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The moderating effect of Moral Values on the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior in the Police Force

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Abstract

One of the key issues currently faced by the UAE Police Force is effective leadership. Authentic Leadership is one of the more contemporary theories of leadership and is linked with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which is the discretionary behaviors that are not directly stated in the job description. This research also incorporates the theory of person-environment fit, by proposing to examine whether a police employee with high moral values, fits with an authentic leader and a work environment where justice is paramount.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership, Justice, Person-environment fit, moral values, OCB

INTRODUCTION

One of the key issues currently faced by the UAE Police Force is meeting the vision of the government in 2021 regarding effective leadership. The National Agenda is that UAE should be one of the safest places in the world (The UAE National Agenda [UNA], 2010). One way this can be attained is through authentic leadership of its superiors. Authentic leadership comprises of self-awareness, moral perspective, balance processing and transparency. It is theorised that that will lead to positive outcomes for the subordinates such as job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Gardner et al., 2005; Luthan and Avolio, 2003). OCB is defined as the discretionarybehaviors that are not expressly mentioned in the job description, but that adds value to the organization. OCB is often linked with increased productivity and is thus important to achieve the UAE National Agenda.

The backbone of this research is the person-environment fit theory which simply states that when people fit into their work environment, they will achieve positive outcomes like high job satisfaction, performance, and OCB.There is already abundant research about the positive relationships between authentic leadership and organizational justice with high job satisfaction, performance and OCB. However, the main research question addresses the gap in the literature which is: Is the subordinates' moral values a moderator of such relationships? In other words, will a person with high moral values fitwell with a leader who is highly authentic and a work environment where justice is prevalent? Put in another way, will a person with high moral values not fit with a leader who is perceived to be less authentic and an environment where justice is lacking? These are the research questions that this research aims to answer, and in doing so, hopefully, addresses the gap in the current literature. This research also touches on the equity theory in so far as organizational justice is concerned. Equity theory, according to Adam (1965) states that people experience cognitive dissonance when things are opposite of what they visualize as ideal. This theory also proposes that people are always comparing what they receive about what they contribute and that they often compare this with others. It would be particularly interesting to see whether the police forceand organization often associated with enforcing justice, is perceived to be fairby its employees when it comes to HR practices.Finally, this research also relies on Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958) – relationships providing more benefits than costs will yield mutual trust and attraction (Blau, 1964).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Authentic Leadership

Luthans and Avolio (2003) defined authentic leadership "As a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development" (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 89).Authentic leaders behave according to their beliefs, values, ethics, and morals when building relationships with their followers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). It is sometimes described a behaving by one's true self (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Of course, a necessary prerequisite would be to know oneself well enough in the first place. If leaders know their strengths,weakness, and values, and use that knowledge to guide their interactions with others, they are authentic leaders (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Authentic leadership has four dimensions:

1) Self-awareness – deep knowledge of one's skills, values, and preferences.
2) Relational transparency – openness and integrity in interactions.
3) Balanced processing – consideration of diverse perspectives in decision making.
4) Internalized moral perspective – the demonstration of integrity and using one's values and well-evaluated external standards to guide behavior (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Cottrillet al., 2014).

Organizational Justice

James (1993) Defined organizational justice as the perception of individuals and groups regarding the fairness of the treatments they receive from organizations about their actions. Organizational justice is deeply rooted in Equity theory. According to Adam (1965), people are always comparing what they receive about what they do. They compare this ratio in their current situation with their previous situations andwith others. There are three

dimensions of justice: distributional, procedural and interactional. Distributive justice is essentially about the equity theory – whether benefits are distributed fairly or not, regarding their "inputs" and "outputs" (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998). Procedural justice relates to the methods and mechanisms used to arrive at decisions. It is about the process. Distributive justice is about the "what" whereas procedural justice is about the "how". If the system is unfair (procedural) then the result or outcome (distributive) is also unfair. Lastly, interactional justice is about the communication involved. Were subordinates consulted? How was the result disseminated?

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) and the relationship with authentic leadership and justice perceptions

According to Bateman and Organ (1983), OCB includes behaviors such as helping another colleague to solve job-related problems, accepting orders without any objections, carrying out tasks which are not their responsibility without complaints, and not overly critical. OCB is doing tasks which are not stated expressly in the job description. OCB has received a great deal of attention among researchers (Bateman & Organ, 1983). OCB is related to job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, and leadership behavior (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1983; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Organ & Motowidlo, 1993). In particular, AlZaabi, Ahmad & Hossan (2016) found that Authentic Leadership is significantly related to OCB among employees in the Oil Industry in the UAE.Accordingly the hypothesis is:

H1: Authentic leadership is related to OCB

Regarding organizational justice, Williams et. Al (2002) observed that when supervisors treat employees fairly, more OCB is observed. Thus Organizational justice is also significantly related to OCB and the hypothesis is:

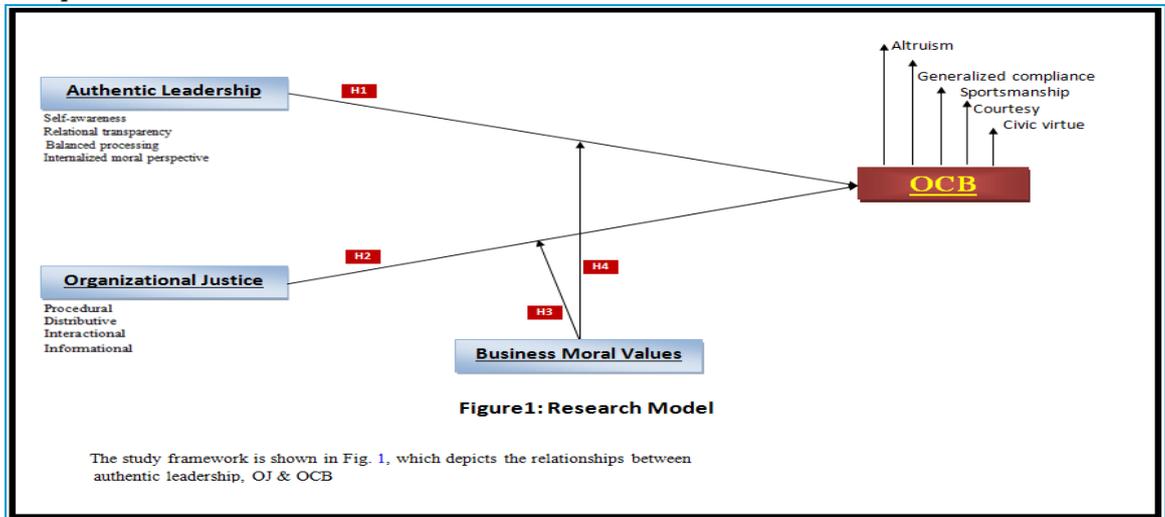### *H2: Organizational Justice is related to OCB*

Business Moral Value/ Ethical Value and its moderating effect

Scott (2002, pg. 510) defined moral values as "beliefs about what is good and evil behavior within the individual's control, bearing on relations to self, to others, to God, and to the natural and animal world." Business moral values are the values that individuals hold when they engage in business activities (Carroll, 1987; Gandz and Hayes, 1988; Lewis, 1985). Personal moral values refer to the standard that employees or individuals see from their point of view whether the behavior is moral or notwhile interacting with others (Jiang,Lin & Lin, 2011). Scott (2000), gave four principles of moral values: honest communication; (b) using one's own rights properly and not interfering with the rights of others; (c) respecting life; and (d) following rules and principles of justice. Schwartz's (2005) moral values has six dimensions: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Business moral values are guidance for employees to distinguish between the right and wrong behaviors (Carrol, 1987).

Fritzche and Becker (1984) mentioned that moral issues in organizational management include: supervisory coercion and control, conflicts of interest between organizations and employees, stress of the physical environment, balance between the interests of employees and those of customers, and personal integrity. The person-environment fit theory(Kristof, 1996) posits that when a person is congruent with the environment or situation, positive work outcomes such as high job satisfaction and OCB occurs. So it is proposed here that a highly moral employee, who works in an organization where HR practices are just, and matched with a leader who practices authentic leadership, that employee will be highly satisfied. Accordingly the hypothesis is:

H3: Moral values is a significant moderator of the relationship between (a) Authentic leadership and OCB; and (b) Organizational Justice and OCB

Conceptual Framework

Figure1: Research Model

The study framework is shown in Fig. 1, which depicts the relationships between authentic leadership, OJ & OCB

CONCLUSION

This research contributes to theory in that there is no known published research that investigated the moderating effects of moral values on the relationship between authentic leader and OCB, and between organizational justice and OCB. The multidimensional perspectives of authentic leadership, organizational justice as well as OCB will be adopted, thus giving many combinations to be examined separately to determine which has the strongest effect.

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