Authentic leadership and its effect on employees' organizational citizenship behaviours

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The studies that have verified the positive association of authentic leadership with organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs), have used global measures of both constructs. Therefore, the goal of this work is to analyze the effect of authentic leadership on employees' OCBs, specifically focusing on the relations of the four components of authentic leadership with the individual and organizational dimensions of the OCBs. The participants of this study were 220 Spanish employees (30.9% men and 69.1% women) who completed a questionnaire that included the variables of interest in this study: Authentic Leadership, OCB and Sociobiographical control variables. The results, obtained with stepwise multiple regression analysis, show that two components of authentic leadership—moral perspective and relational transparency—present significant relationships with OCB. Moreover, authentic leadership is a better predictor of employees' OCB when these behaviors are impersonal and directed towards the organization than when they are directed towards other people. These results have practical implications for human resources management in organizations, especially in selection processes and when training top executives.

Liderazgo auténtico y su efecto en los comportamientos de ciudadanía organizacional de los seguidores. Los estudios que han probado asociación positiva del Liderazgo Auténtico con los OCB han empleado medidas globales de ambos constructos. Este trabajo pretende profundizar más en el efecto del Liderazgo Auténtico sobre los OCB, concentrándose en analizar la relación específica de sus cuatro componentes con las dimensiones individual y organizacional de los OCB. Los participantes de este estudio cuasi experimental fueron 220 empleados españoles (30,9% hombres y 69,1% mujeres) que respondieron a un cuestionario compuesto por las variables a estudiar: Liderazgo Auténtico, Comportamientos de Ciudadanía Organizacional y variables sociobiográficas. Los resultados obtenidos mediante análisis de regresión múltiple stepwise indican que dos componentes del liderazgo auténtico—perspectiva moral y transparencia relacional— se relacionan significativamente con los OCB. Adicionalmente, el liderazgo auténtico es mejor predictor de los OCB de los seguidores cuando estos comportamientos son impersonales y están dirigidos a la organización en sí misma que cuando están dirigidos a personas. Estos resultados tienen implicaciones prácticas para la gestión de los recursos humanos en las organizaciones, especialmente en los procesos de selección y formación de directivos.

Currently, one of the increasingly important explanatory models of leadership is the model of authentic leadership, seen as a central aspect of diverse forms of positive leadership, whether it be charismatic, transformational, or ethical (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). For example, with regard to charismatic leadership, authentic leadership provides a basis to understand why a leader is considered to have charisma. According to Avolio and Gardner, the origin of the influence of leadership lies in the nature of the leader and his exemplary behavior. This may cause the leader to be perceived

as charismatic by his employees in as much as he genuinely represents the group he leads and, moreover, his behavior reflects both his own values and those of the group (Williams, Rajnandini, Bryan, & Kevin, 2011). Likewise, authentic leadership is related to the four behavioral dimensions of transformational leadership (charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) proposed by Bass (1985). But authentic leadership does not appeal to inspiration in order to build stable and lasting relations with the employees. In fact, the process by which the employees internalize the leader's beliefs and values does not lie in resources that promote inspiration (for example, dramatic presentations of the use of symbols), but in the leader's morality, dedication, and transparent behavior. In comparison with ethical leadership (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005), authentic leadership includes more than being ethical, because it is based on three other components: self-awareness, balanced information processing, and transparency in the relations between the leader and the employees

(Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

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Currently, there is increasing interest in the forms of positive leadership because of the evidence that supports the idea that positivity increases well-being and job performance (Avolio et al., 2004; Fredrickson, 2009; Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007). Thus, diverse investigations show that the greater the authentic leadership, the greater the employees' satisfaction with the supervisor, their organizational commitment, extra effort, and organizational citizenship behavior (hereafter, OCB) (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009; Moriano, Molero, & Lévy-Mangin, 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey, & Oke, 2009; Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, & Avolio, 2010). Taking into account the positive relation between the employees' attitudes and business results such as, for example, productivity, benefits, or client satisfaction (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002), the perceptions of authentic leadership not only positively affect employees' work attitudes and happiness, but they can also-at least indirectly—have a favorable impact on the performance of any company (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009).

The general goal of this work is to analyze more in depth the influence of authentic leadership on the employees' OCB. Specifically, we propose to study the relations of the four components of authentic leadership proposed by Walumbwa et al., (2008) with the two dimensions of OCB defined by Williams and Anderson (1991): citizenship behavior directed towards individuals (OCBI) and citizenship behavior directed towards the organization (OCBO).

Authentic leadership components

Authentic leadership is defined as a pattern of behavior that promotes and is inspired both by positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate to foster more self-awareness, internalized moral, balanced information processing, and transparency in the relations between the leader and the employees (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Below are described the four components of authentic leadership that have been found with the *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire* (ALQ, Walumbwa et al., 2008), an instrument recently validated in Spain by Moriano et al., (2011).

Self-awareness. This factor refers to various facets of leaders that involve their self-awareness in values, identity, emotions, objectives, and goals, as well as of the consequences of their acts on the employees. Knowing oneself means more than being aware of one's own thoughts, values, and motives; self-knowledge also implies the awareness of one's own emotions as well as the knowledge of contradictory internal aspects (Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies, Frederick, & Nahrgang, 2005).

Balanced processing. This implies objectively analyzing facts and data, both external and self-referential (Gardner et al., 2005). It means that the leaders do not distort, exaggerate, or ignore information and they objectively analyze all the important data before making a decision. This allows them to avoid bias in their perceptions due to self-defense, self-exaltation and/or self-protection (Kernis, 2003). Balanced processing is at the base of personal integrity (Ilies et al., 2005).

Moral perspective. The behavior of such authentic leaders rests on moral and ethical standards in the face of possible group, social, or organizational pressure; it produces ethical and transparent behaviors, aimed at serving the common group interests, which are sometimes in direct conflict with the leader's own personal interests (Ilies et al., 2005). This type of behaviors implies an integrated form of self-regulation (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

Relational transparency. The need to openly share information is a key facet of authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). One of the characteristics of such relational transparency is the fact of maintaining relations with the employees based on sincerity and honesty. As stated by Goldman and Kernis (2002), relational transparency is an active process of self-disclosure and development of intimacy and trust with the employees, being sincere about oneself and communicating both positive and negative aspects.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

OCBs can be understood as individual behaviors that are voluntary, and are not directly or explicitly defined by the formal reward system. Over time, they promote the efficacious and efficient functioning of organizations (Organ, 1988). In a recent metaanalysis (Podsakoff, Whiting, & Blume, 2009), carried out with 168 independent samples, it was found that OCBs were related to a series of organizational benefits such as productivity, efficiency, cost reduction, client satisfaction, and decrease in employee turnover. According to Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine, and Bachrach (2000), these behaviors affect the efficacy and efficiency of organizations, a) increasing managerial and coworker productivity; b) freeing resources so they can be used for more productive purposes; c) reducing the need for the use of scarce resources in maintenance functions; d) helping to coordinate activities through work teams; e) strengthening the ability of the organization to attract and retain the best employees; f) increasing performance stability of the organization; and g) enabling the organization to adapt more effectively to changes in the environment.

There is no consensus about the number or forms of OCBs. However, the most widely accepted OCB categories (Podsakoff et al., 2000) have been: (a) helping behavior, which implies helping coworkers to resolve difficulties at work; (b) a sportsperson's attitude, understood as the act of maintaining a positive attitude when things do not turn out as desired; (c) organizational loyalty, which consists of protecting the organization, supporting and upholding its goals; (d) obedience, understood as the internalization and acceptance of the person, the rules, norms, and procedures of the organization; (e) civic virtue, characterized by employees' participation and active interest in the life of the organization; (f) self-development, which includes workers' behaviors to engage in processes of improvement that allow them to better perform their job; and (g) individual initiative, which implies creativity and innovation to improve personal performance in the tasks of the organization. This proliferation of the ways that the OCBs manifest has led authors to reflect on the number and the relevance of the dimensions that should be considered within citizenship behaviors (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). These authors argue that if two forms of manifestation of the OCBs have different antecedents and effects, it is reasonable to state that they are, at least partially, different dimensions.

Recently, various investigators have focused on a bidimensional approach of the OCBs, based on the consideration of two different receivers of the behavior (Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder, & Penner, 2006; Finkelstein, 2006; Finkelstein & Penner, 2004; Williams & Anderson, 1991). In this sense, they propose, on the one hand, organizational citizenship behaviors directed towards individuals (hereafter, OCBI). These are prosocial behaviors directed towards specific people within the organization. The help may be related

to work or to personal problems. Among this type of behaviors are helping behaviors and sportspersonship. On the other hand, rest of the aforementioned types of OCB are directed towards the organization (hereafter, OCBO), because they are preferentially directed to benefit the organization as a whole.

There are scarce empirical studies of these two dimensions of OCBs in the Spanish context, but the work of Dávila and Finkelstein (2010) verifies the existence of these dimensions and their dependence on different antecedents. The present investigation, therefore, proposes to advance our conceptual comprehension of OCBs, verifying that there are different antecedents for each dimension, as will be explained in detail below. In this sense, we follow the recommendations of Spitzmuller, Van Dyne, and Ilies (2008).

Relations between authentic leadership and OCB

Meta-analytical studies have shown that leadership behaviors correlate positively (ranges .09 to .35) with employees' OCBs (Podsakoff et al., 2000). This is particularly applicable to authentic leadership behaviors because they facilitate a fair and open work environment that has direct effects on employees' attitudes, producing high levels of satisfaction, trust, commitment, and readiness to perform extra-role behaviors (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio et al., 2004; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Various processes have been proposed through which authentic leaders could influence their employees: positive modeling, emotional contagion, personal and social identification, increase of trust in the leaders, positive social exchanges, and support of self-determination (Ilies et al., 2005).

When displaying high levels of self-awareness, balanced processing, ethical and transparent behaviors in their interactions with their employees, authentic leaders are capable of increasing their employees' personal identification with them—in the sense of their becoming a model and reference for the employees to follow—and employees' social identification with the group and organization. In turn, personal and social identification will produce an increase in employees' trust and optimism that will result in an increase of satisfaction and commitment to the leader and the group (Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005). Trust and commitment, in turn, have positive consequences on OCBs (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Wong & Cummings, 2009).

In a recent study (Walumbwa et al., 2010) carried out with 397 employees and their 129 immediate supervisors, the data showed that authentic leadership behaviors were positively related to employees' OCBs ($\beta = .20, p < .01$), and that relation was mediated by the level of the employees' identification with their supervisor and their feelings of empowerment.

The studies that have verified the positive association of authentic leadership with OCBs, both at an individual level (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2010), and at a group level (Walumbwa et al., 2009), have used global measures of both constructs. Therefore, the present work proposes as a goal to study more in depth the influence of this type of leadership on OCBs, focusing on the relation of their four components with the OCBIs and the OCBOs.

However, there is evidence (Barling & Cooper, 2008) that supports the idea that the employees do not perform OCBs uniformly. A review of this type of behavior shows that there are

different antecedents for OCBO and OCBI; high work demands, routine tasks, and work environments characterized by a low level of interdependence among the employees are negatively associated with the OCBIs; quality in interpersonal relations, intensity of friendships, exchanges among team members, cohesion, and cooperative group rules are positively related to the OCBIs (Spitzmuller et al., 2008). In a study carried out by Kamdar and Van Dyne (2007), it was proposed that exchange relations among the team members (Team Member Exchange, TMX) would better predict helping behaviors towards coworkers—which are considered a type of OCBI-than exchange relations between team members and their leader (Leader Member Exchange, LMX). The results showed slightly higher correlations between TMX and helping behaviors towards coworkers (r= .39, p<.01) than between LMX and such behaviors (r = .32, p < .01) and, also, TMX positively predicted helping behaviors towards coworkers (β = .20, p<.01).

Therefore, a second goal is proposed in this work: to analyze possible differences in the influence of authentic leadership on the two dimensions of the OCBs. It is expected that the four components of authentic leadership will have a higher impact on the OCBs that the employees direct towards the organization (OCBOs) than on the behaviors they direct towards other employees (OCBIs), because the quality of their interpersonal relations could influence the positive effect of authentic leadership on such behaviors.

Method

Participants and procedure

The participants of this study were 227 employees (30.9% men and 69.1% women) who worked in 40 groups, belonging to 22 organizations in the Region of Madrid. The mean age of the interviewees was 33.18 years (SD=16.5); mean time of permanence in the organization was 8.5 years (SD= 8.4), and 4.27 years (SD= 4.8) working with their current leader. The educational level of the participants was predominantly university level (65.6%), followed by those who had middle studies such as High School, Pre-University, or Professional Training (23%), and those with primary or other studies (11.4%). The activity in which they worked was quite varied: psychosocial intervention and community services (26.1%), general services (18.5%), health (14.1%), education and culture (14.1%), trade, tourism, and hotel business (10.9%), aeronautics and telecommunications (6.6%), car industry and illumination (3.5%), human resources (3.1%), and others (4.9%). Depending on the type of organization in which they worked, 65.6% performed their work in private organizations, and 34.4% worked in the Public Administration; of the organizations, most of them (58.1%) were large (more than 250 employees), 26.9% were medium (between 50 and 250 workers), 12.3% were small (from 10 to 49 workers) and 2.6% were micro (less than 10 workers).

To recruit the participants, firstly, a document was elaborated and sent to 150 Directors of Human Resources Departments, in which the goals of the study were explained and participation of the organization requested. Subsequently, we met with representatives from the organizations that answered (22), so they could inform us which group or groups of employees would respond to the questionnaire, providing certain requirements were met: their participation was completely voluntary, they were members of the same department, section, or work group, even

if their jobs or functions were not similar, and there were at least 4 employees coordinated by the same leader in each one of these work groups. The participants completed a questionnaire that included the variables of interest in this study. Before handing out the questionnaire to the participants, the condition of guaranteed anonymity in the data treatment was stressed. The administration of the questionnaire lasted approximately 20 minutes and was carried out in the second trimester of 2011.

Instruments

The questionnaire used in this study was made up of the following sections:

Authentic Leadership. We used the Spanish version (Moriano et al., 2011) of the ALO (Walumbwa et al., 2008), made up of 16 items. This is Likert-type scale that requests the employees to rate the frequency with which each statement of the questionnaire matched the leadership style of their supervisor, ranging between 0 (Not at all) and 4 (Always or almost always). The questionnaire is made up of the four above-mentioned factors: self-awareness (4 items, i.e., "He/she has a fairly exact idea about how other people see his/her leadership capacities"), balanced processing (3 items, i.e., "He/she analyzes the relevant data before reaching a decision"), internalized moral perspective (4 items, i.e., "He/ she displays beliefs that are consistent with his/her actions"), and relational transparency (5 items, i.e., "My leader encourages everyone to express their opinion"). The analysis of internal consistency of the scale showed satisfactory reliability for all the Authentic Leadership factors: Self-awareness (α= .85), Balanced Processing (α = .78), Moral Perspective (α = .81), and Relational Transparency (α = .83).

OCB. We used the adaptation to Spanish (Dávila & Finkelstein, 2010) of the scale designed by Lee and Allen (2002). This instrument assesses two dimensions: OCBOs ("I show interest in the image of the organization") and OCBIs ("I devote time to helping others who have problems either related or unrelated to work"). This scale, made up of 16 items with a 5-point Likert-type response format requests participants to report the frequency with which each statement of the questionnaire matches their own behaviors at the work setting, ranging from 0 (*Not at all*) to 4 (*Always or almost always*). Reliability analysis revealed fairly satisfactory internal consistency for each dimension: OCBI (α = .80) and OCBO (α = .90).

Sociobiographical control variables. In the last part of the instrument refers to variables about the employees (sex, age, educational level, profession, job tenure in the organization and with their current leader) and about the organization (size depending on the number of employees, typology, and activity sector).

Data analysis

The SPSS program version 19 was used to carry out the statistical analyses. Initially, we performed an exploratory analysis of the stem and leaf plots to identify anomalous cases that could alter the results, eliminating 7 subjects due to their extreme response scores. To analyze the influence and predictive capacity of the authentic leadership components on the employees' OCBIs and OCBOs, we conducted a multiple regression analysis. The procedure of entering all the significant variables of the model

in the regression equation is not the most adequate, because the variance of the model increases when increasing the number of regressors. In order to obtain the most parsimonious model, with the optimum number of nonredundant, independent variables we applied the stepwise method. This method optimizes the fit of the model and the proportion of increment in the total variance of the dependent variable that is accounted for. Not including some of the regressor variables in this type of models is usually related to the possibility of multicolinearity among the independent variables, so that, statistically speaking, many of them can be eliminated because they do not contribute any sufficiently significant additional explanation of the variance (López González, 1998).

Results

The descriptive results (Table 1) revealed medium levels of authentic leadership perceived by the employees in their leaders, with relational transparency being the authentic leadership component that obtained the highest score (M= 2.39, SD= 0.92) and self-awareness the lowest (M= 2.08, SD= 0.93). With regard to the employees' OCBs, somewhat higher values than the mid-point of the scale were obtained, with higher values for the OCBIs (M= 2.74, SD= 0.60) than for the OCBOs (M= 2.39, SD= 0.87). Next, the correlations between the variables of the study were calculated, obtaining significant and positive relationships among the four dimensions of authentic leadership, and between them and the employees' OCBIs and OCBOs, with higher correlations between the authentic leadership components and the OCBOs than with the OCBIs (Table 1).

The results concerning the OCBIs (see Table 2) showed an initial model that corresponds to the control variables, in which their predictive capacity was nonsignificant, and that the employees' sociodemographic variables and the organization variables did not affect the employees' OCBIs. The second model, corresponding to authentic leadership, only introduced authentic leaders' relational transparency. The value of R^2 increased significantly with regard to the first model and indicated that relational transparency had a positive impact on employees' OCBIs (β = .34, p<.01).

Next, we analyzed the influence of authentic leadership on the employees' OCBOs (see Table 3). The first model corresponds to the control variables, in which only the size of the organization was significant, with a negative relation with the employees' OCBOs. The second model entered relational transparency of authentic leadership, the value of R^2 increased significantly with regard to the first model ($\Delta R^2 = .22$, p < .01), indicating that relational

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Self-awareness	2.08	0.93	-				
2. Balanced processing	2.13	0.96	.79**	-			
3. Moral perspective	2.37	0.97	.71**	.71**	-		
4. Relational transparency	2.39	0.92	.77**	.74**	.77**	_	
5. OCBI	2.74	0.60	.25**	.29**	.31**	.31**	-
6. OCBO	2.39	0.87	.40**	.40**	.46**	.48**	.49*

transparency positively affected the employees' OCBOs (β = .48, p<.01). The third model also entered the moral perspective of the leaders. The value of R² increased slightly, albeit significantly, with regard to the second model (ΔR^2 = .02, p<.01), indicating that authentic leaders' moral perspective (β = .22, p<.05) positively affected the employees' OCBOs. In the third model, relational transparency was also entered and it maintained its significant impact (β = .31, p<.01) on the OCBOs, although its weight was lower than in the second model.

The analyses have also shown that the fit of the model was better in the OCBOs than in the OCBIs. The authentic leadership components accounted for 14.3% of the variance of the OCBIs

Regression analysis of authentic leadership on OCBI						
Predictors	Model 1	Model 2				
	β	β				
Block 1						
Gender	.05	.08				
Age	.08	.07				
Studies	.07	.04				
Job tenure	.04	.01				
Time with leader	13	13				
Size of organization	03	01				
Type of organization	03	04				
Block 2						
Self-awareness		-				
Balanced processing		-				
Moral perspective		-				
Relational transparency		.34**				
	_	$\Delta R^2 = .117^{**}$				
	$R^2 = .026$	R ² = .143				
	F= .773	F= 27.049**				

** p<.01

p<.05; ** p<.01

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	
Predictors	β	β	β	
Block 1				
Gender	05	03	-02	
Age	01	02	01	
Studies	.14	.10	.10	
Job tenure	.06	.02	.02	
Time with leader	.08	.07	.06	
Size of organization	16*	13*	13*	
Type of organization	.06	.06	.05	
Block 2				
Self-awareness		_	_	
Balanced processing		_	_	
Moral perspective		_	.22*	
Relational transparency		.48**	.31**	
	_	$\Delta R^2 = .225^{**}$	$\Delta R^2 = .018^*$	
	$R^2 = .041$	$R^2 = .266$	$R^2 = .284$	
	F= 1.23**	F= 60.94**	F= 5.049**	

and 28.4% of the variance of the OCBOs. These results allow us to partially confirm that authentic leadership is a better predictor of the employees' OCBOs than of their OCBIs.

Discussion and conclusions

The main goal of this work was to analyze the influence of the four components of authentic leadership on employees' OCBs. The results have shown that authentic leadership positively affects employees' OCBs, but differentially. OCBIs were only significantly affected by relational transparency, whereas OCBOs are affected both by moral perspective and relational transparency, although the latter has a greater impact. These results are similar to those obtained by Wong and Cummings (2009) because, in their study, only the relational transparency component of authentic leadership showed a positive relation with OCBs. The present work distinguishes the two dimensions of OCBs and finds a positive influence between another component of authentic leadership, moral perspective, although only with OCBOs.

With regard to the other two authentic leadership components (self-awareness and balanced processing), we expected that they would also have a significant relation with employees' OCBs, but the results show the contrary.

Some theoretical approaches (Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005; Kernis, 2003) argue that the four components of authentic leadership may be interdependent. Hughes (2005) has argued that relational transparency is a result of the leader's self—awareness of his goals, motives, identity, values, and emotions. In contrast to the other three authentic leadership components, relational transparency could be the best reflection of the pattern of relations that leaders establish with others in the organization, as it is the key component proposed to generate trust in the employees (Ilies et al., 2005). The results of this study support the idea that the influence of authentic leadership on employees' OCBs is stronger when these behaviors are impersonal and are directed towards the organization, than when they are directed towards individuals.

However, it was found that the increase in the size of the organization is accompanied by a decrease in the OCBOs, although this variable does not affect the employees' OCBIs. These results support the existence of different antecedents for each of the two dimensions of the OCBs, and, following (Spitzmuller et al., 2008), it allows confirming the bidimensional approach of the OCBs.

Implications for the Management of Human Resources

This study has shown that the leaders' role is a key factor in employees' behavior. The results provide support to the model of authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003) and, in accordance with previous research (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Moriano et al., 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2010; Wong & Cummings, 2009), it shows that this leadership style can positively affect the employees' behavior. In this sense, it is necessary for organizations to have authentic leaders and to design their processes of selection, promotion, and training programs, considering the leaders' relational transparency and internalized moral perspective as relevant variables, because these authentic leadership dimensions stimulate employees' OCBs, which are positively related to the efficacy and efficiency of the organizations (Podsakoff et al., 2000; Podsakoff et al., 2009).

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