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THE EFFECT OF AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR ON PERCEPTIONS OF WELL BEING OF EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

An authentic leader is the one who can get his/her hands dirty together with the employees in case of need. It is noticed that his body language and speech are always related to the employee's ideas with his smiling and listening state. This behaviour shows that you are interested in employees, that you are clearly improving yourself to ideas and advices, and that you respect the sharing that has been made. Employees, customers and those who feel and value themselves as a stakeholder within the business feel the happiness of working with the authentic leader owing to this and many other exemplary behaviours. This process will trigger the well-being of the leader and those who follow him/her.

Keywords: Self Awareness, Employee Happiness, Authentic Leadership, Well-Being.

1. INTRODUCTION

Those who establish trust, positive emotions, and hope needed in a business while establishing a vision for the future are authentic leaders. If there is such a leader in a business, it will be easier to cope with difficulties (Tütüncü and Akgündüz, 2014: 168).

Well-being does not mean feeling happy and joyful. Well-being is the whole of a series of processes and behaviours that make people feel good and their life is fulfilled and satisfying. Well-being is a necessary element for authentic leaders to show these aspects to exemplary subjects (Yücel&Kılıç, 2018: 83).

The process of well-being can be defined as people evaluate the information they filter from their experiences by making them most useful for them, and develop a road map in order to communicate more effectively and raise their living standards (Demirci and Ekşi, 2015: 11).

In order to exist in the dizzying competition, businesses have grasped the importance of intellectual capital and have started to allocate serious resources for human resources. That is because the

higher the loyalty and motivation of a business's human resources to the business, the higher the benefit they will add. In today's global world, businesses have seen that they can make a difference with innovative contributions created when they strengthen their intellectual capitals to achieve their goals. The creators of this difference are authentic leaders and employees with high motivation and sense of loyalty (Akdemir, 2005:428).

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Authentic Leader Concept

The authentic leader should have special qualities such as full self-awareness, cold-blooded approach to things, lack of prejudice to people, self-confidence, ability to act on a case-by-case, relationship transparency, openness, ability to have high moral values and ability to have empathy (Şahin, 2019:54).

2.2. Characteristics of Authentic Leaders

Shamir and Eliam (2005), who conducted research on authentic leaders, stated that the authentic leader has four basic qualities, these qualities are as follows (Shamir and Eliam 2005:400).

1. Authentic leaders are first of all truth. They are not pretentious and do not pretend to be someone else. Their leadership competence is inherent and noticeable.

2. Authentic leaders are not motivated by position, status, dignity, or praise. They are motivated by beliefs and values in truth and the goals created by these values.

3. Authentic leaders are original and not imitations. They act uniquely and sincerely. Their view of events, their beliefs, even their purposes may be similar to those of another leader. However, it is clear that they have achieved these gains with the values that make them exist within their own life repertoire.

4. Authentic leaders behave according to their values, they are reliable, their thoughts are positive, what they say is neutral, what they do is consistent and they do not contain contradictions. In addition, they are aware of the aspects of their teammates that need to be improved, they increase their loyalty and efficiency with flexibility, trust, positive outlook, goodwill (Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 317).

Sparrowe (2005) stated that the most basic characteristics of authentic leaders can be listed as self-efficacious, hopeful, highly resilient and well-being towards their audience (Sparrowe, 2005: 420);

1. Self-efficacy is the belief that a person has in his/her own ability to reach a certain goal, and the devotion, patience and discipline that he/she creates in order to achieve this goal. A leader or team member with high self-efficacy is aware of the contingency principle and knows how to act in which situations (Kesken and Ayyıldız, 2008: 739).

2. Hoping stimulates the individual's determination, effort, and creative energy that he/she uses to find new solutions without dreading to achieve his goals. Those who can hope know that they can find new solutions to achieve their goals even if everything is

negative. In the scientific researches, it has been found that the hopefulness of the leader is very effective in increasing the performance of the whole business and in the efficient work of the employees loyally (Luthans and Youssef, 2004: 154).

3. Psychological resilience is the behaviour and endurance that a person chooses at the point where he/she faces any positive or negative condition. It is an element of organizational behaviour and a situation that the employee decides to be (Luthans, 2002: 70). Psychological resilience is the power of enduring that a person creates in all kinds of challenging situations, his ability to adapt to this challenging situation, his flexibility, his acceptance or reaction to events, and his behaviours and approaches in the case of continuous compulsive situation and pressure (Kesken and Ayyıldız, 2008: 740).

Compelling situations and problems encountered in businesses cause burnout syndrome in working individuals, loss of commitment and loyalty to work, decrease in desire and motivation, decrease in creativity and make problems unsolvable, and it is the task of leaders to ensure that all these are resolved (Avey, 2014: 142).

Authentic leadership also guides a person in his/her journey to know himself/herself (Ilies, et al., 2005: 376).

Authenticity not only reflects the mood of the person, but also means showing who he/she is to everyone without hesitation because he/she is instinctive and pure in his/her behaviour in every situation encountered. Thus, authenticity is a psychological structure and it means that the self-values and subconscious decisions brought by one's own life repertoire direct his/her life. This situation helps authentic leaders to express themselves sincerely and basically to positively affect the well-being of both themselves and those who follow them (Yammarino et al., 2008: 693).

The well-being of the audience allows authentic leaders to express themselves sincerely in any situation, and the leader also sees the positive effect it has on the well-being of himself/herself and employees. This is an indication of how correctly the road map has been chosen (Şimşek, 2019: 828).

In order to achieve authentic results and gains, an individual's personal reputation and reliability are important elements. Moving from the idea that everybody has aspects that need improvement, people will be stronger when they know and accept their strengths, and they will build a more fulfilling life. They will be able to create open, participatory, and sharing relationships with others and there will be no contradiction between their behaviours, words, and values (Kernis, 2003: 22).

Although well-being means development and progress, it also includes the place of residence, the air we breathe, health, income, family life, and social situation. According to a view, the concept of well-being is formed as a result of the possibilities brought by the structure. In other words, well-being is the contentment events and behaviours encountered by individuals in a good environment. Another view expresses well-being as a way of being better than all and

everyone in the light of all known information inside and outside (Ilies, et al., 2005: 377).

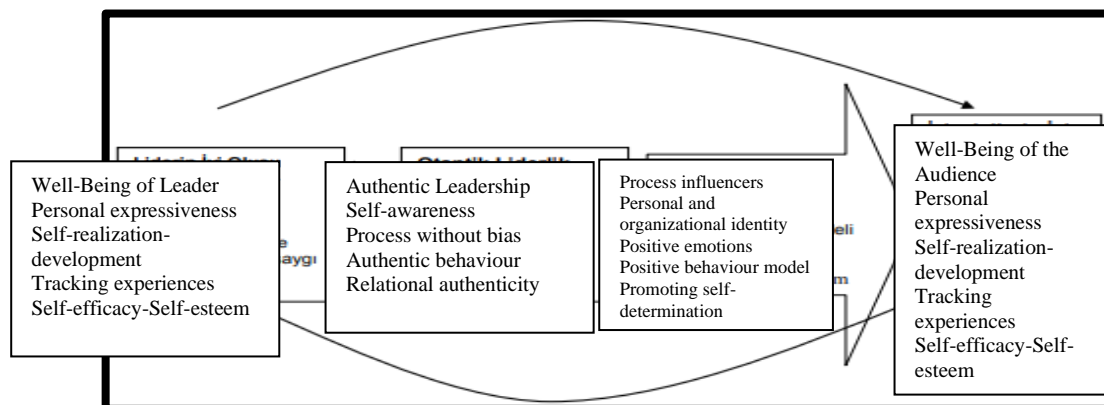


Figure 1. The effects of the authentic leader on the well-being of the audience.
Reference: (Ilies, et al., 2005: 377).

Figure 1 illustrates the effects of the authentic leader on the well-being of the audience. What makes a leader different from an ordinary person with his/her attitude that leads to the success of his team is that he/she is aware of himself/herself and reaches the consciousness of the truth without deceiving himself/herself under his success. In order to achieve this sincerity, the authentic leader primarily values people. It is possible to explain how authentic leaders affect the well-being of the audience with some exemplary behaviours as follows. With his/her authentic leader influence, he/she encourages employees to express their opinions freely and thus gain new perspectives for dealing with difficulties.

2.3. Determinants of Authentic Leadership

1. Personal CV, not only for leaders, but also for everyone, the elements that make up the personal history, family situation, parents and role models, education life, challenging situations encountered in life, work life experiences come to mind. One's own life, who am I? His/her answer to the above question is the totality of the conscious and subconscious behaviour patterns that contribute to the formation of this identity (Gardner, et al., 2005: 348).

2. Situations that are the cause of changes that are sometimes not directly noticeable, which can be shocking as well as having positive effects on the development of individuals, are called trigger events (Yeşiltaş, et al., 2013: 337).

3. From a business perspective, leaders intervene in triggering events and come up with creative and innovative solutions. Although these interventions are generally perceived as resolving a crisis, it is a well-known fact that every chaos contributes to the development and progress of the leader. Triggering events and situations are one of the most important elements that will reflect on the leadership style of the leader and form his character.

4. Self-awareness includes the person's needs, ethical values, feelings, stance and behaviour. Self-awareness is also an

indicator of how solid the psychological structure is. Self-awareness means to know one's own strengths or sides that need improvement, to understand and define their feelings, and to grasp their character and their own spirit. In authentic leadership, the self-expressive behaviours of the leader while showing his own leadership style are critical in terms of showing how much self-awareness has developed (Goffee and Jones, 2005: 86).

2.4. Effects of Authentic Leadership

The effects of authentic leadership can be listed as follows (Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 316);

1. Confident workers can tackle more difficult tasks. They are relatively more diligent. Besides, they can show high performance under pressure.

2. Hoping is that people define the goals they wish to achieve, design how they will achieve their goals, and have faith and confidence in what they can do. Hope has two components. The first shows the individual's determination to walk towards the goal. The second means that the individual designs plans to achieve the goal. Authentic leaders give individuals a goal and then share the road map required to achieve that goal. Hope also shows situations where there are concrete gains. Being aware of this, authentic leaders also present concrete gains in the goals to be achieved as a result of effort (Gardner and Schermorhorn, 2004: 275).

3. The authentic leader knows that the satisfaction of the leader, which is highly specific and personal, such as the experience of positive social changes and the search for meaning and finding it, observing his own progress, the contribution of his new experiences, and self-esteem, increases in parallel with the well-being of his followers. If impressing is the taste left by a literary masterpiece in terms of subject or creation, the authentic leader also knows the importance of leaving a mark and being authentic (Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 317-318).

4. Flexibility means being positive despite all the challenging situations we face and accepting this compelling situation, in other words adapting to this situation. Today, businesses are experiencing dizzying technological change, financial shocks, political or cyclical upheavals, shrinkage, and even more dramatic processes. Dealing with difficult situations is an area where authentic leaders can make a difference. The reaction of the leaders in this situation is seen as extraordinary. Authentic leaders act together with those who follow him/her to implement the concept of flexibility. When dealing with challenging situations, they accept difficulties, do not resist, and adapt to it. Their development continues under all circumstances (George, 2000: 1028).

5. One of the most fundamental missions of authentic leaders is to create an optimistic climate within the business. Optimistic individuals who follow the leader are also more determined to achieve their goals because they are more inclined to feel and create positive emotions such as pride, sense of accomplishment, happiness.

Their motivation is high. They are generally mentally and physically healthy. Depressive states, burnout syndrome, and negative situations are more common in pessimistic individuals. Leaders are mentors for their followers. They create an exemplary model. This role model increases motivation and productivity with its realistic and grounded optimism and ability to persuade (Avolio, et al., 2004: 813).

Realistic optimism means that a person has a positive feeling that he/she will have access to some resources and that he/she can be successful in some situations. People who are optimistic know that their own strength and determination underlies the positive situations in their lives, and they believe in its continuity. For example, employees who are appreciated by senior management know that their own work discipline underlies this success. Optimism does not mean feeling that good events and situations will be encountered in the future. The optimistic individual explains and justifies the reasons for the negative or positive situations he/she experiences with optimism (Sparrowe, 2005: 424).

2.5. The Effects of Authentic Leadership on Individual Development

One of the most specific characteristics of authentic leaders is that these types of leaders do not react by looking at the person or the state of the business. Leaders are concerned with the well-being of society or the entire business. Their personal powers and moral attitudes are at the highest level. They build trust in everyone and spread an optimistic climate. In light of this, authentic leaders are not superhuman beings. Everyone has aspects that need improvement. Authentic leaders take responsibility when they make mistakes and accept that they make wrong decisions (Ofori, 2008: 624).

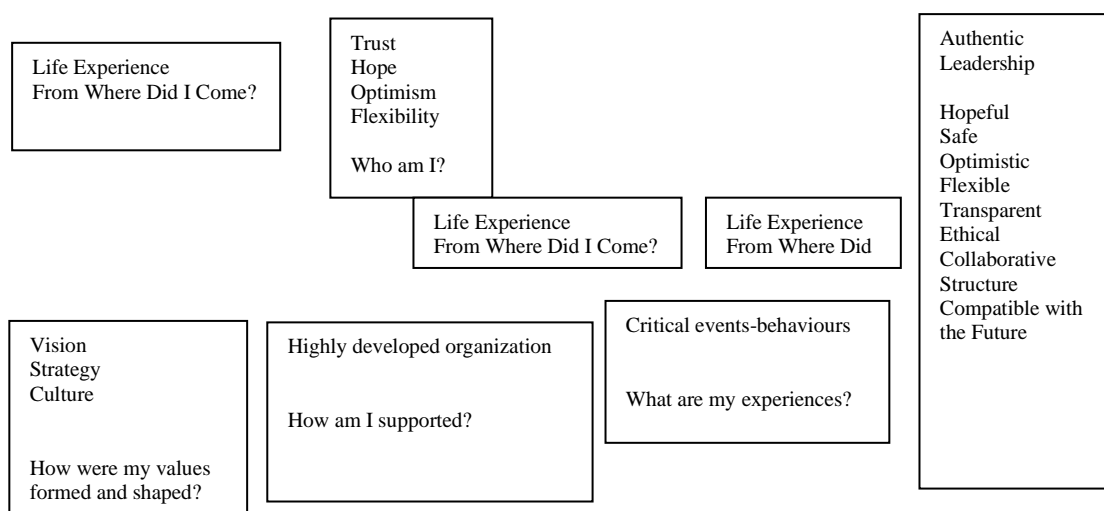


Figure 2. Authentic Leadership Development Model

Reference:(Korkmaz, 2017: 444).

In Figure 2, the authentic leadership development model is shown as a figure. According to the model, authentic leaders are

hopeful, confident, optimistic, flexible, transparent, moral, compliant and collaborative and it is because of their life experience, vision, calm behaviour and individual awareness of critical events.

According to Luthans, self-awareness, authentic decision-making process, self-control, organizational context, and developing self-awareness competencies with self-control from the audience constitute the most basic components of authentic leadership. Self-reliance, self-confidence, hope, being optimistic, and coping with difficulties are among the aspects of psychological resources, which are defined as the sine qua non of authentic leadership (Luthans et al., 2007: 152).

Authentic leadership is the reflection of trust, hope, flexibility and optimism that brings together personal success criteria such as contribution, effort and creativity. Therefore, wherever authentic leaders exist, there is a sense of trust, hope, optimism, flexibility, and tolerance (Gardner and Schermorhorn, 2004: 274).

Positive emotions are the most fundamental elements in the existence of authentic leadership. Building trust in leadership includes important organizational elements such as belief in information, loyalty, and organizational membership approach. In addition, the process of establishing trust contains very important information about the leader's character structure (Avolio, et al., 2004: 814).

2.6. The Concept of Well-Being

Although the concept of well-being basically means development and progress, it also includes areas of life, health status, income earned, social and family life, and free time. According to a view, well-being is formed as a result of opportunities and gains encountered in life. Well-being includes the well-being and satisfaction situations experienced by the people to whom opportunities and possibilities are offered. When viewed from many angles, it can be expressed as being even better (Gökdemir and Veenhoven, 2014: 359).

The concept of personal well-being, which shows how individuals think and feel about their own lives, is the reflection of the reactions given by the person, his/her view of life, the taste he/she gets from life, and all of these again to himself/herself (Donaldson & Ko, 2010: 177).

As a result of the studies of Zheng et al. (2015), 3 main dimensions of employee happiness were found. These are happiness in life (subjective well-being), workplace happiness, and psychological well-being (Zheng, et al., 2015: 622).

The term well-being means being cognitively and feeling well. It can be said that feeling good is to behave well. In studies carried out, life satisfaction is also expressed in terms such as feeling emotionally well and being happy. Psychological well-being is a concept that refers to individuals with good mental health. Psychological well-being is basically the ability to manage the existential delusions in life. It is the effort to hold on to meaningful goals for existence and to establish satisfactory relationships. An individual who is mentally healthy is a

person who is also psychologically sound (Demirci and Şar, 2017: 2710).

2.7. Employee Happiness

In the model, employee happiness consists of three elements (Zheng, et al., 2015: 632-633);

1. Subjective well-being shows satisfaction from life and its reflections.
2. Workplace happiness includes job and job satisfaction and positive or negative reactions.
3. There are six functions of psychological well-being. They are self-acceptance, ability to establish positive and satisfying relationships with others, environmental mastery, autonomy, personal development, and life purpose.

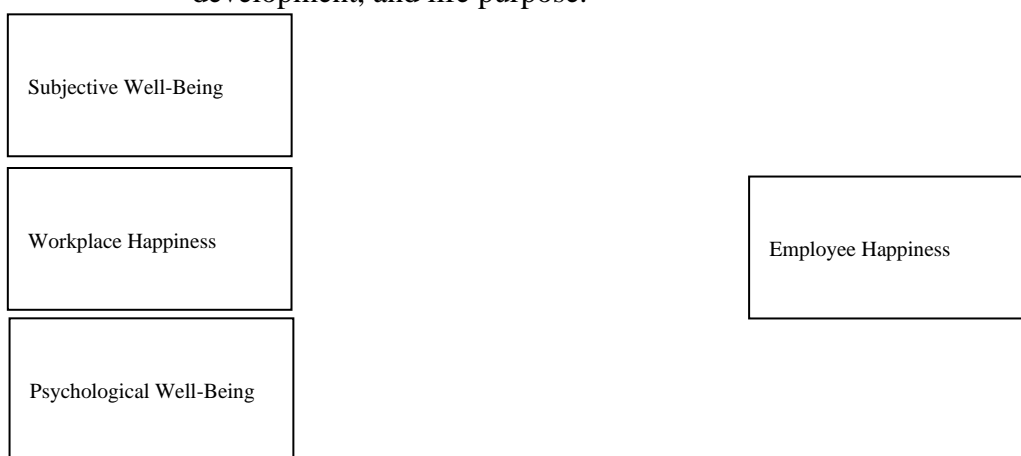


Figure 3. Employee happiness model
Reference: (Zheng, et al., 2015: 633).

Figure 3 includes the employee happiness model. According to the figure, in order to create the most suitable climate for employee happiness in a business, managers should not only focus on physical health but also care about social and emotional health. Although the most important factor affecting general happiness is psychological and subjective well-being, it is necessary for businesses to create synergy with all the aforementioned elements by creating workplace happiness in order to work happily.

Employee happiness is a targeted situation for businesses that allocate a significant part of their resources for their intellectual capital and whose main purpose is to make profit, and that puts a customer-oriented perspective in the centre. The employee, who adds value to the business, wants to contribute to his/her development in order to protect his/her job satisfaction and success in addition to wages, social and health rights, and continuity (Harter et al., 2002: 271).

2.8. Dimensions of Well Being

In this section, autonomy, environmental dominance, individual development, and positive interaction with others will be covered.

1. Autonomy refers to the independence of a person in the decisions he/she makes and to be self-confident in this process. A person with a high level of autonomy does not succumb to negative and unfair reactions from others. Autonomy is basically an individual's effort to seek autonomy to prove his individual existence in the social and social sphere, reflecting his own thoughts and style despite all kinds of pressure (Heckert et al., 2000: 122).

2. Environmental dominance is the ability of the individual to create his/her environment in a way to meet his own needs and desires and to create benefit for himself/herself by shaping all the conditions in his environment. Well-being is manifested by the presence of environmental dominance, as well as the belief in control and competence. The person knows his/her own needs, and he/she has a full belief that he/she is competent in this regard. After this stage, the formation of environmental dominance and well-being becomes easier (Ryff and Singer, 2008: 23).

3. Individual development means that the individual is aware of his/her capabilities and limits and that he/she is open to any criticism and opinion that will improve himself/herself with the effort to improve his/her creativity and skills. When the social structure is examined, it is observed that children raised with this perspective are more autonomous, develop a positive social attitude, care about their personal development, and seek the meaning of their lives. Individual development includes factors such as well-being, positive behaviour model, and the ability to establish qualified relationships, and being an autonomous individual (Ryff, 1989: 1070).

4. Positive relationships with others mean that the individual establishes and maintains positive and qualified relationships with other individuals, feels empathy and closeness, and cares about the happiness of the other individual. The concept of establishing positive relationships with other individuals in sociological intercultural well-being studies also varies according to cultures. It emerges as an important factor in understanding the structural differences of cultures (Ryff and Singer, 2008: 21).

5. Life purpose means that the individual has a life purpose and the life he/she lives is meaningful. The individual who has a purpose in life shows behaviours related to this purpose. He/she finds a meaning both in its past and the moment he/she exists and believes in this meaning. He/she always has goals. In an individual who does not have a life purpose, there is a lack of meaning in his/her life as well as unwillingness. Neither in the past nor in the present, she/she cannot find a target and draw a path for himself/herself. He/she has no thought or even belief in the life bestowed on him/her. Psychological well-being shows itself with the existence of life purpose and the realization of existential meaning (Aytaç, 1997: 9).

6. Self-acceptance means that an individual is content with himself/herself and his/her past, looks positively at himself/herself, and approaches himself/herself with tolerance even in situations where he/she has limits and is not capable of (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009: 2).

2.9. The Effects of Authentic Leadership on the Perception of Good Employees

In other words, subjective well-being is happiness in business life, the effort made to increase the knowledge and skills of individuals, to strengthen their creative side, and to adapt to business life while performing their jobs and duties. When individuals look at their lives, the response of these efforts is subjective well-being, and business employees' perception of affective well-being in return for these efforts they realize when they examine their own work lives. Job-related perception of affective well-being is usually explained by job-related satisfaction or job satisfaction. The perception of affective well-being related to the job is the sum of these conditions that make up the feelings and thoughts of the individual while performing his/her duty (Akduman and Yüksekbilgili, 2015: 72).

Maddux and Tagney has shown in their study that demographic factors and conditions affect the subjective well-being of individuals by 10% on an average basis, mental and behavioural efforts spent on doing good to others, doing the requirements of their beliefs, helping others and creating a life goal affect subjective well-being on average 20% 40%, and genetics and personality formation affect subjective well-being 50% on an average basis.

Generally, individuals tend to adapt to the health-related problems they experience. While the effect of health on feeling happy is more limited, being happy and positive emotions have an undeniable positive effect on the immune system and health. Happy individuals have a stronger immune system than unhappy individuals. It proves the thesis that happy individuals get sick less (Carr, 2016: 49-50).

Jobs, which create a sense of success, responsibility and belonging, provide the opportunity to progress and gain appreciation can be expressed as incentive factors. Although some elements are also motivating, they are insufficient to create motivation, but its absence also creates dissatisfaction. As an example, issues related to hygiene can be given (Önen and Tüzün, 2005: 74).

Working and being able to do a job give the person social status and reputation as well as creating economic gain, and also provides a sense of belonging. Working also meets the need to prove one's existence because of the satisfaction that a person experiences as a result of being respected and loved for his job (Telman and Ünsal, 2004: 12).

Establishing positive and qualified relationships with other people, which is one of the most basic elements of well-being, is extremely important, considering the need for trust and warmth. Self-aware and self-actualized individuals are mature and feel a deep compassion and empathy for all. This naturally results in establishing positive and qualified relationships with others. Ability to establish positive relationships with others is a critical factor for both psychological well-being and since it is the most important one among the social skills (VanderZee et al., 1997: 1843).

3. CONCLUSION

Awareness means achieving a level of consciousness by focusing attention on the present, in reducing the stress created by work, increasing the self, improving emotional intelligence, reducing destructive, acceptable emotional, mental, and behavioural reactions. Authentic leaders have high level of individual awareness since these types of leaders have established body-mind integrity and allows them to change their feelings and ways of thinking in the face of unpleasant life experiences which creates tension. By focusing on thoughts and emotions and developing consciousness, they manage to deal with them.

In order for the leader to be authentic within the business, he/she must have an unchanging sense of self-identity, establish his/her task and position within the business, and adopt goals that are synchronized with his technical development and personal development. Leaders must be unbiased and clear when making decisions, and show a leadership attitude consistent with their attitude and values within the business.

The authentic leader is a particularly sheltered and trust-building area where those who follow him/her take refuge in times of pain and uncertainty. Authentic leaders help employees within the business give meaning to their tasks and discover themselves. The authentic leader, who builds trust and creates a sense of loyalty by supporting employees with a clear attitude, also ensures that business ethics are established as a culture.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

✓ The effects of leadership styles on the optimism levels of businesses can be examined. The contributions of various leadership styles to optimism in the academic structure in schools can be determined comparatively.

✓ Those who work in managerial positions in businesses should be especially careful in the decision stages. They should take into account the feedback from employees. In order to make the right decision under all circumstances, it is necessary to try to clarify the events.

✓ Managers should be aware of their leadership style. The authentic leader should be able to communicate clearly with his followers and make clear analysis about people. He/she should be able to take responsibility and be a leader who takes care of the followers, not only in success but also in failure. The manager should take these factors into account and make a decision about his/her own behaviour pattern.

✓ A leader is expected to create a vision. Having a vision is one of the most important criteria of progress. It is the characteristic of a visionary leader to have innovative ideas that can influence the audience and to offer brand new expansions. The manager should evaluate himself/herself by looking at criteria such as the determination and autonomy to create a vision.

✓ The authentic leader inspires the environment and is loved by those around him/her. Managers should evaluate themselves with these features and prominent attitudes.

✓ When awareness increases, compelling thoughts and emotions become less active in our lives. Therefore, this situation positively affects emotional fluctuations in business or private matters. The person with high awareness establishes a more flexible, harmonious, transparent communication and steps into a more efficient and fulfilling life.

✓ In future research, the contribution of the concept of authentic leadership to employee performance, productivity, or organizational loyalty can be investigated. It can be studied on its relationship with job satisfaction. The impact of cultural differences may also be subject to examination by evaluating the studies conducted at home and abroad. A different sample group can be taken for study. This type of study can be useful for managers to realize the reflections of different leadership qualities on employees.

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