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The Mediating Effect of Work Engagement on the Relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Outcomes*

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to replicate recent researches linking authentic leadership to job embeddedness and emotional exhaustion and to extend the knowledge of these relationships by examining the mediating role of work engagement. The suggested framework was scrutinized through data gathered from hotel employees in Antalya, Turkey. 290 employees in five stars hotels participated in the survey. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test measurement model and regression analyses were conducted to examine research model. The results depicted that authentic leadership increased work engagement and embeddedness of the workers; on the other hand, it negatively affected emotional exhaustion. Additionally, work engagement acted as a partial mediator on the relationship between authentic leadership and job embeddedness. Discussion part including implications and limitations with future directions were drawn at the end of the study..

Keywords: Authentic leadership, Work engagement, Job embeddedness, Emotional exhaustion.

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı, işe adanmışlığın aracı rolü vasıtasıyla, otantik liderlik ile işe gömülmüslük ve duygusal tükenmişlik konularını ilişkilendiren çalışmaları artırmak ve bu ilişkiler hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinilmesini sağlamaktır. İleri sürülen çalışma modeli Antalya/Türkiye'deki otel çalışanlarından toplanan veri ile araştırılmıştır. Çalışmaya 290 5 yıldızlı otel çalışanı katılmıştır. Ölçüm modelini test etmek için doğrulayıcı faktör analizi ve araştırma modelini test etmek için de regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar göstermiştir ki otantik liderlik çalışanların işe gömülmüşlüklerini ve işe adanmışlıklarını arttırırken, çalışanların duygusal tükenmişliklerini olumsuz etkilemektedir. Ayrıca, işe adanmışlık otantik liderlik ile işe gömülmüşlük arasındaki ilişkide kısmi aracı rolüne sahiptir. Bulguların teorik ve yönetsel katkılarını ve ayrıca sınırlılıkları içeren tartışma bölümü de çalışmanın sonunda sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Otantik liderlik, işe adanmışlık, işe gömülmüşlük, duygusal tükenmişlik.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the foremost industries in the world, and serves as a primary source of income, employment, exports and taxes (Kadir & Karim, 2015). Worldwide tourism demand has grown unusually from 25 million arrivals in 1950 to 1.5 billion with the international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) worldwide growth rate of 4% in 2019 (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2020). With confirmed strong linkage effects, the tourism industry also provides almost 276 million job opportunities (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2015). However, the fact that the seasonality unarguably affects the employment directly and obviously has been disclosed (Alananzeh, Mahmoud, & Ahmed, 2015; Ashworth & Thomas; Ball, 1989; 1999). Seasonality has been considered as a crucial problem for the tourism industry and has been held responsible for creating many difficulties faced by the industry: “problems in gaining access to capital, in obtaining and holding a full time staff, for low returns on investment causing subsequent high risk in operations and for problems relating to peaking and overuse of facilities” (Butler, 2001). The most crucial concern regarding the seasonality issue is the hardship of recruiting and retaining full-time staff (Andriotis, 2005) and associated with this, maintaining product and quality standards is also complicated (Baum, 1999).

The seasonality in tourism is one of the challenging issues of the EU's hospitality industry. According to data of Eurostat that is the statistical office of the European Union, in 2011, virtually 40% of the European citizens go on holiday between July and September (Eurostat, 2019). Therefore, tourism companies mostly prefer to recruit employees during this period. The rate of short term employment in this industry is much higher than others. For instance, Austrian tourism employment rate soars up to 26% in peak season. This rate is 47% in Spain, 50% in Italy, and the number of employees increases twice in Denmark from May till October. In accordance with WTO, the percentage of employees in tourism is 35% in EU countries, 40 % in North American countries, and 25 % in Asia - Pacific countries (Boz, 2006).

Turkey hosted around 46 million tourists in 2018, about 29 million of them from Europe with the total expenditure of 37 million US Dollar (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2019). According to the 2023 Vision of Turkey, the goal about tourism is to be the fifth country having tourist attractions and get the highest tourism revenue (Kervankiran, 2015). Even though tourism has a quite important role in the Turkish economy and is a dispensable remedy

for the governments as a solution for employment, trade deficit and inflation rate, Turkey has also been immensely subjected to the seasonal aspect of tourism.

Previous studies have shown that since seasonality stigmatizes tourism industry as an unstable kind of employment, the tourism industry is acknowledged by the employees as unsafe and unpromising in terms of future recruitment. Even though Lee and Moreo (2007) proposed that managing workers in such a way that they feel satisfied in their work place with motivation, there is a huge gap in leading art in the tourism industry with a rising demand throughout the world (Baum, 2015). The role of managers is also demanding for it necessitates distinct leading styles in order to be equal and fair towards the workers (Lundberg, Gudmundson, & Andersson, 2009).

Authentic leadership is acknowledged as one of the main concepts so as to build trust and favorable work environments that are recognized to develop worker retention (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). As long as the leaders meet the demands and necessities of their workers, they respond with a more engaged style in their work (Harter, Schmidt, Hayes & 2002). Authentic leaders can meet the needs; therefore, they enhance followers' work engagement. Avolio et al. (2004) also posed that authentic leaders push up their workers to be more engaged and committed by motivating them.

Hence, there is a necessity to study authentic leadership style so as to keep workers in the sector through impressive leadership perceptions, abilities, and approaches. In this sense, this study aims to examine the impact of authentic leadership on employees' work engagement, job embeddedness and emotional exhaustion.

The model and latest recommendations proposed by the recent study could be utilized by the managers to figure out how to commit a good leadership, and thanks to this to diminish the negative impact of seasonality on employment such as emotional exhaustion by providing these employees' engagement and job embeddedness in the tourism industry. Yet more important, the study fulfils the gap about the leadership of employees in the tourism management literature by developing a new model for those who constitute an unnegligible sum of the industry corresponding to nearly half of its employees.

Recognizing these voids in hospitality literature, the present study develops and suggests a new model for hotel organizations in Turkey that is based on Authentic Leadership Theory (ALT), Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory, and Social Exchange

Theory (SET) using data collected from employees in Antalya hotels. The next part includes the theoretical framework. Afterwards, respectively, the hypothesized relationships with study model are proposed, the research methodology and results of the empirical study are discussed, and the study concludes with implications of the results and avenues for future research.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

Theory

The leadership has been a leading topic in organizational and management literature in which attempts have been made to promote the improvement of managerial effectiveness and efficiency within corporations (Antonakis et al. 2003; Arici, 2018; Avolio et al., 1996; 1999; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Dinh et al., 2014; Driver, 2013; Heracleous & Klaering, 2014; Ling et al., 2016; Tracey & Hinkin, Wong & Lee, 2012; Zhu et al., 2015).

Within the past years, leadership has been scrutinized in a wide range of theoretical bases. Whereas initial investigations regarding leadership, in the 1920s, focused on traits of leaders which were regarded as measures of leader efficiency (Gibb, 1947), later, the investigations have evolved from individual attributes into leaders' behavioral characteristics (Luthans, 2002). For instance, Likert (1961) defined the term "job centered" versus the term "employee centered" management. Blake and Mouton (1964) also differentiated "concern for production" from "concern for people". With the Contingency Theory of Fiedler (1967), conditional situations affecting the leadership styles started to gain prominence in the 1960s. In accordance with the theory, leadership effectiveness count on the conditions and the organizational style and, relying on the situation, a leader must be able to realize the right style of effective leadership. (Hinterhuber & Friedrich, 2002). Lastly, since the late 1980s, theories of transformational and charismatic leadership have been ascendant (Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1987). Unlike the traditional leadership theories, which emphasized rational processes, theories of transformational and charismatic leadership emphasize emotions and values (Yukl, 1999).

A lot of authors have tried to investigate the topic of leadership in tourism industry to determine the most appropriate style in an ever-shifting environment of different cultures and countries by concentrating on the cultural effects on leadership (Testa, 2007), effects of leading style on exchanging concepts (Yang,

2007), methods and procedures representing the leading clearly (Pittaway et al., 1998), besides the leadership styles such as quality leadership (Camison, 1996), transformational leadership (Erkutlu, 2008; Gill et al., 2010; Kara et al., 2013; Patiar & Mia, 2009; Tracey & Hinkin, 1996), ethical leadership (Khuong & Nhu, 2015; Kincaid et al., 2008), the combination of machiavellian and bureaucratic models (Minett et al., 2009), transcendental leadership (Alexakis, 2011), servant leadership (Koyuncu et al., 2014), authentic leadership (Butler et al., 2014), and charismatic leadership (Poskas & Messer, 2015).

Due to the fact that the seasonality is one of the most challenging issues in hospitality industry, in order to manage this demanding issue efficiently, developing a kind of leadership style in which a leader is aware of the values, knowledge, strengths, and weaknesses of his/her own, employees, organizations, and the industry is vital.

Therefore, based on the necessity, ALT was drawn on as core theory of the study. Authentic leadership was an important constituent in the favorable leadership search in the previous 30 years and was theoretically extended as a "root construct in leadership theory" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). ALT, as recommended by Luthans and Avolio (2003), and then improved by Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa (2005) and Avolio and Luthans (2006) claims that leader is quite aware of both how s/he understands and behaves and how s/he is understood by the others (Avolio et al., 2004). Authentic leadership is a "higher-order, multidimensional construct, comprised of self-awareness, balanced processing, relational transparency, and internalization of a moral/ethical perspective" (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) was utilized in this research as a guide. It focuses on resource so as to manage psychological challenges and averts from destroying valued sources. The theory asserts that psychological stress sooner or later brings about burnout. In this study, authentic leadership is acknowledged as a valued organizational source (Laschinger & Fida, 2014) to avoid from emotional exhaustion, as a core syndrome of burnout.

There has been the common thought concerning job burnout that it consists of three sub-categories: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Emotional exhaustion as a core syndrome of burnout is defined as "the feeling of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work" (Maslach & Jackson, 1981: 101). Employees,

who work seasonally and earn less, obtain diminished or no perk, and are generally not syndicated, miss the job advantages like over-time, equal payment, and fairness, given generally to the permanent workers (Barker & Christensen, 1998; Thompson, 1995). Ainsworth and Purss (2009) stated that employees were described as being less motivated; less engaged, and lower performing than permanent employees. These workers' physical and mental sources are depleted and it causes emotional exhaustion. Previous studies correlated with the supportive leadership both directly and indirectly with workers' emotional exhaustion and burnout (Balogun, Titiloye, Balogun, Oyeyemi, & Katz, 2002; Laschinger, Finegan, & Wilk, 2011; Vahey, Aiken, Sloane, Clarke, & Vargas, 2004; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010), proposing that supportive management could defend workers against emotional exhaustion by establishing good work environments.

SET focuses on sociology and human studies (Firth, 1967) and has been commonly utilized in numerous industries. Fremeaux and Michelson (2011) claim that behaviors base not only upon reason and rational reciprocity, however, as Goss (2008) suggests, an aware comprehension is necessary to develop business. One of the main features of the theory is that thanks to social life, tangible and intangible awards can be reached (Homans, 1961). Although different understandings of SET, it actually includes interactions creating social commitment (Emerson, 1976).

Hypotheses

If a leader satisfies the needs and expectations of employees, these workers will considerably engage in their jobs (Harter et al., 2002). Regardingly, the phenomenon work engagement has been basically defined by two groups of researchers. Firstly, Kahn (1990: 694) defined it as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances". On the other hand, according to Schaufeli et al. (2002: 74), work engagement is "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is qualified by vigour, dedication, and absorption". The researchers in the field of tourism and hospitality have utilized these two definitions regarding their work engagement related studies. For example, Gürlek and Tuna (2019) discussed these two definitions and used the definition of Kahn. Whereas, Karatepe (2013) utilized the definition and scale of Schaufeli et al. (2002) in his study.

If leaders are aware of how their attitudes influence their followers and are transparent with respect to procedures and their effects in their corporations, then their followers tend to feel better sense of

organizational aims and challenges (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009). The effect of authentic leadership on followers' work engagement is endorsed by the findings of previous empirical studies. Ilies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang (2005) argued how authentic leadership might positively affect employees' behaviours in that these leaders present supportive operations for employees' self-determination. George (2003) discussed that authentic leaders promoted the employees by building a deep sense of purpose to present greater products, excellence services, and maximum quality. These are the traits of workers highly engaged with their works and organizations. Authentic managers are anticipated to enhance the level of work engagement by creating organization climate full of knowledge, sources, and back up and improving equal processes (Liu, Hu, Li, Wang, & Lin, 2014). In their empirical research, Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, and Avolio (2010) contended that authentic leading behaviors are associated with work engagement of the workers. Penger and Černe (2014) statistically discovered authentic leadership had a positive influence on employees' work engagement. Hence, the first hypothesis of the research is as follow:

Hypothesis 1: Employees' perception of authentic leadership is positively related to work engagement.

Previous studies have maintained that not only one of the main reasons of organization costs but also a critical determinant disrupting guest services in the organizations result from high employee turnover rate (Posthuma, Joplin, & Maertz, 2005). This challenge could be declined by efficiently examining employee job embeddedness, which attributes to as "the combined forces that keep a person from leaving his or her job" (Yao, Lee, Mitchell, Burton, & Sablynski, 2004:95). There are three crucial dimensions of job embeddedness: links, fit, and sacrifice (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, & Erez, 2001). Mitchell et al. (2001) defined "links" as "formal or informal connections between a person and institutions or other people, "fit" as "an employee's perceived compatibility or comfort with an organization and with his or her environment", and "sacrifice" as "the perceived cost of material or psychological benefits that may be forfeited by leaving a job".

In their ALT, Avolio et al. (2004) proposed that authentic managers could raise employees' engagement by reinforcing the identity of the organization members with each other and with the corporation, and by improving hope, trust, optimism, and favourable emotions. Given that authentic leadership is assumed that it develops the trust of followers (Gardner et al., 2005) and promotes employees to develop themselves

(Luthans and Avolio, 2003), authentic leadership might be presumed to be positively associated with job embeddedness. This can be the first empirical study having direct examination of the relation between authentic leadership and job embeddedness. Past studies have explored the indirect association between these two factors, by means of several mediators, such as work engagement and intention to leave (Amunkete and Rothmann, 2015; Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2010). Because of the affiliations demonstrated above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2: Authentic leadership practices positively influence employee job embeddedness.

According to COR (Hobfoll, 1989), individuals attempt to acquire, maintain and foster their valuable resources including health, happiness, peace, and self-protection. In a stressful situation as a response, they lose these resources, helping employees to overcome it and preventing burnout, an effectual response to long-term stressful situation in the work (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). So far as Leiter and Maslach (2004) stated in their theory of Burnout, intensive workload, inadequacy of control over work, insufficient rewards and recognition, bad working relationships, unjust treatment and conflict between personal and organizational values generate firstly a mode of emotional exhaustion, often referred as the core of burnout. In line with COR (Hobfoll, 1989), organizational resources considerably affect burnout, beginning with emotional exhaustion (Leiter & Maslach, 2004), and there is a powerful correlation between organizational resource and emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). One of the most significant organizational resources diminishing the possibility of emotional exhaustion is authentic leadership (Laschinger & Fida, 2014). Laschinger, Wong, and Grau (2013) also discussed that authentic leadership influenced hospital nurses' emotional exhaustion. Authentic leadership plays an important protector role against emotional exhaustion and burnout by providing empowering circumstances in place and by building environments (Laschinger & Fida, 2014). Therefore, following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Authentic leadership practices negatively influence employee emotional exhaustion.

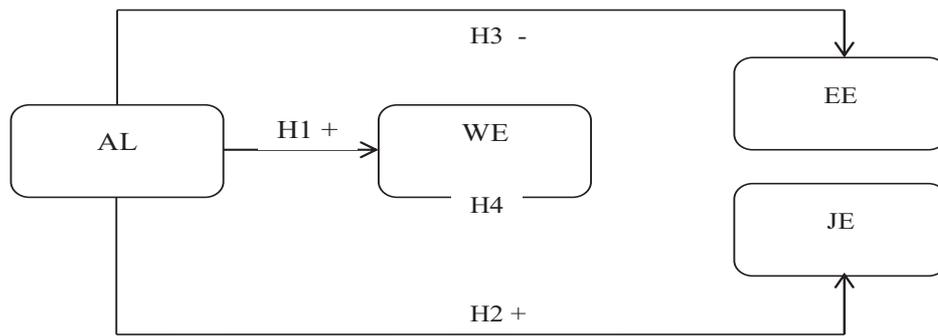
Work engagement is "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is qualified by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2002). According to its definition, engagement has three main elements. Vigour is defined as "high energy invested in work performance, even in cases where performance is challenging, while dedication refers to

strong involvement in one's work, resulting in positive feelings about work, such as pride and inspiration. Finally, absorption means a state of engrossment in work such that one has difficulty detaching from work" (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). While engagement could alter when work circumstances change, embeddedness may alter in a slower way and possibly necessitates "shocks" to decline (Mitchell et al., 2001). Increasing work engagement has been a basic challenge for numerous businesses looking into avenues to develop contribution to personal and institutional performance (Wong, Laschinger, & Cummings, 2010). Highly engaged followers work very hard, given that they have enhanced energy levels (Karatepe & Ngeche, 2012). These workers are involved and blithely engrossed in their work (Bakker, 2010; Karatepe & Olugbade, 2009). Previous empirical findings demonstrated work engagement developed job embeddedness and peculiarly, workers remaining engaged in their work were embedded in their jobs (Karatepe & Ngeche, 2012).

Avolio et al. (2004) also put forward that authentic leadership enhanced worker's job engagement and commitment continuously adding their job performance.

Authentic leadership relates to job engagement referred as the opposite of burnout (Laschinger et al., 2013; Walumbwa et al., 2010). Engaged employees unlike unwell-being ones, suffering from emotional exhaustion, feel themselves more energetic and efficient in their work practices and they regard themselves as able to cope with the demands of their work (Schaufeli, Taris, & Van Rhenen, 2008). Giallonardo, Wond, and Wasiw (2010) explored that new graduate nurses' work engagement mediated the association between their perceptions of preceptor authentic leadership and job satisfaction. The indirect effect of authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion through structural empowerment was examined by Laschinger et al. (2013); however; so far, the work engagement has yet to be studied as a mediator among authentic leadership, job embeddedness and emotional exhaustion in the hospitality industry. Given the empirical findings discussed above, the last hypotheses are as follow:

Hypothesis 4: Work engagement has a mediator role on the relationship between (a) authentic leadership and job embeddedness and (b) authentic leadership and emotional exhaustion.



Note: AL is authentic leadership, WE is work engagement, JE is job embeddedness, EE is emotional exhaustion.

Figure 1: Proposed Model

METHODOLOGY

Data and Sample

Research model was tested according to data collected from 290 seasonal hotel employees, working in five-star hotels in Antalya in 2019, which is one of the most important tourist destinations in Turkey. The hoteliers were called to get permission and organize the distribution of questionnaires. 12 out of 20 hotels accepted to join this research. The participant employees were distributed the questionnaires at the meeting room supplied by the hotel managers. Before the questionnaires were distributed, it was assured that the data, gathered from the participants, would be just utilized for the present research and absolutely kept confidential. Totally 300 questionnaires were distributed to employees working in various departments of hotels such as, human resource management, marketing and reception. Having been completed by the participants, the questionnaires were directly gathered. Since the employees are of great value for the hotel profitability and about 50 percent of the workers are seasonal in hospitality sector in Antalya (240 thousand) (AKTOB, 2014), they were chosen to examine their understanding about the hypothesized relations. Therefore, judgmental sampling method was used as a sampling technique. Of the collected questionnaires, 10 void ones were removed out of the paper and 290 questionnaires were analysed with the response rate of 97 % thanks to the hotel managements for providing the opportunity to collect data directly from the seasonal staff.

Questionnaire Design

Authentic leadership was measured with 16 items, obtained from Walumbwa et al. (2008), one of which

was “My leader says exactly what he or she means”. Nine items were adapted from (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) work to gauge job engagement. One of the samples was “At my work, I feel bursting with energy”. Job embeddedness was measured with 6 items adapted from Crossley, Bennett, Jex, and Burnfield (2007). A sample item was “I am too caught up in this hotel to leave”. To measure emotional exhaustion, 6 items were taken from Maslach, Jackson, and Later (1996). An example item was “I feel emotionally drained from my work”. Likert scale was utilized to examine the items, valued from (strongly disagree-1) to (strongly agree-5). At the end of the survey, participants were addressed five demographic items; gender, age, education, experience, and marital status, which can be seen in Table 2.

The questionnaire was firstly written in English and later translated into Turkish using back-translation technique (McGorry, 2000). Following this step, two professional scholars, had all the items controlled to provide them to be cross-linguistically same. Before conducted in the field, to measure the convenience, study items were pretested with 25 seasonal hotel employees in Antalya. The results showed all items were clear and correct; therefore no item was removed out of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

SPSS 21.0 and AMOS software package (Arbuckle, 2005) were used to analyze the data in this study. Participants’ profiles were depicted with descriptive statistics and the hypotheses were tested with Structural Equation Model (SEM). The dependence associations are analyzed by SEM simultaneously: It becomes helpful especially when the outcome variable is a predictor in following dependent relations (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). SEM could be

Table 1: Measurement Parameter Estimates^a

	Standardized Loading ^b	CCR	AVE
<i>Authentic leadership</i>		.90	.39
AL1	.58		
AL2	.53		
AL3	.54		
AL4	.54		
AL5	.66		
AL6	.71		
AL7	.73		
AL8	.75		
AL9	.66		
AL10	.63		
AL11	.63		
AL12*	-		
AL13	.58		
AL14	.58		
AL15*	-		
AL16*	-		
<i>Work engagement</i>		.79	.35
WE1	.52		
WE2	.70		
WE3	.59		
WE4*	-		
WE5*	-		
WE6	.57		
WE7	.56		
WE8	.61		
WE9	.57		
<i>Emotional exhaustion</i>		.89	.66
EE1	.85		
EE2	.72		
EE3*	-		
EE4	.81		
EE5	.87		
EE6*	-		
<i>Job embeddedness</i>		.95	.81
JE1	.84		
JE2	.88		
JE3	.96		
JE4	.82		
JE5	.97		
JE6*	-		

Note: CCR = composite construct reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

a. $\chi^2 = 582.75$, $df = 380$, $p < .01$; comparative fit index = .96; goodness-of-fit index = .89; Tucker-Lewis index = .95; root-mean-square error of approximation = .043; standardized root-mean-square residual = .024.

b. All loading values are significant at the 0.05 level.

* Dropped as a result of confirmatory factor analysis.

carried out in two manners: one-step method and two-step method. A one-step analysis becomes useful when there are solid theoretical background and extremely reliable examination of the model (Hair et al., 1998). Yet, if the measures are not reliable enough or a theory is indeterminate, the investigators ought to take into account a two-step approach. Absolute presentation of the indicators' reliability can be obtained in two ways through neglecting the association of the items and the study framework (Hair et al., 1998). Hence, a two-step model was adopted in this paper. In the first stage, the measurement model was first estimated and measured with a variety of fit indices. Once items were adjusted, the study framework was evaluated in the following level utilizing the identical fit indices. Lastly, the variables were examined so as to decide whether the data endorsed the study questions: the direct paths from authentic leadership to work engagement (H1), to job embeddedness (H2), and to emotional exhaustion (H3), as well as, the indirect paths from authentic leadership to job embeddedness (H4a), and emotional exhaustion (H4b).

RESULTS

Respondents' Profiles

The participants' demographic profiles were summarized in Table 2. The participants included 136 male (46.9%) and 154 female (53.1%). The large age group was 29 to 38 years (84.8 %). Some 52 % of participants had a senior-high school degree. The majority of respondents (70.3%) had worked for their current organization for 1-5 years. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents were single, while 70% were married, and the rest were divorced.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The study used Alpha Coefficient so as to check the reliability of the items: authentic leadership style, work engagement, job embeddedness, and emotional exhaustion. All of the coefficient alphas exceed the threshold of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; see Table 1). Afterwards, the factor analysis loaded into four latent variables with their barometers. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) demonstrated an acceptable model fit: $\chi^2 = 582.74$; $df = 380$; $p < .01$; comparative fit index (CFI) = .96; goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .89; Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .95; root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .043; and standardized root-mean-square residual (RMR) = .024. All results demonstrated anticipated loadings on

Table 2: Respondents' Profile ($n = 290$)

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	136	46.9
Female	154	53.1
Total	290	100.0
Age		
18-28	22	7.6
29-38	246	84.8
39-48	21	7.2
49-58	1	.3
Total	290	100.0
Education		
Less than senior-high school	19	6.6
Senior-high school	150	51.7
Bachelor degree	112	38.6
Master degree	9	3.1
Total	290	100.0
Organizational tenure		
Below 1 year	33	11.4
1-5	204	70.3
6-10	42	14.5
11-15	7	2.4
16-20	4	1.4
Total	290	100.0
Marital status		
Single	82	28.3
Married	204	70.3
Divorced	4	1.4
Total	290	100.0

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviations, and Correlation Matrix

Construct	Means	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Authentic leadership	4.46	0.37	–			
2. Work engagement	3.59	0.35	.327**	–		
3. Emotional exhaustion	2.00	0.69	-.229**	-.156**	–	
4. Job embeddedness	4.59	0.52	.398**	.278**	-.194**	–

Note: SD denotes Standard Deviation.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

their construct ranging between .97 and .52 ($p < .05$). All of the constructs showed the satisfactory composite construct reliabilities (CCR) between .954 and .789.

A path from authentic leadership to work engagement was positive as expected. A negative association was found between authentic leadership and emotional exhaustion.

Table 4. Break Down of Total Effect of the Research Model

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect
AL →	WE	.327	.327	.000
WE →	EE	-.091	-.091	.000
WE →	JE	.166	.166	.000
AL →	JE	.398	.344	.054
AL →	EE	-.229	-.199	-.030

The average variance extracted (AVE) scores were between .35 and .50, implying the insufficient convergent validity. Overall, the AVE has to be more than .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). But the same authors pointed out that if composite reliability is higher than .60, the convergent validity is acceptable. Discriminant validity emerges when the AVE scores were greater than the shared variance (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). One couple of variables with high correlation were job embeddedness and authentic leadership ($\Phi = .389$). Yet, the AVE in job embeddedness (.81) and authentic leadership (.39) was more than the square of the correlation between the two constructs ($\Phi^2 = .15$). Other variables that needed the more investigation were AL and WE ($\Phi = .327$). Further, the AVE in the factors (.39 for authentic leadership and .35 for work engagement) exceeds the square of the correlation between the two factors ($\Phi^2 = .10$). Hence, all four factors possessed discriminant validity (Table 1).

Hypothesis Testing

Table 4 demonstrates the findings of the model. The study hypotheses were examined on the basis of the significance of the structural path coefficients.

As anticipated, authentic leadership positively influenced job embeddedness. While there was significant positive association between work engagement and job embeddedness, there was a negative relationship between work engagement and emotional exhaustion as proposed in the study model. Hence, H1 (AL to work engagement: $\gamma = .327, p < .01$), H2 (AL to job embeddedness: $\gamma = .344, p < .01$), and H3 (AL to emotional exhaustion: $\gamma = -.199, p < .01$) were supported. The outcome shows that the unstandardized indirect influence of AL on JE emerged as significant .054 ($p = .009, 90\%$ confidence interval: .014 – .012), proving that a partial mediation exists between the two constructs. Hence, H4a was supported; however, the indirect effect of AL on EE is insignificant (-.030), therefore, H4b was rejected.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Theoretical Contributions

Previous empirical studies confirmed that authentic leadership could develop some outcomes with respect to the employees’ perspectives (Avolio et al., 2004; Liu et al., 2014; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Penger &

Černe, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2010). In the paper, the research model that examined the effects of authentic leadership on employees' job embeddedness and emotional exhaustion was developed. In addition, the present research investigated the mediator effect of work engagement on the relationships. According to the findings, authentic leadership enhances the job embeddedness of the workers; on the other hand, it diminishes the emotional exhaustion of the seasonal employees. Moreover, these results show that AL develops the work engagement of the seasonal workers.

The study demonstrates that the authentic leadership in tourism industry embeds the employees in organizations both directly and through ensuring their work engagement as initially proposed. Further, employees' emotional exhaustion is directly diminished by authentic leaders who are considered as a valuable resource to prevent emotional exhaustion (Laschinger & Fida, 2014). This finding is also consistent with the study results of Laschinger et al. (2013).

SEM findings also showed a positive association between authentic leadership and work engagement. The effect of authentic leadership on employees' work engagement demonstrated that parallel to the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), as well as the findings of previous studies (Penger & Černe, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2010), the employees who see their leaders to be authentic can willingly pay more effort for the job.

In the association between authentic leadership and job embeddedness, the findings indicate the partial mediation of work engagement. Congruent to the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), authentic leaders displaying openness and supportiveness, and also developing trust relationships in the organization assure the employees' work engagement (Avolio et al., 2004). The seasonal workers with sufficient resources ensured by their authentic supervisors are embedded in their job.

On the other hand, the findings pose that work engagement doesn't have a mediating role on the relationship of authentic leadership and workers' emotional exhaustion, contrary to the expectation. That is, any evidence couldn't be found as a result of statistical analyses about the proposition that supportive operations of authentic leaders prevent the employees' emotional exhaustion through ensuring their work engagement in hotel organizations.

Managerial Contributions

In light of the findings, important managerial implications could be submitted to hoteliers, intensely exposed to seasonality effect and high turnover rate in

the hospitality industry. First, the empirical validation of the authentic leadership model endorses that the supervisors' authentic management practices are plausible and suitable, because they bring about not only seasonal hotel employees' work engagement and job embeddedness, but they can also directly diminish these workers' emotional exhaustion. Second, employees, less-paid by the job and often not syndicated, miss the labor advantages, like equal payment (Thompson, 1995). This case results in emotional exhaustion in that these workers' energy and mental resources are depleted. Hotel managers can handle this negative discriminatory situation by adopting authentic leadership characteristics such as trustworthiness, transparency, and fairness. Third, hoteliers should ensure employees' engagement to work and organization displaying authentic leadership behaviours, for previous studies defined these workers as being less motivated and less engaged than permanent employees (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009). Forth, hotel managers can obtain employees' job embeddedness through insuring their work engagement. It leads to not only keep and retain engaged and embedded employees in the tourism organization, but also reduces high turnover rate, one of the main suffered problems in the industry. Fifth, managers, adopting authenticity, should pay attention to re-employing of the previous seasonal workers in the next season and making these employees feel the sense of belonging to the organisation. They ought to maintain their relationship with these workers in the low-season and not disregard the difficulties the employees confront during the low-season to conduct team spirit.

On the other hand, a novel model is presented to the tourism and hospitality literature. Even though leadership has been studied extensively in diverse contexts and theoretical bases via invaluable general leadership theories for tourism industry, there has not been any specific leadership study for employees, constituting about 50 percent of the total workers in the hospitality sector. At this point, this current paper presents a new study model to the management scholars trying to focus on the leadership of seasonal workers.

Limitations and Future Study Directions

One of the limitations emerging in this study is that this study utilized seasonal hotel workers from only five star hotels in Antalya as the sample. Further research can focus on employees working in three and four star hotels in Antalya as well as in other destinations, to present the whole hotel industry. Second, one of the most common problems of tourism industry is high turnover rate. Therefore, the influence of AL

on turnover intentions of less-committed employees with mediator role of organizational commitment could be studied by future investigations. Third, jobs were regarded by employees as not contributing to career development (Lee-Ross, 1998). Hence, future researches can examine the moderator influence of career opportunities in the relationship between authentic leadership and employee retention being the main problem of employees in the industry (Lee & Moreo, 2007). Finally, this study concentrated on only authentic leadership as a leadership approach for managing seasonal hotel employees effectively and efficiently. Other unique leadership theories such as servant leadership, and transformational leadership could be carried out in future studies.

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