



Relationship Between Agriculture and Forestry Workers, Authentic Leadership, and Organizational Commitment

Halil Özcan Özdemir^{1,a,*}

¹Kırşehir Ahi Evran Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Meslek Yüksekokulu, Kırşehir, Türkiye

*Corresponding author

ARTICLE INFO

Research Article

Received : 24.04.2024

Accepted : 14.05.2024

Keywords:

Authentic leadership
Organizational commitment
Agricultural and forest workers
Surveys
Education level

ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationships between authentic leadership perceptions and organizational commitment levels of public personnel working in the agriculture and forestry sector. Within the scope of this research, surveys consisting of ready-made scales were used. The authentic leadership scale is a scale consisting of four dimensions and 16 items. The answers given to the surveys were interpreted using the SPSS package program. When the results of the research are evaluated in general; It appears that the perception of authentic leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment. Looking at the demographic results; According to gender, it has been determined that men have more authentic leadership perceptions than women. According to education level; It appears that authentic leadership perception and organizational commitment do not differ. When examining whether employees' authentic leadership perceptions and organizational commitments vary according to their age; It is seen that the perception of authentic leadership and organizational commitment differ according to age. While employees between the ages of 36 and 40 have higher perceptions of authentic leadership; Organizational commitment of those between the ages of 41 and 45 was higher.

^a hoozdemir@ahievran.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0021-3618>



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Introduction

Employees needed new structures to express and solve the problems that arise in working life and directly affect their quality of life. Employees have become very influenced by the concept of leadership to express their problems and demands and seek solutions together. As a result of this situation, issues such as employees' commitment to work and productivity are also affected.

Although the word authenticity is linked to individual characteristics and identities in terms of psychology, in terms of philosophy; It is linked to individual virtues and ethical behavior (Novicevic et al., 2005). According to Kernis (2003), authenticity is the phenomenon of a person acting according to his/her own truths while performing daily activities. Acting authentically means; It is the individual's behavior according to his own values, preferences, and needs. To put it another way, it is the opposite of fake behavior shown to escape punishment, win a reward, or please others (Akgündüz, 2012).

Most definitions of authentic leadership; It begins with defining the underlying concept of authenticity. Authenticity; It means knowing yourself, being honest with yourself, accepting yourself, that is, being yourself. Kernis (2003), authentic behavior; It is defined as acting in accordance with one's preferences and needs among one's preferences and value judgments. George (2003), as most people agree; He stated that what is needed to build strong organizations is authentic leadership. Leaders who aim for true and deep feelings about their core values are needed. To rebuild their companies, leaders who have the courage to meet all the needs of their shareholders and recognize the importance of their service to society are needed. According to Neider and Schriesheim (2011), authentic leaders are self-aware leaders who develop their followers and the knowledge they have learned from them.

When we look at the studies on authentic leadership, the literature generally states; It is seen that subjects such as subordinates' performance at work, their commitment to

the organization, their job satisfaction, their level of dedication to work, and their level of making extra effort for the organization are investigated. Again, when looking at authentic leadership studies, it is seen that the literature is generally based on Walumbwa et al.'s (2008) studies and the components are evaluated within the framework of four dimensions (Yeşiltaş, Kanten, & Sormaz, 2013).

The authentic leadership scale developed by Avoird, Gardner, and Walumbwa (2007) was used to determine leadership behaviors. This scale consists of four dimensions and 16 items. The dimensions of the authentic leadership scale are: Transparency, Moral behavior, balanced behavior, and individual awareness.

To give an example of some of the definitions of organizational commitment; According to Grusky (1966), it is the nature of the relationship of an individual within an organization with the organization as a whole. According to Kanter (1968), emotional commitment is the organizational structure of which one is a member. Hall et al. According to (1970), harmonization and integration of the goals of the organization and the goals of each individual of the organization over time. Porter et al. (1974), it is the individual's attitude toward the goals and values of the organization he/she is in, his/her struggle in this direction, and his/her desire to remain within the organization. According to Weiner (1982), organizational commitment is the sum of the pressures that create internalized rules to act in accordance with organizational interests. According to Meyer and Allen (1991), the attitude of members is shaped by the organizational relationship and causes them to decide to stay in the organization permanently. According to Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), the result that an organization wants to achieve is to make a superior effort toward the goal by internalizing the goals and values. They based the concept of organizational commitment on three main components: emotional commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, beyond the distinction between attitudinal and behavioral commitment (cited in Mayer et al. 1990).

In light of these explanations, answers are sought to the following questions regarding the hypotheses of the research.

H1: Is there a significant relationship between the perception of authentic leadership and employees' organizational commitments?

H2: Do perceptions of authentic leadership and organizational commitment of employees differ according to gender?

H3: Do perceptions of authentic leadership and organizational commitment of employees differ according to their education levels?

H4: Do perceptions of authentic leadership and organizational commitment of employees differ according to age?

Material and Method

The sample of the research consists of agricultural and forest workers. In this context, 384 surveys were answered successfully. The data returned from the surveys were interpreted using the SPSS statistical program. To measure members' organizational commitment, Meyer et al. (1993) and Dağlı et al. (2018) and the authentic leadership scale developed by Avoird, Gardner, and Walumbwa (2007) were used to measure members' authentic leadership perceptions. This scale consists of four dimensions and 16 items. The dimensions of the authentic leadership scale are: Transparency, Moral behavior, balanced behavior, and individual awareness. The research is quantitative. Within the scope of the research, a full census method was applied to employees, and all employees were reached. Research data were obtained in 2020.

Results

Looking at the demographic results of the employees; It was observed that 74.4% were male employees (Table 1). The education levels of the employees were divided into high school and below, undergraduate and graduate levels, and it was determined that 70% of the employees were at the undergraduate level. When the marital status of the employees was examined, 78.4% were married. In terms of age groups, there is a generally balanced distribution in each age group.

Table 1. Demographic status of the employees

		n	%
Sex	Male	286	74.4
	Female	98	25.6
Marital Status	Married	301	78.4
	Single	83	21.6
Education Status	High school and below	94	24.4
	Undergraduate education	270	70.0
	Postgraduate education	20	5.6
Age	Under 30	34	0.10
	31-35	70	18.2
	36-40	72	18.8
	41-45	68	20.8
	46-50	45	18.0
	51 years and over	95	24.1
Organization	TOB	384	100

Table 2. Authentic leadership and Organizational Commitment Reliability Analysis Results

Authentic Leadership		Organizational Commitment	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.812	16	.870	18

Table 3. Differentiating levels of authentic leadership and organizational commitment according to gender T-test results

	Sex	N	Average
Authentic Leadership	Female	98	2.81
	Male	286	2.87
Sig 0.476			
	Sex	N	Average
Organizational Commitment	Female	98	2.28
	Male	286	2.35
Sig 0.857			

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.95 confidence interval.

Table 4. Authentic Leadership and Organizational Commitment ANOVA Test Analysis Results by Education Level

	Educational Status	Average
Authentic Leadership	High school and below	2.37
	Undergraduate education	2.55
	Postgraduate education	2.61
	Total	2.51
Sig 0.598		
Organizational Commitment	High school and below	2.82
	Undergraduate education	2.32
	Postgraduate education	2.26
	Total	2.47
Sig 0.688		

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.95 confidence interval.

Compliance Results for the Factor Analysis

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test performed for the suitability of the data collected with the survey for factor analysis shows that the survey for the authentic leadership scale is suitable for factor analysis and that the measured feature has multidimensionality in the universe from which the sample was selected [KMO = 0.826; $\chi^2 = 1525.929$; $p < 0.001$]. Because the Bartlett Sphericity test result for the data group was found to be $p < 0.001$, there is a significant relationship between the items of the authentic leadership scale. The KMO and significance level were found to be suitable for factor analysis (Büyükoztürk, 2009). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test performed for the suitability of the data collected with the organizational commitment survey for factor analysis shows that the survey for the organizational commitment scale is suitable for factor analysis and that the measured feature has multidimensionality in the universe from which the sample was selected [KMO = 0.726; $\chi^2 = 1675.929$; $p < 0.001$]. Since the Bartlett Sphericity test result for the data group was found to be $p < 0.001$, there is a significant relationship between the items of the organizational commitment scale. The KMO and significance level were found to be suitable for factor analysis (Büyükoztürk, 2009).

Reliability Analysis Results

The results of the reliability analysis conducted to determine whether the authentic leadership and organizational commitment scales are reliable are shown in Table 2.

Because of the reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha value for the authentic leadership scale was 0.812 (N=16); Cronbach's alpha value for the organizational commitment scale is 0.870 (N=18); has come out. Because these values are greater than 0.70, we can say that the scales used are reliable (Nunnally, 1978).

When we look at table 3, which shows whether authentic leadership and organizational commitment differ according to gender, shows that authentic leadership differs according to gender, but organizational commitment does not. According to gender, men have more authentic leadership perceptions than women.

When table 4, which shows whether authentic leadership perception and organizational commitment differ according to educational status, shows that authentic leadership perception and organizational commitment do not differ according to educational status.

When table 5, which shows whether the perception of authentic leadership and organizational commitment differs according to age, shows that the perception of authentic leadership and organizational commitment differ according to age. While employees between the ages of 36 and 40 have higher perceptions of authentic leadership; Organizational commitment of those between the ages of 41 and 45 was higher.

Table 6 shows the correlation analysis results showing the relationship between authentic leadership and organizational commitment. According to this table, there is a positive significant relationship between the perception of authentic leadership and organizational commitment.

Table 5. Authentic Leadership and Organizational Commitment ANOVA Test Analysis Results by Age

	Age	Average
Authentic Leadership	Under 30	2.02
	31-35	3.35
	36-40	3.58
	41-45	3.01
	46-50	2.56
	51 years and over	2.24
	Total	2.32
		Sig 0.043
Organizational Commitment	Under 30	2.50
	31-35	2.88
	36-40	3.05
	41-45	3.07
	46-50	2.96
	51 years and over	2.13
	Total	2.77
		Sig 0.011

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.95 confidence interval.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis Results for the Relationship Between Authentic Leadership and Organizational Commitment

	Organizational Commitment	
Authentic Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.424**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 7. Regression Analysis Results for the Relationship Between Authentic Leadership and Organizational Commitment

	B	Sig.	Beta	t
Fixed Value	0.761	0.000		3.814
Authentic Leadership ,552	0.548		0.476	8.121
R	0.476			
R ²	0.220			
Adjusted R ²	0.213			
Standard Error	0.754			
F Value	0.658			
Durbin-Watson	1.620			

In this study, regression analysis was conducted to measure the effect of authentic leadership perception on organizational commitment. It appears that the perception of authentic leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment. The perception of authentic leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment and is approximately 22% explanatory (R² = 0.213). Based on this, it can be said that as the perception of authentic leadership increases, organizational commitment will also increase.

Discussion and Conclusion

When the results of the research are evaluated in general; It appears that the perception of authentic leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment. The perception of authentic leadership has a significant effect on organizational commitment and is approximately 22% explanatory (R² = 0.213). This result is similar to studies in the literature. Alinezhad et al. (2015) found a positive significant relationship between teachers' authentic leadership perceptions and their organizational commitment. Alomari et al. (2019) stated in Jordan that the effect of authentic leadership on organizational commitment was statistically positive and significant. In

their study, Tijani and Okunbanjo (2020) found a significant positive relationship between authentic leadership perceptions and organizational commitment of employees working in the field of information technology.

Looking at the demographic results; According to gender, it has been determined that men have more authentic leadership perceptions than women. According to education level; It appears that authentic leadership perception and organizational commitment do not differ. When examining whether employees' authentic leadership perceptions and organizational commitments vary according to their age; It is seen that the perception of authentic leadership and organizational commitment differ according to age. While employees between the ages of 36 and 40 have higher perceptions of authentic leadership; Organizational commitment of those between the ages of 41 and 45 was higher. These results are similar to those of studies in the literature. Topal (2019) determined that gender and educational status play an effective role in the process of authentic leadership behaviors that affect organizational commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) stated that personal factors are among the most important factors affecting organizational commitment; He stated that the employee's age, gender, education level, and marital status. Abac (2021) states that the employee's

organizational commitment is directly proportional to his age; He mentioned an inverse relationship between education levels and organizational commitment. When the results obtained in this context are evaluated; It is seen that employees' perception of authentic leadership returns to the company as a higher organizational commitment. A higher organizational commitment will bring many positive outcomes for the business and the employee and will give the business a competitive advantage. Although the institution examined is a public institution, the process is thought to be similar for private sector institutions. It is recommended that managers working in the Agriculture and Forestry service branch be given training to increase authentic leadership behaviors. Since organizational commitment increases with age, it is necessary to ensure the continuity of senior staff in the institution. Satisfaction levels of highly educated personnel should be increased to prevent them from changing institutions. Additionally, more investment should be made in the sense of organizational justice to ensure labor peace. This research has a time constraint. Conducting a different sampling and spatial study on this issue in the future may yield different results.

References

- Akgündüz, Y. (2012.) Konaklama işletmelerinde otantik liderlik ve öz yeterlik arasındaki ilişkinin analizi. Doktora Tezi, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Turizm İşletmeciliği Anabilim Dalı, Turizm İşletmeciliği Programı, İzmir.
- Alomari, G. I., Alharafsheh, M. I., & Nofal, M. I. (2019). The impact of authentic leadership in the ocb and employees commitment in the Jordanian companies. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 9(11), 437-458.
- Alinezhad, M., Abbasian, H., & Behrang, M. R. (2015). Investigating the effects of authentic leadership of managers on organizational commitment of teachers with organizational justice as the mediator variable. *Ciência e Natura*, 37, 407-416.
- Avolio B.J., Gardner W.L., & Walumbwa F.O. (2007). *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire*. www.mindgarden.com (29 Mart 2016).
- Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2009). *Sosyal Bilimler İçin Veri Analizi El Kitabı*, (Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık, Ankara).
- George, B. (2003). *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value* (Jossey-Bass, Imprint, USA).
- Kernis, M.H. (2003). Toward a conceptualization of optimal self-esteem. *Psychological Inquiry*, 14(1), 1-26.
- Kanter, R. M., (1968). Commitment and Social Organization: A Study of Commitment Mechanisms in Utopian Communities, *American Sociological Review*, 33 (4), 499-517.
- Abacı, M. G. (2021). Algılanan otantik liderlik davranışının çalışanların örgütsel bağlılık ve performans düzeylerine etkisi: Otel işletmelerinde bir araştırma (Master's thesis, İskenderun Teknik Üniversitesi/Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü/Turizm İşletmeciliği ve Otelcilik Ana Bilim Dalı).
- Mathieu, J. E. & Zajac, D. M. (1990). A review and meta analysis of the antecedents, correlates and consequences of organizational commitment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(2), 171-194.
- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J., & Gellatly, I. R., (1990). Affective and Continuance Commitment To The Organization: Evaluation of Measures and Analysis of Concurrent and Time-Lagged Relations, *Journal Of Applied Psychology*, 75 (6), 710.
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J., (1991). A Three-Component Conceptualization Of Organizational Commitment, *Human Resource Management Review*, 1 (1), 61-89.
- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J. & Smith, C. A., (1993). Commitment To Organizations and Occupations: Extension and Test Of A Three-Component Conceptualization, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 538-551.
- Neider L.L., Schriesheim C. A. (2011). The authentic leadership inventory (ALI): Development and empirical tests. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(6), 1146-1164.
- Novicevic M.M., Davis W, Dorn F, Buckley M.R., & Brown J.A. (2005). Barnard on conflicts of responsibility: Implications for today's perspectives on transformational and authentic leadership. *Management Decision*, 43(10), 1396-1409
- Tijani, O. O. & Okunbanjo, O. I. (2020). Authentic leadership and organizational commitment: empirical evidence from information technology industry in Nigeria. *Kelaniya Journal of Management*, 9(2), 55-74.
- Topal, A. (2019). Kurum çalışanlarının, örgütsel bağlılığını etkileme sürecinde otantik ve hizmetkâr liderlik davranışlarının incelenmesi: Sağlık Bakanlığı merkez teşkilatı örneği, (Yayımlanmamış Doktora Tezi), İstanbul.
- Yeşiltaş M, Kanten P, Sormaz, Ü. (2013). Otantik liderlik tarzının prososyal hizmet davranışları üzerindeki etkisi: konaklama işletmelerine yönelik bir uygulama. *İstanbul Üniversitesi İşletme Fakültesi Dergisi*, 42(2), 333-350.
- Walumbwa F. O., Avolio B. J., Gardner W. L., Wernsing T. S., & Peterson S. J. (2008). Authentic leadership: development and validation of a theory-based measure. *Journal of Management*, 34(1), 89-126.