



Leader's Authenticity Influence on Followers' Organizational Commitment

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This study researches the influence of authentic leadership on three types of organizational commitment—affection, continuance, and normative—and examines the extent to which trust mediated this relationship. The study uses quantitative methodology that incorporates cross-sectional survey research. Convenience sampling (N=66) is utilized in the study. The results are discussed in terms of correlative data analysis. Future direction for this research is discussed and limitations of this study are outlined.

Most of the management literature in the West is based on the American experience (Welsh, Luthans, & Sommer, 1993). Cross-cultural research that tests U.S. based theories in Ukrainian and Russian contexts may prove to be beneficial to Russian and Ukrainian managers, foreign owned Russian and Ukrainian subsidiaries, and other businesses. While employee attitudes are a significant area of research in the U.S., little research has been conducted in this area in post-Soviet countries (Buchko, Weinzimmer, & Sergeyev, 1998).

Soviet and post-Soviet leadership have been known for being controlling and stubborn (Buchko, Weinzimmer & Sergeyev, 1998), and a lack of integrity has been identified as a reason why post-Soviet managers fail (Longenecker, 2001). The following research proposal is focused on the relationship between authentic leadership and organizational commitment and suggests that changing leadership from hypocritical (lack of integrity) to authentic may contribute to development of organizational commitment. While testing the theoretical framework in the context of two Eastern European countries, Ukraine and Russia, this research is designed to provide a practical frame of reference for leadership in post-Soviet countries. As Ashman (2007) stated, organizational commitment is “fundamental to the creation of an optimally functioning organization” (p. 6).

Authentic Leadership

Chester Barnard (1938) gave the very first reference to authenticity in management and organizational studies. At the time, he used the authentic capacity of a leader as the litmus test of executive quality. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest to this construct due to the major shift to positive psychology. After years of studying what is

wrong with people and organizational behavior, according to Luthans (2002), the time has come for positive constructs. Thus, positive organizational behavior research became the catalyst for developing the construct of authentic leadership (Luthans & Avolio, 2009). Luthans and Avolio were the first to use and define authentic leadership. They used the term authentic to describe "very basic, genuine elements of positive leadership development" (p. 303). A number of studies of this phenomenon have been conducted since then.

Authentic leadership is a root construct to any positive leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Avolio (2005) called authentic leadership "the highest end of leadership" (p. 194). George (2003) described authentic leadership as "being your own person" (p. 12). Authentic leadership theory takes much from Kernis' (2003) study on authenticity, yet the literature review shows that there is no universally accepted definition of the authentic leadership (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Turner & Mavin, 2007). The study by Walumbwa et al. (2008) provides an operational definition of authentic leadership:

A pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development. (Walumbwa et al., p. 94)

One of the fundamental components of the authentic leadership construct is self-awareness. Researchers agree that self-awareness is the starting point of authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005). Self-awareness means that leaders know what is important to them (May et al., 2003). Whether it is values, identity, emotions, goals, or motives, the leaders need to be fully aware of them (Avolio & Gardner).

Sparrowe (2005) connected self-awareness with self-regulation, and makes it central to his definition of authentic leadership. A broader exploration of this construct shows that self-regulation helps leaders to assess discrepancies between their internalized standards and their praxis (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). The research indicates that self-regulation is a complex construct and it includes internalized regulation, balanced processing of information, relational transparency, and authentic behavior (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Gardner et al., 2005). Sparrowe stated that self-regulation helps to facilitate transparency and consistency in leadership, where behavior reflects inner standards of a leader. The process of self-regulation helps the leader to withstand the external pressure and influence (Gardner et al., 2009; Ilies, Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2005).

Avolio and Gardner (2005), Walumbwa et al. (2008), Avolio et al. (2004), and Eagly (2005) have all discussed relational authenticity or relational transparency, which reflects the fact that authentic leadership is opposite to impression management

(Avolio, 2005). While these two constructs are similar, Avolio and Gardner posit that relational transparency is more descriptive as it points to the transparent interaction between leaders and followers. Thus, relational authenticity or transparency is the construct that involves both leaders and followers as active agents of authentic relationships (Eagly; Avolio & Gardner).

There is some dispute over the unbiased processing construct that was initially suggested by Kernis (2003) and then implemented in the authentic leadership definition by Ilies et al. (2005). Unbiased processing implies that a leader is objective in assessing positive and negative self-aspects based on presented information (Goldman & Kernis, 2002). The foundational argument against unbiased processing comes from cognitive psychology research, which shows that humans are inherently flawed and cannot have unbiased opinions. Therefore, the unbiased processing construct has been replaced by balanced processing (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). The change of the construct is significant. Instead of positing that authentic leaders are free from bias, balanced processing implies that authentic leaders are capable of considering multiple sides of the issue at hand and analyzing all relevant information before making a decision (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; McKenna, Rooney, & Boal, 2009; Gardner et al., 2005; Gardner et al., 2009).

Are authentic leaders raised or born? Can just anyone be authentic? Conceptualization of authentic leadership shows that it is a multi-dimensional construct. It involves traits, behaviors, contexts, and attributions (Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005). Sparrowe (2005) posited that because authenticity is a developmental process, as a leader grows in self-awareness the leader actually grows to better understand his or her values. These values constitute a leader's true self, and they are more static than dynamic.

Followers Trust in Their Leaders

Trust is a valuable contributor to different forms of exchange; it facilitates strong relationships between individuals and companies (Doney, Cannon, & Mullen, 1998). Norman (2006) stated that a trusting relationship between leaders and followers is one of the characteristics which differentiates mediocre organizations from the leading ones. Oxford English Dictionary defines trust as "Confidence in or reliance on some quality or attribute of a person or thing, or the truth of a statement." Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis (2007) defined trust as a "willingness to be vulnerable to another party" (p. 347). Trust has been studied in different disciplines (organizational science, sociology, and psychology) and at different levels (individual, group, firm, and institutional) (Rousseau et al., 1998). Across all these disciplines, the definition of trust includes the willingness to be vulnerable (Rousseau et al.). On the other hand, other scholars define trust as willingness to rely on another, which is based on the characteristics of the other person (Doney, Cannon, & Mullen). Dietz and Hartog (2006) wrote about different

qualitative degrees of interpersonal trust: (1) calculus-based (suspicious, but benefits of trust outweigh the costs), (2) knowledge-based (positive confidence based on prior predictability), (3) relational-based (a stronger positive confidence based on shared affection), (4) identification-based (extremely positive confidence based on converged interests) (p. 563).

Organizational Commitment

While there are different definitions of organizational commitment in scholarly literature, these definitions share a common theme in that “organizational commitment is recognized to be a bond of the individual to the organization” (Samad, 2005). It is more than passive presence in an organization. “Committed employees feel the need to go beyond normal job requirements in order to make a significant personal contribution to the organization” (Perryer & Jordan, 2005, p. 382). Organizational commitment is multi-dimensional construct (Nwadei, 2003). Meyer and Allen (1991) conceptualized three components of organizational commitment: affective, continuance and normative commitment. Affective attachment refers to affective orientation to the group; it is the strength of individual identification with the group or organization, or as Ashman (2007) described, “an emotional bond between individual and organization” (p. 6-7). Continuance commitment is connected with perceived costs of leaving organization. It speaks to the situation, when, for example, pension or position of seniority become contingent upon remaining with the organization. This is what Hrebiniak and Alutto called “calculative involvement” (p. 560). Normative commitment speaks to the obligation that an employee feels toward his or her organization. Marsh and Mannari (1977) described it in following way: “In this view, the worker considers it morally right to stay in the company, regardless of how much status enhancement or satisfaction the firm gives him over the years” (p. 59). The three constructs are components, rather than types of the organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). In other words, they are not mutually exclusive, but are complementary and may be present to various degrees in the psychological state of employees.

Research Model and Hypotheses

Gardner et al. (2005) posited that authentic followership is an integral part of authentic leadership development. Shamir and Eilam (2005) stated that development of authentic leaders is beneficial because it affects followers in positive way. They defined authentic followers as people who (a) follow for authentic reasons, since they share leader's values, beliefs and convictions; (b) do not have illusions or delusions about the leader; and (c) authenticate the leader (i.e., they judge the leader based on his convictions and beliefs and his consistency with them). Avolio et al. (2004) argued that authentic leaders, through their authentic behavior, motivate and transform their followers. As a result, followers become more authentic. Gardner et al. asserted that authentic leaders affect followers through positive modeling. This modeling includes high levels of self-

awareness, balanced processing, transparency, and authentic behavior. As a result, followers develop trust in their leader (Zhu, 2006; Avolio et al.; Turner & Mavin, 2007; Eagly, 2005). Thus, trustworthiness may be seen as an integral part of authentic leadership. Butler (1991) discussed ten conditions that lead to trust: availability, competence, consistency, fairness, integrity, loyalty, openness, overall trust, promise fulfillment, and receptivity. This resonates with characteristics of an authentic leader who is a trustworthy, reliable person with integrity. Based on qualitative measures of trust, components of authentic leadership, and current literature on authentic followership, it is possible to say that followers of authentic leaders may develop knowledge based trust, which is rooted in predictability. Once employees learn that what the leader says he or she does, followers can begin building knowledge based trust. This may later grow into identification based trust, wherein followers identify themselves with their leaders and the leaders' values and goals.

Trust has been linked with lower turnover and organizational commitment (Watson & Papamarcos, 2002; Perryer & Jordan, 2005; Bernardi & Guptill, 2008). Perryer and Jordan (2005) stated that there has been limited research on the relationship between leadership style and employee commitment. The author has not found a study that is devoted to the way authentic leadership affects employees' commitment to an organization. Based on the literature review, the author suggests the following model for research (figure 1):

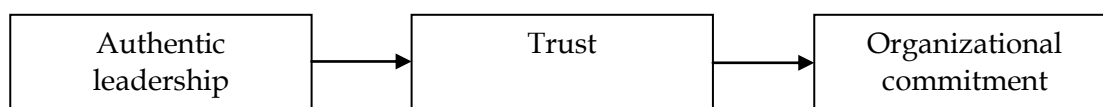


Figure 1. Research model.

Due to the fact that authentic leadership develops followers who share leader's values, beliefs, and convictions (Shamir & Eliaam, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005), it is possible to suggest that authentic leadership will have the strongest correlation with affective commitment, which describes the strength of the employee's identification with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). As far as the other two kinds of organizational commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, it is difficult to hypothesize which of them will be stronger in suggested model. An employee may equally be committed to the organization because of perceived costs of leaving it (continuance commitment) and because of moral obligation that one might feel towards an organization (normative commitment). Authentic leadership may affect both kinds of commitment by its transparency and the moral stance of the authentic leader (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Therefore, the research will seek to understand the correlation between authentic leadership and each kind of organizational commitment separately. The research tests the following hypotheses:

H1: Authentic leadership has a positive correlation with affective commitment.

H2: Authentic leadership has a positive correlation with continuance commitment.

H3: Authentic leadership has a positive correlation with normative commitment.

H4: Authentic leadership's correlation with affective commitment is higher than with continuance and normative commitment.

H5: Trust mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and affective organizational commitment.

H6: Trust mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and continuance organizational commitment.

H7: Trust mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and normative organizational commitment.

Control variables. The literature review shows that there are other predictors of organizational commitment, such as age, tenure, wages, and position in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Transactional leadership, as it focuses on exchange of rewards, also may affect organizational commitment. Aforementioned variables are control variables in this research model.

Research Method

In order to test the proposed hypotheses, a quantitative methodology that incorporates cross-sectional survey research was employed. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) stated that the best way to conduct survey research is through personal interviews, since mail questionnaires produce low returns and thus "valid generalization cannot be made" (p. 603). Mail questionnaires need to be conducted in conjunction with other methods to verify the responses given. This research design implements web based questionnaires and personal interviews.

Sampling. Fowler (2002) posited that good sampling depends on sample frame and sample size. Sample frame is "the set of people that has a chance to be selected, given the sampling approach that is chosen" (Fowler, p. 11). In the beginning stage of development of this research, a stratified random sampling (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000) was suggested to minimize the effect of control variables in this study. The sample frame would include people of the same age and similar tenure, wages, and positions in organizations. However, stratified random sampling is challenging in Eastern Europe, where people are reluctant to take surveys. Therefore, the sampling method was changed to convenience or accidental sampling (Kerlinger & Lee). This is the weakest, but also the most common form of sampling (Kerlinger & Lee). One of the criticisms of

this sampling method is that it is not representative of the population (Castillo, 2009). Girden (2001) suggested having 20 respondent samples per independent variable; sixty-six respondents participated in this research both from Kiev, Ukraine and Krasnoyarsk, Russia. The respondents represent employees in education, production, and service industries.

Instrumentation. Since understanding of a construct can be only as good as the instrument used to examine it (Dietz & Hartog, 2006), this study utilizes well-established instruments presented in peer reviewed journals.

To measure employees' perception of their leaders' authenticity (authentic leadership), the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire is employed (Appendix A). Its validity and theoretical and empirical basis have been extensively analyzed and confirmed (Avolio, 2007; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005; Avolio et al., 2004).

While the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) is the most used questionnaire in measuring the construct of organizational commitment (Ashman, 2007) and "has been found to correlate strongly with leadership and mentoring variables" (Scandura & Williams, 2004, p. 457), OCQ measures only one dimension of organizational commitment – affective (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Nwadei, 2003). In order to rule out the influence of transactional rewards, Meyer and Allen's instrument (1991) is used (Appendix C). This scale is based on the three dimensions of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative.

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) is used to measure and account for transactional leadership's effect on organizational commitment (Appendix B). Antonakis et al. (2003) stated that construct validity of MLQ was established by Bass and Avolio (1997) with a large sample of pooled data (N=1490).

Clark and Payne's (1997) instrument is used for measuring trust (Appendix D). It consists of 26 pairs of items: the first item in each pair focuses on what a person believes about his or her leadership, and the second focuses on intention to act based on this belief. This instrument also focuses on integrity (34 percent of trust related items) and benevolence (28 percent of items) (Dietz & Hartog, 2006).

Backtranslation. The instruments used in this study have been developed in North America and have been put together in English language. Therefore, they reflect the realities of the culture of origin for each instrument. Instruments developed in one country may lack validity in another (Gardberg, 2006). It is the researcher's task to make sure that their instruments have conceptual and functional equivalence in the culture where research is conducted (Gardberg). Conceptual equivalence has to do with similarity of attitudes or behaviors associated with a given construct across cultures. Functional equivalence has to do with relationships of the construct under scrutiny, its

antecedents, or consequences in a given culture (Gardberg). One of the steps in reaching conceptual and functional equivalence is backtranslation. This is the process when two bilinguals work on translation, one of them translating from the source to the target language and the second blindly translating translated copy back into the original language (Brislin, 1970). Then the researcher has two copies in original language, which helps him see the differences in perception of the instrument in another language. Necessary corrections are made to the instrument in the target language to reflect the concepts pertaining to the research.

Out of the four instruments employed in this research, only three required translation and backtranslation. ALQ has been previously translated and tested in Russian language. The other three instruments underwent the translation/backtranslation process. Then, the two copies in their original language were reviewed by two native English-speaking investigators, and necessary suggestions were made to improve on the quality of the translation. The backtranslations are provided together with the original copies of the instruments in Appendices.

Another step of testing the translation is conducting a pretest. Two pretests were conducted with native speakers, where "each subject completes the questionnaire, and is interviewed to probe about what he or she thought was meant by each questionnaire item and the chosen response" (Beaton et al., 2000, p. 3189). This helped to establish the semantic and idiomatic equivalence (Beaton et al.) as well as to establish conceptual equivalence. The researcher asked each question of the surveys and recorded the interviewees' answers. Along with this, the researcher asked for the interviewees' understanding of each of the questions and their response.

After analysis of the pretest and the final adaptation of the translated instruments, the questionnaires were distributed, with a cover letter and request to ask other people in their respective organizations to fill out the survey, among subjects in Ukraine and Russia via the Create Survey web application.

Instrumentation reliability. Prior to conducting the data analysis, all measures used in this study were tested on reliability. The reliability of the measures in this study is reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Chronbach's alpha for instruments used in the research

Instrument	Chronbach's alpha	Number of items in the scale
Authentic leadership	0.91	16
Transactional leadership	0.66	6
Trust	0.90	42
Organizational affective commitment	0.87	8

Organizational continuance commitment	0.80	8
Organizational normative commitment	0.66	8

Results

Responses from the surveys were entered into SPSS (version 17.0.2). Table 2 contains descriptive statistics; the mean and standard deviation are shown for control and for the independent and dependent variables in the study.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics (N=66).

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Authentic Leadership	3.45	0.74
Transactional leadership	2.94	0.75
Trust	3.29	0.44
Affective commitment	3.26	0.98
Continuance commitment	2.82	0.84
Normative commitment	2.68	0.63
Age ^a	2.38	0.76
Average wages ^b	2.59	1.60
Tenure ^c	2.44	1.05
Position ^d	3.21	1.05

^a Age was coded 1 – younger than 20; 2 – 20 to 29; 3 – 30 to 39; 4 – 40 to 49; 5 – older than 50.

^b Average wages (per month) were coded 1 – less than \$400; 2 – \$400 to \$599; 3 – \$600 to \$799; 4 – \$800 to \$999; 5 – more than \$1000

^c Tenure was coded: 1 – less than one year; 2 – from 1 to 3 years; 3 – 4 to 5 years; 4 – 5 to 10 years; 5 – over 10 years.

^d Position was coded: 1 – entry level employee; 2 – entry level management; 3 – middle level management; 4 – upper level management; 5 – senior management

Correlations. Correlation analysis was performed to assess the degree of relationships between independent, control and dependent variables. The results of Pearson r correlation are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlations between variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	--									
2. Average wages	-.05	--								

3. Tenure	.46**	.09	--						
4. Position	.01	.33**	0	--					
5. Authentic leadership	-.01	.30*	0	.27*	--				
6. Transactional leadership	-.15	-.04	-.28*	.09	.48**	--			
7. Trust	-.26*	.19	-.06	.10	.55**	.27*	--		
8. Affective commitment	.02	.20	.24*	.22	.51**	.10	.52**	--	
9. Continuance commitment	.03	.14	.16	.21	.14	.09	.15	.40**	--
10. Normative commitment	.15	.01	.21	.02	.40**	.21	.31*	.52**	.45**

** . $p < 0.01$

* . $p < 0.05$

This table shows the strongest positive correlation between authentic leadership and trust ($r = 0.55$), affective commitment and trust ($r = 0.52$), affective commitment and authentic leadership ($r = 0.51$). Control variables (age, average wages, tenure, position, and transactional leadership) do not have strong correlations with any of the three kinds of commitment. SPSS flagged only the correlation between tenure and affective commitment as significant ($r = 0.24$).

Linear regression analysis. In order to establish the mediating effect of the trust variable, first the relationship between authentic leadership and trust was established using linear regression analysis. Table 4 shows the analysis of the relationship between authentic leadership and trust. It shows that authentic leadership had a significant influence on trust (standardized coefficient beta is .55).

Table 4: Coefficients for authentic leadership as IV and trust as DV.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.17	.22		9.92	.000
	Authentic leadership	.32	.06	.55	5.20	.000

Table 5 displays authentic leadership's influence on affective organizational commitment and the mediating effect of trust. Authentic leadership had the highest effect on affective commitment, and the influence of control variables was insignificant (with the exception of tenure) before authentic leadership was introduced. Authentic leadership significantly reduced the influence of control variables; $p < 0.01$ for authentic leadership; therefore, H1 is supported. Before trust was introduced, authentic leadership had a standard coefficient beta of .54. After trust was introduced, authentic leadership had a standard coefficient beta of .33, and trust was .37. Therefore, trust had a partial mediation effect on the relationship between authentic leadership and affective commitment as it only partially reduced the influence of authentic leadership on affective commitment. As a result, H5 is partially supported.

Table 5: Authentic leadership's influence on affective organizational commitment and the mediating effect of trust.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.67	.70		.95	.35
	Transactional leadership	-.13	.17	-.10	-.79	.44
	Age	-.15	.16	-.12	-.96	.34
	Average wages	-.02	.07	-.03	-.25	.80
	Tenure	.26	.12	.27	2.21	.03
	Position	.09	.11	.10	.87	.39
	Authentic leadership	.71	.18	.54	4.07	.00
2	(Constant)	-1.46	.97		-1.51	.14
	Transactional leadership	-.13	.16	-.10	-.80	.43
	Age	-.01	.15	-.01	-.07	.95
	Average wages	-.02	.07	-.04	-.32	.75
	Tenure	.23	.11	.25	2.12	.04
	Position	.11	.10	.12	1.08	.28
	Authentic leadership					

Authentic leadership	.44	.19	.33	2.33	.02
Trust	.84	.28	.37	3.00	.00

^a. Dependent Variable: Affective commitment

Table 6 reports on authentic leadership's influence on continuance organizational commitment and the mediating effect of trust. It is evident that authentic leadership had no effect on continuance commitment; and $p > .05$, there is no statistical significance in the relationship between authentic leadership and continuance commitment. Therefore, H2 and H6 are not supported.

Table 6: Authentic leadership's influence on continuance organizational commitment and mediating effect of trust.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.56	.71		2.19	.03
	Transactional leadership	.14	.17	.12	.80	.43
	Age	-.06	.16	-.06	-.41	.68
	Average wages	.03	.07	.06	.46	.65
	Tenure	.18	.12	.22	1.51	.14
	Position	.14	.11	.18	1.33	.19
	Authentic leadership	.01	.18	.01	.06	.95
2	(Constant)	.93	1.04		.89	.38
	Transactional leadership	.14	.17	.12	.81	.42
	Age	-.02	.16	-.02	-.14	.89
	Average wages	.03	.07	.06	.44	.66
	Tenure	.17	.12	.21	1.44	.16
	Position	.15	.11	.18	1.37	.18

Authentic leadership	-.07	.20	-.06	-.35	.73
Trust	.25	.30	.13	.82	.42

^a. Dependent Variable: Continuance commitment

Table 7 shows a significant influence of authentic leadership on normative commitment with standardized coefficient beta .41 and $p = .01$. This supports H3. Trust had a minor mediating effect on the relationship between authentic leadership and normative commitment, as seen in that when introduced to the analysis, it slightly reduced the standardized coefficient beta for authentic leadership to .3. However, trust did not have statistical significance with $p > 0.05$. Therefore, H7 is not supported.

Table 7: Authentic leadership's influence on normative organizational commitment and mediating effect of trust.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.09	.49		2.24	.03
	Transactional leadership	.07	.12	.08	.58	.56
	Age	.05	.11	.07	.50	.62
	Average wages	-.04	.05	-.11	-.85	.40
	Tenure	.13	.08	.21	1.58	.12
	Position	-.04	.07	-.06	-.50	.62
	Authentic leadership	.35	.12	.41	2.84	.01
2	(Constant)	.40	.71		.56	.58
	Transactional leadership	.07	.12	.08	.60	.55
	Age	.10	.11	.12	.89	.38
	Average wages	-.04	.05	-.11	-.88	.39
	Tenure	.12	.08	.20	1.48	.14
	Position	-.03	.07	-.05	-.43	.67
	Authentic leadership	.30	.12	.3	2.50	.01

Authentic leadership	.26	.14	.30	1.85	.07
Trust	.27	.20	.19	1.33	.19

^a. *Dependent Variable: Normative commitment*

Analysis shows that authentic leadership had the highest influence on affective organizational commitment (.54); therefore, H4 is supported.

Discussion and Future Research

The present study is a preliminary step in understanding the influence of authentic leadership on organizational commitment in Eastern Europe. Findings of this study indicate that a positive and significant relationship exists between authentic leadership and affective organizational commitment. This proves the theoretical assumption that an authentic leader's moral stance and the development of authentic followers who share the leader's values and beliefs have a positive correlation with affective organizational commitment when followers identify themselves with the organization (Shamir & Eliaim, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Authentic leadership was expected to have positive correlation with continuance commitment, although not as strong as with affective commitment. This expectation was based on the transparency and truthfulness of authentic leaders, which allows employees to plan for their future growth and helps them clearly understand the organization's future. However, the data analysis showed no significant correlation between authentic leadership and continuance organizational commitment. The third kind of organizational commitment, normative, was found to have positive correlation with authentic leadership. These findings point to the fact that authentic leadership contributes to moral- and value-based organizational commitment as both affective and normative types of commitment rooted in values and morality. Continuance commitment does not have significant correlation with authentic leadership due to the fact that it is based on transactional, calculative involvement. These findings point to the contribution authentic leadership makes into building strong organizations with committed employees who share the vision and goals of an organization and thus achieve more than they would in their own self-interest (Northouse, 2007).

This research established partial mediation of trust in the correlation between authentic leadership and affective organizational commitment. However, trust does not mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and normative commitment.

Future research may focus on moderating effects of cultural values, as both authentic leadership and affective/normative commitment are based on values (Shamir & Eliaim, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005; Meyer & Allen, 1991). As authentic leadership is based upon

dynamic ethics (Henderson, 1982; May et al., 2003), it implies that every authentic leader bases his or her own ethics and values on self-awareness (May et al.). However, different cultures represent different values (Hofstede, 2001), and as this study researched the correlation between authentic leadership and organizational commitment, it had homogeneous cultural representation among leaders and followers in each organization. It is also noteworthy that trust is culturally embedded (Elahee, Kirby, & Nasif, 2002). Therefore, culture may moderate the relationship between authentic leadership and affective/normative types of organizational commitment.

Limitations

The first limitation of this research is convenience sampling. This is the weakest form of sampling. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) suggested avoiding it or using it with extreme circumspection only if there is no other way of getting a sample. One of the dangers of this kind of sampling is the non-response bias. The non-response bias has to do with a theory that those who respond to surveys answer questions differently than those who do not respond to surveys ("Nonresponse bias," 2009). Also, there were two occasions when the employees were not allowed to fill out the surveys for this study by their leadership. Therefore, this study can be improved by employing random sampling procedures.

Translation of the instruments also may have contributed to misguided answers to survey questions. While necessary steps of translation, backtranslation, pretest, and final tweaking of the instruments were conducted, further steps such as panel of professionals and experts in the respective fields, who would evaluate each of the translated instruments, could improve the validity of the instruments. Additionally, although all the instruments were translated into Russian, in Ukraine many people speak Ukrainian as their native language. This may have caused some misunderstandings of survey questions among Ukrainian respondents. To improve this study, the instruments should go through the rigorous process of translation – backtranslation – pretest and tweaking in the Ukrainian language as well for the Ukrainian sample.

Common method variance (CMV) may be another limitation of this study as the data on independent, dependent, and mediating variables was collected from the same source. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) gave the following reasons for CMV: "common rater, a common measurement context, a common item context, or from the characteristics of the items themselves" (p. 885). This study could be improved by collecting data on predictors and criterion from different sources: leaders could evaluate employees' commitment, while employees could evaluate characteristics of authentic leadership in their leaders. The advantage of this procedure design is that it makes it impossible for the rater "to bias the observed relationship between the predictor and criterion variable, thus eliminating the effects of consistency motifs, implicit theories,

social desirability tendencies, dispositional and transient mood states, and any tendencies on the part of the rater to acquiesce or respond in a lenient manner" (Podsakoff et al., p. 887).

Conclusion

This research shows the correlation between authentic leadership and two types of organizational commitments, affective and normative, in an Eastern European context. The initial premise for this research was that post-Soviet leadership has been known for being controlling (Buchko, Weinzimmer, & Sergeev, 1998) and has exhibited a lack of integrity (Longenecker, 2001). Authentic leadership was considered one of the ways to improve the situation in failing Ukrainian and Russian businesses by fostering committed employees in the organizations. The research has shown that authentic leadership contributes to development of organizational commitment based on values and ethics. The author hopes that this will be the first of many further steps which will test positive leadership theories in Eastern European context and help bring sound leadership practice into businesses of post-Soviet countries.

About the Author

Artem Kliuchnikov is a second-year Ph.D. student at Regent University, where he is studying organizational leadership. For the last 15 years, he has been involved in a ministry organization comprised of people from Canada, the U. S., Ukraine, and Russia, and he has organized different ministry projects across Russia and Ukraine. His interests include cross-cultural leadership research.

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