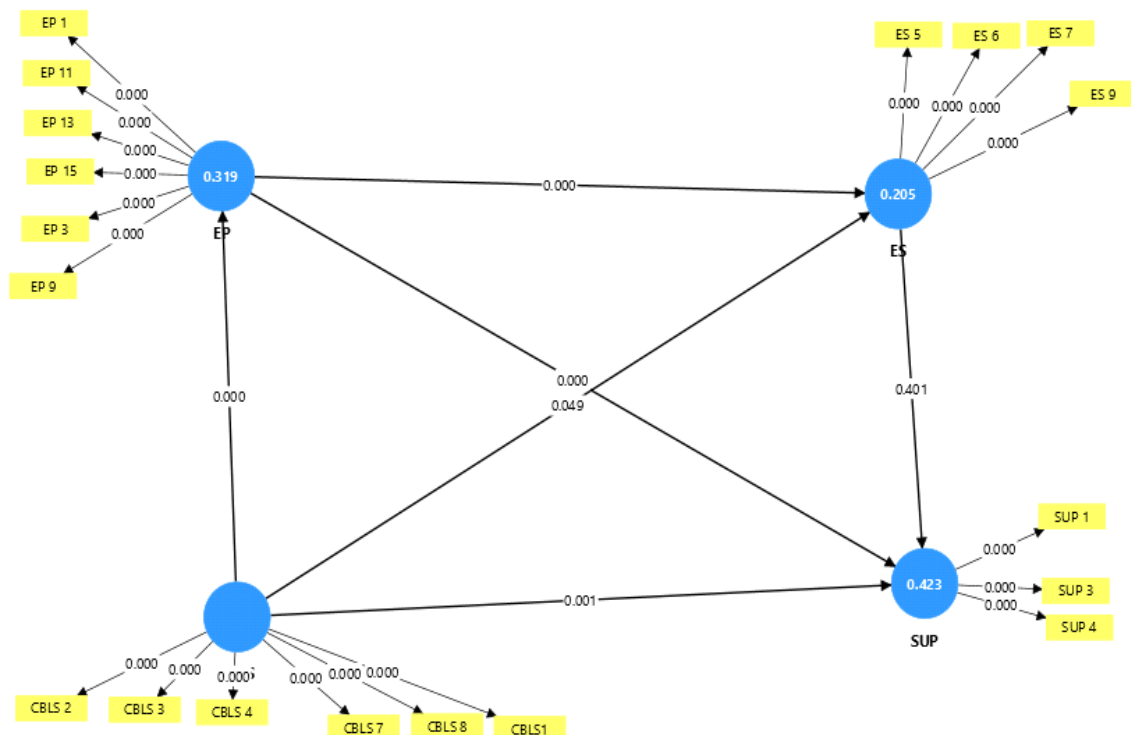


Table No 6: Direct Effect

Hypothesis	Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
H1	CBLS -> EP	0.564	0.565	0.07	8.094	0
H2	CBLS -> ES	0.159	0.15	0.081	1.97	0.049
H3	CBLS -> SUP	0.255	0.25	0.074	3.443	0.001
H4	EP -> ES	0.343	0.349	0.063	5.441	0
H5	EP -> SUP	0.447	0.448	0.065	6.906	0
H6	ES -> SUP	0.049	0.044	0.059	0.84	0.401

The results of the direct effects indicate that there were significant relationships between important constructs. The Coaching-Based Leadership Style (CBLS) shows a powerful and statistically significant influence on Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) ($b = 0.564$, $p = 0.000$) and a moderate but still significant effect on Entrepreneurial Satisfaction (ES) ($b = 0.159$, $p = 0.049$) and Startup Performance (SUP) ($b = 0.255$, $p = 0.001$) as well. Entrepreneurial Passion has a very strong impact on ES ($b = 0.343$, $p = 0.000$) and SUP ($b = 0.447$, $p = 0.000$), which is why it is put in the central role of the model. Nevertheless, the direct effect of ES on SUP is not meaningful ($\beta = 0.049$, $p = 0.401$), and this should be interpreted as the fact that satisfaction by itself does not necessarily promote startup performance directly. In general, the results stress the central position of coaching-type leadership and passion in entrepreneurship in startups success.

Table No 7: Mediation Effect

Hypothesis	Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
H7	CBLS -> EP -> ES	0.194	0.198	0.047	4.163	0
H8	CBLS -> ES -> SUP	0.008	0.008	0.011	0.703	0.482
H9	CBLS -> EP -> SUP	0.252	0.255	0.055	4.594	0
H10	EP -> ES -> SUP	0.017	0.015	0.021	0.797	0.426
H11	CBLS -> EP -> ES -> SUP	0.01	0.009	0.012	0.772	0.44

According to the mediation analysis, two indirect paths are found to be statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$. Follow-up results provide insight into how follow-up hospitals across the United States were ranked according to the number of Medicaid and Medicare patients they treated. In particular, Established Passion (EP) plays an important mediation role in the

connection between Coaching-Based Leadership Style (CBSL) and satisfaction or performance, i.e. it mediates the relationship between Coaching-Based Leadership Style (CBLS) and both Entrepreneurial Satisfaction (ES) (H7: $\beta = 0.194$, $p = 0.000$) and, Startup Performance (SUP) (H9: $\beta = 0.252$, $p = 0.000$). The other paths of mediation are however not significant as H8 is $\beta = 0.093$, H10 $\beta = 0.239$, and H11 $\beta = 0.208$ and therefore above 0.05 and as such the path of entrepreneurial satisfaction alone or in cascade mediations is not significant in explaining Startup Performance. These conclusions highlight the fact that the main mediating construct is the variable of Entrepreneurial Passion, and the extent of the mediating effect of satisfaction in the model is minimal.

Table No 8: Summary of Hypotheses

	Hypotheses	Results
H1	Coaching style leadership has positive and direct impact on entrepreneurial passion.	Accepted
H2	Coaching style leadership has positive and direct impact on entrepreneurial satisfaction	Accepted
H3	Coaching style leadership has direct and positive impact on startup performance.	Accepted
H4	Entrepreneurial passion has impact on direct and positive on the entrepreneurial satisfaction.	Accepted
H5	Entrepreneurial passion has direct and positive impact on startup performance.	Accepted
H6	Entrepreneurial satisfaction has direct and positive impact on startup performance.	Rejected
H7	Entrepreneurial passion mediate the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.	Accepted
H8	Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediate the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.	Rejected
H9	Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediates the relationship between Entrepreneurial passion and Startup performance.	Accepted
H10	Entrepreneurial satisfaction mediates the relationship between Coaching style leadership and Startup performance.	Rejected
H11	Entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial satisfaction serially mediate the relationship between coaching style leadership and startup performance.	Rejected

4.5 Discussion

This paper has discussed the effect that Coaching Style Leadership (CSL) has on the performance of startups based on emotional and psychological status of entrepreneurs specifically Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction (ES). The outcomes revealed that CSL has a tremendous effect on the EP and ES levels, which proves the authenticity of supportive autonomy-oriented leadership within the entrepreneurial scenario. Other behaviors that can achieve coaching includes empathetic communication, constructive feedback, and personal encouragement which aligns with the Self-Determination Theory

(SDT) principles to help the entrepreneurs be emotionally energized and internally motivated. Within demanding startup contexts such as in Pakistan, such aspects of leadership provide a psychological sense of safety and support, which not only generates emotional involvement, but also the physical performance measures. EP became a significant direct determinant of performance and a moderator between CSL and the success of start-ups and pointed the need to rely on emotionally appealing leadership to develop long-term entrepreneurial motivation.

More so, the study concludes that the role of EP is significant in enhancing ES, which positively mediates the association between passion and performance of startups. This implies that although passion makes entrepreneurs emotionally devoted and able to take punches, what ensures that the passion is balanced to yield actionable and productive results is satisfaction. When entrepreneurs are reportedly internally driven and their inner state emotionally complete, they will have a higher chance to remain focused, prevent burnout, and make decisions strategically sounder, which positively impacts the venture-related outcomes. Nonetheless, it is important that the contentment is based on the engagement in something valuable, emotional connections with the job, but not extrinsic outcomes. In particular, in the Pakistani situation where resource limitations and absence of institutions where entrepreneurs need to cope with these challenges, the capacity to enjoy intrinsic motivators like purpose and passion, acts as a force multiplier in terms of sustainable performance.

Interestingly, this study discovered that ES did not significantly mediate relations between CSL and startup performance. H6, H8, H10, H11 has been rejected. According to the analysis results, H6, H8, H10, H11 have been rejected, This study hypothesized that entrepreneurial satisfaction would significantly mediate the relationship between coaching-style leadership and startup performance; however, the analysis using SmartPLS found this mediation to be statistically non-significant. One plausible explanation, supported by Carree and Verheul (2012), is that entrepreneurial satisfaction is multidimensional, with certain aspects such as psychological well-being being more influenced by intrinsic motivation than by external leadership factors like coaching-style behaviors. In particular, their findings suggest that while intrinsic motivation improves psychological satisfaction, it does not necessarily enhance satisfaction with income or leisure time. In the context of Pakistani startups, founders may be facing financial constraints and time pressures, leading them to evaluate satisfaction more through extrinsic dimensions like monetary gain or work-life balance—areas that coaching-style leadership may not directly impact. Furthermore, entrepreneurs who manage to balance work and family care were shown to have higher satisfaction across all dimensions, likely due to greater flexibility and realistic expectations from self-employment. If such balance is lacking among incubated startup founders in Pakistan, it may explain why coaching-style leadership—despite being supportive did not translate into heightened entrepreneurial satisfaction, and therefore, did not mediate startup performance. This highlights the importance of considering personal contexts and motivation sources when assessing satisfaction's role in performance pathways (Carree & Verheul, 2012).

This can be explained by the multidimensional aspect of satisfaction whereby one might not necessarily be in the domain of coaching-style leadership which might be driving satisfaction in terms of income and leisure time amongst others which are more extrinsic. In

the case of startups, especially in developing countries, satisfaction of the founders might be based more on hard outcomes or work-life organization, both of which CSL might not be able to touch. It means that CSL has the potential to foster passion and emotional commitment, but the satisfaction that may arise on its basis is not inevitable since other personal or contextual conditions need to be supplemented in such a way as to guarantee the given outcome with the help of financial security or related support, e.g., of the family. This result adds a sophisticated insight in the body of literature, involving fulfillment being more stabilizing than performance increasing in the entrepreneurial setting. In general, the study highlights the pivotal role of emotionally intelligent leadership and intrinsic motivation in the entrepreneurship experience, which can be of great value to the academic community and the practical one when dealing with startup ecosystems.

5. Conclusion

The present study examined the kind of influence Coaching-Style Leadership (CSL) that has on Startup Performance (SUP), including Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction (ES) of them as mediating variables, in Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Goal Setting Theory (GST), between 272 Pakistani entrepreneurs who work within the incubation centers of Pakistan. This showed that CSL plays an important part in EP, ES, and SUP and that EP is an important mediating factor. The culture that CSL encourages, the autonomy, and emotional support are found to be self-motivating and innovation-boosting among the startup founders. Interestingly, though CSL and EP affect ES positively, it does not have a significant effect on SUP which poses a problem to the traditional idea that performance is driven directly by satisfaction. This is an indication that ES might be more associated with future psychological well-being instead of the instant performance results in the stressful startup world. Theoretically, the study can further the use of SDT and GST in entrepreneurship and EP as an essential emotional and motivational connection between leadership and performance. In practice, it promotes the introduction of CSL principles to the work of entrepreneurial development programs focusing on the aspects of emotional intelligence, coaching, and the practice of motivation-based leadership. It advises incubators, accelerators, as well as policymakers to spend money not only on financial and structural assistance but also for leadership training, which cultivates a sense of emotional stability and independence. Moreover, the paper also points out gender inequality and recognizes the lack of female entrepreneurship so that more aims to be done to educate people, both men and women, to become better leaders. Despite the limitation like cross-sectional nature of the study and geographical focus, the study provides a way forward to future longitudinal, cross-sectional and mixed-methods studies. To sum up, the study highlights the pivotal importance of leadership style and emotional involvement in entrepreneurial success, which provides meaningful implications of the study in the research and practical application in terms of the implementation of the entrepreneurship in the 3rd world countries in particular, Pakistan.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

The present study has important theoretical implications because the study samples Coaching-Style Leadership (CSL), Entrepreneurial Satisfaction (EP) and Entrepreneurial Passion (ES) into a single framework to create a new model of predicting Startup Performance

(SUP) and subsequently extends the usefulness of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Goal Setting Theory (GST) to the entrepreneurship domain. The finding that there were positive confirmations of numerous direct and mediated relationships with CSL in predicting both EP and SUP helps validate the positive role CSL plays in autonomy, competence and relatedness as intrinsic motivators proposed in SDT, just as it continues to affirm SDT as it emphasizes goal clarity and leader support highlighted in GST. It is particularly important to note that the research finds EP as a critical mediating mechanism that becomes the transfer mechanism converting behavior by the leadership into better performance, introducing a new angle on the emotional, psychological mechanisms in the entrepreneurship sphere. In contrast to the previous studies that consider passion as an attribute/variable or a consequence, the study at hand focuses on its dynamic, process character demonstrating that the passion can be sparked by leadership and subsequently improve innovation, endurance, and success. Furthermore, the subtle effects of ES that have been observed as heavily dependent upon the other as the CSL and EP, but not SUP challenge the common preconceptions that increased satisfaction naturally and immediately spells improved performance to consumers, with implications alluding that emotional satisfaction is perhaps not always the impetus of boosting short-term performance in high-stress start-up business context. In this way, this suggested theoretical model can be seen as a precursor to the subsequent researches of other styles of leadership and emotional dynamics within the field of entrepreneurship and, furthermore, stimulating comparison and interdisciplinary study across cultures, between genders, and across various industries.

5.2 Practical Implications

The applied results of this research may be utilized as a guideline by a founder of startups, managers of incubators, business advisors, and policymakers to help startups become significantly more successful. One important recommendation will be to incorporate the Coaching-Style Leadership (CSL) as well as promote the same, especially where startups are faced with fast-paced and uncertain environments. Leaders able to guide, emotionally support, and empower produce more resilience, creativity and proactive behaviors within their team. Incubators and accelerators should include training programs that emphasis coaching skills: goal setting, active listening, emotional empathy in their leadership development programs. These online platforms would be able to include simulations, peer learning and real world practice to imbibe the coaching mindset and enable the entrepreneurs to develop passion which has been identified in this study as a leading predictor of startup success. In addition to that, policy-makers will be advised to develop comprehensive entrepreneurial ecosystems that respond not only to financial and infrastructural demands, but also to emotional and psychological capital. The progress of entrepreneurs should be measured more humanely by incorporating some sort of measurement of motivation and satisfaction into the government programs and incubators. The implications of the findings to practicing entrepreneurs, startup teams hinge on the need to be emotionally aware and relationally leadership-oriented entities should be encouraged to build cultures where people find their voices and feel strong and connected to the mission of the venture. Entrepreneurial Satisfaction might not contribute directly to the performance, nevertheless, well-being practices supporting it are crucial to ensure sustainable and long-term performance, as well as continuity of founders. Altogether, the present investigation demonstrates the significance of emotionally intelligent leadership

and the necessity of ecosystems not only helping the business aspect of entrepreneurship but also the human one.

5.3 Limitations of The Study

Notwithstanding their useful knowledge on the effects of coaching-style leadership (CSL) on the performance of a startup, the studies somehow limit analytical development by revealing a few of the bases on which analysis can be carried out. This study has a number of limitations that can be satisfied using entrepreneurial passion (EP) and satisfaction (ES). Must be given due credit as regards the balanced interpretation of the findings. To begin with, the study relied on the cross-sectional study design, which described the situation at one specific time. This limits the possibility of causal conclusion between variables. The transversal studies should be followed by the longitudinal ones. The way CSL, EP, and ES change as time passes and the influence it has on the performance of start-ups as time varies venture growth. Secondly, the geographical scope covered incubation centers within Rawalpindi and Islamabad only and thus, any further extension of the scope had to be checked by the impact of the geographical scope covered (i.e. Rawalpindi and Islamabad) on the research findings cannot describe the full range of startups in Pakistan or other emerging economies. This regional the focus makes it hard to generalize the findings to extending entrepreneurial ecosystems, particularly the ones whose resource abundance, cultural or institutional environments are different.

5.4 Future Recommendations

Considering the current study results, the study of the subtle role of entrepreneurial satisfaction in the connection between coaching-style leadership and startup performance needs to be conducted in future research because the mediating role could not be proved in the given study. Other possible intermediaries that researchers may consider include entrepreneurial resilience, goal clarity or perceived organization support that may provide more insights on the way coaching-style leadership leads to better performance outcomes. Along with it, there is a suggestion to adopt a longitudinal research design that will enable the tracking of the evolution of entrepreneurial satisfaction and passion over time, which may help to prove their mediating functions more strongly. Extending's to this study with future studies could also involve having incubators of different origins, that is, of different cultural or regional settings to see whether cultural dynamics could be able to have an impact on the effectiveness of coaching-style leadership. Lastly, considering qualitative techniques, e.g., in-depth interviews or case studies, can assist in leading to the discovery of non-obvious or emotional/contextual influences that a pure quantitative approach may not reveal.

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