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## Authentic Leadership and Job Involvement; Trust as a Mediator

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### ABSTRACT

This research was conducted with the aim of investigating the effect of authentic leadership practices on job attachment in the circles of the pure and righteous families. This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-survey in terms of data collection. Therefore, the statistical population of this research is the righteous group leaders, who, in the role of a coach, comment on them as the leaders of their groups. SPSS software was used to analyze the data of this research. The tests performed include Cronbach's alpha coefficient test to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, Pearson's correlation coefficient test to determine the type and intensity of the relationship between the variables, and regression to test the research hypotheses. The findings of this research showed that, in order to increase their level of attachment to the formation of the circle, the leaders must first measure themselves from the point of view of whether they entered this field out of desire or simply because of some side issues or it was even because of the facilities. The findings of this research showed that, in order to improve the quality level of competent circles, the organization should use managers who have the ability and the power to build trust between the lower ranks and who can, with an educational and calculated view, measure the level of increased attachment among the groups. Therefore, in order to improve the level of job attachment on the part of the leaders, the organization must make them believe that the organization cares about their existence and considers them as the main asset of its organization. Job attachment between leaders can include being concerned for the growth of teachers, feeling the danger of losing values, increasing the desire for a strong and continuous presence in the circles, etc.

**KEYWORDS:** authentic leadership, job attachment, trust, LeT tree rings Salehin

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## 1. Introduction

The psychological relationship of employees with work has received much importance and attention in the 21st century. In today's world, in order to compete effectively, organizations not only seek to attract and hire great talent, but also have to empower and inspire employees to use all their abilities in doing work (Baker; Arbrich and Leiter 2011); or in other words, have a job attachment. The positive consequences of employees' job attachment in the organization clarify the necessity of addressing the issue. Employees who have job attachment are more capable in their work, communicate better with their work activities and respond better to their job demands. They have more hope for their work and suffer from less mental or physical fatigue. Job attachment also leads to increasing job satisfaction and organizational commitment and reducing employee turnover. (Baker; Arbrich and Leiter 2011, Hassan and Ahmed 2011, Roux 2010, Shafley; Baker and Salavona 2006). By creating trust in employees, authentic leadership can achieve beneficial results, including employee job attachment. (Rooks 2010) Authentic leadership theory is the newest and most complete leadership approach that has been proposed in recent years. Authentic leaders are people who have reached self-knowledge and are aware of how they think and behave. They have value-ethical insight and know the knowledge and abilities of others and the context in which they operate. Authentic leaders are confident, hopeful, optimistic and flexible and have a highly ethical personality (Gardner; Kugliser and Davis et al. 2011). Trust, especially trust in leadership, is a necessary and permanent component in the success of the organization. An authentic leader is defined as someone who is trustworthy and truthful. The relationship between trust and job attachment is also such that they strengthen each other (Hasan and Ahmed 2011). This research was conducted with the aim of investigating the effect of authentic leadership on job attachment in the genealogy circles of pure and righteous families, and seeks to answer these questions: What effect does authentic leadership have on job attachment and trust in these circles? And what is the effect of trust on the job attachment of these groups? According to the subject of the research, which is to examine the relationship between authentic leadership and job attachment with regard to the mediator role of trust, circles of righteous people were chosen because it is one of the places where the dimensions and components of authentic leadership can be seen well. After carrying out more than a decade of research work, the righteous family tree was announced in 2008 under the title of the pure and righteous family by the Basij Mustazafeen (underprivileged) organization to all the sub-categories. The nature of these circles consists of one person named Sargroh (group head), who is supposed to grow 21 people named Motarabi (trainers) under his moral and spiritual responsibility. This level of the circle is formed in Basij resistance bases. The highest order of the circle consists of one person called the coach and 21 group leaders. In this research, what we mean by authentic leadership refers to the role of a coach and job attachment to leaders.

## 2. Research basics and literature

Authentic leadership theory was proposed for the first time in 2004 by the Gallup Leadership Institute in the Nebraska-Lincoln University. The main difference between this theory and other recent theories in the field of leadership is that the authentic leadership theory is more general and focuses on the root structure. (Awalio et al., 2005) Root structure means the foundation that forms positive leadership. (same) Authentic leadership theory focuses on self-control (self-discipline) and self-awareness of the leader and followers, positive psychological capital and the role of positive organizational moderator. (Awalio et al., 2005; Fray et al., 2008; Sparrow, 2005) Authentic leadership is not necessarily transformative.

For example, it does not seek to convert followers into leaders. In most cases, authentic leadership conveys its meaning to others through actions, not words, and in the form of principles, values, and ethics (Fray et al., 2008). Charismatic, seeks to influence and convince others with eloquence and rhetoric. (Awalio et al., 2005; Brown and Trevino, 2006) Of course, the theories of spiritual and servant leadership, although they openly or referencing the role of self-control and self-awareness in leadership, are the same as authentic leadership theory, but they remain at the level of theoretical discussions and do not have the support of field research. They also ignore the role of organizational context. (Awalio et al., 2005) Therefore, it can be said that the result of the efforts of western and eastern thinkers until today has led to the authentic leadership theory; this theory has used all its efforts to eliminate the shortcomings of the theories of previous periods. Therefore, the authentic leadership theory can be considered the most comprehensive and complete theory that has been proposed. The design of the theories of the approach of individual characteristics directed the attention of thinkers to the mental and spiritual characteristics of the leader, so that after that, thinkers paid attention to spirituality and spirituality in their theorization. Therefore, the efforts of thinkers to express the importance of spirituality and human characteristics in leadership led to the creation of leadership theories such as spiritual, transformative and charismatic leadership theories. The thinkers hoped that with their efforts, they could create theories that would solve the problems and shortcomings of the previous theories, considering the divine and spiritual qualities of leadership. Previous theories have given their instructions without considering the spiritual and divine nature of man. These efforts were valuable, but insufficient; because the created theories were criticized over the years and sometimes remained only a theory. Eventually, a comprehensive and complete leadership theory that satisfies the scientific satisfaction of users has not yet been created. Therefore, it can be said that the shortcomings of the proposed theories, which are based on human ideas and mentalities, as well as the understanding of the need for spirituality and the presence of divine and human characteristics in leadership theories, show the readiness of the scientific community and thinkers to turn to divine schools. Therefore, it seems necessary to present theories, including leadership theories, from the perspective of divine schools. Therefore, according to the theoretical foundations and research literature, the conceptual model of the research is as follows: Authentic Leadership -> Trust -> Job Attachment by Workers.

Therefore, the hypotheses will be presented as follows:

There is a positive and significant relationship between authentic leadership and job attachment.

There is a positive and significant relationship between authentic leadership and trust.

There is a positive and significant relationship between trust and job attachment.

Authentic trust and leadership have a significant effect on job attachment.

### 3. Research Methodology

This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-survey in terms of data collection. The statistical population of this research is the leaders of the pure and righteous family in the Basij resistance areas of Sari city. A group of Basij resistance bases in a geographical area form a domain. The total number of bases in Sari city is 20, 13 are for brothers and 7 are for sisters. Therefore, the statistical population of this research is the righteous group leaders, who, in the role of a coach, comment as the leader of their group. The statistical population of this research is two parts, the brothers (13 groups) and sisters (7 groups) in Sari city.

The total statistical population is 950 people, and according to the following formula, 273 questionnaires should have been collected for analysis, of which 330 questionnaires were distributed and 278 questionnaires were collected for analysis. The sampling method of this research is random with proportional allocation. Out of this number, 182 questionnaires were collected from the field of brothers and 96 questionnaires were collected from the field of sisters. Therefore, the size of the research sample is equal to:

$$n = \frac{950 (1.96)^2 0.5(1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2(950 - 1) + 1.96^2 0.5(1 - 0.5)} = 273$$

As can be seen in the statement (formula), the minimum sample size of 273 people was determined. Due to the possibility of some questionnaires not being returned, 330 questionnaires were distributed and finally 278 questionnaires were collected for analysis. In this research, a questionnaire was used to collect data, which has two parts; The first part includes questions about demographic information such as: gender, age, education, etc.; the second part contains the main questions of the research, which itself is divided into three parts; the first part is related to the variable questions of authentic leadership, which consists of sixteen (16) questions, authentic leadership measurement criteria from the research of Awalio and others (2007) which includes four functional dimensions of self-awareness, balanced processing, moral aspect and relational transparency. In order to measure job attachment, the standard questionnaires of Lodahel and Kejner (2001) is used, which includes 8 items. And finally, interpersonal trust is measured using Ruano's (2003) 7-item scale. The most common response form for measuring research variables is the response form (rating scales) and among these scales, the Likert rating scale is the most popular.

**Table1-** Description of questionnaire variables

Variable	Type variable	Number of questions	Source
Authentic leadership	Independent	16	Olive and others (2007)
trust	Mediator	15	Ruano (2003)
Job involvement	Dependent	26	Ludahl and Kejner (2001)

The questionnaire of the current research has validity and content validity because the components of the variables of authentic leadership, job attachment and trust are taken from standard questionnaires, based on the works of other researches. In order to localize the questionnaire, the questionnaire has been approved by asking the advisors and consultants in this field who are familiar with the subject under investigation. SPSS software and Cronbach's alpha test were used to confirm the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha is 0.91 for authentic leadership questionnaire, 0.90 for job attachment questionnaire, 0.71 for trust and 0.88 for the whole questionnaire.

SPSS software was used to analyze the data of this research. The tests performed in this research are:

1. Cronbach's alpha test to determine the reliability of the questionnaire.
2. Using Spearman's correlation coefficient test to determine the type and intensity of the relationship between variables.
3. Regression, to test research hypotheses.
4. Findings: After the descriptive analysis of the data, we proceed to the inferential analysis of the data. In inferential analysis, research hypotheses are evaluated and tested.

**Table1. Correlation test**

The dependent variable	Independent variable	The correlation coefficient	Significance level	Error
Authentic leadership	Job involvement	0.253	0.000	0.01
Authentic leadership	trust	0.776	0.000	0.01
trust	Job involvement	0.289	0.002	0.01

Table2. Regression test

Dependent variable	Independent variable	R Square	B	Significance level
Authentic leadership	Job involvement	0.499	1.14	0.000
Authentic leadership	trust	0.506	0.66	0.000
trust	Job involvement	0.657	1.4	0.000
Authentic leadership trust	Job involvement	0.692	0.426 1.084	0.000

Table3. Direct, indirect, and total effects of variables in the structural model

Total effect	Path		
2.06	1.14	Authentic leadership– Job involvement	direct Path
	$0.66 \times 1.4 = 0.92$	Authentic leadership – trust -Job involvement	Indirect path

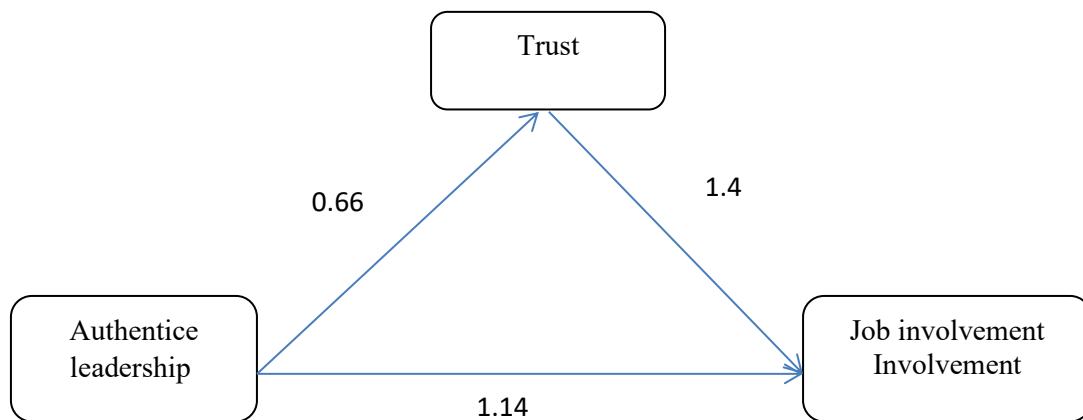


Figure 1- The influence coefficients of the routes in the conceptual model of the research

#### 4. Findings

**First hypothesis:** There is a relationship between authentic leadership and job attachment.

According to the test results (correlation value equal to 0.253 and significant), it can be said that there is a significant and positive relationship between authentic leadership and job attachment. In the Model Summary table, which shows the coefficient of determination, since the coefficient of determination, that is, R Square, must be between

0 and 1, and the closer this number is to one, it indicates the appropriateness of the number and type of independent selection variables for justification. The change of the dependent variable is in the regression model, we see that this value is equal to 0.499.

In the ANOVA table, which can be analyzed through the F statistic and significance level (sig), given that the value of  $\text{sig}=0$ , it indicates the suitability of the linear regression method for fitting the regression model and obtaining the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. According to the information in the Coefficients table, the linear regression model between the variable of authentic leadership and job attachment can be shown as  $Y=-4.5 + 1.14 X$ , where X is the variable of authentic leadership and Y is the variable of job attachment. Therefore, the first hypothesis is confirmed.

**Second hypothesis:** There is a relationship between authentic leadership and trust.

According to the test results (correlation value equal to 0.776 and significant), it can be said that there is a significant and positive relationship between authentic leadership and trust. In the Model Summary table, which shows the coefficient of determination, since the coefficient of determination, that is, R Square must be between 0 and 1, and the closer this number is to one, it indicates the appropriateness of the number and type of independent selection variables for justification. The change of the dependent variable is in the regression model, we see that this value is equal to 0.506. In the ANOVA table, which can be analyzed through the F statistic and significance level (sig), given that the value of  $\text{sig}=0$ , it indicates the suitability of the linear regression method for fitting the regression model and obtaining the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. According to the information in the Coefficients table, the linear regression model between the authentic leadership variable and trust can be shown as  $Y=1.4 + 0.66 X$ , where X is the authentic leadership variable and Y is the trust variable. Therefore, the second hypothesis is confirmed.

**Third hypothesis:** There is a relationship between trust and job attachment.

According to the test results (correlation value equal to 0.289 and significant), it can be said that there is a significant and positive relationship between trust and job attachment. In the Model Summary table, which shows the coefficient of determination, since the coefficient of determination, that is, R Square, must be between 0 and 1, and the closer this number is to one, it indicates the appropriateness of the number and type of independent selection variables for justification. The change of the dependent variable is in the regression model, we see that this value is equal to 0.657. In the ANOVA table, which can be analyzed through the F statistic and significance level (sig), given that the value of  $\text{sig}=0.05$ , it indicates the suitability of the linear regression method for fitting the regression model and obtaining the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. According to the information in the Coefficients table, the linear regression model between the variable of trust and job attachment can be shown as  $Y=-5.4 + 1.4 X$ , where X is the trust variable and Y is the job attachment variable. Therefore, the third hypothesis is confirmed.

**Fourth hypothesis:** trust and authentic leadership have a significant effect on job attachment.

In the Model Summary table, which shows the coefficient of determination, since the coefficient of determination, that is, R Square, must be between 0 and 1, and the closer this number is to one, it indicates the appropriateness of the number and type of independent selection variables for justification. The change of the dependent variable in the regression model, we see that this value is equal to 0.692. In the ANOVA table, which can be analyzed through the F statistic and significance level (sig), given that the value of sig=0, it indicates the suitability of the linear regression method for fitting the regression model and obtaining the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed.

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

According to the results of statistical analysis, regarding the first hypothesis, authentic leadership and job attachment have a meaningful and positive relationship. This means that the better the role of authentic leadership is played; it will cause job attachment to increase. Our findings in this field are consistent with the results of Baker, Albrecht and Leiter (2011). They are of the opinion that in today's world, in order to compete effectively, organizations not only seek to attract and hire excellent talent, but also must empower and inspire employees to use all their abilities in doing work. Or in other words, have a job attachment. Employees who have job attachment are more competent in their work, communicate better with their work activities and respond better to their job demands. They have more hope for their work and suffer from less mental or physical fatigue. Job attachment also leads to increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment and reduced employee attrition. Also, the research of Salavana (2006) shows that empathy, self-awareness, high motivation and self-confidence are the characteristics that cause a positive relationship between public health and collaborative leadership style. Also, these characteristics in managers will increase the self-esteem, motivation, and as a result, increase the level of job satisfaction of the employees. Also, regarding the third hypothesis, in a research that was conducted on the topic of determining the relationship between decision-making style, leadership style and organizational trust with organizational justice in order to provide a suitable model for education in Isfahan city, the findings of the research show that trust in the organization alone amounts to 5% of variance of interactional justice. With the inclusion of trust in the manager, the amount of explained variance increases to 13% and with the inclusion of trust in colleagues, it increases to 0.18%. (Farhad Shafipour Mutlaq, 2010) In this context, a research based on the findings of Rex (2010) shows that CEOs can improve the quality of strategic decisions of senior managers of their organization by forming and improving a relationship based on trust between senior managers and also accelerating their learning process. Also, according to the results of this research, there is a positive relationship between job attachment and trust, which means that the more a person trusts his organizational leaders, the more his job attachment increases. The research results of Hassan and Ahmad (2011) are consistent with the findings of this research; they believe that there is a positive relationship between job attachment and trust. And regarding the fourth hypothesis, a research was conducted

on the subject of investigating the relationship between the organizational trust of nursing staff and their job satisfaction in the hospitals of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences in 2005. The results obtained from the data analysis regarding the main hypotheses of the research showed that there is a relationship between the organizational trust of the nursing staff and their job satisfaction. In other words, the more nurse's trust the managers of the organization, the higher their job satisfaction will be. According to the set of researches that included the three variables of authentic leadership, job attachment and trust, as well as the role that each of these variables can have in relation to the other, it can be concluded that the combination of these three variables as the components of growth and progress in group work and especially the topic under discussion in this research, namely the circles of the righteous, it can play an effective role. From another point of view, due to the fact that the creation and movement of righteous circles is considered as a cultural and culture-building work, therefore, the development of long-term plans and a long implementation schedule to maintain the coherence and ultimately the effectiveness of these links, requires mutual trust,

so that by maintaining and improving all the existing conditions, acquiring over time, what is intended by the designers and top managers of the Basij organization to be achieved. In addition, the training of capable managers who can play the role of effective leadership in their circles and take steps in the direction of staff training and building forces in the style of the Islamic Revolution is an important issue that must be solved by creating attachment to executive activities and fostering this belief in them that how effective and useful your role and position in the future of the Islamic revolution can be, it can be achieved. It is suggested that in order to increase trust in addition to the previous two cases, that is to employ powerful managers and leaders and of course with an educational perspective at the top of affairs and also to increase the level of job attachment in the heads of groups, the implementation and infrastructure mechanisms of the place of formation of circles and the feedback process from educators and families at the community level should be given more attention.

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**ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Authenticity of the texts, honesty and fidelity has been observed.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Author/s confirmed no conflict of interest.