



The relationship between authentic leadership with work engagement and organizational identification

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Abstract

One of the important issues in the schools is the organizational identification and teacher's work engagement that can be influenced by various variables, including leadership style. One of the leadership styles that have been used today by organizations is the authentic leadership style. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the relationship between authentic leadership Work Engagement and Organizational Identification of teachers. The research is descriptive-correlational. The statistical population of this study was all the elementary schools teachers of Konarak city in the academic year of 2020-2021, with 795 teachers' volume. 259 teachers were selected as the sample, using stratified random sampling method and teachers were studied through three questionnaires including authentic leadership, organizational identification and work engagement of teachers. The data was analyzed using correlation coefficient and multiple regression with SPSS21 software. The findings showed that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between authentic leadership (and all its components: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and balanced processing) with teacher's work engagement and organizational identification. Also, based on the results of regression, the style of authentic leadership has been able to predict 60.7% of organizational identification changes and 5.3% of work engagement changes. Hence, School principals can improve organizational identification and employee' work engagement by better use of authentic leadership style.

Keywords: authentic leadership, organizational identification, work engagement

Introduction

The emergence of the authentic leadership was strongly influenced by Kernis's efforts that expressed the authentic concept as a fundamental factor for self-esteem (Diddams & Chang, 2012) [8]. Following the efforts of Kernis, the theoretical works on the conceptualization of authentic leadership began gradually by Avolio and Gardner and Gardner et al in 2005 [1]. Also in 2008, Walumbwa et al. were among the first that worked on preparation and developing an authentic leadership measuring tool. Authentic leadership is characterized as a model of leadership behavior that extends both positive psychological capabilities and a positive moral environment (Roof, 2013) [29]. Avolio and Gardner (2005) [1] described the authentic leadership as follows: these leaders know who they are, they recognize and value their beliefs, and, based on those values and beliefs Take steps and at the same time, are very clear with others. According to Ilies et al. (2005) [16] authentic leaders are deeply aware of their values and beliefs, self-assured, honest, reliable, and trustworthy and they focus on empowering followers, they expand their thinking, and building an organization with positive people.

The foundation of authentic leadership is based on the authenticity concept, which expressing the conditions that persons behavior in accordance with their fine human values and beliefs and insist on behaving in accordance with their values and beliefs under various conditions and pressures. The components of authentic leadership are self-awareness, relational transparency, Internalized moral perspective and balanced processing. Self-awareness is defined as trust in personality, values, motives, feelings and personal perceptions. Internalized moral perspective represents a controlling process by which the leaders adapt their values to their goals and activities. Balanced processing is a level in which the leader analyzes his/her information before making a decision and calls for followers views that challenge their position. In relational transparency, the leader shows his/her information to others, shares the information with others, and expresses his/her thoughts and feelings (Walumbwa et al., 2008) [33]. Authentic leaders penetrate in the persons' abilities by motivation and motivating for better function, and as a result, persons appear at their highest level of effort and performance (Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004) [11]. Authentic leaders increase the actual and sustainable performance of employees. The Authentic leadership also promotes the positive interpersonal relationships between leaders and employees and among employees, which these relationships can be a source of positive emotions. Positive emotions affect the promotion of relationships and social connections among employees (Rego et al., 2014) [27]. Authentic leaders experience much positive emotional states and for this reason through the emotional excitement penetration of them, they also experience a much positive emotional state compared to other leadership styles (Rego et al., 2012). The authentic leadership play

an important role in strengthening the positive approaches of followers, including commitment, engagement in work and passion for work, improving individual and organizational performance, positive organizational behavior, security sense and job satisfaction (Al Sahi AL Zaabi et al., 2016).

The authentic leaders are those who are self-identified and aware of their behavior and beliefs. They have moral value insights and know the knowledge and capabilities of others. The authentic leaders are sure, hopeful, optimistic and flexible and have a very moral character, and the authentic leader is defined as someone who is trustworthy (Gardner et al., 2011) ^[10]. These leaders are secretive, hopeful, optimistic, flexible, transparent, ethical and future-oriented, and have a good understanding of cultural sensitivities and are very motivated and self-conscious. They have a high level of honesty, deep commitment to goals, courage to move forward, enthusiasm and leadership skills (Toor & Ofori, 2009) ^[32]. In general, organizations that have authentic leadership, experience positive psychological capacities as well as a better positive ethical atmosphere in the relationship between leaders and followers (Hinojosa et al., 2014) ^[15]. Authentic leaders can provide the ground for organizational excellence by helping followers for finding the meaning in their work, creating optimism and commitment among followers, and encouraging transparent relations to build trust, and improve the positive environment (Wong & Cummings, 2009) ^[34].

Organizational identification is based on the Social identity theory that states persons grouping themselves and others in different social categories such as organizational membership, gender, race, age group, or religious affiliation, and persons consider their membership in special groups based on the Social roles and roles relationships (Fombelle et al., 2012) ^[9]. Organizational identification refers to a cognitive link between organizational identity and employee identity (Glavas & Godwin, 2013) ^[13] and states that the person's affiliation and interesting to their organizations will cause they define themselves according to the characteristics of an organization. In other words, they will see their identity in the heart of their organizations. Gkorezis, Mylonas & Petridou (2011) ^[12] have interpreted the organizational identification as belonging of persons to an organization, if they consider themselves the organization that they are working in. In other words, the person will sense identity through the organization and organization provides the person's identity (Çeri-Booms, 2012) ^[5]. Organizational identification is an attempt to answer this question that we as the organization "who" are (Puusa, 2006) ^[25]. Riketta (2005) states that all definitions of organizational identification refer to an individual feeling of being a part of an organization, accepting organizational values, or pride in his membership.

The identification process provides a relation between identities at different levels, and a well-defined, quite distinct, and comprehensive and accepted organizational identification, can provide a grave point for members of the organization to determine their own identities in an uncertain employment patterns (Puusa, 2006) ^[25]. Organizational Identification is not a permanent, stable and static framework, but is a pattern of beliefs, values and feelings that shape in a special interaction between individuals and their environment in the context of organizational culture. Therefore, factors such as gender, nationality and race in this view will have multiplicity of organizational identification that can have a positive or negative effect on organizational performance (Cornelissen et al., 2007) ^[7]. Organizational Identity is an important cognitive variable that affects not only the sense of membership in the organization, but also determines the individual behavior in an organizational environment (Melita et al., 2011). Organizational identification consists of three components: (A) Membership: is included the sense of belonging and the strong sense of affiliation and emotional traction. Membership indicates that a person have a strong relation with his/her organization, who is proud to be presence at that organization and to introduce himself with that organization. (B) Loyalty: means the individual's support and defense of the organization and organizational goals. (C) Similarity: means the employee feels that he/she has shared goals and interests with other members of the organization, which promote the spirit and the sense of commitment (Ngo et al. 2012) ^[24]. Through identification, employees attract important features of the organization as their own features. For this reason, activities that threaten organizational identity are threats to employees themselves (Kalemcı & Irfan, 2009) ^[18]. The term work engagement has not been entranced into organizational behavior for a long time. Work engagement defined as an individual's approach toward the job and how much that job can eliminate individual needs, and also defined as an employee's psychological perception of his role at work. Work engagement is a positive mental state and relevant to the job that is defined with the power, devotion yourself to work and work absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002) ^[31]. Power means being prepared to work, providing high levels of energy in working and a willingness to remain firmly in the face of the difficulty or failing in the work. Devotion yourself to work refers to determination a person's strong identity with work. Absorption is meant to be quite focused and engaging in work, so that time passes fast for a person and it is difficult to get out of work (Bakker et al., 2011) ^[2]. Christian et al. (2011) ^[6] also defined work engagement as a mental state that is relatively stable and signifying the simultaneous investment of individual energies on the experiences or work functions. In fact, work engagement is the individual psychological replication with the kind of work he/she is doing and work engagement is an important source of job satisfaction and a major need in the work environment (Moynihan and Pandey, 2007) ^[23].

People who are very involved in their work are known and excited with their work. They like to work harder and more profitable than others, and it's more possible for them to achieve the results that customers and organizations want (Schaufeli et al., 2002) ^[31]. Personnel with a work engagement are more capable in their work, are better in communicating with their work activities, and respond better to their job demands; they have more hope for their work and suffer less physical or psychological fatigue (Hassan & Ahmed, 2011) ^[14]. work engagement has a positive relationship with internal motivation, general service motivation, job satisfaction, organizational productivity, organizational commitment, decrease in absenteeism, increasing organizational self-

efficacy behaviors, increasing self-esteem and also has a negative relationship with job exhaustion, non-commitment to work, job stress and nervous pressure (Lambert *et al.*, 2012) ^[19]. Education Organization is one of the organizations whose success depends on the use of sustained and committed personnel. Teachers are the most effective and influential educational personnel that implement supportive programs to maintain and create sufficient motivation for them. The persistence and motivation of teachers are the influencing important factors on the quality of education and students' learning. Teachers' supportive programs will have different consequences that most important of them are continuously motivation service and tendency to further work towards the goals of education. Not paying attention to teachers' motivations and tendencies leads to their non-motivational survival, which is combined with words such as falling, emigrating, moving and displacing that a lack of willingness to remain in the education job (Ingersoll, 2001) ^[17]. Therefore, paying attention to their needs and the type of supply of their needs by school manager can lead to job satisfaction and as a result, their organizational commitment. School principals like teachers to have a high degree of work engagement and organizational identity. Hence, managers seek to identify ways to increase the work engagement and organizational identity of teachers, that authentic leadership, can be effective in this regard. Therefore, the present research question is what is the relationship between the managers' authentic leadership with organizational identification and the work engagement of primary school teachers in Chabahar?

Research Method

The method of the study was descriptive-correlational. The statistical population of this study was all the elementary schools teachers of Konarak city in the academic year of 2017-2018, with 795 teachers' volume (245 men and 550 women). 259 teachers (80 men and 179 women) were selected and studied as the sample, using stratified random sampling method and according to the Cochran's Sample Size Formula. Three questionnaires were used to collect information as follows:

- The Walumbwa *et al.* authentic leadership questionnaire (2008): This questionnaire was comprised of 1 items and 4 components including self-awareness (4 items), relational transparency (4 items), internalized moral perspective (4 items), and balanced processing (4 items) that investigates the authentic Leadership. The questionnaire based on the Likert 5 selective range adjusted from completely opposite to completely agree and scaled from 1 = completely opposite to 5 = completely agree. The minimum score in this questionnaire is 16 and the maximum is 80. The closer score to 80 indicate the more and better use of authentic leadership style in the school.
- The Kanungo's work engagement questionnaire (1982): This questionnaire investigate the employee work engagement with 10 items. The questionnaire based on the Likert 5 selective range adjusted from completely opposite to completely agree and scaled from 1 = completely opposite to 5 = completely agree. The minimum score in this questionnaire is 10 and the maximum is 50. The closer score to 50 indicate the more work engagement.
- The Cheney's organizational identification questionnaire (1983): This questionnaire investigate the organizational identification with 18 items and 3 components including membership (6 items), loyalty (8 items) and similarity (4 items). The questionnaire based on the Likert 5 selective range adjusted from completely opposite to completely agree and scaled from 1 = completely opposite to 5 = completely agree. The minimum score in this questionnaire is 18 and the maximum is 90. The closer score to 90 indicate the more organizational identification.

The content validity method was used to determine the validity of the questionnaires. In this regard, the questionnaire was approved by the faculty members of the educational management department of Sistan and Baluchestan University, and ensured that the questionnaires are valid and measure the intended characteristic of the researcher. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient amount for the authentic leadership questionnaire was 0.787, for the work engagement questionnaire was 0.812 and for the organizational identification questionnaire was 0.740. The obtained coefficients indicate that the questionnaires have the required reliability. The data was analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression with SPSS21 software.

Findings

In order to investigate the relationship between authentic leadership with the organizational identification and work engagement of teachers, in the first stage, Pearson correlation coefficient was used that findings are showed in Table 1.

Table 1: correlation coefficients of authentic leadership with organizational identification of teachers

variable	membership		loyalty		similarity		Organizational identification		work engagement	
	r	p	r	p	r	p	r	p	r	p
self-awareness	0.611	0.001	0.706	0.001	0.657	0.001	0.743	0.001	0.142	0.023
relational transparency	0.573	0.001	0.661	0.001	0.669	0.001	0.71	0.001	0.188	0.002
internalized moral	0.575	0.001	0.658	0.001	0.643	0.001	0.703	0.001	0.152	0.015

perspective										
balanced processing	0.527	0.001	0.626	0.001	0.637	0.001	0.668	0.001	0.222	0.001
authentic leadership	0.625	0.001	0.725	0.001	0.712	0.001	0.772	0.001	0.192	0.002

According to the findings of Table 1, there is a meaningful positive relationship between the authentic leadership (and all its components: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing) with the organizational identification and work engagement ($p < 0.05$), which means with better use of authentic leadership style, the teachers show better organizational identification and work engagement.

In the second stage and after finding out the relationship between authentic leadership and its components with the organizational identification and work engagement of teachers, in order to predict this relationship, the simultaneously multiple regression test was used that the results are showed in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Summary of regression analysis to predict organizational identification based on authentic leadership components

variable	non-standard coefficients		standard coefficients	T	p
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
self-awareness	1.36	0.248	0.39	5.43	0.001
relational transparency	0.764	0.288	0.206	2.65	0.008
Internalized moral perspective	0.547	0.281	0.151	1.94	0.053
balanced processing	0.346	0.253	0.097	1.36	0.172
$p=0.001$ $f=21.071$ $R^2=0.249$ $r=0.499$					

According to Table 2, the coefficient of explanation (R^2) is equal to 0.249 which mean that the authentic leadership account for 24.9% of the organizational identification. Also, among the components of authentic leadership, the relational transparency with the value of β (0.206) and self-awareness with the value of β (0.39) have a positive effect on the organizational identification.

Table 3: Summary of regression analysis to predict work engagement based on authentic leadership components

variable	non-standard coefficients		standard coefficients	T	p
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
self-awareness	-1.113	0.207	-0.061	-0.546	0.586
relational transparency	0.192	0.241	0.096	0.797	0.426
internalized moral perspective	-0.127	0.235	-0.065	-0.541	0.589
balanced processing	0.462	0.212	0.241	2.18	0.030
$p=0.001$ $f=3.55$ $R^2=0.053$ $r=0.230$					

According to Table 3, the coefficient of explanation (R^2) is equal to 0.053 which mean that the authentic leadership account for 5.3% of the work engagement. Also, among the components of authentic leadership, the balanced processing with the value of β (0.241) has a positive effect on the work engagement.

Discussion and Conclusion

One of the important issues in the schools is the organizational identification and work engagement of teachers that can be influenced by various variables, including leadership style. One of the leadership styles that have been used today by organizations is the authentic leadership style. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the relationship between authentic leadership with organizational identification and work engagement of teachers.

The first finding of this study showed that there was a positive and meaningful relationship between authentic leadership (and all its components: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and balanced processing) with organizational identification ($p < 0.001$) and authentic leadership could predict 24.9% the organizational identification changes of teachers. This finding, the positive relationship between authentic leadership and organizational identification, has also existed in previous studies. For example, Lotfi Jalalabadi and et al. (2015) showed that all aspects of authentic leadership have a meaningful relationship with organizational identification. Meanwhile, relational transparency had the most roles in organizational identification, and then the internalized moral perspective, balanced processing and self-awareness had the most impact on organizational identification, respectively. In his study, Çeri-Booms (2012) [5] also found that using an authentic leadership style can have a positive effect on organizational identification of employees. Hence, by using the authentic leadership style, employees' willingness to organizational identification and positive outcomes can be increased. Organizational identification encourages employees to concentrate on things that are profitable for the organization rather than entirely personal goals.

They work with interest and will increase the behavior of citizenship, job satisfaction and work engagement (Çeri-Booms, 2012) [5]. Also, a person feels loyalty to the organization, increases his/her interest to membership in the organization, has a unique duty- knowing to organization, and respect the similarity of the organization goals with other members, and it is important to share the values and goals of the organization with other members (Celik & Findik., 2012) [4]. An organizational identification affects the sharing of knowledge within the organization (Carmeli

et al., 2011) [3]. Another finding of this study showed that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between authentic leadership (and all its components: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and balanced processing with work engagement ($p < 0.001$) and authentic leadership could predict 39.8% the organizational identification changes of teachers. Yousefy et al. (2016) also confirmed the positive and meaningful relationship between authentic leadership and work engagement. Based on the findings of these researchers, the dimensions of balanced processing, internalized moral perspective and relational transparency had the highest impact on work engagement of employees, respectively. However, the leader's self-awareness aspect had no meaningful effect on work engagement.

Hasan and Ahmad (2011) performed a study in the Malaysian banking system that examined the impact of authentic leadership on work engagement and interpersonal trust; the results of this study indicate that authentic leadership has led to increasing in trust and helping to work engagement of staff. Rucker et al. (2011) [30] investigated the relationship between authentic leadership, optimism and self-cognition, and the impact of these variables on work engagement. The results of the research showed a positive and meaningful relationship between authentic leadership and work engagement.

Toor and Ofori (2009) [32] in an inquiry into the question of what factors in leadership promote employees work engagement studied the impact of different leadership styles which, as a result, authentic leadership as the most important and best leadership style for promotion work engagement was suggested and recommended. Mirmohammadi et al. (2013) [22] in a research entitled "Authentic Leadership and Work Engagement: Trust as a Mediator Variable", studied the views of experts and faculty members of the universities; the results of the study showed that interpersonal trust as a mediator variable had a complete effect on the relationship between authentic leadership and work engagement; in other words, authentic leadership by interpersonal trust affects the level of employees work engagement.

The limitation of this study was using the correlation method. Therefore, the resulting relations cannot be assumed as causal relations. Perhaps these relationships are due to the effect of other variables. Finally, according to the results of the research, the positive and meaningful relationship between the components of authentic leadership with organizational identification and work engagement, the following practical suggestions are presented:

- In the management of the school, leaders with the characteristics of the authentic leaders be selected; training and development actions be taken to increase the style of authentic leadership, as it will have a positive impact on the states and positive emotions of the staff and increase the transparency in relations and, consequently, increase the psychological capital and reduces organizational ambiguity.
- Suggestions for self-awareness development: Right describing of others look to yourself; supporting of feedbacks to improve interaction with others; Investigation how behaviors effect on others.
- Proposals for the transparency of the relationships: the exact expression of the demands and intentions; Do not suppress the opinions of others, give importance to them and the expression of the own language; the attempt to understand own feelings and showing them consciously, to express the truth; Accept own mistakes.
- Proposals for the moral internalizing: based on the fundamental values of making decision; the compatibility of speech and practice; encouraging individuals to make decisions based on ethical values; acting based on ethical standards.
- Proposals for creating balanced processing: Lack of bias in information attainment; Access to useful information, comprehensive and on time; have challenging viewpoints and comments; Listening carefully to different viewpoints.

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