

THE IMPACT OF AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY MEDIATED BY AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT (STUDY AT PT. UBA UHUD INTERNATIONAL)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Creativity with the mediation of Affective Commitment at PT Uba Uhud International in Cilacap. The dependent variable used in this study is Employee Creativity, the independent variable is Authentic Leadership, and uses the mediating variable, namely Affective Commitment. The data collection technique used in this research is a questionnaire. The number of respondents taken in this study were 50 respondents. Purposive sampling method is used in determining respondents. Based on the results of research and data analysis using SPSS linear regression shows that: (1) Authentic Leadership has a positive effect on Employee Creativity, (2) Authentic Leadership has a positive effect on Affective Commitment, (3) Affective commitment has a positive effect on Employee Creativity, (4) Authentic Leadership has a positive effect on Employee Creativity mediated by Affective Commitment. The implication of the above conclusions is that the leadership of PT Uba Uhud is expected to increase knowledge and make considerations in strategies for implementing leadership styles in decision makers and can improve a comfortable work environment to increase employee creativity and to expand the global market for coconut fiber.

Keywords: *Authentic Leadership, Affective Commitment, Employee Creativity*

INTRODUCTION

PT. Uba Uhud International (UUI) established on November 20, 2020, UUI started as a farmer and manufacturer that also supplies agricultural/ plantation products such as cocopeat, cocofiber & bristle fiber (coco brush fiber) by serving the needs of the global business market. Handled by a qualified work team with more than 3 years of experience, UUI guarantees to offer the best raw materials and mass production capabilities, conducting piece-by-piece quality control for mass production, achieving the best quality production performance with on-time delivery. At the moment, PT. Uba Uhud International is dedicated to expanding and growing into a major company with a sizable production capacity. Large orders for items can be filled by PT. Uba Uhud, and its top-notch products can rival those of other

nations. UUI puts a high value on honesty and dedication in order to satisfy the growing demands of the market.

PT Uba Uhud International always provides services and products of the highest quality and competitive prices. For now, buyers come from various circles, ranging from individuals to companies. The proposed service refers to the needs of the buyer. PT Uba Uhud provides the needs of buyers in the scope of agriculture and plantations so that the company has several products such as cocopeat, cocofiber & bristle fiber (cocobrush fiber). PT Uba Uhud International produces eco-friendly raw materials and products from coconut waste that maintain their quality. PT Uba Uhud offers products such as cocopeat, coconut fiber, & cocofiber. There are also bench vases, garden decorations and accessories. Uba Uhud also targets the home and automotive industry markets. All of the above products are made from coconut shells that are well processed by craftsmen who are generally done by people who have expertise in it.

The vision of PT. Uba Uhud is to develop into a proficient and cost-effective manufacturer focused on satisfying the demands for cocopeat, cocofiber, and bristle fiber (coco brush fiber). PT. Uba Uhud's mission is to meet the needs of providers of cocopeat, cocofiber, and bristle fiber (coco brush fiber), to provide processed and manufactured goods that are focused on meeting needs and sales, and to offer professional, courteous, and cost-effective services. The organization also aims to develop strategic partnerships with other institutions to improve performance and best practices, to develop the potential of human resources and the village economy to be superior, to constantly innovate to reduce environmental waste, and to advance the Indonesian economy by marketing products abroad.

In the context of an ever-changing business world, employee creativity is a critical factor in the long-term success of an organization. Employee creativity can lead to new ideas, innovations and solutions that can improve an organization's competitiveness and growth. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that can influence the level of employee creativity and as a key to generating innovative solutions, meeting diverse market demands, and maintaining the competitiveness of the company (Cheung and Wong 2011). All companies always strive to be winners in business competition. Increasingly fierce business competition and the development of innovation in the era of globalization force companies to continuously improve creative performance.

Creativity is a skill that everyone has to recognize and formulate new ideas, as well as new concepts that are beneficial to themselves and others. According to Shalley et al. (2000) new things do not need to be something that has not existed before, but rather individuals are looking for new combinations, new partnerships, and innovative constructions that have higher quality standards. Creativity is the interaction between intellectual, emotive, and motivational forces. Shalley et al. (2000) stated that employees are able to come up with fresh and possibly helpful ideas to develop new or enhance current products, services, procedures, and

routines, employee creativity can be seen as essential to an organization's long-term existence.

One of the factors that can influence the level of employee creativity is the leader (Müceldili, Turan, and Erdil 2013). Leaders are key elements in an organization that can influence various aspects of the work environment, including employee creativity (Jean Jr and Ferinia 2023). One leadership approach that has gained great attention in recent years is authentic leadership. Authentic leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes the importance of integrity, honesty, transparency, and consistency in a leader's actions and behaviors (Tierney, Farmer, and Graen 1999). It also encourages leaders to be their true selves, acknowledge their weaknesses, and foster strong relationships with subordinates. Authentic leadership has emerged as a leadership approach that emphasizes honesty, integrity, and consistency. Authentic leadership encourages closer relationships between leaders and employees, creating an environment where employees feel supported to contribute creatively (Ribeiro et al. 2020). Employee creativity is becoming an increasingly valuable quality in addressing business challenges and creating added value. The influence of authentic leadership on employee creativity can be explained by the fact that authentic leaders tend to create a culture that allows the expression of innovative ideas without fear of judgment (Luxvi 2022).

Another factor that can impact employee creativity is work commitment, employees' work commitment reflects their level of attachment to the organization and involvement in achieving company goals (Jnaneswar and Ranjit 2022). According to Allen & Meyer (1990), organizational commitment is built from three dimensions, namely affective commitment, continuous commitment, and normative commitment. Creativity is formed from several things, one of which is the affective commitment of the employees themselves (Semedo et al. 2016). Affective commitment is an emotional bond inherent in an employee to identify and involve himself with the organization (Allen and Meyer 1990). Organizations that rely on the innovative ideas and creativity of their workforce must value the high levels of motivation and engagement that accompany organizational commitment. Employees who have high creativity tend to have more ideas and new perspectives that will also have an impact on better performance.

Authentic leaders tend to demonstrate honesty, openness and transparency in their interactions with employees. This creates an environment that leads to a high level of trust between leaders and employees (Adriansyah 2020). Employees tend to feel closer and more connected to authentic leaders. They feel the leader cares about their interests and encourages open communication. This creates a sense of trust between employees and leaders. When employees feel that their leaders are honest, trustworthy, and care about them, they tend to feel more connected to the organization and its goals (Luxvi 2022). They believe that the organization has values that align with their personal values, thus strengthening their commitment to

their work and the organization (Adriansyah 2020). Creativity often emerges in an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas without fear of ridicule or punishment (Luxvi 2022). Trust and openness create a sense of security that allows employees to try new things, think creatively and generate creative ideas. Employees who feel connected to the organization and invested in their work tend to be more motivated to contribute creatively (Ardiansyah and Wulansari 2018). They consider the organization's success as their personal success and strive to improve performance and make innovative contributions.

Researchers feel that this research will be very important to do, because the results of this study will provide an overview of the influence that can be a reference so that companies can increase creativity in employees by using authentic leadership styles and authentic leader support can also increase affective commitment, so that companies can improve employee performance in order to achieve company goals with maximum results. Employees are company assets that can support the success of the company's goals. The importance of the role of employees requires companies to manage employees well to improve employee performance in order to increase profits from the company. And with a high level of employee creativity, it will have a positive effect on the company, because the company can compete in a tight market with new ideas and innovations.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of authentic leadership on employee creativity and to determine affective commitment as a mediating variable on employee creativity. This research also provides valuable insights into how authentic leadership practices can influence employee creativity, which can assist organizations in developing more effective leadership strategies to stimulate creativity and innovation in their work environment. This research can also provide a foundation for more effective employee and leadership development efforts in the future.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is defined as a leader's pattern of behavior based on strong psychological traits and an ethical environment that supports positive self-development and helps employees become more self-aware, internalize moral viewpoints, process information in a balanced way, and have transparent relationships with their leaders (Xu et al. 2017). According to Cooper et al. (2005), authentic leadership is leadership that has the confidence, optimism, hope, efficiency and resilience to bring followers to become high-interest leaders. Bringing followers to be high-interest leaders refers to a leader's efforts to develop and empower team members or subordinates so that they can also play an important role in prioritizing high interests, whether in the context of a particular organization or group. It involves developing leadership skills, good decision-making, work ethics, and a deep understanding of the organization's vision and mission.

The first factor that can shape creativity is authentic leadership (Walumbwa et al. 2008). Authentic leadership is a type of leadership that requires leaders to act authentically. Authentic leadership is a leader who must be true to themselves (May et al. 2003). Authentic leadership emphasizes the process of building a leader's legitimacy through honest relationships with subordinates, valuing feedback, and building on ethical foundations (Gardner et al. 2005). Authentic leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes high standards of integrity, responsibility for one's actions, and principle-based decision-making rather than short-term success (Matt 2019).

Affective Commitment

According to commitment is defined as having a strong desire to stay in the organization, striving to fulfill the aims and ideals of the organization, accepting specific beliefs, and wanting to stay a member of it. Robbins & Timothy, (2017) explain job commitment is an employee who favors a particular organization, as well as its goals and desires to maintain membership in the organization. According to Kinicki et al., (2014), an agreement to do something for oneself, other people, groups, or organizations is called a commitment. From several existing theories, a conclusion can be drawn that work commitment is a feeling of psychological and physical connection or attachment of employees to their work so that employees who have high commitment will work well compared to those with low commitment. Allen & Meyer, (1990), suggest that the work commitment model consists of three aspects, namely: affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment.

Employee Creativity

Generally, creativity is characterized as the capacity to offer fresh viewpoints and generate novel and meaningful ideas. Additionally, it involves employees leveraging their diverse skills, abilities, knowledge, perspectives, and experiences to generate innovative ideas for decision-making, problem-solving, and efficient task completion. (Cheung and Wong 2011). Meanwhile, according to Smith et al. (2014), creativity is a person's ability to create something different in the form of both assessable results and ideas (actions that produce new and different creative works). Creativity is the creation of new ideas that are useful on a smaller scale, and innovation is the application of new ideas that are useful on a broader scale (Ardiansyah and Wulansari 2018).

Employee creativity is important since it is essential to an organization's long-term viability. Workers has the ability to generate fresh and potentially valuable ideas, which they can use to improve or create new goods, services, procedures, and routines, which promotes creativity and flexibility. (Shalley et al. 2000). According to Carmeli et al. (2010), employee creativity is defined as the

production of ideas, products, or procedures that are new or original, and have potential benefits for an organization.

HYPOTHESIS

- H1: Authentic Leadership Positively Affects Employee Creativity
- H2: Authentic Leadership Positively Affects Affective Commitment
- H3: Affective Commitment Positively Affects Employee Creativity
- H4: Authentic Leadership Positively Affects Employee Creativity Mediated by Affective Commitment

RESEARCH METHOD

The research to be conducted uses quantitative research. Quantitative research is empirical research whose data is in the form of numbers (Abdullah 2015). This research will use the survey method. The survey method is a method used in large and small populations, but the data studied is from samples taken from the population regarding beliefs, opinions, characteristics, variable relationship behavior, and to test several hypotheses about sociological and psychological variables from the population, the sample is taken from a certain population. This research used SPSS to data analyzed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis I: Authentic Leadership Positively Affects Employee Creativity

Table I. Authentic Leadership (X) influence Employee Creativity (Y)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
I (Constant)	17.464	4.979		3.507	0.001
X	0.583	0.161	0.464	3.626	0.001

Source: Primary data processed, 2023

Based on table I, the Sig value is obtained. $0.001 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that the authentic leadership variable has a significant positive effect on the employee creativity variable at PT Uba Uhud International. Thus, the first hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: Authentic Leadership Positively Affects Affective Commitment

Table 2. Authentic Leadership (X) influence Affective Commitment (Z)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
I (Constant)	13.783	3.519		3.917	0.000
X	0.710	0.114	0.670	6.247	0.001

Source: Primary data processed, 2023

Based on table 2 obtained Sig. value $0.001 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that the Authentic Leadership variable has a significant positive effect on the Affective Commitment variable at PT Uba Uhud International. Thus, the second hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3: Affective Commitment Positively Affects Employee Creativity

Table 3. Authentic Leadership (X) influences Employee Creativity (Y) mediated by Affective Commitment (Z)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
I (Constant)	6.562	4.793		1.369	0.177
X	0.022	0.181	0.017	0.119	0.906
Z	0.791	0.171	0.667	4.622	0.000

Source: Primary data processed, 2023

Based on table 3, the Sig. value of the affective commitment (Z) is $0.000 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that affective commitment (Z) has a significant positive effect on Employee Creativity (Y) at PT Uba Uhud International. Thus, the third hypothesis can be accepted. But the Sig value authentic leadership (X) $0.906 > 0.05$ so it does not have a significant effect on the employee creativity (Y). So, it can be concluded that the mediating variable of affective commitment mediates the effect of authentic leadership on employee creativity. Thus, the fourth hypothesis can be accepted.

Hypothesis 4: Authentic Leadership Positively Affects Employee Creativity Mediated by Affective Commitment

Path Analysis

Test of authentic leadership Variables (X) on employee creativity (Y) with affective commitment mediation (Z). Decision-making criteria for regression analysis tests using independent variables of authentic leadership, dependent variables of employee creativity, and affective commitment variables as mediating variables. If the direct effect $>$ indirect effect then H_a is accepted.

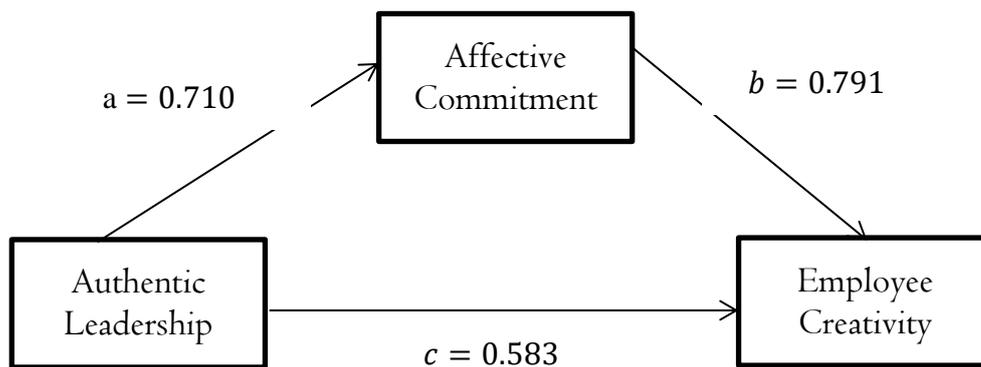


Figure I Path Analysis Model

Information:

- a is the unstandardized beta value of the influence of X on Z (table 4.II)
- b is the unstandardized beta value of the influence of Z on Y (table 4.I4)
- c is the unstandardized beta value of the influence of X on Y (table 4.I4)

From the data above:

- The direct effect of authentic leadership on employee creativity (c): 0.583.
- The indirect effect between authentic leadership on employee creativity with Affective commitment as a mediating variable is:

$$a \times b = 0.710 \times 0.791 = 0.561$$

$0.583 > 0.561$ then H_a is accepted, so affective commitment is a variable that can mediate between authentic leadership on employee creativity.

Path analysis:

- Direct effect of X to Z (a) = 0.710
- Direct effect of X to Y (c) = 0.583
- Direct effect of Z to Y (b) = 0.791
- Indirect effect of X to Y through Z = $a \times b = 0.710 \times 0.791 = 0.561$.
- Total effect of path coefficient = $c + (a \times b)$
 $= 0.583 + (0.710 \times 0.791) = 1.144$

Based on these calculations, the total influence of the path coefficient is $1.144 >$ the direct influence is 0.583 . This means that affective commitment is proven to mediate the influence of authentic leadership on employee creativity, so H4 is accepted. Authentic leadership has been proven to be able to increase employee creativity through affective commitment. The higher level of authentic leadership is proven to increase affective commitment so that it has an impact on increasing PT Uba Uhud International employee performance. Thus, the fourth hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

This study aims to determine the effect of authentic leadership on employee creativity mediated by affective commitment. From the results of this study, the following conclusions were obtained:

1. Authentic leadership has a positive effect on employee creativity.

This confirms that leaders who exhibit genuine values, self-awareness, and transparency can inspire creativity in their teams. Employees are more likely to feel comfortable taking risks, experimenting, and generating new ideas under such leadership.

2. Authentic leadership has a positive effect on affective commitment.

Authentic leaders build strong emotional bonds with their team members by displaying trustworthiness, fairness, and empathy. This leads to affective commitment, where employees feel emotionally connected to the organization and its goals.

3. Affective commitment has a positive effect on employee creativity.

When employees are emotionally invested in their work and organization, they are more motivated and enthusiastic to contribute their best. This creates a fertile ground for creativity and innovation.

4. Authentic leadership has a positive effect on creativity mediated by affective commitment.

This is the key finding. The study proposes that the positive influence of authentic leadership on creativity is partially explained by the increase in affective commitment. In other words, authentic leaders foster creativity not just directly but also by establishing a work environment that encourages emotional attachment and dedication, ultimately leading to more creative employees.

Implications

With the results of this study, researchers hope to contribute to the development of management science, especially in the context of human resources. The contributions and implications of this research include:

I. Theoretical implications

This research strengthens the authentic leadership theory of (Avolio & Gardner, (2005), Walumbwa et al., (2008)). This theory states that authentic leaders are leaders who have strong values and beliefs, and are able to be their true selves. Authentic leaders have high self-awareness, are able to process information objectively, have a strong moral perspective, and are transparent in their actions. This research shows that authentic leadership can encourage employee creativity. This is also in line with authentic leadership research which states that authentic leaders can create a work environment that supports creativity (Adriansyah, (2020), Ribeiro et al., (2020), Semedo et al., (2016)). Overall, this research makes an important contribution to the development of leadership and motivation theory. This research shows that authentic leadership can be an important factor that can encourage employee creativity.

2. Managerial Implications

Based on the results of research at PT Uba Uhud, it is known that the level of coconut fiber production continues to increase and the work environment is good, but still needs to be considered because the work environment affects employee creativity. Judging from the answers of PT Uba Uhud employees who have the lowest average, increasing employee creativity can be done by creating a comfortable environment to increase employee emotional attachment to motivate employees to come up with creative ideas.

Companies need to pay more attention to authentic leadership styles in order to create a balance between the work environment and their personal environment. By creating a positive work atmosphere, it will be able to reduce the pressure experienced by employees in the work environment. Bosses also need to increase attention to employees' personal circumstances so that employees have a feeling of worth so that it will increase employee enthusiasm and motivation at work.

Limitations

Limitations this study has several limitations that need to be considered by future researchers, including:

1. Distributing the questionnaire via Google Form experienced problems because not all respondents had adequate equipment and did not understand how to fill out the questionnaire. For further research, it is hoped that researchers can provide alternative methods for distributing questionnaires, such as distributing questionnaires directly.
2. This research only relies on measurements based on questionnaires filled out by respondents, so the results are very dependent on the participation and responses

of the respondents. It is hoped that future research will be able to carry out good planning, effective communication, set a clear time period, careful analysis, and provide instructions for filling out the questionnaire that are clear and easy to understand.

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