

## ENHANCING AUTHENTIC FOLLOWERSHIP THROUGH MINDFULNESS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL: INSIGHTS FROM AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

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### ABSTRACT

Goal of this study is to determine how authentic leadership affects authentic followership, with mindfulness and psychological capital acting as mediators and moderators, respectively. The recent study's methodology suggests that authentic leadership develops authentic followership by maintaining their mindfulness. The study's other goal is to determine whether psychological capital influences the association between mindfulness and authentic leadership. Using the convenience sampling approach and adopted questionnaires, data was gathered from 252 employees. Statistical methods including regression, correlation, and reliability have been used for data analysis. The findings show a favorable and substantial association between authentic followership and authentic leadership. The findings supported the idea that mindfulness plays a mediation role between authentic leadership and authentic followership. The findings indicate that the moderating effect of psychological capital between mindfulness and authentic leadership is not entirely supported. In order to enhance the beneficial impact of psychological capital on mindfulness in the present moment for both leaders and followers, leaders should employ additional methods as a crucial bridge.

**Keywords:** Authentic leadership, Authentic followership, Mindfulness, Psychological capital.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, authentic leadership has gained significant scholarly attention, particularly due to its association with fostering a positive organizational climate and enhancing follower performance (Avolio et al., 2021; Gardner et al., 2022). Authentic leadership, broadly defined, emphasizes self-awareness, transparency, and ethical behavior, aiming to create an environment where both leaders and followers feel empowered to bring their full selves to the workplace (Kleynhans et al., 2022). Rooted in positive psychology and focused on ethical and relational practices, authentic leaders strive to align their

actions with core values, demonstrating honesty and integrity. This approach to leadership has been particularly valuable in today's turbulent business environment, where ethical challenges and demands for transparency have heightened the importance of a leadership style that fosters trust and accountability (Gardner et al., 2022). Since studies have shown that authentic leaders may have a good impact on psychological well-being, work satisfaction, and engagement, the relationship between authentic leadership and follower outcomes has been a major focus of research (Walumbwa et al., 2020; Leroy et al.,

2021). Authentic leaders provide an environment where followers feel psychologically comfortable to express who they really are by demonstrating integrity and self-control (Gardner et al., 2022). By strengthening followers' internal motivation and aligning them with the organization's ideals, this reciprocal authenticity boosts commitment and productivity (Walumbwa et al., 2021). Furthermore, the impact of authentic leadership on long-term performance has become a crucial subject, demonstrating that organizations with authentic leaders have a higher chance of long-term success because of improved resilience and team bonding (Wang et al., 2023).

As an amplifier of authentic leadership, mindfulness is also becoming more widely acknowledged for its contribution in improving leaders' presence and self-control (Kelly, 2023; Macaulay et al., 2022). Because they are more aware of present scenario, mindful leaders are better able to make decisions and maintain emotional stability, which supports authentic leadership practices even more. Maintaining a grounded perspective fosters a nonjudgmental awareness that enables leaders to address issues candidly, improving their relationship dynamics with followers (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Because mindfulness promotes more effective and honest communication with followers and a sense of shared purpose, leaders who practice mindfulness report feeling less emotionally exhausted and more satisfied with their jobs (Hulsheger et al., 2022.) Concurrently, the idea of Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap) has become well-known as a tool for leaders who want to strengthen their authentic leadership skills (Luthans et al., 2023). Leaders may stay resilient and focused in the face of adversity by using PsyCap, which includes self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, and hope (Avey, Agarwal, & Gill, 2022). Authentic leaders with high PsyCap values are better able to cultivate a culture of trust, optimism, and flexibility among their followers by modeling similar traits. The importance of genuine leadership bolstered by mindfulness and PsyCap in cultivating flexible, dedicated, and self-controlled followership is growing as modern businesses traverse complex constantly changing settings (Glomb et al., 2011).

Although mindfulness has been identified as a key element in the formation of authentic leadership, its mediation function in cultivating authentic

followership has not received enough attention in recent research (Reb et al., 2019; Walumbwa et al., 2023). According to existing research, mindfulness improves leaders' emotional control, self-awareness, and present-moment focus, all of which are essential for authentic relationships with followers (Reb, Narayanan & Chaturvedi, 2014). Yet, little is known about how mindfulness functions as a mediator in the process by which authentic leaders build connections with their followers that are sincere, open, and founded on trust (Glomb et al., 2011). In particular, while authentic leaders are frequently seen as naturally open and non-defensive, research has not yet thoroughly explored how mindfulness could bolster these traits in the leadership-followership interaction, increasing follower trust and engagement. Addressing this gap would give important insights into the special processes that mindfulness contributes in fostering relationship between authentic leadership and authentic followership in a variety of organizational environments. Furthermore, little research has been done on the moderating function of Psychological Capital (PsyCap), which includes optimism, resilience, efficacy, and hope (Avey et al., 2011). According to (Luthans et al., 2023), PsyCap has the potential to enhance the benefits of mindfulness by giving leaders and followers psychological resources that support involvement, flexibility, and trust. It would be insightful to investigate how PsyCap enhances the link between mindfulness, authentic leadership, and followership. This would reveal the special processes that support authentic followership in a variety of organizational contexts in addition to authentic leadership. Additionally, the moderating role of Psychological Capital (PsyCap), which encompasses hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism, has not received much attention (Avey et al., 2011). PsyCap can help leaders and follower's benefit from mindfulness by providing psychological resources that encourage engagement, adaptability, and trust (Luthans et al., 2023). Examining how PsyCap strengthens the connection between followership, authentic leadership, and mindfulness might be enlightening. This would expose the unique boundary condition that underpin both authentic leadership and authentic followership among various kinds of organizational environments. The literature significantly lacks the application of Self-

Determination Theory (SDT) in this situation. In order to clarify leader-follower interactions and highlight the impact of leaders on followers' motivation and engagement, the majority of previous research has depended on frameworks like Transformational Leadership Theory and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) (Bass, 1990; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). SDT, which emphasizes people's psychological needs and intrinsic motivation, hasn't been used to investigate how authentic leadership could assist in making followers feel more connected among followers, competent, and autonomous (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This lack of coverage creates a big gap since including SDT might give us a more sophisticated knowledge of how authentic leaders can better meet the psychological requirements of their followers and foster authentic followership (2020).

This study is important because it examines how authentic followership can be developed through authentic leadership, specifically by encouraging followers to be self-aware, to have high moral standards, and to act ethically, such as with honesty and integrity. These traits improve employee productivity and positive attitudes in organizations (Gardner et al., 2021). Authentic leaders may foster a culture where followers and leaders act in accordance with their beliefs in the face of demanding, changing circumstances, laying the groundwork for long-term organizational success (Caza et al., 2022). This study emphasizes the role of present-moment awareness in reducing stress and bad emotions by investigating mindfulness as a mediator. This enables followers to maintain their basic ideals in the face of outside influences (Leroy et al., 2022). Furthermore, the moderating function of psychological capital (PsyCap) is essential because it gives real leaders the resilience, hope, and self-efficacy to employ leadership techniques that enable followers to see their own potential, creating a psychologically secure atmosphere for individual development (Malik & Singh, 2023). By addressing these dynamics within the Pakistani higher educational organizational context—which is frequently characterized by conservative structures—this study makes a significant contribution, highlighting the necessity of adaptive leadership that promotes the engagement and well-being of followers. This research makes a substantial contribution to the theory of

leadership as well as to its practical implementation in organizational settings, especially in Pakistan.

It incorporates to the literature on authentic leadership by presenting mindfulness as a mediator and psychological capital (PsyCap) as a moderator between authentic followership and authentic leadership. It emphasizes how these mechanisms improve leaders' self-awareness and values-driven actions, which in turn promote favorable follower outcomes (Gardner et al., 2021; Leroy et al., 2022). Additionally, it offers insights unique to the Pakistani organizational context, illustrating how genuine leadership may be used in culturally different settings characterized by hierarchical systems (Qureshi & Hayat, 2023).

### 1. Literature review

Organizational studies have given authentic leadership a lot of attention, mostly because of its focus on ethical behavior, team trust, and leader transparency. Studies have consistently demonstrated that followers' attitudes and actions are positively impacted by authentic leaders who exhibit self-awareness and relational honesty. According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), for example, authentic leadership fosters a positive work environment, which raises employee engagement and job satisfaction. Studies that show how authentic leadership may foster an atmosphere where followers feel appreciated and empowered, resulting in greater organizational engagement, further support this association (Leroy et al., 2012). Additionally, as they set an example of moral conduct, followers are inspired to adopt these qualities, which promotes authentic followership. Studies show that authentic leadership may foster an atmosphere where followers feel appreciated and empowered, resulting in greater organizational engagement, further support this association (Leroy et al., 2012). Additionally, as they set an example of moral conduct, followers are inspired to adopt these qualities, which promotes authentic followership. This relationship is crucial because authentic followers support the organization's overall efficacy and sustainability in addition to sharing the beliefs and vision of its leaders (Walumbwa et al., 2010).

Although the fundamental connection between authentic followership and authentic leadership has been established, a better comprehension of

this dynamic may be gained via the incorporation of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). According to SDT, people's psychological requirements for relatedness, competence, and autonomy are innate and essential for developing intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Leaders who put these needs first may greatly increase their followers' sense of purpose and belonging in the context of real leadership. According to research, leaders who exhibit authenticity foster an atmosphere in which followers are encouraged to express themselves and achieve their ambitions, strengthening their loyalty to the leader and the company (Ryan & Deci, 2020). The concepts of authentic followership, in which followers actively participate in and support their leaders' vision, are in line with this inherent desire. This creates a positive feedback loop of cooperation and trust. By incorporating SDT into the research on authentic leadership and followership, it is possible to examine the psychological processes that underlie these relationships in greater detail. By recognizing the significance of psychological needs in inspiring followers, this paradigm demonstrates that authentic leaders can create settings that foster both individual development and improved team performance. According to research, leaders who are sensitive to the psychological needs of their followers, for instance, may successfully cultivate a feeling of belonging and a common goal, which improves true followership (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Accordingly, the idea that "there is a positive relationship between authentic leadership and authentic followership" can be further supported by the idea that authentic leaders who attend to the psychological needs of their followers will strengthen their ties to them, which will ultimately result in more successful organizational outcomes.

H1: There is a positive relationship between authentic leadership and authentic followership.

### 2.1 Mindfulness as mediator

In organizational behavior research, the idea of mindfulness has become popular, especially when it comes to dynamics of leadership and followership. An improved level of consciousness and attention to the present moment are hallmarks of mindfulness, which enables people to interact with their thoughts, feelings, and environment more skillfully (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

Research indicates that by enhancing decision-making and developing emotional intelligence, mindfulness can have a major impact on leadership effectiveness (Zhao et al., 2020). Being attentive helps authentic leaders become more self-aware and empathetic, which improves their capacity to engage followers more deeply. According to research, for example, mindful leaders are better able to have a nonjudgmental attitude, which fosters an atmosphere in which followers feel comfortable sharing their ideas and feelings (Reb et al., 2014). Since followers are more inclined to participate completely when they believe their leaders are approachable and empathetic, this encouraging environment is essential for developing authentic followership.

Additional understanding of the psychological mechanisms at work may be gained by incorporating mindfulness between authentic leadership and authentic followership. Authentic leaders who practice mindfulness not only help their followers become more self-aware, but they also inspire others to follow as well, which improves team relations as a whole (Leroy et al., 2013). By encouraging psychological stability, mindfulness acts as a catalyst for authentic followership, enabling followers to be real and match their values with those of their leaders. Additionally, studies show that mindfulness can improve wellbeing and reduce stress, allowing followers to do their responsibilities more completely and honestly (Hülshager et al., 2013). Therefore, the interaction of mindfulness, authentic leadership, and authentic follower ship highlights the need of developing mindfulness in companies to support follower engagement and leader effectiveness, ultimately improving organizational performance and sustainability.

The incorporation of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) into leadership and followership dynamics has become more popular in recent studies, emphasizing the psychological processes that guide these connections. According to SDT, people are motivated by internal factors that arise from meeting their core psychological needs, which include relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These demands are directly related to authentic leadership, which is defined by self-awareness and transparency. This is because authentic leaders create an atmosphere in which followers feel free to express who they really are. According to studies, followers are more



motivated and engaged when they believe their leaders are authentic, which results in the development of authentic followership (Walumbwa et al., 2008). The significance of comprehending how authentic leadership may provide favorable circumstances for meeting followers' psychological needs and, eventually, cultivate a culture of trust and cooperation inside businesses is highlighted by this relationship. The relationship between authentic leadership and authentic followership is further clarified by using mindfulness as a mediator in the SDT framework. By creating a nurturing atmosphere where followers may meet their psychological needs, mindfulness helps leaders become more self-aware and regulate their emotions, which is consistent. According to research, authentic leaders are better able to identify and address the needs of their followers, creating a more independent and encouraging environment (Reb et al., 2014). This alignment is essential because it can improve followers' intrinsic motivation and general well-being by meeting their requirements for autonomy and relatedness. Additionally, mindfulness fosters a healthy workplace culture that promotes trust and open communication, both of which are necessary for the growth of authentic followership (Leroy et al., 2013). Therefore, the interaction of SDT, mindfulness, and authentic leadership provides important insights into the processes that promote authentic followership, highlighting the necessity for leaders to develop mindfulness practices that meet their followers' psychological requirements with SDT concepts (Kernis & Goldman, 2006).

H<sub>2</sub>: Mindfulness plays a mediating role between authentic leadership and authentic followership.

## 2.2 Psychological capital as moderator

Hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy are the four main components of psychological capital (PsyCap), which is a person's good psychological state (Luthans et al., 2007). PsyCap is an essential regulator in the context of authentic leadership and followership, affecting how followers view and react to the genuineness of their leaders. Studies show that followers who score higher on PsyCap are more likely to interact favorably with their leaders because they are resilient and self-sufficient enough to overcome obstacles (Avey et al., 2010). According to this dynamic, followers

with high PsyCap are more likely to adopt supportive actions from authentic leaders and cultivate their own genuine followership. Additionally, followers' hope and optimism allow them to see their leaders' genuineness as an inspiration, which can improve their dedication and output inside the company (Newman et al., 2014). Important insights into organizational dynamics may be gained by including psychological capital as a moderating component in the link between genuine followership and authentic leadership. More specifically, followers with greater PsyCap may feel more linked and supported when their leaders are seen as genuine, which strengthens the bond between them (Gardner et al., 2005). This improved relationship is essential because it not only boosts followers' involvement but also motivates them to exhibit the traits and ideals of true followership. According to research, followers can react with more trust and loyalty when psychological capital is present, which enhances the benefits of authentic leadership (Zhang et al., 2022).

The link between genuine leadership and authentic followership is significantly influenced by psychological capital (PsyCap), especially when examined through the prism of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). SDT holds that people are driven by the satisfaction of three fundamental psychological needs: relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In this regard, genuine leaders improve their followers' PsyCap, which is defined by optimism, self-efficacy, hope, and resilience, by creating an atmosphere that meets these demands (Luthans et al., 2007). Higher PsyCap followers are more likely to believe that their leaders are sincere and encouraging, which fosters a deeper bond and dedication to the group and its leaders. According to research, followers who experience psychological support and empowerment are more inclined to act in authentic followership behaviors when they feel empowered and supported in meeting their psychological needs (Avey et al., 2010).

Underpinned by SDT, the relationship between psychological capital and authentic leadership offers important insights into how followers react to the genuineness of their leaders. According to research, followers are more likely to act in authentic followership behaviors when they feel

empowered and supported in meeting their psychological needs (Avey et al., 2010). Underpinned by SDT, the relationship between psychological capital and authentic leadership offers important insights into how followers react to the genuineness of their leaders. A favorable environment for the development of PsyCap is produced when genuine leaders exhibit actions that meet followers' demands for competence and autonomy (Newman et al., 2014). In addition to increasing followers' resilience and self-assurance, this setting also strengthens their engagement and dedication to genuine followership. Additionally, meeting relatedness requirements increases followers' and leaders' trust and cooperation,

which enhances the benefits of authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005). By demonstrating how meeting fundamental psychological needs empowers genuine leadership to more successfully foster authentic followership inside businesses, SDT as a framework highlights the significance of psychological capital as a moderator.

H<sub>3</sub>: Psychological capital moderates the relationship between mindfulness and authentic followership; such that if Psychological capital is high then the relationship between mindfulness and authentic followership would be stronger.

### Research Model

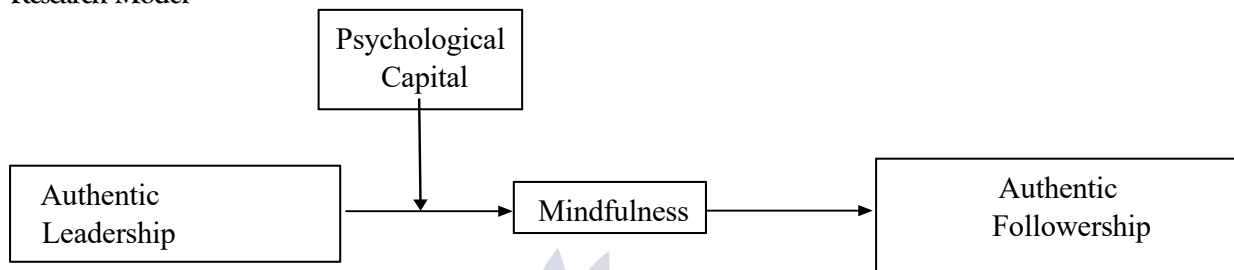


Figure 2.1: Impact of Authentic Leadership on Authentic Followership with the mediating role of Mindfulness and Moderating Role of Psychological Capital

### Figure 1 Theoretical model

#### 2. Methodology

This study examines the relationship between authentic followership and authentic leadership, using psychological capital as a moderator and mindfulness as a mediator. Its methodology is cross-sectional and quantitative, and it collects responses from academic personnel's from Pakistan's higher education sector by using a survey approach. By using a survey, interviewer bias was lessened since replies were consistent. The survey is administered during working hours without imposing an artificial setting, ensuring ecological validity in a real work context. The study population consists of faculty members who teach and do research at the MS and PhD levels at both public and private institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Faculty members from six universities, including Quaid-i-Azam University, Punjab university, Allama Iqbal Open University, and the Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamic international university were

chosen as responders using a convenience sample technique. Although this method is easy to use, its generalizability is limited. An 84% response rate was obtained from the 252 full replies to the 320 questionnaires that were distributed throughout these universities. Every respondent is seen as a separate analytical unit, offering unique perspectives on the concepts being examined. This method seeks to document faculty members' genuine viewpoints on psychological capital, leadership, and mindfulness in the workplace.

Four validated tools have been used in this study to measure important constructs. A 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," is used to rate 16 items in the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (Walumbwa et al., 2008). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.764. The Mindful Attention Awareness is a 15 items scale and it has been rated on 6-point scales with starting point of 1 = almost always-6 almost never. The Cronbach's alpha value was 0.739 of original scale. This 16-items scale of authentic followership has been taken from a self-report Authenticity Inventory which has been progressed by the Kernis and Goldman (2006) that we adapted to reflect the dimensional structure identified by Walumbwa et al. (2008). The Cronbach's alpha is 0.737. Lastly, Luthans et al. (2007) use the 24-item

Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) to evaluate psychological capital (Psy Cap). The scale's Cronbach's alpha is 0.878.

Table 1

		Mean	SD	AL	M	Psy Cap	AF
1	AL	4.18	0.57	1			
2	M	4.01	0.62	0.41**	1		
3	Psy Cap	3.95	0.51	0.40**	0.42**	1	
4	AF	3.96	0.49	0.40**	0.42**	0.37**	1

Note. N=252; Cronbach alpha reliabilities are in parenthesis.\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

p <.01) and PsyCap (r = 0.423, p <.01), whereas PsyCap has a correlation with AF (r = 0.424, p <.01).

#### 4.Results and findings

##### 4.1 Demographic, Means, Standard Deviations, correlations, and reliabilities

According to the demographic data, men make up the majority of respondents (70.2%), while the age group of 26 to 33 years old accounts for the bulk of responses (56.0%). The majority of participants (59.1%) have an MS degree, followed by a PhD (22.6%) and a BS (18.3%). Fewer respondents (3.6%) have more than 21 years of job experience, whereas half (50.8%) have 1 to 5 years. A comprehensive picture of the academic staff questioned over a range of age, education, and experience levels is given by this demographic profile.

Descriptive statistics, correlations, and reliabilities for the key variables authentic leadership (AL), Mindfulness (M) Psychological Capital (Psy Cap) and authentic followership (AF) of educational sector have been mentioned in the following table. These variables have mean values between 3.96 and 4.18 and standard deviations between 0.49 and 0.57. Additionally, Table 1 demonstrates that every variable has sufficient internal consistency, with each one's Cronbach alpha exceeding 0.70. According to the correlation matrix, AL has a moderate correlation with M (r = 0.41, p <.01) and Psy Cap (r = 0.40, p <.01) and weak correlation with AF (r = 0.309, p <.01). These findings suggest a significant relationship between mindfulness, Psy Cap, and authentic followership and authentic leadership. Additionally, Mindfulness has a positive correlation with both AF (r = 0.366,

##### 4.2 Mediation Analysis

The results of the mediation study, which include a cumulative figure of direct and indirect effects, are presented in Table 4.1. Preacher and Hayes (2008) state that the boot strapping method was used to conduct mediation analysis. For this investigation, 5000 bootstrap resamples with 95% confidence intervals were employed. There is no zero value between LLCI (.25) and ULCI (.46), and the overall impact explains the relationship between authentic leadership and authentic followership to be 0.35. The direct influence of mindfulness and authentic leadership on authentic followership was found to be.24, and there is no zero value between LLCI (.13) and ULCI (.35). When mindfulness, a mediation variable, was included, the impact size was.11, with no zero value falling between the LLCI (.06) and ULCI (.19). According to Preacher and Hayes (2008), a substantial association is determined by the absence of a zero value between the upper and lower boot limits. According to these findings, employees' authentic followership is positively correlated with authentic leadership; moreover, the link is mediated by mindfulness, supporting hypothesis one and two. Based on these findings, it can be argued that employees' authentic followership is positively correlated with authentic followership; moreover, the link is mediated by mindfulness, which supports hypothesis one and two.

Table 2

Effect	Effect Size	S.E	t	p	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
Total Effect	.35	.052	6.84	.00	.25	.46
Direct Effect	.24	.54	4.43	.00	.13	.35
Indirect Effect	.11	.03	-	-	.06	.19

S.E = standard error, LL = lower limit, UL = upper limit, CI= confidence interval

#### 4.3 Moderation Analysis

The moderation analysis focuses on whether PsychCap acts as a moderator for the AL-M relationship. The findings of a moderation study using psychological capital as a moderator between mindfulness and authentic leadership are shown in Table 4.2. According to Preacher and Hayes (2008), an insignificant association is established by the appearance of zero values

between the upper and lower boot limits. The resultant results contain zero values between LLCI (-.23) and ULCI (.13), with an inconsequential P-value. Based on the aforementioned findings, hypothesis three has been disproved as psychological capital does not mitigate the beneficial association between authentic leadership and mindfulness leadership, and zero falls within the upper and lower bounds of confidence interval.

Table 3

Variables	B	S.E	t	p	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
Constant	.39	1.42	.28	.78	-2.41	3.19
AL×PsyCap → Mindfulness	-.05	.09	-.54	-.59	-.23	.13

S.E = standard error, LL = lower limit, UL = upper limit, CI= confidence interval

#### 5 Discussion

The results of this study shed light on the intricate relationship between authentic followership and authentic leadership, indicating that flexibility, not rigidity, is necessary for authenticity. Leaders who inflexibly follow one method may unintentionally come out as less cooperative, which diminishes their genuineness. A more nuanced awareness of oneself is necessary for real leadership, which enables one to adjust to various positions and the varied motives of followers. This strategy supports leaders' capacity to become self-aware while meeting the diverse demands of followers by indicating that authenticity entails a complex self-concept, which is consistent with earlier findings. Authentic followership is strengthened by leaders' readiness to show vulnerability, practice self-control, and maintain connections via openness. Furthermore, authentic leaders foster interpersonal trust, self-acceptance, and a reduction in self-doubt within the company in addition to influencing followers' ideological beliefs.

The mediating function of mindfulness in enhancing the connection between genuine leadership and genuine followership is also highlighted in this study. Being mindful helps followers and leaders stay in the now, which encourages participation and a sincere commitment to company objectives. Leaders who practice mindfulness are better able to control

their emotions and deal with emotionally charged circumstances, which enhances collaboration and performance. By improving self-awareness, self-regulation, and emotional intelligence, mindfulness supports genuine leadership. It facilitates the management of organizational difficulties and creates a positive atmosphere for leaders and followers alike. Although mindfulness has the potential to encourage genuine functioning, different cultural settings may restrict its use because of differences in psychological capital. The beneficial effects of psychological capital on mindfulness may be lessened in environments where organizational issues including social and political factors affect leaders' authenticity. Therefore, increasing psychological capital and being mindful may be essential to creating a resilient and authentic leadership culture.

#### 5.1 Practical implications

Higher education institutions ought to make a strong priority on helping its leaders build authentic leadership abilities through training courses that stress transparency, ethical behavior, and self-awareness. This can lay a solid basis for gaining followers' confidence and genuineness. Furthermore, incorporating mindfulness practices within the organization through workshops, mindfulness sessions, or specialized tools can support professors and staff in managing stress, staying focused, and participating fully in their jobs. Even without the extra boost from psychological capital, this focus on mindfulness



might increase the effect of authentic leadership and foster an atmosphere of respect and involvement.

### 5.2 Theoretical implication

These factors support Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by attending to the fundamental psychological demands of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. By creating a climate of trust and connection, authentic leadership promotes relatedness, which is crucial for higher education's intrinsic motivation and engagement. Faculty and staff can feel appreciated and truly linked to the institution's objectives when leaders are open and morally sound. In turn, mindfulness promotes self-awareness and emotional control, which increases competence and autonomy. In line with SDT's focus on intrinsic motivation and personal development, followers who are more present and purposeful feel more in control and effective in their responsibilities. These components work together to expand SDT by demonstrating how mindfulness and leadership techniques may meet psychological requirements and encourage genuine participation in academic

### 5.3 Limitations and Future Directions

The quality of the data as well as the reliability of the analysis and findings drawn from this study may be impacted by its limitations. First, the limited sample size may have hindered our capacity to identify statistically significant connections between variables and decreased the study's statistical power (Fortin, 2010). Second, our non-probabilistic sampling technique restricts how broadly the findings may be applied. Furthermore, even though participants came from a variety of backgrounds, not all of them were in leadership roles when they took part, which reduced the findings' representativeness. Incorporating additional methods like group talks or interviews into future research might boost the data gathering process, which now relies exclusively on a questionnaire survey. In order to give a more thorough picture of the dynamics at work, social and contextual aspects should also be taken into account when gathering data. The effects of followership and authentic leadership in various organizational contexts should be investigated in future studies, and the causality between the variables should be evaluated using longitudinal designs. Furthermore, it would be

advantageous to look into novel mechanisms that could further regulate or moderate the link between followership and genuine leadership, such as interpersonal trust and emotional intelligence. To ascertain how these elements affect the efficacy of genuine leadership and followership dynamics, researchers should also look at boundary constraints including organizational size and cultural aspects. Examining these aspects may help develop useful tactics for improving followership in the higher education industry and offer a more nuanced knowledge of how authentic leadership works in various circumstances.

### 5.4 Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to regress and examine the relationship between authentic leaders and authentic followers using mindfulness as a mediator and Psy cap as a moderator. Authentic leaders and authentic followers have a favorable and substantial relationship, according to a study done at Pakistani academic institutions with a predominantly educated population. It has been suggested that mindfulness acts as a mediator between followers and real leaders. Psy cap is not completely moderately influencing the link between genuine leaders and mindfulness, according to an analysis of its moderating influence. The study's main finding is that mindfulness can be used to control how leaders interpret workplace events cognitively and how that affects followers. This is because mindfulness, a positive personality trait, can reduce negative feelings and challenges, which are typically created by keeping oneself emotionally or mentally trapped in past events or by remaining curious or doubtful about potential threats in the future.

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