

## **Examining the Key Effect of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behaviors of University Teachers in Pakistani Context**

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### **Abstract**

It is widely recognized that leaders distinctly inspire individuals of an organization to maintain a healthy culture regardless of diverse circumstances. The need of authentic leadership has been recognized to promote positive organizational behaviors in teaching institutions. Moreover, previous research has emphasized the role of organizational citizenship behaviors in facilitating employee retention by increasing their commitment towards organizations. This study explored the role of authentic leadership in promoting organizational citizenship behaviors of teachers from public sector universities of Pakistan. The population of this study comprised permanent faculty members of public sector universities of Pakistan and a sample of 450 teachers were selected. A quantitative research strategy was employed. The cross-sectional time period has been used for the data collection through the survey questionnaire during the pandemic situation. Findings revealed a strong positive association between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors of teachers. Moreover, the findings support the research findings in other cultural contexts. It revealed that public sector teachers need authentic leadership to motivate teachers to display organizational citizenship behaviors which in turn spread positivity throughout the organization. Because when authentic leaders in teaching organizations play their positive role then teachers tend to reciprocate with beneficial behaviors within the organizations.

**Keywords:** Authentic Leadership, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Public Sector Universities, Social Exchange Theory.

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## **Introduction**

The skill of leadership is utilized while influencing the subordinates to accomplish their goals. Leadership is a vital part of behavioral science that emphasizes on the actions of the leader. Leaders markedly inspire individual of the organization to follow a pattern of behaviors to maintain a healthy culture regardless of diverse circumstances. Authentic leadership is described as an important organizational resource for its ability to elicit supportive behaviors of employees towards the organizations (Anwar et al., 2019).

The focus on authentic leadership has increased due to scandals in the corporate sector (Walumbwa et al., 2011). The reason behind these scandals are the rude behavior of the management and other social challenges which are unstoppable in the routine life. Therefore, the need of positive leadership is urgent in the organizations for the betterment of the employees and organizational climate. Leaders are the role models of the employees and they expect them to be fair in all organizational matters; transparent in the dealings and trustworthy for them.

Avolio and Luthans (2003) defined authentic leadership as a procedure that is developed for organizational welfare and attains positive psychological capacities, that increases self-regulation and self-awareness in the leader and the employee which is necessary for the betterment of the organization.

Organ et al. (2005) described organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) as employee's extra role behaviors where employees go beyond their prescribed roles and duties to make it more successful without any monetary compensation; these are the voluntary actions of the employees to facilitate smooth functioning of the organizations. Employees' OCB reflect their satisfaction with jobs and consequently they contribute in the wellbeing of the organization. Previous research has emphasized on the role of organizational citizenship behaviors in facilitating employee retention by increasing commitment towards organizations (Dierdorff, et al. 2021). The benefits of employees' OCB include helpful attitude towards coworker, serving as a replacement in case of colleague's short leave, giving hands on training to colleagues, talking positive about organization on public forums and finding novel ways to improve organization. Employees' OCB positively transpire organization into a place where everyone is motivated to work for. Employees' oriented policies augment their self-esteem which induce them to pay back their organizations with constructive behaviors (Schroeder, 2010).

Organizational citizenship behavior is necessary for determining the environment of the educational institutions such as school, colleges and universities. Moreover, the objective of this research is to explore the effect of authentic leadership on the discretionary behaviors of permanent teachers/faculty. University leadership play an important part in empowering their faculty members for the betterment of the students and to improve its overall standards. Teachers are encouraged to perform beyond their prescribed duties by their organizational heads because it shows their loyalty towards the universities. Therefore, in this study an attempt is made to help the university management and higher authorities to comprehend the underlying pattern through which they can increase the organizational citizenship behaviors in their employees. There is limited literature on authentic leadership in higher education institutions in Pakistan's context. Therefore, it is envisaged that the finding of this study will help the Universities to increase the organizational citizenship behaviors in their teachers. This study is likely to add in the literature of authentic leadership and organizational leadership behavior in Pakistan's context.

### ***Problem Statement***

The teaching faculty faces lots of problems from ineffective leadership in Pakistan. Most of the time teachers have piled up grievances and cannot find ways to vent it out. Moreover, public sector universities do not offer very high or competitive salaries to teachers. Therefore, ineffective leadership as well as low pay structure can aid work withdrawal behaviors of teachers in the universities. During global Pandemic, the need for organizational citizenship behaviors have been magnified as universities are closed for safety reasons and teaching mode is online. Therefore, this study will make an attempt to explore the impact of authentic leadership on organizational citizenship behaviors of teaching staff in Pakistani public sector universities. Moreover, previous literature emphasized that OCB has a positive impact between teacher and school principal relationship (Elstad et al., 2011).

### **Literature Review**

#### **Authentic Leadership**

Walumbwa et al., (2008) described authentic leadership as a pattern of leader's behavior that endorses both positive climate and psychological abilities, having self-awareness, possessing internal moral aspect, exhibiting transparency in dealing with followers, and having an ability to process information in a balanced way while addressing organizational matters. It is widely believed that in authentic leadership the decisions are made on the basis of ethics. Stander et al., (2015) discussed that leaders continually motivate their employees to work honestly and behave in trustworthy manner. Honesty

and the trustworthiness are such qualities which are necessary for the leaders to possess. So, that their subordinates trust in them and perform their tasks diligently. Kouzes and Posner (2007) stated that if a leader is not credible then he loses all his followers and employees get demotivated because of his bad impression. Therefore, trust is the fundamental characteristic of authentic leadership (Beddoes & Swailes, 2015). Walumbwa et al. (2008) explained the four important dimensions of AL which are explained below:

*Self-awareness* is primarily having knowledge about one's own values, talents. Kernis (2003), explained the concept of self-awareness as the strength of the leader and his way of communication and dealing with the other person, that justifies how he deals with others. This includes the way of the treatment of the other people with the leader. Self-awareness is basically the recognition of one's own personality towards the outer world that how he lies, behaves and deals with the other people in the day to day affairs of life.

*Relational transparency* has been further explained (Kernis, 2003) as an inner truth of a person towards others, including all types of communication with others. In this context a leader should be a person who explains and describes his true inner self towards other people.

Walumbwa et al., (2008) and Luthans, Avey, and Oke (2011) described the *balanced behavior* of the leader as an ability to take into account all facets of a problem and process all available information before reaching a conclusion. Walumbwa et al., (2008) explained the fourth point that was *co-opted/internalized moral prospective*. It is that behavior of a leader which he possesses because of his internal moral principles and outer relationship and behavior of his society, peers and other people dealing with them.

Authentic leadership operates on the basis of taking actions according to their own self beliefs (Leroy, Palanski & Simons, 2012). These leaders are loyal to themselves and behave consistent to their true values. Hence, their actions would not be contradictory to their opinions/statements, which will enhance the respect of an authentic leader among followers. According to another perspective proposed by Kiersch & Byrne (2015), "fairness" is the foremost component of authentic leadership. Avolio et al., (2018) advocated that fairness is a balanced approach of authentic leadership, which strengthens the bond of the leader with their follower's attitudes, prosperity, and their "behavioral intentions". Because of having self-awareness, authentic leaders know their competencies which will lead them to achieve their goals and objectives successfully.

### ***Organizational Citizenship Behavior***

Organ (1988) presented the definition of “organizational citizenship behavior” which comprises of three chief characteristics which are “organizational citizenship behaviors are supposed to be as an unrestricted behavior, which are not the part of job description, these are performed by internally without any restriction” (Podsakoff, 2008). These are ingenuities that are helpful but not the part of specified job description. The initiatives can be started from the employees but the organization cannot impose them on the employees. On the other hand, we can say these are the beneficial initiatives which are taken by the employees but the interference of the organization cannot be considered. Dekas (2013) added that in lieu of citizenship behaviors the organization is not liable to pay any reward in return. Therefore, no rewards or compensation is promised for the extra role behaviors to the employees. It's taken as a good will gesture from employees within the organizations. It inspires individuals to help others without any monetary benefit (Burrows, 2011) and it is also considered as “social helping” (Tews & Michel, 2015).

Organ (1988), suggested the five main categories of OCB that are defined as variance of OCB and personality behavior. These are courtesy (having patience while taking action); conscientiousness (moral sense of being right and wrong); altruism (give aid to others); sportsmanship and civic virtue (discussing the important task in the organization). However, few scholars serve as a devil's advocate to challenge the positive role of organizational citizenship behaviors. According to Bolino et al., (2013), the presence of these characteristics does not mean that employees are the good citizens. This can indicate that they are trying to make good impressions on their bosses. He also added that it is not necessary that OCB motives are essentially positive.

### ***Authentic Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors***

An empirical research by Quraishi and Aziz (2018) revealed that there occurs a positive association between OCB and AL. According to Joo and Jo (2017), they emphasized that authentic leaders are those who publicly share their viewpoints, they accept and escalate the views of others whether the views or opinions are in their favor or not. The dominant trait in their decision making is fairness (Avolio et al., 2005). This tends to produce an optimistic environment for the employees where they can learn and recognize the significance of serving their subordinate for organizational betterment. Previous research identified that AL has positive relationship with organizational commitment, job performance, job satisfaction and employee engagement (Avolio et al., 2004). A positive association was reported between AL and employees' OCB in an empirical study conducted in the telecommunication sector in China, (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Moreover, George (2015) conducted research on teachers in kindergarten schools, and concluded that there exists a positive and linear correlation between OCB and AL. Authentic

leadership is recognized for its ability to promote open communication, higher employee engagement, eliciting positive attitudes and making a congenial organizational climate among (Avolio et al., 2018). Because of having self-awareness, authentic leaders know their competencies which will lead them to achieve their goals and objectives successfully.

Podsakoff and Mackenzie (2006) stated that there is lot of evidence in the previous literature on the relationship between the OCB and AL. Authentic leadership creates such an environment where the rights of the employees are equally treated and everyone is fairly treated (Gardner & Avolio, 2005). Walumbwa et al., (2010) said that authentic leadership encourages the citizenship behavior in employees by teaching them the importance of helping others and share the information among each other. Authentic leadership stresses helping fellow colleagues in the organization, encourage building the strong bonds of relationship between them; which facilitate achieving organizational objectives. The role of the authentic leadership in the organization is to empower the employees, to develop the good citizenship behavior among employees (Alizadeh et al., 2019). Employees' OCB consequently results in improved service quality in organizational contexts. Zubair and Khan (2018) conducted a study in Pakistan and verified that authentic leadership strongly motivated employees working for electronic news media to participate in OCBs. Dierdorff, Rubin, and Ellington (2021) have empirically proved the direct association between OCBs and AL in a recent study conducted in South Korea.

The concept of the OCB and AL is best explained by the social exchange theory. This theory propagates that individuals' behaviors are an outcome of their organizational environment. It implies that if employees receive positive behaviors from their leaders and peers then they will return them in the same good way leading to a healthy work environment.

### ***Research Question***

This research solicits to answer the vital question:

Q1: How does authentic leadership effect teachers 'organizational citizenship behaviors in public sector universities of Pakistan?

## **Research Methodology**

### ***Research Design***

This study was descriptive and explanatory in nature. A cross sectional design was found suitable to carry out this research in the given time period. The quantitative approach is used in this research to investigate the principal relationship between authentic leadership and Teachers' OCB and a survey method was contended to collect data.

### ***Population and Sampling***

The population comprised full-time faculty members which are teaching in the public sector universities of Pakistan. There are four provinces in Pakistan and all four were included in the population. Initially a multistage sampling technique was used to identify the organizational units at provincial level followed by a proportionate random sampling to collect data from individual teachers' in the universities. Survey questionnaire was administered in thirteen universities across the country and a total number of 600 questionnaires were distributed among university teachers based on the chosen sampling technique. However, 500 questionnaires were returned by respondents and 450 instruments were found complete in all respects to be used for further analysis. Initially vice chancellors in the chosen universities were approached and assured of the importance of this research in Pakistan. Subsequently, individual teachers across all cadre were approached to fill out the survey. Teachers were briefed about the topic and to clarify any ambiguity.

### ***Research Instrument***

In this study authentic leadership is an independent variable and was treated as a unified construct developed by "Walumbwa et al. (2008)". On the other hand, the dependent variable organization citizenship behavior which is treated as a unified construct was proposed by "Allen, 2002". It is important to mention here that research instrument of this study is borrowed and adapted for local context from previous research. Furthermore, an 8-item scale given by Allen, (2002) was adapted to measure the OCB for the current research and a 16-item scale of ALQ developed by "Walumbwa et al. 2008" was adapted to measure the authentic leadership. Data collection tool was a structured questionnaire developed around a likert scale while having options as strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree.



Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Authentic leadership and OCB

### **Hypothesis Formulation**

H1: There is a positive relationship between authentic leadership and university teachers' OCB.

### **Data Analysis**

Before gathering the whole data, *Pilot testing* was implemented to check the reliability of both dependent and independent variables. A sample size of 50 teachers was collected from different universities representing each province of Pakistan. According to the results, the Cronbach's Alpha value for authentic leadership scale is  $\alpha = .838$ , whereas the Cronbach's Alpha value for OCB scale is  $\alpha = .830$  and it was found reliable scale to proceed with the study.

### **Findings**

Table 1

#### *Reliability Analysis*

	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Organizational citizenship Behaviors	.830	08
Authentic Leadership	.838	16

Furthermore, the normality of data was checked by using the p-plots technique. Data was found to be normal in the p-plots technique. To check the strength of the relationship between AL and OCB, a Pearson correlation test was run. Afterward linear regression was also applied to the data.

### **Correlational Analysis**

Pearson correlation is used to check the correlation between dependent and independent variable.



Table 2  
*Correlation Analysis between Authentic Leadership and Teachers' OCB*

Variables	AL	OCB
Authentic Leadership (AL) Pearson correlation	1	0.732
Significance. (2 tailed)	.000	.000
N	450	450
Organization Citizenship Behavior(OCB) Pearson Correlation	0.732	1
Significance. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
N	450	450

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 (2 tailed)*

The above table shows the correlation between the variables. The variables under investigation revealed a strong positive association with a magnitude of 0.732 which is significant at p-value less than 0.05. A strong relationship was found between AL and OCB which implies; this phenomenon is vital for successful functioning of University teachers. Research further highlighted the positive connection between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) is in support of past research. It suggests that if leaders in university at every level adopt an authentic behavior by displaying fairness towards teachers, reflect transparency in giving rewards and promotions, spread positivity and lead by example then they inspire their subordinates' (teachers) to exhibit more organizational citizenship behaviors. It verifies that reciprocal behavior is amplified between university teachers and their leaders.

### **Regression Analysis**

Table 3  
*Regression analysis between Authentic Leadership and Teachers' OCB*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.592 <sup>a</sup>	.285	.219	.326

The above table shows the value of multiple correlation R which is 0.592 and coefficient of determination R-square which is 0.285 which is also called the explanatory power of the model. Which shows that 28.5% change in OCB is caused due to AL and the remaining change is caused because of other aspects which are not counted in this model. The findings can be explained in this manner; AL has an impact on teachers' intention to participate voluntarily in the academic and cocurricular activities of the Universities. When teachers exhibit such type of voluntary behavior which help their colleagues as well as their students then the beneficial effect will trickle down throughout the university. Teachers will extend help to their colleagues in carrying out daily tasks by sharing useful information including course material such as course outlines and ppt slides etc. Students will also be benefited by teachers' supportive behaviors to their after-class queries. Teachers' voluntary behaviors will be very helpful in students career counseling and personal grooming too.

Table 4  
*Regression Coefficients*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1-Constant	1.888	0.190	0.618	9.002	.000
Authentic Leadership	0.592	0.52		10.935	.000

Dependent variable: Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 (2 tailed)

It is visible that  $\beta$  value is 0.592 at P value less than 0.05. The above analysis shows a strong positive relationship between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors of teachers. It supports H1 and rejects null hypothesis.

## Results

Teachers' are found to display OCBs towards their organization under the perception of authentic leadership. A strong positive relationship between perceived authentic leadership and teachers' OCB has been discovered in the current study which answers the proposed research question; that authentic leadership has a strong positive effect on the teachers' organizational citizenship behavior in Pakistani universities context. Study results are in affirmation with former research of Almori et al., (2019) who provided empirical evidence to support a strong association between AL and OCB in Jordanian companies. Likewise, Farid et al., (2018) verified the relationship between AL and OCB in banking sector of Pakistan. Research of Aziz and Quraishi (2018) empirically supported that authentic leadership holds a strong relationship with the employees' OCB and also influence the employees' in making their work roles further clearer. The findings of this study are in line with the pervious study by Iqbal et al., (2018) as well as Zubair and Khan (2018) that emphasized authentic leadership is critical in motivating discretionary behaviors of the employees in organizational setups. The study encourages us to conclude that it is vital for academic leaders to adopt positive behaviors and encourage two-way communication with their subordinates to provoke citizenship behaviors. We can conclude the above discussion by saying, if the organizational leaders set their personal interest aside and only focus on their employees' well-being, then employees will become positively motivated to contribute in the organization. When teachers focus on the academic needs of their students then they will focus on their academic progress and teachers OCB towards their profession will increase. Consequently, student teacher interaction will help the students to learn and grow intellectually. Blau, (1964) proposed theory of social exchange and stated when individuals perceive being treated well by their superiors and colleagues, they tend to reciprocate good behaviors towards organizations in the same way. In the context of social exchange theory (Blau,1964), this study aptly reinforces organizational citizenship behaviors and university leadership operating on the principal of reciprocity. When authentic leadership is adopted by university heads then teachers exhibit OCB.

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between authentic leadership of university administrators (departmental heads, Chairman, Principals etc.) and teachers' OCB in public sector universities in Pakistan. The study confirmed the positive relationship between variables under study. The current findings support the existing research (Aziz & Quraishi, 2018). Which shows a strong positive relationship between employees' OCB and AL. These studies support the argument that teaching and learning prospect in the universities is useful to induce OCB in the teachers. Walumbwa et al., (2010) also supported the same type of arguments. The relationship between the OCB and AL can be observed in different fields such as business and educational sectors, across all levels of the organization. Arshadi and Neisi (2019), studied the same type of relationship and his findings are almost the same. He also focused on the employees' self-determination, which is necessary for the enhancement of the performance. Tahira et al., (2019) said that authentic leaders play an important part in the development of the character of the employees 'which in return increase their motivational level and affiliation with the organization.

Leadership play a vital part in the success of an organization. The role of the leadership in a university set up is to appear transparent in all the policies and procedures which are necessary for the career advancement of the teaching staff. It is important for leadership to show transparency in awarding university teachers' educational scholarships for pursuing PhD and creating promotional opportunities along with their career. Another important aspect of university leadership is empowering teachers fairly in departmental auto rotative positions such as assigning them designations; program coordinator, journal editor or head of examination. All the previous mentioned initiatives of authentic leadership foster the confidence of university teachers in a constructive way and teachers become more inclined to reciprocate the university with their voluntarily behaviors to make it more successful.

## Limitations and Recommendations

This study adds to the exiting body of knowledge in the domain of authentic leadership and provides an insight for the role of authentic leadership in university teachers' OCB in Pakistani context. However, there are some limitations in this study which we have to look into for future studies.

- The first one is the issue of generalizability. This study has used a representative sample across the four provinces of the country. In future, each city of a province can be part of the sample to make research results more generalizable.

- The second constraint was to rely on a cross sectional design due to limited time available to complete the study. Data was collected only once from respondents without any comparison across time. It is recommended to conduct a longitudinal study in future to extend the scope of the research findings.
- This research scope is limited to public sector universities and the dynamics of public sector organizations are far different from private sector. Future research can also include private sector universities to compare the research findings.
- The model of study can be expanded in the future by adding different mediators and moderatos. In future both type of studies such as qualitative and quantitative can be conducted on this topic. Because in Pakistani context a lot of work needs to be done in the betterment of higher educational sector. In the education sector the employees' citizenship behavior is necessary to study.

The behavior of an individual plays an important part in the development of the society. OCB in the universities of Pakistan needs a lot of attention. It is believed that individuals affiliated with the organization follow their role model's ideology. So, there is an immense need to make such type of role models in the form of authentic leaders who lead followers in the right direction constructively.

## **Conclusion**

Authentic leadership is recognized as a vital component in inducing organizational citizenship behaviors in university teachers' in Pakistani context. Authentic leadership ensures good organizational environment by procedural and relational justice in all organizational matters which fosters the confidence of teachers in their leadership. A healthy interaction has higher likelihood to discourage any immoral behavior at teachers' part. Watermeyer et al., (2021) highlighted that universities should take initiatives to introduce training programs for teachers' character growth. In this way the teacher student interaction will increase which will lead to good educational environment.

The above study clearly shows that the success of the universities depends upon the good and authentic leadership which can encourage good organizational citizenship behavior in the university teachers. Moreover, the relevance of teachers' citizenship behaviors has been enhanced in the global pandemic (Covid-19) due to online teaching as teachers have to put extra effort for student's mental engagement to facilitate learning. During, Covid-19, online teaching mode has also enhanced the importance of teachers' student interaction through social media such as zoom classes, sending emails and occasionally exchanging texts too. The need of discretionary behaviors of teachers has been amplified to keep effective learning in place during this global pandemic. Therefore, a trust-based relationship between teachers and students is also very important at the university level teaching. The role of teachers is recognized as the back bone of every nation. Because, they are an inspiration to develop a good nation.

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