Research Paper: Prediction of Psychological Well-being based on the Perceived Authentic Leadership Style and Work Engagement in the Employees of Factory

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Abstract

One of the important ways to increase organizational virtue is leadership, which can increasingly be considered as a role in creating differences. Therefore, among the theories that have been proposed for inspiring and implementing organizational virtue, authentic leadership theory is the most recent and comprehensive leadership approach that has been discussed in recent years. The present study aimed to predict psychological well-being based on perceived authentic leadership style and job engagement in employees. This research was descriptive and correlational in nature. The study population consisted of factory employees. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula, and 77 individuals were randomly selected as the sample. Three questionnaires were used to measure the research variables: Ryff's psychological well-Being scale (RPWBS), the authentic leadership questionnaire (ALQ) and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). The data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The results of the study showed that 29.0% of the variations in psychological well-being could be predicted by the perceived authentic leadership style variable ($\beta=0.539$, $\alpha<0.01$) and 25.7% of the variations in psychological well-being could be predicted by the job engagement variable ($\beta=0.507$, $\alpha < 0.01$). Therefore, to improve the well-being of employees, attention should be paid to authentic leadership style and Job engagement.

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1. Introduction

Today's world is rapidly moving towards industrialization, with competitive markets and commercialization, which obliges organizations to focus on aspects such as productivity, flexibility, and responsiveness. The turbulent conditions of the 21st-century global economy have led organizations to face increasing challenges and pressures in meeting stakeholders' demands (Hameed & Sharma, 2020). Since attention to factors such as the level of trust and acceptance of employees towards managers and organizations, creativity, and effectiveness enhances organizational excellence, employees strive to maximize their potential in achieving management and organizational goals (Feldner & Berg, 2014).

Psychological well-being can be defined as happiness, joy, and having positive emotions in life, where individuals strive to develop their potential abilities. Psychological well-being can be defined as happiness, joy, and having positive emotions in life, where individuals strive to develop their potential abilities (Adil & Kamal, 2017). The concept of psychological well-being has deep roots in the field of psychology. Key studies on well-being have been conducted by Ryff (1989). Psychological well-being is a multidimensional concept that encompasses physical and mental health, educational status, economic situation, material security, attainment of independence and freedom, and the ability to participate in urban life (Rodriguez-Bravo et al., 2020).

Therefore, psychological well-being is understood as a multidimensional construct that encompasses individual and social aspects, influencing how we perceive, interpret, and engage with the world, as well as how we cope with life events and challenges. This means that psychological well-being relies on the deployment of emotions and strategies that are conducive to optimal physical and social performance (Rodriguez-Bravo et al., 2020). On a personal level, individuals with higher levels of psychological well-being tend to have larger social networks, more energy, and better immune systems. At the organizational level, creativity, collaboration, job quality, individual performance, and organizational productivity increase (Adil & Kamal, 2017). The PERMA model is one of the most prominent models in the field of psychological well-being. The current model considers psychological well-being as a comprehensive growth process that spans throughout the lifespan. Ryff and Singer (1998) primarily attempted to determine and categorize the criteria for a desirable life or, in other words, a good life based on philosophical foundations (such as Aristotle and Russell).

Authentic leaders enhance the psychological well-being of employees and help them revive when faced with challenges, deficiencies, and failures (Beddoes-Jones & Swailes, 2015). Therefore, authentic leadership is considered one of the most important components in predicting psychological well-being. Authentic leaders are individuals who have self-awareness and are conscious of their thoughts and behaviors. They know who they are, what they think, and how they behave, and they are aware of

the values/ethics of their own and others' knowledge and abilities. They are also aware of the context in which they need to operate. An organization is considered authentic when it accepts limitations and uncertainties in leadership, understands its capacity for responsibility and choice, acknowledges its mistakes, utilizes its creative management skills for flexible planning, growth, and policy development, and actively participates in a broad community (Cameron et al., 2016).

Authentic leadership is characterized as a specific leadership behavior that possesses both positive psychological qualities and prevents an unethical climate within an organization. The values created by authentic leadership enhance effective relationships among employees and organizations (Grošelj et al., 2020). Authentic leadership can have a positive impact on organizations, as it is associated with various outcomes such as individual creativity, individual performance (Duarte et al., 2021), customer orientation, and employee retention and commitment (Ribeiro et al., 2020).

Job engagement is a positive psychological concept and is recognized as an indicator of well-being and psychological health in the workplace. Job engagement encompasses the levels of energy, dedication to work, and effectiveness in one's profession (Karimianpour & Moradi, 2018). Additionally, there is a relationship between psychological well-being in the workplace and job engagement (Umans et al., 2016; Probergpp et al., 2020; Ponomareva et al., 2020). Therefore, job engagement is one of the most influential factors in predicting psychological well-being. Khan (1990) was

the first to introduce the concept of job engagement in work environments, defining it as the use of one's entire self in fulfilling work roles. Job engagement consists of three components: vigor, dedication, and absorption, which refers to the intense psychological involvement of employees in their work (Salehi et al., 2021).

Job engagement refers to the level of energy, job involvement, and effectiveness. It is described as having enthusiasm for work, high levels of energy, mental flexibility while working, enthusiasm for investing, and resilience in facing challenges. Work attraction involves a deep focus on work, difficulty in separating from work, the rapid passage of time, and forgetting everything around while working. It also includes a sense of meaningfulness in work, a sense of enthusiasm and pride in work, and a sense of the work being challenging (Karimianpour &Moradi, 2018). Employees who are interested, motivated, and enthusiastic have higher productivity, a greater tendency to stay in the organization, fewer absences, and higher work motivation. They are also more likely to support and accompany organizational changes (Falaki Koluri et al., 2020). Therefore, organizations should strive for leadership styles that can create motivated, committed, and retention-oriented human resources, leading to improved individual and organizational performance (Aluwihare-Samaranayake et al., 2018).

Multiple studies have been conducted on the topics of psychological well-being, authentic leadership, and job engagement. Koon and Ho (2020) demonstrated in their study "Perceived Authentic Leadership and

Job Engagement: The Mediating Role of Employee Psychological Well-being" that psychological well-being in the workplace has a mediating effect between perceived authentic leadership and job engagement. Studies indicate that psychological well-being plays an important role in various aspects of personal, family, social life, and job performance (Gun, 2020). Falaki Koluri et al. (2020) found in their research that job engagement has an impact on organizational commitment. The results of the study by Ghorbanpour et al. (2022) indicate the importance of psychological well-being in predicting job engagement among teachers of slow learners. Tomasz (2020) has shown that authentic leadership can lead subordinates to engage in unethical organizational behaviors. This does not mean that one should abandon authentic leadership, but rather pay more attention to learning what is morally acceptable and unacceptable in an organization. Ethics should be integrated with the core values of the organization. However, when evaluating leaders, their ethics should be taken into consideration. The findings of Maarefi and Sharifi (2021) indicate a significant positive impact of mental well-being on job engagement and perceived organizational support. Karami and Amanian (2021) demonstrated in their research titled "The Impact of Spiritual Leadership on Psychological Well-being of Employees" that the components of spiritual leadership, including performance feedback, organizational commitment, vision, friendship, and membership, had the greatest impact on employees' psychological well-being in the police force.

Leadership plays an important role in challenging and uncertain times (Baran and Woznyj, 2020; Rath et al., 2021) as employees look to leaders for guidance and direction. Authentic leadership leads to employees' job enthusiasm. Job enthusiasm creates qualities in individuals that directly relate to their work performance. They voluntarily go beyond job responsibilities to achieve organizational goals and become physically, emotionally, and cognitively engaged and intertwined with their work (Faryad et al., 2016). If leaders fail to strive towards organizational goals and fail to recognize and provide a conducive environment for the growth and flourishing of employees' capabilities, over time, individuals will lose their motivation to align with organizational strategies or even engage in organizational diagnostics to identify organizational priorities and resources. Leadership encourages employees to actively participate in the work environment through the motivation they create in their followers and encourage active engagement through their behaviors and attitudes, leading to an increase in employee job enthusiasm (Tadbari & Shafizadeh, 2016).

Leadership encourages employees to act according to the values, attitudes, and fair behavior of the organization in any situation by creating beliefs, understanding, assigning responsibilities to individuals, employing participatory management, and creating an appropriate organizational climate to achieve organizational health and promote a culture of honesty and trust (Fateh et al, 2022). Successful organizational change depends on the leaders' ability to recognize the need for

change and plan for its achievement so that management can move, alongside the workforce, with unity and cohesion towards predetermined goals (Cottrill et al., 2014). Additionally, leaders have a great responsibility to create conditions that motivate members to strive towards the organization's defined goals (Purwanto, 2022).

Most factories are managed in a traditional management thinking manner, which was also the case with this factory. This approach has fundamental weaknesses in establishing human relationships and considering the human aspects of work, which has led employees to prioritize their personal goals over organizational goals. Furthermore, the lack of emphasis on empowerment and disregard for initiative and innovation over time has turned employees and managers into mere administrative and executive tools within this organization, rendering discussions and thinking about work along with training and acquiring new knowledge in this area useless and devoid of practical value. If human resources do not see themselves as part of the organization and make efforts towards achieving organizational goals and if the organization does not give due recognition to the talents and worthiness of its employees in its management and fails to create a flexible environment for their growth and flourishing, over time, individuals will lose their motivation to align strategies or even engage in organizational diagnostics to identify organizational priorities and human resources. These issues have prompted a decrease in the psychological well-being

components from the perspective of Oraki and Sami (2016) in the factory, which include autonomy (feeling competent and capable of managing one's environment), personal growth (continuous personal development), self-acceptance (having a positive self-perception), and environmental mastery (the ability to choose and create a suitable environment). These factors have led to a greater sense of the need to increase psychological well-being among employees.

Furthermore, one of the necessities of conducting this research was that authentic leadership and its characteristics were not given much attention in the factory until now. This gap led to the execution of this study in this field. The management perspective of the factory should always aim to increase the psychological well-being of employees in order to enhance their mental well-being and self-actualization and influence organizational justice.

Therefore, the aim of this article was to predict psychological well-being based on perceived authentic leadership style and job enthusiasm in employees.

2. Method

The present study adopted a descriptive correlational research design in terms of data collection and research method. The population of the study included the employees of Hebelk's factory, with a total of 96 individuals. The sampling method was random, and the sample size was determined using Cochran's formula, resulting in the selection of 77 participants. With the cooperation of the factory management, a

link to the questionnaire was randomly sent to the employees' mobile numbers, taking into account their access to electronic communications and announcements. To prevent potential reduction in the sample size due to high workload, excessive working hours, and possible internet access issues, a larger number of individuals were selected. Ultimately, after continuous follow-up to ensure internet access and to gain the employees' trust in the confidentiality of their opinions and their willingness to participate, 77 individuals completed the questionnaires on well-being, job satisfaction, and authentic leadership. The inclusion criteria consisted of employees with a minimum of six months of work experience, internet access, and willingness to respond to the questionnaire. The exclusion criteria included employees who had temporarily transferred to other branches and any incomplete questionnaires. The participants were assured that their answers would be completely confidential and would only be analyzed for research and improvement purposes. Ethical considerations were observed in the study. Based on the orientation session and the cooperation of the employees, no compromised questionnaires were observed.

2.1. Instruments

Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (RPWBS): This scale was developed by Ryff (1989) and was revised in 2002 (Hofer et al., 2005). The original form of this questionnaire consists of 120 items, but shorter forms with 84, 54, and 18 items have also been proposed in subsequent studies. In this research, the short-form 18-item Ryff Psychological Well-

being scale was used to measure the variable of psychological well-being. The scoring of the Ryff Psychological Well-being questionnaire is based on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 6 (completely agree). It consists of six subscales and components (self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purposeful life, and personal growth), with three questions considered for each component, and a total score.

The reliability coefficient of the psychobiological well-being scale (referred to as "Reeve") was found to be 0.82 using the test-retest method. The subscales of self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth had reliability coefficients of 0.70, 0.77, 0.78, 0.77, 0.71, and 0.78 respectively, which were statistically significant ($p<0.001$) (Bayani et al., 2008). Li et al. (2014) reported a correlation of 0.84 between this questionnaire and an 84-item scale. Furthermore, the content and construct validity of the test have been confirmed in various studies. The results of a study by Li et al. (2014) for the 18-item version of the scale showed factor loadings of at least 0.60 and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.92 and 0.60-0.75 for the subscales. Regarding the convergent validity of the psychobiological well-being test, evidence suggests that the six psychological well-being factors have a positive correlation with life satisfaction (Yaryari et al., 2007). In the Iranian version, the reliability coefficients using Cronbach's alpha for the three

components of purpose in life, personal growth, and environmental mastery were found to be 0.92, 0.91, and 0.89 respectively (Saadati & Moltafat, 2017).

The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ): The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, developed by Avolio et al (2006; as cited in Walumbw et al., 2008) consists of 15 questions and uses a Likert five-point scale (ranging from 1-5, with options such as "very rarely", "rarely", "moderately", "often", and "very often") to measure authentic leadership. The subscales include self-awareness questions 1-4, balanced processing questions 5-7, ethical-moral questions 8-11, and relational transparency questions 12-15. The questionnaire's reliability has been confirmed by experts and specialists in the field, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.80 obtained (Ghadami, 2017). The reliability of the questionnaire for the components of self-awareness, balanced processing, ethical-moral, and relational transparency, using the Cronbach's alpha method in a study by Atari (2017), was found to be 0.84, 0.71, 0.82, and 0.71, respectively, indicating the questionnaire's reliability and necessary validity. In terms of validity and reliability of the research results (Giallonardo et al., 2010), it was shown that the factor loadings of the questionnaire items ranged from 0.66 to 0.87, and the overall reliability of the scale, based on the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, was reported as 0.91, while the reliability of the self-awareness, relational transparency, inner ethical aspects, and balanced processing components was reported as 0.71, 0.69, 0.8, and 0.83, respectively. The results of the

research by Ghanbari et al. (2016) showed that the structural validity and internal consistency of the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire were confirmed, with factor loadings of the four components of self-awareness, relational transparency, inner ethical aspects, and balanced processing reported as 0.74, 0.90, 0.88, and 0.89, respectively.

Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES): This Questionnaire was developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006) and consists of 17 Likert-type items on a five-point scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree). The subscales include professional energy (items 1-6), professional sacrifice (items 7-11), and professional engagement (items 12-17). The validity of the questionnaire was reported to be 0.95 based on Jalali's research (2007; cited in Ziaaldini & Sohi, 2013), and the reliability, assessed using Cronbach's alpha, was reported to be 0.92. Hajloo's findings (2013), resulting from exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, showed that three interrelated yet distinct factors of energy, commitment, and visible attraction were present. The results regarding reliability indicated that the three-dimensional aspects of energy, commitment, and attraction in the questionnaire exhibited internal consistency based on Cronbach's alpha. In order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire, its convergent and divergent validity as well as construct validity were examined. For evaluating convergent validity, the correlation between the scores and dimensions of the questionnaire with job satisfaction scores was calculated, resulting in values ranging from 0.76 to 0.84. For

evaluating divergent validity, the correlation between the scores and dimensions of the questionnaire with job burnout scores was calculated, resulting in values ranging from 0.35 to 0.44. The study by Tomas et al. (2018) demonstrated that factor loadings obtained through factor analysis allowed us to estimate internal consistency and validity, with values ranging from 0.74 to 0.85. Cronbach's alpha was also estimated for the model, yielding a value of 0.63.

2.2. Data Analysis procedure

In this study, two methods were used for data analysis: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the mentioned data using measures of frequency, percentage, and graphs. Additionally, central tendency measures such as the mean and dispersion measures such as standard deviation were used to better describe the data. In terms of inferential statistics, the multiple regression method was used to test hypotheses, using the 2SPSS software.

3. Results

The study sample consisted of 77 employees of the Heblex factory. 6 individuals, equivalent to 79.7%, were under 25 years old. 16 individuals, equivalent to 77.2%, were between 25 and 30 years old. 24 individuals, equivalent to 16.31%, were between 31 and 35 years old. 20 individuals, equivalent to 97.25%, were between 36 and 40 years old. 11 individuals, equivalent to 28.14%, were over 40 years old. Among the respondents, 26 individuals, equivalent to 77.33%, had a high school diploma or lower education. 7 individuals, equivalent to 9.9%, had an associate degree. 31 individuals, equivalent to 26.40%, had a bachelor's degree. 13 individuals, equivalent to 88.16%, had a master's degree or higher. Additionally, among the respondents, 22 individuals, equivalent to 57.28%, had less than 5 years of work experience. 31 individuals, equivalent to 26.40%, had between 5 and 10 years of work experience. 24 individuals, equivalent to 14.31%, had between 11 and 15 years of work experience. The mean, standard deviation, as well as the minimum and maximum scores of the questionnaire variables, are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of research variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Psychological well-being	3.37	0.75	2	5
Job engagement	3.72	0.70	2	5
Perceived authentic leadership style	3.25	0.74	1.5	5

The psychological well-being questionnaire was determined by 18 items.

The lowest score for this variable, according to respondents, is equivalent to 2 and the highest score is equivalent to 5. The job

enthusiasm variable in the questionnaire was determined by 17 items. The lowest score for this variable, according to respondents, is equivalent to 2 and the highest score is equivalent to 5. The perceived authentic leadership style variable in the questionnaire was determined by 15 items. The lowest score for this variable, according to respondents, is equivalent to 5.1 and the highest score is equivalent to 5.

The results related to the regression analysis of predicting the relationship between psychological well-being and authentic leadership, as well as the results of predicting job enthusiasm based on psychological well-being, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Regression analysis results predicting psychological well-being based on authentic leadership and job engagement

Hypothesis test	R value (coefficient of correlation)	R^2 (coefficient of determination)	Coefficient of change	Constant value	Beta	sig
Authentic leadership	0.53	0.29	0.57	0.42	0.53	0.000
Job satisfaction	0.50	0.25	0.54	0.19	0.50	0.000

Based on Table 2, it can be observed that $\beta = 0.539$ was significant at the 0.01 level for the authentic leadership variable. Therefore, the perceived impact of authentic leadership on psychological well-being is 53.9%, which was positive considering the positive sign of the beta coefficient. With respect to the coefficient of determination, it can be stated that 29.0% of the variation in psychological well-being can be predicted by the perceived authentic leadership variable. Similarly, the results of the table regarding the job satisfaction variable show that $\beta = 0.507$ was significant at the 0.01 level. As a result, the impact of job satisfaction on psychological well-being is 50.7%, which was positive considering the positive sign of the beta coefficient. Additionally, with regard to the

coefficient of determination, it can be stated that 25.7% of the variation in psychological well-being can be predicted by the job satisfaction variable.

4. Discussion

The findings demonstrated the impact of authentic leadership style on psychological well-being. These results are consistent with the findings of Karami and Amanian (2021) and Wu and Tsai (2020). Authentic leadership is associated with customer orientation, job preservation, and employee engagement (Rebore et al.). It also increases psychological well-being resources (Boudrias & Savoie, 2015). By examining the items assessing perceived authentic

leadership styles, it can be concluded that among these items, the item "the manager attentively listens to different perspectives" had the lowest average, indicating that employees do not feel comfortable expressing their opinions to managers and believe that managers solely manage the organization based on their own mentality and beliefs, disregarding the importance of employees' opinions, which is the main pillar of an organization. This management style leads to inflexibility, lack of attention to human resources, wasting of time and resources, and conflicts of interest. It also hinders quick adaptation to the environment and causes employee frustration (Shahrokhi, 2023), which in turn leads to employee dissatisfaction and lack of optimism in the work environment. This ultimately results in emotional exhaustion and fatigue for employees in the long run. Pessimism and dissatisfaction in the work environment lead to frustration and ultimately cause emotional exhaustion (Vahdati et al., 2021).

The findings demonstrated the impact of job enthusiasm on employees' psychological well-being. These findings were consistent with the studies conducted by Thomas (2020), Maarefi and Sharifi (2021), and Ghorbanpour et al. (2022). The research conducted by Do and colleagues (2021) showed that authentic leadership enhances employees' enthusiasm. This study contributes to the literature on authentic leadership and provides insight into how individual and contextual factors interact to influence the impact of authentic leadership on job enthusiasm in organizations. Therefore, it is necessary to organize classes

and explanatory sessions to raise awareness among managers and justify the importance of employees' opinions in improving processes, as they are directly involved in operational activities and understand many hidden aspects of the work. To clarify the results, it can be stated that leaders should understand that factors such as self-acceptance (having a positive attitude towards oneself), autonomy (evaluating oneself under pressure), and personal growth (perceiving oneself as a growing entity) increase enthusiasm and perceived authentic leadership, leading to better role performance and increased well-being in the workplace. Job enthusiasm, defined as job involvement, leads to an increase in psychological well-being, which also enhances the presence of positive emotions, absence of negative emotions, and job satisfaction among employees. Therefore, managers should clearly and consistently focus on enhancing these factors. Moreover, it can be stated that authentic leadership, with characteristics such as internalized morality and transparency, fosters the creation of social capital and increases psychological well-being resources. Increasing psychological well-being based on authentic leadership and job enthusiasm strengthens organizational virtue in the workplace. There is a significant positive relationship between organizational virtue, job enthusiasm, and psychological well-being. The first and biggest limitation of this research was the time constraint, which prevented further monitoring of the implementation of authentic leadership style and its impact on psychological well-being. Therefore, it is suggested to employ a dedicated consultant in the organization who

has enough time to assist managers in implementing appropriate programs to change employees' psychological capital, so that they can revive and increase job satisfaction when facing problems or failures, ultimately leading to an increase in psychological well-being. The second limitation concerns how individuals respond, as some employees may not accurately complete the questionnaires due to job demands and long working hours. Therefore, it is recommended to expand the study to other factories with careful execution. Additionally, this study did not include moderating variables such as age and education, which is another limitation in generalizing the results to other participants or different time periods. It is suggested to examine the impact of variables such as education and age in future research. Furthermore, considering the significant role of socio-economic status in employees' perspectives, it is recommended to further investigate this aspect in future studies.

5. Conclusion

An authentic leadership with its four dimensions of self-awareness, balanced processing, relational transparency, and ethical aspects has been introduced as an appropriate behavioral model to improve employee engagement and enhance psychological well-being in the organization. Considering the results obtained in this research and the role of mindfulness, the need for understanding and psychological resources in explaining psychological well-being, conducting mindfulness workshops and trainings to align self-perception and job

role will lead to individual and ultimately organizational development. Furthermore, the results of these findings highlight the importance of workplace well-being in promoting job engagement.

Conflict of interest
The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with any organization. Also, this research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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