

Effect of Resilience on Work Engagement under Authentic Leadership

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Abstract:

Background: Authentic leadership is a suitable leadership model that results directly or indirectly in more positive workplace behaviors and attitudes, including employees' resilience and work engagement. **Aim:** To assess the effects of resilience on work engagement under authentic leadership. **Design:** A descriptive correlational design was used for this study. **Setting:** This study was conducted at El- Rajehy and Al Orman, Hospitals. **Subjects:** Convenient sample was used in this study total number (345) which includes (305) nurses and (40) head nurses in the predetermined setting. **Results:** The highest percentages of nurses who have good work engagement and high resilience were working in Al Orman Hospital. Moreover, the head nurses working in Al Orman Hospital had the highest mean scores on authentic leadership. **Conclusion:** There was a strong positive correlation between resilience and work engagement with highly statistically significant differences, and there was a positive correlation between authentic leadership and resilience with highly statistically significant differences. **Recommendation:** Managers should constantly evaluate employee resilience levels and develop strategies and use resources to ensure that employees are encouraged to adopt good work engagement attitudes.

Keywords: Resilience, Work engagement, Authentic leadership

Introduction:

A theory of authentic leadership has emerged over the last several years from the intersection of leadership, ethics, and positive organizational behavior and scholarship literature (Cooper & Nelson, 2018).

Authenticity can be defined as “owning one’s personal experiences, be their thoughts, emotions, needs, preferences, or beliefs, processes captured by the injunction to know oneself” and behaving according to the true self (Walumbwa et al. 2018).

Moreover, authentic leadership defined “as a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated

positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development” (Luthans ,& Avolio ,2019).

In addition, authentic leaders described as individuals who have the following attributes: (a) “the role of the leader is a central component of their self-concept, (b) they have achieved a high level of self-resolution or self-concept clarity, (c) their goals are self-concordant, and (d) their behavior is self-expressive” (Shamir and Eilam, 2020).

Authentic leadership is a pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-

development (Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt, 2019).

Self-awareness refers to the ability demonstrate an understanding of how one derives and makes meaning of the world and how that meaning making process impacts the way one views themselves over time and understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses and the multifaceted nature. Relational transparency refers to presenting one's authentic self to others. Meanwhile, balanced processing refers to leaders who objectively analyze all relevant data before coming to a decision; internalized moral perspective refers to an internalized and integrated form of self-regulation (Luthans, & Avolio, 2019).

Authentic leadership is defined as encompassing the positive psychological capacities of confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience (George et al., 2021).

A resilience perspective promotes a new way of seeing, by arguing that organizations are more effective than threat rigidity and what other deterministic perspectives allow. Although leadership has always been more difficult in challenging times, the unique stressors that organizations are facing worldwide today call for a renewed focus on what constitutes genuine leadership, and the need for authentic leadership has become obvious (Zehira & Narcikara, 2019).

Resilience is the successful adaptation to life tasks despite social disadvantages or highly adverse conditions and the maintenance of positive adjustment under challenging environmental and interior conditions where the organization emerges from those conditions strengthened, more powerful and more resourceful (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2019).

Resilience probably occurs when individuals have access to a sufficient amount of high - quality resources, such as human, social, emotional and material capital, that they make individuals develop competence. Moreover, it is more likely to occur when individuals have experiences that allow them to

encounter success and build self-efficacy that motivates them to succeed in their future endeavors (Masten, 2020).

Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind, characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working. Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, and challenge. Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2019).

Engagement refers to involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, absorption, focused effort, and energy. Employees who are engaged in their work are fully connected with their work roles. They are bursting with energy, dedicated to their work, and immersed in their work activities (Kahn, 2018).

Significance of the study:

According to positive psychology and organizational literature authentic leadership is a suitable leadership model for resilient organizations with high levels of organizational efficiency (Zehira & Narcikara, 2016). So, researchers intended to study the authentic leadership style, which is the most famous leadership style among positive organizational scholarship researchers and its effects on resilience and work engagement.

Aim of the study:

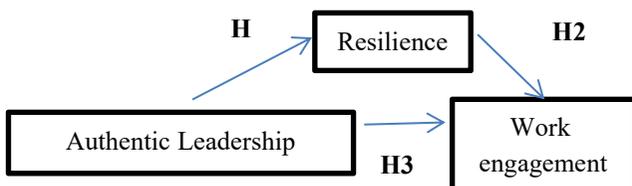
This study was investigate the effects of resilience on work engagement under authentic leadership.

Research hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant relationship between resilience and work engagement.

H2: There is a significant relationship between authentic leadership and resilience

H3: Resilience has a mediating effect on the relationship between authentic leadership and work engagement.



Subjects and Method

1-Technical design

1.1) Study design: A descriptive correlational study design was used.

1.2) Setting: This study was conducted at El- Rajehy and Al Orman Hospitals.

1.3) Subject: Convenient sample was used in this study total number (345) which includes (305) nurses and (40) head nurses which includes (305) nurses and (40) head nurses in the predetermined setting.

1.4) Data collection tools: Study tool (I): Personal characteristics for the subject under study: it included hospital name, age, sex, marital status, educational qualification, and experience.

Study tool (II): Resilience Scale: This tool was developed by **Connor and Davidson, (2009)** and consists of 25 items. The items are measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not true at all) to 5 (true all the time), with lower scores indicating lower resilience. According to **Scali et al., (2012)** score interpretation varies according to the total score of 25 items, which (reaches 125): scores from 83 to 125 indicate high resilience, scores from 41 to 82 indicate normal resilience, and scores from 25 to 40 indicate low resilience.

Study tool (III): The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ): This tool was developed by **Walumbwa et al. (2018)** and is used to measure head nurse's perceptions of

authentic leadership. It consists of 16 items divided into four dimensions, based on the following four authentic components: relational transparency (5 items), balanced processing (3 items), self-awareness (4 items), and internalized moral perspective (4 items). The items are measured on a three-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (disagree) to 3 (agree), with higher scores indicating higher levels of authenticity.

Study tool (IV): Work Engagement

This tool was developed by **Lateef, (2021)** and is used to assess nurses' work engagement. It consists of (17 items) divided into the following three dimensions: vigor (6 items), dedication (5 items), and absorption (6 items).

Scoring system:

The responding scoring system was measured on a three-points Likert scale : 1 indicates "never" , 2 indicates "a few times a month" ,and 3 indicates "every day", according to how often the participant experienced the feeling described. Scores from (1 to 34) indicate poor work engagement, whereas scores from (35 to 51) indicate good work engagement.

2- Administrative design: Official approval from the Dean of Nursing Faculty - Assiut University was sent to (Medical and Nursing) Directors of El- Rajehy and Al Orman Hospitals. After that, it was distributed to all departmental heads to collect the necessary data for this study.

2.1) Ethical considerations: The research proposal was approved by the Ethics Committee, Faculty of Nursing, Assiut University. The study was conducted following common ethical principles in clinical research, and then, oral agreements were obtained from all participants to participate in this study. The subjects have the right to refuse/ participate/ withdraw from the study without any rationale at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, and the subjects' privacy was considered during the collection of data; all

obtained data were used for research purposes only.

3- Operational design: The actual implementation steps of the study were as follows: preparatory phase, validity, pilot study, and field work.

3.1) Preparatory phase: After reviewing the available literature concerning the topics of the study, which took approximately 3 months, from the beginning of September 2021 to the end of November 2021. The study tools were translated to Arabic.

3.2) Pilot study:

A pilot study was conducted to examine the feasibility, clarity, and practicability of the data collection tools. It was conducted involving 10% of the nurses (31) and head nurses (4) from El-Rajehy and Al Orman Hospitals. The results of the pilot study were collected in December 2021. The data collected from the pilot study were reviewed and used to make the necessary modifications before the finalization of the study tools for data collection.

Validity:

Face validity of the study tools was assessed to ensure accurate comprehension, which was performed through a jury (expert opinions) composed of three professors and two assistant professors from the Nursing Administration and Community Health Nursing Departments, Faculty of Nursing, Assiut University. Moreover, content validity was assessed and analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis test to assure the importance, clearness, and accountability of each item of the study tools, and the result was ≥ 1.9 for all items of the study tools (resilience and authentic leadership), so all items in the study tools were confirmed.

3.3) Fieldwork:

After obtaining oral consent, the study tools were administrated to the participating nursing staff through self-administered

questionnaires. Each subject took approximately 15 min to fulfill the questionnaires. The entire duration of data collection took approximately 2 months, from January 2022 to February 2022.

4- Statistical analysis:

Data entry and statistical analysis were performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 32.0. Data are presented using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the inter-relationships among ranked variables. P-values of less than 0.05 were used to indicate statistical significance.

Results:

Table (1): Showed that 82.5% and 60% of the head nurses under study were female and married respectively, 100% of them had a Bachelor's degree in nursing. Moreover, the age of 55% of the head nurses ranged from 26 to 30 years, and the years of experience of 75% of the head nurses range from 1 to 5 years. In contrast, the table showed that 70.2 % and 61.6 % of the nurses under study were female and married respectively. Then, 80% of them have Technical Institute of Nursing. Of the nurses under study, 53.1% were aged more than 30 years, and 49.2% had years of experience ranging from 6 to 10 years.

Figure (1): illustrated that the highest percentage of nurses who had good work engagement was working in Al Orman Hospital (95%). Meanwhile, the lowest percentage of nurses who had poor work engagement was working in El-Rajehy Hospital (60%).

Figure (2): revealed that the highest percentage of nurses who had high resilience was working in Al Orman Hospital (85%). Meanwhile, the lowest percentage of nurses who had low resilience was working in El-Rajehy Hospital (65%).

Figure (3): illustrated that the head nurses working in Al Orman Hospital had the

highest mean score of authentic leadership (75.65). Meanwhile, the head nurses working in El- Rejeby Hospital had the lowest mean score of authentic leadership (42).

Table (2): showed that the head nurses working in El-Rajehy Hospital had the highest mean score on relational transparency (**12.88±2.23**).

Table (3): showed that the highest mean score related to work engagement was on absorption (**10.25±1.54**).

Table (4): showed that a positive correlation between all dimensions of authentic

leadership with highly statistically significant differences (**p-value ≤ 0.001**).

Table (5): showed that a positive correlation between all dimensions of work engagement with highly statistically significant differences (**p-value ≤ 0.001**).

Table (6): showed that a strong positive correlation between resilience and work engagement with highly statistically significant differences. Furthermore, a positive correlation was observed between authentic leadership and resilience with highly statistically significant differences. Finally, a positive correlation was found between authentic leadership and work engagement with highly statistically significant differences.

Table (1): Distribution of personal characteristics for the subjects:

Personal characteristics	Total		Head nurse		Nurse	
	No. (n=345)	%	No. (n=40)	%	No. (n=305)	%
Age						
20-25 years	80	23	11	27.5	69	22.6
26-30 years	96	28	22	55	74	24.3
>30 years	169	48	7	17.5	162	53.1
Sex						
Male	98	28.41	7	17.5	91	29.8
Female	247	71.59	33	82.5	214	70.2
Marital status						
Single	133	38.55	16	40.0	117	38.4
Married	212	61.45	24	60.0	188	61.6
Hospital						
Al Orman	200	57.97	20	50.0	180	59.0
El- Rajehy	145	42.03	20	50.0	125	41.0
Experience						
1-5 years	100	28.99	30	75	70	22.9
6-10 years	160	46.38	10	25	150	49.2
>10 years	85	24.63	0	0	85	27.9
Qualification						
Bachelor degree of nursing	40	11.32	40	100.0	0	0.0
Technical Institute of Nursing	244	71	0	0.0	244	80.0
Secondary school of nursing diploma	61	17.68	0	0.0	61	20.0
Working position						
Head nurse	40	11.6				
Nurses	305	88.4				

Figure (1): Distribution of work engagement of the nurses under study (n = 305).

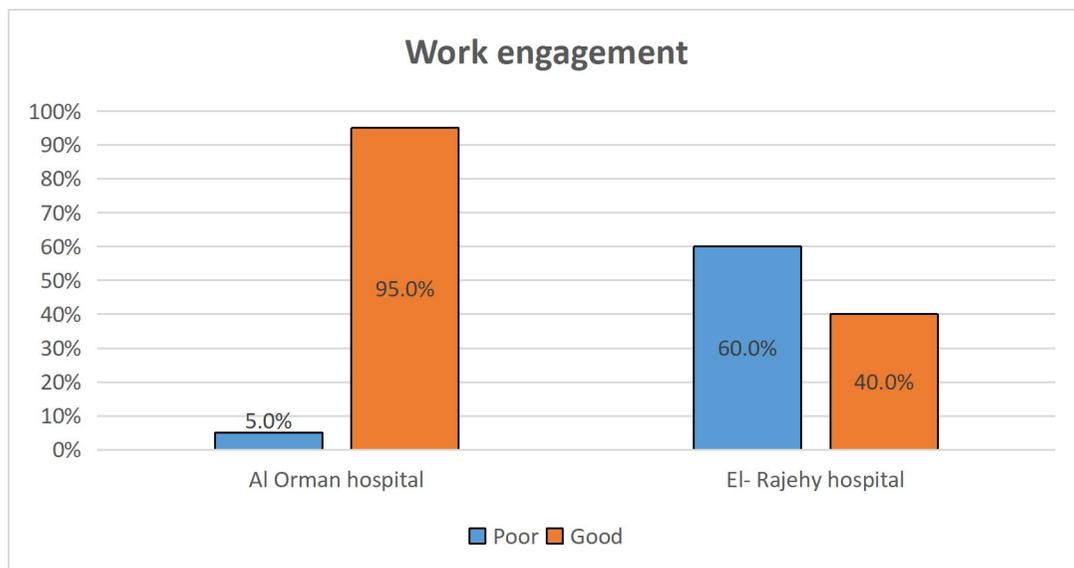


Figure (2): Distribution of Nurses resilience (n = 305).

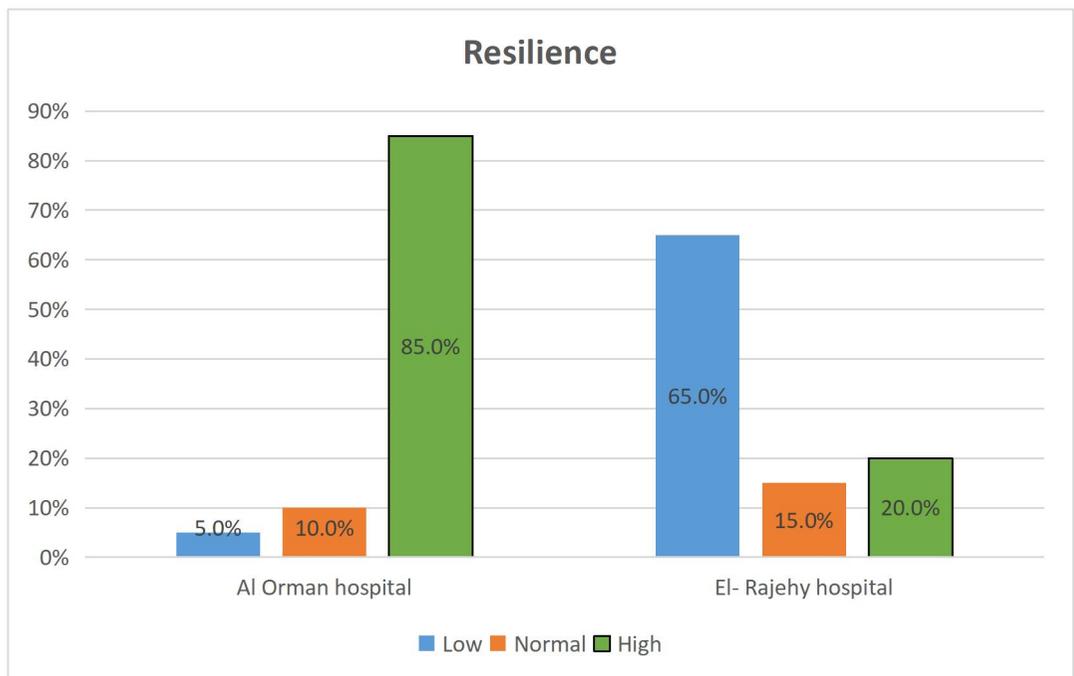


Figure (3): Distribution of authentic leadership among the head nurses under study at Al Orman and El-Rajehy Hospitals (n = 40).

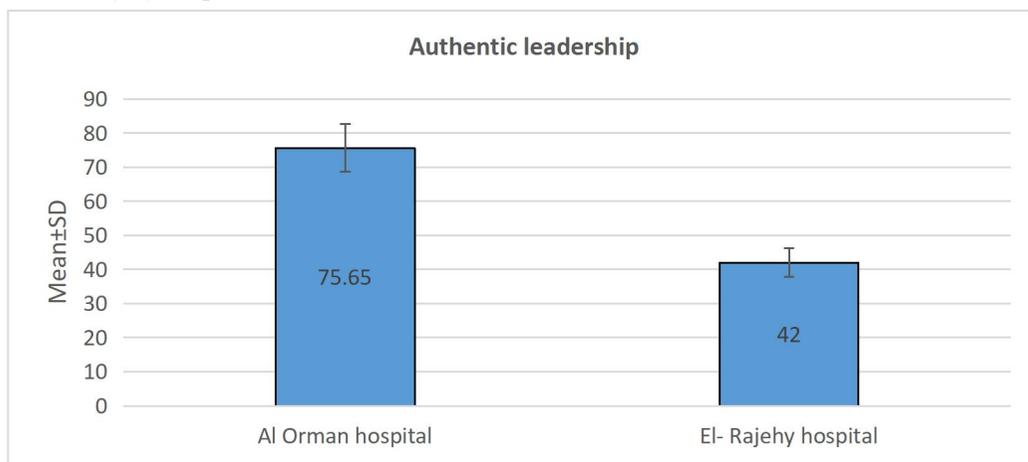


Table (2): Mean scores of authentic leadership dimensions for the head nurses under study (n=40):

Authentic leadership dimensions	Mean ± SD
Relational transparency	12.88±2.23
Balanced processing	8.13±1.07
Self-awareness	10.23±1.76
Internalized moral perspective	10.1±2.02

Table (3): Mean scores of work engagement dimensions for the nurses under study (n=305):

Work engagement dimensions	Mean ± SD
Vigor	9.89±0.96
Dedication	8.51±1.71
Absorption	10.25±1.54

Table (4): Correlation matrix of authentic leadership dimensions for the head nurses under study (n=40):

Authentic leadership dimensions		Self-awareness	Relational transparency	Internalized moral perspective	Balanced processing
Self-awareness	R P				
Relational transparency	R P	0.465 0.000**			
Internalized moral perspective	R P	0.390 0.000**	0.556 0.000**		
Balanced processing	R P	0.288 0.000**	0.584 0.000**	0.476 0.000**	

Table (5): Correlation matrix of work engagement dimensions for the nurses under study (n=305):

Work engagement dimensions		Vigor	Dedication	Absorption
Vigor	R			
	P			
Dedication	R	0.347		
	P	0.000**		
Absorption	R	0.204	0.560	
	P	0.000**	0.000**	

Table (6): Correlation matrix between resilience and work engagement under authentic leadership for the nurses and head nurses under study (n=345):

		Authentic leadership	Work engagement	Resilience
Authentic leadership	R			
	P			
Work engagement	R	0.543		
	P	0.000**		
Resilience	R	0.504	0.739	
	P	0.000**	0.000**	

(**) p-value ≤ 0.001

Discussion

The authentic leadership concept is relatively new, and a positive relationship was observed between authentic leadership, nurses' performance, organizational citizenship behavior, trust in management, organizational commitment and work engagement (Peus et al. 2012).

From the findings of this study, it appeared that most nurses who had good work engagement and resilience and most head nurses who have authentic leadership were working in Al Orman Hospital. Meanwhile, most of nurses working in El-Rajehy Hospital had poor work engagement and resilience. This might be because the head nurses in Al Orman Hospital owned their personal experiences, including their thoughts, emotions, needs, preferences, or beliefs, processes captured by the injunction to know oneself. This finding is consistent with those found by Ryan & Deci, (2001) they reported that organizational leaders know and act upon their true values, beliefs, and

strengths, while helping others do the same; then, higher levels of employees' well-being will accrue, which in turn positively impact follower performance. Engaged employees have high levels of energy and are enthusiastic about their work.

This study confirmed that, regarding authentic leadership dimensions, relational transparency had the highest mean scores, and highly statistically significant between all dimensions authentic leadership. This might be because relational transparency helps leaders to be more effective, which in turn makes it easier to gain the trust of their followers. This finding is consistent with those reported by Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt, (2019) who reported that relational transparency refers to how transparently and truly the leaders communicate with others; and exposure of one's real and genuine self in contrast to inaccurate, biased and fake self. By demonstrating their true self, their commitment to the organization and leadership can be enhanced. The result is also consistent with those reported by Bakker et al., (2007) who reported that relationally

transparent leaders do not hide anything; rather, they say exactly what they mean to say; realize their mistakes if committed; invite others' comments and criticism in their own decisions, actions and personality, propagate truth and possess harmony in their emotions and feelings.

Additionally, **Wong & Laschinger, (2013)** argued that an authentic leader builds trust and creates healthier work environments through 'relational transparency'. Authentic leaders use balanced processing by requesting from their followers adequate input and perspectives. They emphasize a level of openness and truthfulness (relational transparency), which encourages others to be forthcoming with their ideas, challenges, and opinions.

Based on the results of this study, regarding work engagement dimensions absorption had the highest mean score. Highly statistically significant differences were observed between all dimensions of work engagement. This might be because engaged nurses, who are characterized by absorption, are more creative, more productive, and more willing to go the extra mile. This finding is consistent with those reported by **Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, (2019)** who reported that absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, and engaged employees have high levels of energy and are enthusiastic about their work. Additionally, the result is consistent with those reported by **Bakker & Demerouti, (2008)** who reported that engaged employees often experience positive emotions, including happiness, joy, and enthusiasm; experience better health; create their own job and personal resources; and transfer their engagement to others.

This study revealed a positive correlation between all dimensions of authentic leadership. This might be because the definition of authentic leadership has converged around several underlying dimensions. This finding is consistent with those reported by **Luthans, & Avolio, (2019)** who focused on the core self-awareness and self-regulation components of authentic leadership. They identified several

distinguishing features associated with authentic self-regulatory processes, including internalized regulation, balanced processing of information, relational transparency, and authentic behavior.

Moreover, this finding is consistent with those reported by **Walumbwa, et al. (2018)** who reported that self-awareness and the self-regulatory processes reflected as internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency are core components of authentic leadership.

This study confirmed a positive correlation between all dimensions of work engagement. This might indicate the reasons why engaged workers perform better than non-engaged workers. This finding is consistent with those reported by **Bakker & Demerouti, (2008)** who reported that engaged employees often experience positive emotions, including happiness, joy, and enthusiasm; experience better health; create their own job and personal resources; and transfer their engagement to others compared with non-engaged employees .

Additionally, **Bakker et al. (2007)** reported that team-level work engagement was related to individual team members' engagement (i.e., vigor, dedication, and absorption), after controlling for individual members' job demands and resources. They suggest that engaged workers who communicated their optimism, and positive attitudes influence their colleagues, and consequently, they perform better as a team.

This study revealed a strong positive correlation between resilience, work engagement, and authentic leadership with highly statistically significant differences. A previous theory has indicated that authentic leaders can influence follower performance and that there was a meaningful relationship between authentic leadership and resilience. This finding is consistent with those reported by **Wong & Laschinger, (2013)** who reported that a leader's commitment to their work guides followers about how to remain emotionally and physically connected and cognitively vigilant during work. Additionally, the result is consistent with those reported by **Walumbwa**

et al. (2018) who argued that the ethical behaviors of authentic leaders can probably guide their followers because of their attractiveness and credibility as role models. They also found that all behaviors are positively related to supervisor-rated job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and work engagement. Additionally George et al., (2021) found that authentic leaders motivate followers by modeling and transferring a deep sense of responsibility to achieve long-term goals.

Furthermore, Shamir and Eilam, (2020) suggest that the more managers are seen as authentic, by emphasizing transparency, balanced processing, self-awareness, and high ethical standards, the more nurses perceive they have access to workplace resilience, are satisfied with their work, and report higher engagement.

Wong & Laschinger, (2013) reported that when nurses perceive that their leaders are authentic, open, and truthful and involve them in decision-making, they respond positively to their work, report higher work engagement, and demonstrate greater trust in management.

Conclusion:

In this study, a strong positive correlation was observed between resilience and work engagement with highly statistically significant differences. Additionally, a positive correlation was found between authentic leadership and resilience with highly statistically significant differences. Finally, authentic leadership was positively correlated with work engagement with highly statistically significant differences.

Recommendations:

- The managers of an organization should be authentic; they must develop a trusting relationship with their employees, which in turn contribute to achieving positive employee work outcomes, such as work engagement.

- Future research should investigate how authentic leadership influences an organization and its employees.

- Designing and implementing systematic strategies and evaluations that foster and enhance the authentic leadership of supervisors is essential for organizations through conducting workshops and training programs.

- Managers should constantly evaluate employee resilience levels and develop strategies and use resources to ensure that employees are encouraged to adopt good work engagement attitudes.

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