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The Impact of Leadership Styles on Business Continuity Through the Mediation of Corporate Sustainability

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Abstract

This research aimed to explore the role of leadership styles in relation to business continuity and corporate sustainability within the context of Jordanian public manufacturing shareholding companies. Secondly, it also aimed to further understand the mediating role of corporate sustainability in relation to leadership style and its impact on business continuity during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research adopted a quantitative approach using a questionnaire survey of managers based within selected Jordanian public manufacturing shareholding companies. Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modeling using Smart-PLS was used as an analysis technique. The sampling method was a random convenience sampling technique, and 486 responses were taken for analysis. The findings, testing different hypotheses, indicated that some leadership styles are more impactful than others in relation to supporting business continuity and corporate sustainability. Autocratic, authoritative, and democratic leadership styles did not meaningfully predict business continuity. In contrast, other styles such as affiliative, laissez-faire, pacesetter, and coaching leadership styles were found to meaningfully predict business continuity. In addition, corporate sustainability and business continuity were demonstrated to be positively associated. An indirect effect of corporate sustainability was found to be statistically significant between affiliative, autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles and business continuity. In contrast, corporate sustainability did not work as a mediator between authoritative, coaching, and pacesetter leadership style and business continuity. This research is the first exploration of the relationship between leadership styles, business continuity, and corporate sustainability during the Covid-19 pandemic in the context of the manufacturing industry in Jordan. It also contributes to the wider literature by providing empirical evidence about business continuity as a critical factor in today's business management environment.

Keywords: Leadership Styles, Corporate Sustainability, Business Continuity, COVID-19, Jordan.

Introduction

Businesses are paying more attention to business continuity because of growing geopolitical, sociopolitical, and economic threats throughout the world (Al Shraah *et al.* 2021; Haq *et al.*, 2021). Organizations try to deal with catastrophes and crucial situations to maintain their reputation, be more robust, and assure continuity (Parker and Ameen, 2018; Rezaei *et al.*, 2019). Organizations use business continuity to foresee and overcome interruptions, lowering the risk of loss and allowing company activities to continue (Sahebjamnia *et al.*, 2015). Since the 1970s, business continuity management has emerged as a type of crisis management regarding the many threats that a company faces (Herbane, 2010). Business continuity planning was created largely to mitigate the consequences of unforeseen occurrences on the firm's capacity to satisfy

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organizational requirements (Zsidisin *et al.*, 2005). More specifically, business continuity has gained traction in corporate boardrooms because it provides a method to identify risks, define targets, and assist institutionalized risk mitigation and disruption procedures.

Simultaneously, many social and environmental concerns are based on unsustainable industrial and economic growth patterns. As a result, firms are creating new diverse corporate sustainability initiatives in response to regulatory and market considerations (Hahn and Scheermesser, 2006; Zafar *et al.*, 2021). Corporate sustainability has grown in importance as a strategic and fundamental component of business enterprises (Moore and Manring, 2009). According to Al Shraah *et al.* (2021), the high levels of engagement are viewed as a key contributor to long-term performance results. Companies need to understand how to achieve long-term growth to achieve their objectives (Ibid). Sustainability practices are critical to a company's survival and incorporating targeted sustainable measures into a company's strategy is likely to become a driver of competitive advantage (Lozano, 2015).

Leaders play a critical role in an organization, in terms of developing a vision, mission, determining and establishing objectives, designing strategies, policies, and methods to achieve organizational objectives effectively and efficiently, as well as directing and coordinating efforts and organizational activities (Xu and Wang, 2008). According to Tran (2017), leadership refers to the activities that leaders use when guiding their people to achieve corporate objectives. Researchers focusing on leadership models that cover leaders, followers, and how their responsibilities are carried out, have expanded studies on leadership styles. According to contingency theory, all leaders do have not the same degree of abilities and competencies when confronted with a crisis or tough environment (Abu-Rumman *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, Martin *et al.* (2018) found that significant characteristics that have a favorable link between leadership and team performance, including shared practices, personality composition, and task complexity.

According to Goleman *et al.* (2001), various leadership styles are more effective in certain situations. The importance of selecting the appropriate style for the situation cannot be overstated. Positive development and long-term organizational sustainability are facilitated by well-balanced leadership styles and techniques. Every company leader must have the desire to develop a realistic leadership strategy. According to existing literature, various leadership styles have been widely used to meet developing company demands in different eras (Gandolfi and Stone, 2018; Sethuraman and Suresh, 2014). Numerous leaders realize that they are many complications in leadership practices when businesses function in an integrated platform with little control over developing social problems originated from their interactions with the environment (Anderson and Sun, 2017; Schneider and Somers, 2006). Furthermore, successful leadership practice emphasizes the leaders' behavioral efforts that are necessary to increase followers' trust in the leader's commitment to achieving specified organizational goals (Thoonen *et al.*, 2011; Alkhazali *et al.*, 2020).

This study extends the literature in a number of ways. Academics and researchers have developed a variety of methods to assist companies in enhancing business continuity (Lindström *et al.*, 2010; Niemimaa *et al.*, 2019), this study mainly focuses on understanding seven leadership styles i.e., autocratic, authoritative, democratic, affiliative, coaching, pacesetter, and laissez-faire leadership relationship with business continuity. Previously, many leadership scholars (Maria *et al.*, 2017) have focused on large and multinational companies. While there are significant contextual factors that may lead to sentimental leadership judgment in terms of

leadership style and tactics, organizations seem to drive towards corporate sustainability. As a result, to bridge this gap, this study uses corporate sustainability as a mediator to better understand the link between leadership styles and business continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic in Jordanian public manufacturing shareholding companies. The following section will provide a justification for this study through a critical literature review of the hypothesized relationship amongst leadership styles, corporate sustainability, and business continuity.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Leadership Styles and Business Continuity

Leadership styles are referred to as a mix of qualities, characteristics, abilities, and actions that leaders utilize while dealing with their subordinates or followers (Mohd and Valliappan, 2019; Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy, 2014). It is acknowledged in this study that leadership styles are very different and some may more obviously appear to lend themselves to business continuity than others which is something that the study aimed to explore. In terms of different styles, according to Zervas and David (2013), an autocratic leader achieves goals by establishing a clear compelling vision, ensuring that the vision is integrated into strategic planning, and guiding activity throughout the company. However, according to Ushie *et al.* (2010) autocratic leadership styles produce two forms of behavior: it causes employees to become hostile; or lethargic and withdrawn. According to the overall evolution of the features of autocratic leadership style, a business with this style of leadership may experience a high degree of employee unhappiness, with the consequent impact being that workers leave (Al Shraah *et al.*, 2021). In times of crisis, however, such as the pandemic, the authoritative leader may be seen as commanding, determined, status concerned, skilled, and coercive (Zhang *et al.*, 2012; Yogesh *et al.*, 2019). The leader has centralized power, follows the conventional line of command, and employs hierarchical authority (Chandra, 2016). This leadership style works well in circumstances when there are big issues to address or where employees are generating poor results but refuse to change their ways of working (Dove and Freeley, 2011)..

In a pacesetter leadership style, the leader tends to set a high standard of performance. They then impose these standards and norms onto employees which some argue can have a negative influence on the working environment (Rani and Prasad, 2017). Pacesetters are said to be obsessed with achieving things quicker and better. The style is more concerned with the outcome than with how the outcome is reached. This method remains advantageous, however, when it comes to obtaining rapid results from a highly motivated and skilled workforce (Abu-Rumman *et al.*, 2021).

Democratic leaders argue that decisions should be undertaken by the leader and the group collaboratively where critiques and compliments are offered honestly and a sense of joint responsibility is fostered within the group (Igbaekemen and Odivwri, 2015). The main issue with democratic leadership is the underlying premise that everyone has an equal stake in the result and has shared levels of decision-making skill (Al Khajeh, 2018). Democratic leadership is well-known for motivating people to perform better since their ideas and opinions are appreciated.

Coaching style leadership concentrates on ensuring that people are functioning effectively, instead of encouraging employees to take responsibility (Razak and Sarani, 2018). Personal growth is focused on with a coaching style rather than vocational responsibilities. When it comes to creating coaching-style workers and investing in them, it has been found that some employees are resistant to learn and seldom change.

Affiliative leaders concentrate on reducing stress and fostering positive connections amongst team members (Kasapoğlu, 2014). This style has been found to be extremely successful when there have been difficulties inside a company, and where morale and trust are low (Razak and Sarani, 2018). It helps satisfy people's needs to be understood and appreciated by providing a strong foundation of trust (NawoseIng'ollan and Roussel, 2017).

The laissez-faire leadership style can be beneficial when there are a great number of decisions to make, where decision-making is simple and followers must execute regular duties with less complexity and less demanding criteria, or when laws and regulations are pre-determined (Zareen *et al.*, 2015). This leadership style is less effective when followers lack information, experience, competence, or when they are unwilling or unable to make judgments on their own (Donkor and Zhou, 2020). Such an approach demands a high level of connection orientation between workers and their supervisor and leaders. In these situations, a laissez-faire leadership may collapse resulting in poor employee performance in terms of off-track efforts and missed deadlines (Piccolo *et al.*, 2010).

For instance, prior academics have highlighted adaptation of a selected leadership style to a given situation which helps companies in business continuity (Saad and Elshaer, 2020). Therefore, this study focuses on different leadership styles and aims to evaluate which styles are most conducive to business continuity. Based on this discussion, the study proposed the following hypotheses as follows:

H₁: Autocratic leadership style leads to business continuity.

H₂: Authoritative leadership style leads to business continuity.

H₃: Pacesetting leadership style leads to business continuity.

H₄: Democratic leadership style leads to business continuity.

H₅: Coaching style leadership leads to business continuity.

H₆: Affiliative leadership style leads to business continuity.

H₇: Laissez-faire leadership style leads to business continuity.

Corporate Substantiality and Business Continuity

Corporate sustainability refers to a collection of structurally interrelated and interdependent social, economic, and environmental problems at various levels that businesses are required to manage concurrently (Linnenluecke and Griffiths, 2010; Nuseir *et al.*, 2024). It is defined as meeting the needs of the company and its current and future stakeholders while at the same time protecting the resources that will be needed in the future (Derqui, 2020). Firms are critical to long-term growth in a country since they reflect the country's economic productive resources (Bansal and Song, 2017). Corporate sustainability has a strong link to business continuity since sustainable growth aids businesses in resisting unforeseen events and ensuring that organizational operations run smoothly (Coombs and Laufer, 2018; Zhang *et al.*, 2024). Its contribution to business continuity is established through the needs of stakeholders, cost risk efficiency, and process obligations. This relationship enhances the absorption, adaptive, survival, and recovery capacities of a company when an unexpected event, such as a pandemic, occurs (Corrales-Estrada *et al.*, 2021; Abu-Rumman, A. and Qawasmeh, 2021). Faertes (2015) emphasized that organizations must pay attention to strategic planning, proactive management, and risk detecting to compete internationally and achieve optimum commercial performance.

According to Kato and Charoenrat (2018), business continuity management, focuses on important elements that institutions must address to maintain optimum productivity while avoiding current hazards. According to prior research (Margherita and Heikkilä, 2021), business continuity management is a critical component in ensuring that the company functions smoothly during and after an interruption as well as managing business operations. Despite this, not all businesses have a good knowledge or understanding of the value of business continuity and how to put it into action (Phillips and Landahl, 2020; Ranf et al, 2021; Al Shraah et al, 2021). Organizations should have a high level of corporate sustainability in order to gain high standards of business continuity. Based on the above discussion, the study proposed the additional hypothesis as follows:

H₈: Corporate sustainability leads to business continuity.

Mediating Role of Corporate Sustainability

Corporate sustainability has a pivotal role in the competitiveness of all organizations; sustainability is becoming a key instrument for long-term economic, social, and environmental performance (Coombs and Laufer, 2018). Corporate sustainability directs the missions, objectives, values, strategies, and operations of organizations. It is the capability to continue a defined performance, behavior, and attitude indefinitely. Corporate sustainability is inspiring innovation in all aspects: technology, education, industry, and business models, and is increasingly becoming a focal part of corporate strategy. All business leaders and scholars emphasize that corporate sustainability is crucial to the durable achievement of both corporations and the environments in which they operate (Timothy *et al.*, 2015). However, there is a shortage in studies about the mediating role of corporate sustainability and its role in business continuity.

Furthermore, competent leadership combined with a corporate regulation decision-making strategy provides a business model for long-term sustainability that indirectly meets stakeholders' expectations (Pedersen *et al.*, 2018; Alawneh *et al.*, 2025). Amini and Bienstock (2014) revealed that the complexities of various corporate sustainability strategies depend on leadership styles. The current economic situation, volatile business environment, uncertainty, rapid change in technology, and constraints of globalization enforce companies to seek for business continuity (Donkor and Zhou, 2020), however, this needs leadership competences and corporate sustainability (Timothy *et al.*, 2015; Jing *et al.*, 2023). Key leadership competencies which are associated with corporate sustainability include those focused around ethics and integrity; external awareness and the appreciation of wider trends; visioning and the formulation of strategy; risk awareness and identification, stakeholder engagement; and flexibility and the adaptability to change (Grayson, 2017). Each of these competencies are encompassed to differing degrees in each of the different leadership styles covered within the scope of this study. According to Shahzad et al. (2022), corporate sustainability has a significant positive mediating role in relation to leadership and business continuity. In particular, they emphasize the knowledge sharing component of leadership and how different styles deliver this, but call for further research in this area. Hence, this study further explores corporate sustainability as a mediating construct amongst different leadership styles which has not yet been investigated sufficiently in the context of business continuity. Based on previous discussion, this study proposed the following final hypotheses:

H₉: Corporate sustainability significantly mediates the relationship between Affiliative leadership style and business continuity.

H₁₀: Corporate sustainability significantly mediates the relationship between Autocratic leadership style and business continuity.

H₁₁: Corporate sustainability significantly mediates the relationship between Authoritative leadership style and business continuity.

H₁₂: Corporate sustainability significantly mediates the relationship between Coaching leadership style and business continuity.

H₁₃: Corporate sustainability significantly mediates the relationship between Democratic leadership style and business continuity.

H₁₄: Corporate sustainability significantly mediates the relationship between Laissez-Faire leadership style and business continuity.

H₁₅: Corporate sustainability significantly mediates the relationship between Pacesetting leadership style and business continuity.

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the different variables.

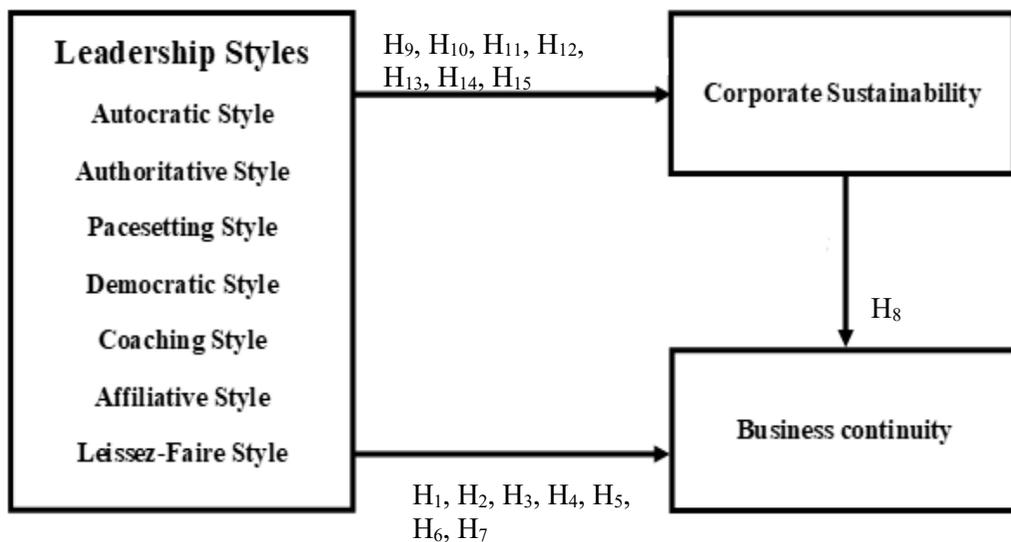


Figure 1. Research Framework

Research Methodology

The information for this study came from primary sources using a random convenience sampling technique. To acquire this primary data, managers and assistant managers in a sample of 56 Jordanian public shareholding companies were invited to complete an electronic questionnaire sent to them via email explaining the purpose of the study and sent with permission of the respective companies. All the survey questions were closed-ended. The goal of using a quantitative method such as this to collect the data was to ensure that enough information from the sample could be received that could then be aggregated and assessed quickly. In total, 585

questionnaires were sent to managers and their assistants. 486 were completed and considered suitable for statistical analysis.

Measurement Scale

This research has taken measurement scales from previous studies and literature. Measurement scales used in the electronic questionnaire were modified according to the current setting, but without changing the meaning of the measurements. The leadership styles chosen were based on those identified by Goleman (2000). The critical components of leadership against which styles could be compared were taken from Hassan et al. (2016) and included: (1) the role of the leader, (2) leader's concern for others, (3) distance from followers, (4) decision making style, (5) followers' motivation. A total of 44 items were taken from previous studies for 9 constructs. Each leadership style was based on 5 items for each with the exception of the Laissez-Faire leadership style. Therefore, the measurement scale of Affiliative, Authoritative, Coaching, Democratic and Pacesetter leadership styles were based on a 5-item scale for each. In addition, 4-item scales were considered for Autocratic and Laissez-Faire. A 4-item measurement scale for corporate sustainability was considered from Choi and Yu (2014), including (1) organizational commitment, (2) organizational performance, (3) organizational citizenship behaviour, and (4) perceived CSR practices. 4-item scales were taken for business continuity from Frikha et al. (2021) including: (1) Risk Assessment, (2) Business Impact Analysis, (3) Strategy and Plan Development, and (4) Test, Implement, and Maintain. All measurements were based on a five-point Likert scale starting from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data Analysis

This section displays the results of the data analysis using various statistical tests such as reliability analysis, correlation, common method bias, and mediation analysis on data generated with SPSS and Smart-PLS. The data was provided in the form of tables to represent the findings. The usage of a two-stage procedure was recommended, with the first stage seeking to ensure construct validity and model stability through confirmatory and explanatory factor analysis. The given hypotheses were then verified in the second stage by performing a structural analysis with smart PLS (Partial Least Square) via a bootstrapping technique.

Partial least square – sequential equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis included procedures such as measurement model assessment and structural model assessment. This is an accepted method of analyzing mediation effects although according to Carrion et al (2017), it can sometimes lead to erroneous results, and suggests that the application of modern procedures including multiple mediators may be more effective. Table 1 includes the results of the descriptive statistics for the data that was used in the analysis. The standard deviation varies between 1.0402 and 0.8506, whereas the mean varies between 4.3356 and 3.9144. The standard deviation and mean values are below the range since the 5-point Likert scale was used. Table 2 shows the results of the first stage of SEM analysis (the Fornell and Larcker criterion), which involves many tests to determine the reliability and validity of constructs.

The measurement model is the initial stage of SEM analysis. Cronbach's alpha, construct reliability, factor loadings, and average variance extracted are all terms used to describe how reliable constructs and measurement are (Hair *et al.*, 2017; Huo, *et al.*, 2020; Li *et al.*, 2020; Ul-Haq *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, the Fornell and Larcker Ratio, as well as the HTMT ratio of association, were calculated to assess the reliability and validity of the data (Hair *et al.*, 2017; Ul-Haq and Awan, 2021). Discriminant and convergent validity are both present in the measurement

model. The construct reliability and Cronbach alpha were tested in convergent validity, and all values were over the threshold point of 0.70 for each (Haq and Awan, 2021). The factor loading threshold is 0.70 (Hair *et al.*, 2017; Haq and Awan, 2021), and because all factor loadings and AVE values are above 0.50 (Hair *et al.*, 2017), the convergent validity is satisfied and maintained.

Cross loadings, the Fornell and Larcker criterion, and the HTMT ratio of correlation are commonly used to assess discriminant validity. The Fornell and Larcker criterion was used in this study, which states that if all diagonal values are greater than their underlying values, discriminant validity is maintained (Haq and Awan, 2021; Huo *et al.*, 2020; Li *et al.*, 2020). Table 3 shows that all bolded diagonal values are greater than their lower values, indicating that discriminant validity is not a problem. Second, the HTMT values should not exceed 0.90 (Hair *et al.*, 2017). In Table 4, there is no such value that is more than 0.90. As a result, the bulk of the findings verified that there are no concerns with data multicollinearity and that the items and constructs are reliable and valid enough to be employed in analysis to yield meaningful results. Figure 2 also shows an overview of the Smart-PLS reliability and validity study obtained by calculating the PLS algorithm.

Table 1. Measurement Model and Descriptive Statistics

Constructs	Code	FD	Cronbach α	CR	AVE	M	SD
Affiliative leadership style (AFLS)			0.861	0.899	0.644	4.2784	0.8506
	AFLS1	0.860					
	AFLS2	0.565					
	AFLS3	0.886					
	AFLS4	0.803					
	AFLS5	0.855					
Autocratic leadership style (ALS)			0.887	0.917	0.690	4.3062	0.8518
	ALS1	0.837					
	ALS2	0.873					
	ALS3	0.901					
	ALS4	0.812					
	ALS5	0.718					
Authoritative leadership style (ATHLS)			0.875	0.909	0.668	3.9144	1.0402
	ATHLS1	0.829					
	ATHLS2	0.828					
	ATHLS3	0.718					
	ATHLS4	0.862					
	ATHLS5	0.844					
Coaching leadership style (CLS)			0.874	0.909	0.668	4.276	0.8556
	CLS1	0.830					
	CLS2	0.884					
	CLS3	0.825					
	CLS4	0.828					
	CLS5	0.708					
Democratic leadership style (DLS)			0.851	0.893	0.627	4.2012	0.8852
	DLS1	0.864					
	DLS2	0.710					
	DLS3	0.865					
	DLS4	0.73					
	DLS5	0.778					
Laissez-Faire leadership style (LFLS)			0.864	0.901	0.607	4.325	0.893
	LFLS1	0.813					
	LFLS2	0.869					
	LFLS3	0.879					
	LFLS4	0.533					
	LFLS5	0.817					
	LFLS6	0.708					
Pacesetter leadership style (PLS)			0.789	0.838	0.514	3.9388	0.986
	PLS1	0.828					
	PLS2	0.814					
	PLS3	0.633					
	PLS4	0.676					
	PLS5	0.601					
Corporate Sustainability (CS)			0.886	0.921	0.746	4.35625	0.867
	CS1	0.844					
	CS2	0.858					
	CS3	0.916					
	CS4	0.834					
Business Continuity (BC)			0.826	0.883	0.655	4.26925	0.864
	BC1	0.795					
	BC2	0.846					
	BC3	0.796					
	BC4	0.798					

Note: FD=Factor Loadings, CR=Construct Reliability, AVE=Average Variance Extracted, and α =Cronbach Alpha.

Leadership Styles - (1) the role of the leader, (2) leader's concern for others, (3) distance from followers, (4) decision making style, (5) followers' motivation

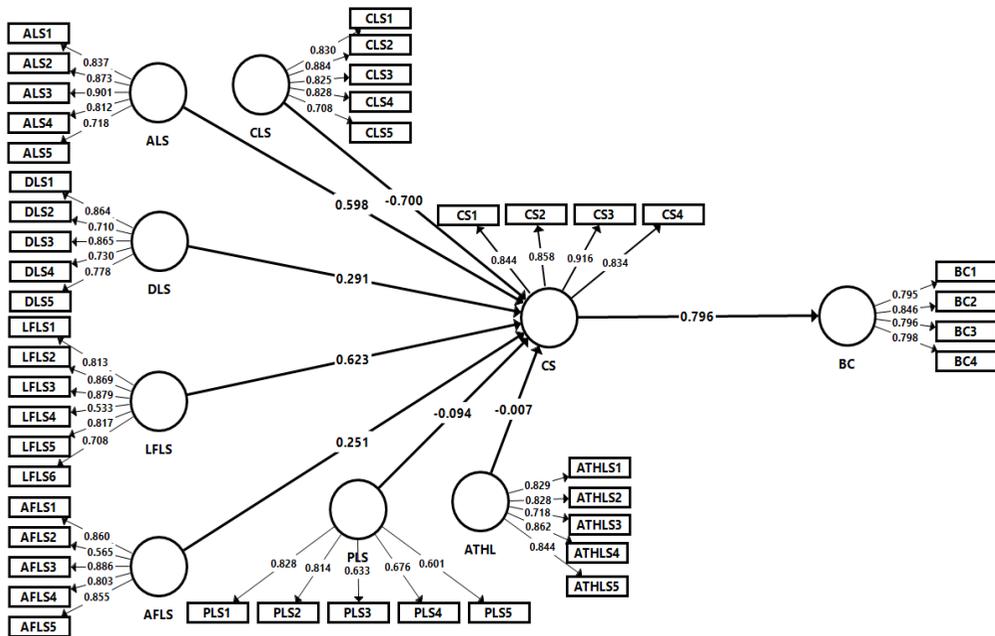


Figure 2. Measurement Model Outcomes

	AFLS	ALS	ATHL	BC	CLS	CS	DLS	LFLS	PLS
AFLS	0.803								
ALS	0.804	0.831							
ATHL	0.511	0.441	0.818						
BC	0.917	0.805	0.494	0.809					
CLS	0.853	0.957	0.450	0.866	0.817				
CS	0.835	0.840	0.434	0.796	0.803	0.864			
DLS	0.762	0.849	0.407	0.787	0.829	0.871	0.792		
LFLS	0.873	0.873	0.486	0.862	0.882	0.927	0.879	0.779	
PLS	0.639	0.809	0.600	0.683	0.737	0.749	0.871	0.749	0.717

Table 2. Fornell and Larcker Criterion

	AFLS	ALS	ATHL	BC	CLS	CS	DLS	LFLS	PLS
AFLS	-								
ALS	0.797	-							
ATHL	0.604	0.507	-						
BC	0.082	0.236	0.584	-					
CLS	0.963	0.486	0.514	1.029	-				
CS	0.512	0.439	0.492	0.215	0.598	-			

DLS	0.752	0.477	0.473	0.134	0.714	0.783	-		
LFLS	0.687	0.495	0.580	0.717	0.801	0.044	0.014	-	
PLS	0.679	0.857	0.835	0.745	0.793	0.783	0.190	0.797	-

Table 3. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) Ratio

The second stage of SEM analysis is structural model assessment, which involves checking statistical significance using PLS-bootstrapping method. In this investigation, 95 percent significance level was chosen. This is also referred to as a stage in which direct and indirect effects are assessed. Furthermore, statistical significance is frequently determined using the beta value (original sampling "O"), R^2 , p-values, and t-statistics.

In total there were 15 hypotheses proposed, among them 8 were direct and 7 hypotheses were indirect hypotheses. The outcome of direct effects is depicted in Table 4. Results of first seven hypotheses confirmed H_2 , H_3 and H_5 were rejected, where autocratic leadership style, authoritative leadership style, democratic leadership style do not meaningfully predict the business continuity under $\beta = -0.102$; $p - value = 0.120$, $\beta = -0.064$; $p - value = 0.281$ and $\beta = -0.106$; $p - value = 0.087$ respectively. In contrast, other styles such as affiliative leadership style, laissez-faire leadership style, pacesetter leadership style and coaching leadership style meaningfully predict the business continuity where H_1 , H_4 , H_6 and H_7 were accepted with $\beta = 0.571$; $p - value = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.868$; $p - value = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.378$; $p - value = 0.003$ and $\beta = 0.224$; $p - value = 0.000$ respectively. Moreover, In the end, H_8 was accepted as corporate sustainability and business continuity are positively associated under $\beta = 0.796$; $p - value = 0.000$. Figures 3 and 4 depict the outcomes for direct and indirect effects respectively.

H	Paths	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Results
H_1	AFLS → BC	0.571	0.567	0.057	10.104	0.000	Accepted
H_2	ALS → BC	-0.702	-0.698	0.078	8.994	0.120	Rejected
H_3	ATHL → BC	-0.064	-0.059	0.028	2.276	0.281	Rejected
H_4	CLS → BC	0.868	0.862	0.095	9.17	0.000	Accepted
H_5	DLS → BC	-0.106	-0.096	0.078	1.361	0.087	Rejected
H_6	LFLS → BC	0.178	0.178	0.065	2.757	0.003	Accepted
H_7	PLS → BC	0.224	0.217	0.059	3.827	0.000	Accepted
H_8	CS → BC	0.796	0.797	0.029	27.093	0.000	Accepted

Note: Original Sample or Beta coefficient = (O), Sample Mean = (M), Standard Deviation = (STDEV), H. = Hypothesis

Table 4. Analysis of the Structural Model

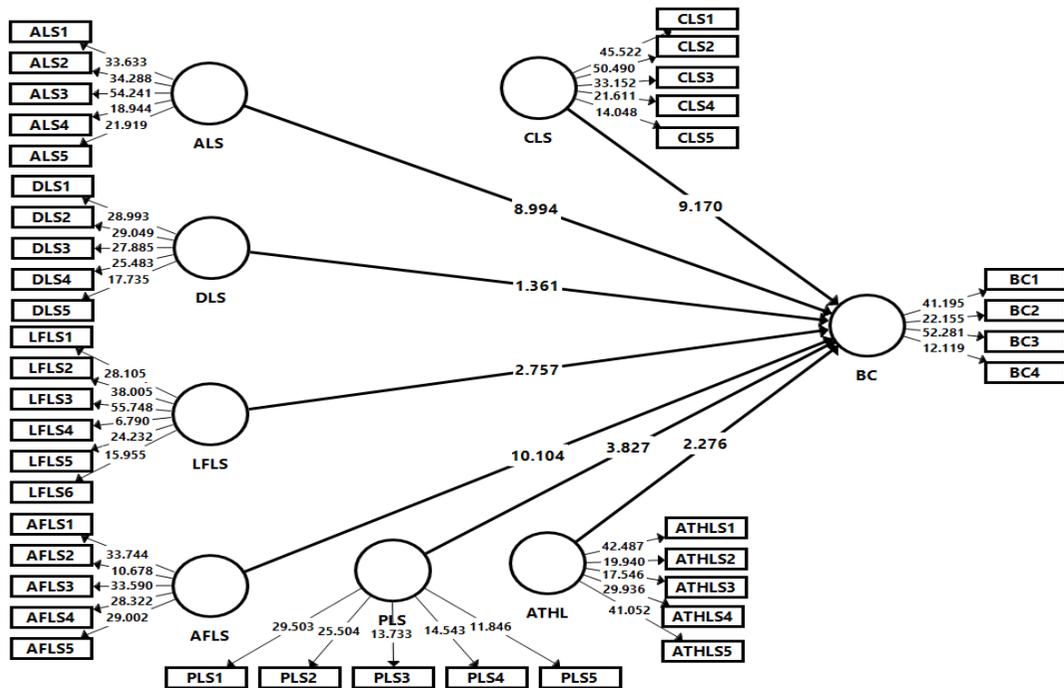


Figure 3 Structural Model Assessment (Direct Effects)

Among seven indirect effects or mediating hypothesis were proposed in total. Results for indirect hypothesis were depicted in Table 6 and Figure 4. H₉, H₁₀, H₁₃ and H₁₄ were accepted, and indirect effect of corporate sustainability was significant statistically between affiliative leadership style, autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style and laissez-faire leadership style and business continuity under $\beta = 0.200; p - value = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.476; p - value = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.232; p - value = 0.000$ and $\beta = 0.496; p - value = 0.000$ respectively. In contrast, H₁₁, H₁₂ and H₁₅ were rejected, corporate sustainability were rejected as mediator between authoritative leadership style, coaching leadership style and pacesetting leadership style and business continuity under $\beta = -0.006; p - value = 0.391$, $\beta = -0.557; p - value = 0.000$ and $\beta = -0.075; p - value = 0.089$ respectively.

H	Paths	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Results
H ₉	AFLS -> CS -> BC	0.200	0.194	0.055	3.602	0.000	Accepted
H ₁₀	ALS -> CS -> BC	0.476	0.478	0.072	6.650	0.000	Accepted
H ₁₁	ATHL -> CS -> BC	-0.006	-0.006	0.021	0.277	0.391	Rejected
H ₁₂	CLS -> CS -> BC	-0.557	-0.550	0.085	0.565	0.094	Rejected
H ₁₃	DLS -> CS -> BC	0.232	0.229	0.054	4.286	0.000	Accepted

H ₄	LFLS -> CS -> BC	0.496	0.490	0.068	7.317	0.000	Accepted
H ₅	PLS -> CS -> BC	-0.075	-0.069	0.056	1.050	0.089	Rejected

Table 5. The Indirect Effect

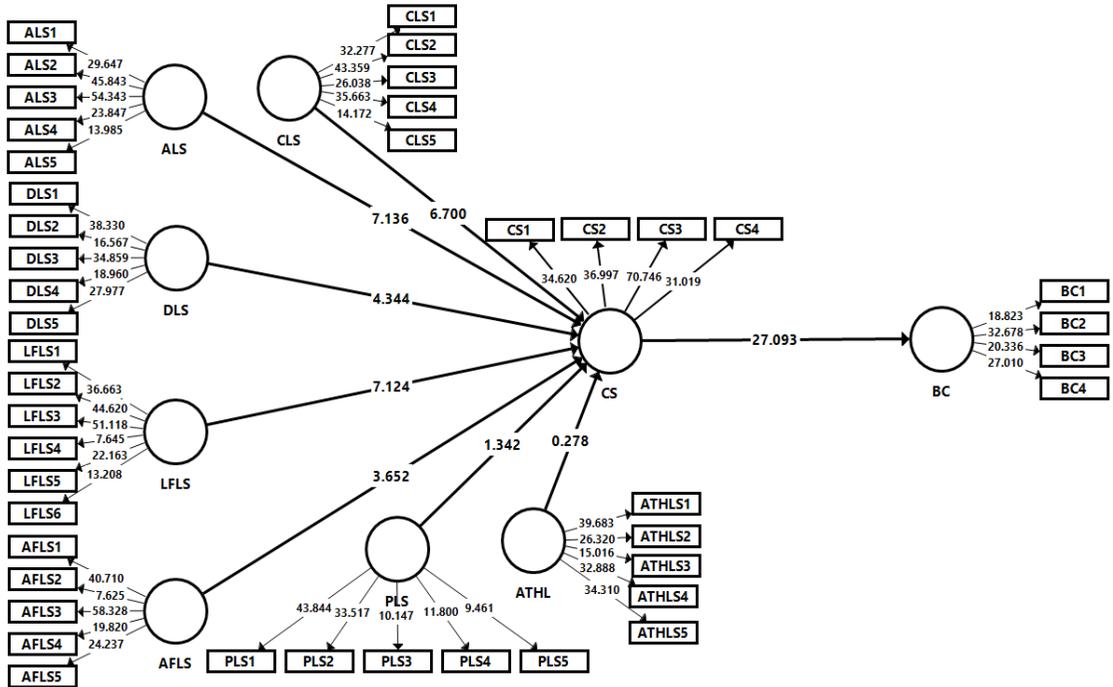


Figure 4. Structural Model Assessment (Indirect effects)

Discussion

Current research explores the role of leadership styles incorporating corporate sustainability and business continuity. The findings of this study demonstrated interesting results which are homogenous as well as heterogeneous with earlier related research. The study found that affiliative leadership style has a direct impact on business continuity. There was a negative impact of autocratic leadership style and business continuity. The p-value indicated a negative effect on authoritative leadership style on business continuity so, it was rejected. On the other hand, there was an acceptable impact of coaching leadership style on business continuity. At the same time, democratic leadership style and business continuity gave a negative result. The impact of laissez-faire leadership style on business continuity was acceptable. Pacesetting leadership style and business continuity gave positive results. These outcomes showed that leaderships styles are important as Mitonga-Monga, *et al.* (2012) defined leadership style as a collection of diverse qualities, traits, and behaviors utilized by leaders to engage their subordinates. Similarly, according to Purwanto *et al.*, (2020b), leadership is a pattern linked with management conduct that is meant to combine organizational or personal interests and impact to accomplish certain goals. Recently, Purwanto *et al.* (2020a) and Alawneh *et al.* (2025) described leadership style may be as a sort of interaction utilized by such an individual to motivate individuals to work together toward a shared objective or goal.

Furthermore, the impact of leadership styles on corporate sustainability was positive, which suggests that leadership style supports and increases corporate sustainability. Also, corporate sustainability had a positive influence on business continuity. This indicates that there was a strong link among these variables. So, the success of any organization depends on the smart mix amongst those variables. These results are consistent with the studies of Coombs and Laufer (2018), Kato and Charoenrat (2018), Preston *et al.* (2015), and Snedaker and Rima (2014). The earlier research demonstrated similar outcomes to Purwanto *et al.* (2020a), authoritarian leaders are the only ones who set the direction of operational policies and require subordinates to obey all their choices. Furthermore, such leaders have limited confidence in their subordinates. Authoritative leaders inspire people by maintaining strict rules and regulations, further imposing discipline. It is used to decrease ambiguity when tight compliance is required and no error can be tolerated, which concurs with Khuwaja *et al.* (2020). The pacesetter style establishes high-performance expectations, collaborates successfully with motivated and capable employees, and understands how to obtain rapid results from them, this result is consistent with the study of Budhathoki (2019) and the study of Abdullah *et al.* (2019). The results of this study revealed that democratic leadership inspires people to perform better by demonstrating that their ideas and opinions are respected, which is aligned with the findings from Purwanto *et al.* (2019). The results of this study also indicated that democratic leadership improves organizational performance through the positive relationship among variables, this conclusion associated with the study of Purwanto *et al.* (2019). Furthermore, NawoseIng'ollan and Roussel (2017) explained that this approach has a favorable influence on organizational performance, and it is utilized by the greatest leaders to build high-performing cultures in conjunction with authoritative and coaching styles.

The findings from this study also indicate that there are indirect positive influences of corporate sustainability on the relationship between affiliative leadership, autocratic leadership, democratic leadership and laissez-faire leadership, and business continuity. These results are in agreement with the studies of Akparep *et al.* (2019), Budhathoki (2019), Freestone and Lee (2008), Tammineedi (2010), Schätter, *et al.* (2019), and Rapaport and Kirschenbaum (2008). Leaders who are more laissez-faire do not exercise their power and avoid acting, and it can be seen as a lethargic and ineffectual leadership style. This approach encourages the creation of a pleasant working environment, yet it lowers morale and diminishes group efficiency (Akparep *et al.*, 2019). Coaching develops individuals for the future, and it is especially useful when it is necessary to assist others in enhancing their performance or establishing long-term qualities (Budhathoki, 2019). In this sense, business continuity may be thought of as a risk management strategy that helps businesses increase organizational resilience. Compliance with continuity standards (Freestone and Lee, 2008; Tammineedi, 2010), risk management (Schätter, *et al.*, 2019), and corporate culture are all highlighted in the research (Rapaport and Kirschenbaum, 2008; A. Rizwan *et al.*, 2024). These findings imply each leadership style is not prone to build business continuity neither corporate sustainability. Therefore, e-commerce industries should focus on crafting and engaging those leaders which have benefited from business continuity and corporate sustainability. However, partial mediation of corporate sustainability between leadership styles and business continuity implies that corporate sustainability is an important indicator between leadership styles and business continuity which is consistent with leadership theory

Conclusion

Today's business management requires a high level of business continuity especially in disasters

and pandemics such as Covid-19. Due to escalating geopolitical, social, and economic challenges around the world, businesses are paying more attention to business continuity. Organizations strive to deal with disasters and critical events to protect their reputation, strengthen their resilience, and ensure continuity. Businesses utilize business continuity planning to anticipate and overcome disruptions, reducing the risk of loss, and allowing operations to continue. Furthermore, corporate sustainability has become a strategic and vital component of businesses. Therefore, this study explored the role of leadership styles in company continuity and corporate sustainability. The analysis technique used in this study was PLS-SEM with Smart-PLS. The random convince sampling methodology was used, and 486 responses were collected for the study. Autocratic leadership, authoritarian leadership, and democratic leadership styles were found to not predict business continuity in any meaningful way. On the other hand, leadership styles such as affiliative leadership, laissez-faire leadership, pacesetter leadership, and coaching leadership accurately predicted business continuity and this is consistent with the results from previous studies discussed in the paper. Affiliative leadership styles, authoritative leadership styles, democratic leadership styles, and laissez-faire leadership styles all predicted corporate social responsibility in a significant way. Furthermore, corporate sustainability and business continuity were linked beneficially, so firms should take consider taking this into account to enhance this relationship.

Corporate sustainability was found to positively mediate the relationship between affiliative leadership style, autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style, laissez-faire leadership style, and business continuity. The indirect influence of corporate sustainability was statistically significant. On the other hand, corporate sustainability did not serve as a bridge between authoritative, coaching, or pacesetter leadership styles and business continuity. The results of this study therefore have implications on the management of organizations, especially in relation to the development of leadership styles. Consequently, e-commerce businesses should concentrate on cultivating and engaging those executives who will assist company continuity and corporate sustainability. However, the partial mediation of corporate sustainability between leadership styles and business continuity suggests that corporate sustainability is a key predictor of leadership style and company continuity.

Limitations and Areas for Further Research

Although this study has provided some useful findings to add to the discussion and body of evidence around corporate sustainability, leadership styles and business continuity, the methodology was purely quantitative and an additional dimension capturing qualitative data about managers experiences of different leadership styles may have enhanced the level of understanding of this phenomenon. In addition, it may be of benefit to apply more modern applications of PLS-SEM to analyse the impact of mediating effects. Furthermore, this study was conducted within a Jordanian context where national culture may have impacted on the perceptions of different enacted leadership styles. Further investigation in other contexts may therefore be of benefit.

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