

The Effects of Authentic Leadership on Psychological Well-being and Job Performance – Focused on Airline Flight Attendants

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진정성리더십이 심리적 웰빙과 직무성과에 미치는 영향 - 항공사 승무원을 중심으로

고선희

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Abstract This study intends to examine how authentic leadership affects psychological well-being and job performance among flight attendants. To test hypotheses, this study performed survey to flight attendants of big airlines in Korea for about two months from October 1 to December 5, 2018. 200 copies of the questionnaire was distributed, and 180 were collected. Among them, 21 copies where many questions were unanswered or not very seriously answered were discarded. So, 159 copies in total were used for analysis. Statistical analysis was done with SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 21.0. The results are as follows. First, balanced information processing, self-awareness, self-awareness have significant effect on psychological well-being, while relational transparency have not. Second, psychological well-being have significant effect on job performance. Consequently, all the hypotheses in this study except for hypothesis 1-3 were adopted.

Key Words : Authentic Leadership, Psychological Well-being, Job Performance, Airline Service, Flight Attendants

요약 본 연구에서는 객실승무원이 지각하는 진정성리더십이 부하의 심리적 웰빙과 직무성과에 어떠한 영향을 미치는지 논의하고자 한다. 가설을 검증하기 위하여 국내에 운항중인 대형항공사 객실승무원을 대상으로 2018년 10월 1일부터 12월 5일까지 약 2개월 간 설문조사를 실시하였다. 설문지는 총 200부를 배포하여 180부가 회수 되었으며, 총 159부를 실증분석에 이용하였다. 본 연구의 자료 통계분석은 SPSS 22.0과 AMOS 21.0을 이용하였다. 분석결과는 아래와 같다. 첫째, 진정성 리더십 중 균형적 정보처리, 자아인식, 내면화된 도덕관점은 심리적 웰빙에 유의한 영향을 미치는 것으로 나타나 채택되었다. 반면 진정성리더십 중 관계적 투명성은 심리적 웰빙에 유의한 영향을 미치지 않는 것으로 나타나 기각되었다. 둘째, 항공사 승무원이 지각하는 심리적 웰빙은 직무성과에 유의한 영향을 미칠 것 이라는 유의한 경로계수를 보여 채택되었다. 따라서 본 연구에서 설정한 가설 중 가설 1-3을 제외한 나머지 가설은 모두 채택되었다.

주제어 : 진정성리더십, 심리적웰빙, 직무성과, 항공서비스, 항공사승무원

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1. Introduction

Recently, with rapidly changing market characteristics and technology, firms, which want to produce maximum effects with limited number of workers, need to have leaders who will effectively lead those workers. Leader plays important role by making members of an organization adjust themselves properly to the organizational environment and efficiently achieve the organizational goals, and maximize management performance[1].

Transactional leadership and transformational leadership suggested by Burns(1978)[2] and revised by Bass(1990)[3] have been dealt with by many leadership researches. However, some have raised the necessity to deal with a new leadership different from existing leadership explained by characteristics theory, behavioral theory, and situational theory.

Gallup Leadership Institute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln suggested authentic leadership. It is a leadership based on transformational leadership and ethical leadership, and which can get respect and trust from the society and organizational members. Later, some suggested the need to integrate transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, and ethical leadership into a new leadership, and the concept of authentic leadership as a desirable leadership style was born.

Authentic leadership was treated as an important agenda by Leadership Quarterly, one of famous journal dealing with leadership. Authentic leadership was conceptualized by Avolio & Gardner (2005)[4]. Later, the measurement scale of authentic leadership, with the development of ALQ (Authentic leadership questionnaire), authentic leadership could be credited as a good concept of leadership[5]. According to Avolio & Gardner, authentic leadership is defined as something in which a leader, with clear life goals and values, leads with his or her own beliefs and

warm heart.

According to Luthans & Avolio (2003)[6], as authentic leader is self-confident, hopeful, positive, elastic, moral, and future-oriented, the leader is honest to himself or herself and is always trying to change and develop. As described up to now, authentic leadership has been dealt with by many scholars. The most widely accepted definition of authentic leadership is what Avolio & Gardner (2005)[4] suggested. "A pattern of leader who promotes active self-development, and who can create positive mental capacities and ethical atmosphere, in the sense that he or she works with followers to promote self-awareness, balanced information processing, internalized moral perspective and relational transparency", while the definition looks complex, it contains many aspects of authentic leadership[7].

First, self-awareness means clear awareness about oneself around the situation where one is located. Balanced information processing means the process in which one views something with non-biased and objective viewpoints. Relational transparency means to express oneself honestly to others. Internalized moral perspective means to behave on the standard of one's own internal moral values[5,6].

Authentic leadership is dealt with roughly in three aspects. First is a research on definition of authentic leadership and components of it. Second is on the relationship between authentic leadership and resulting variables. Third is on what mechanism affects the relationship between authentic leadership and resulting variables, that is, what works as mediating or moderating variables in the relationship.

This study intends to examine how authentic leadership affects psychological well-being and job performance. Psychological well-being is a concept, which exceeds daily happiness and joy and the degree of happiness one feels as a social being[8,9]. It is a concept differentiated from pleasure well-being, and is deep happiness and

self-seeking exceeding current joy and satisfaction[10,11]. Ryff & Keyes(1995)[12] based on existing researches, developed a psychological well-being scale, and divided it into different sub-elements of it: self- acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth.

To organizational members, happiness is an important process to find meanings in the organization which they belong to and the works they are engaged in and it has important effect on life in general beyond the organization. As psychological well-being is a criterion by which one can evaluate one's life as a member of society[9,13] and by which one can judge one's life as a member of an organization, and is closely related with happiness, we can view that it is also closely related with authentic leadership. Authentic leader tries to reduce the gap between himself in real world and himself in ideal world through behavior regulation based on self-consciousness. Thus, the image of a leader who tries to overcome limits of oneself and come close to reasonable oneself promotes psychological well-being of employees[14]. Many researches have proven that psychological well-being and job performance are significantly related[15,16]. Namely, we can expect that psychologically happy workers perform better in job-related behavior than unhappy ones. Consequently, based on above existing researches, this study set the following hypotheses on the relationship between authentic leadership, psychological well-being, and job performance.

Hypothesis 1: Authentic leadership will have significant positive effect on psychological well-being.

Hypothesis 2: Psychological well-being will have significant positive effect on job performance.

2. Materials and Methods

To test hypotheses, this study performed survey to flight attendants of big airlines in Korea for about two months from October 1 to December 5, 2018. Before survey, the aim of the survey was explained to respondents who were waiting for the next flight in office. Owing to limits of time and expenses, convenience sampling, one of non-probability sampling methods, was adopted. The managers were excluded from the sample of this study to achieve the research purpose.

200 copies of the questionnaire was distributed, and 180 were collected. Among them, 21 copies where many questions were unanswered or not very seriously answered were discarded. So, 159 copies in total were used for analysis. Statistical analysis was done with SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 21.0. To find out demographic characteristics of respondents, frequency analysis was performed. To test reliability and validity of the data, confirmatory factor analysis was done. To secure discriminant validity, correlation analysis was done. Finally, to figure out relations among variables, structural equation modeling was done.

3. Empirical Analysis

3.1 Demographic characteristics

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	female	102	64.2
	male	57	35.8
Marital status	married	82	51.6
	single	77	48.4
Age	20-29	80	50.3
	30-39	62	39.0
	40 and above	17	10.7
Position	Flight attendants	103	64.8
	Vice manager	56	35.2
Airlines	Korean Airlines	72	45.3
	Asiana Airlines	87	54.7
Work Period	1-5 years	81	51.0
	6-10 years	42	26.4
	10 years and over	36	22.6
Total		159	100

3.2 Reliability

To confirm reliability and validity of construct concepts and question items, this study did confirmatory factor analysis. The findings are shown in Table 2, which contain estimates and standardized estimates of all questions.

Standardized estimates range from .607 to .880 and all the questions are significant at .001 level. Goodness-of-fit which tests whether the model fits the data shows that the model is acceptable.

The statistics are as follows: $\chi^2=415.001$, $df=181$, $p<.001$, $\chi^2/df=2.292$, $CFI=.951$, and $IFI=.907$. $RMSEA$ is .043, lower than the critical value .08, satisfying the requirement of goodness-of-fit[17]. And, $GFI=.900$, and $AGFI=.890$, which are lower than recommended value .9. But, as all other values satisfy requirements, goodness-of-fit is acceptable.

Table 3 shows correlation matrix to test convergent validity and discriminant validity. Average Variance

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the measurement model

Factor	ITEM	Std. factor loading	t Value	SMC	AVE
Balanced information processing	BI 1	.687	---	.679	.544
	BI 2	.807	17.108**	.619	
	BI 3	.806	17.372**	.824	
	BI 4	.880	18.173**	.678	
Self-awareness	SA 1	.804	19.708**	.608	.678
	SA 2	.865	---	.673	
	SA 3	.797	18.911**	.601	
	SA 4	.657	18.708**	.603	
Relational transparency	RT 1	.664	---	.677	.606
	RT 2	.802	16.708**	.611	
	RT 3	.791	17.708**	.712	
Internalized moral perspective	IP 1	.766	---	.708	.774
	IP 2	.700	17.113**	.604	
	IP 3	.775	16.032**	.772	
Psychological well-being	PW 1	.807	10.138**	.703	.604
	PW 2	.847	---	.510	
	PW 3	.836	11.412**	.604	
	PW 4	.848	17.193**	.579	
Job performance	JP 1	.811	14.470**	.679	.712
	JP 2	.607	13.177**	.750	
	JP 3	.796	---	.724	
	JP 4	.848	15.118**	.778	

Table 3. Correlation Matrix

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Balanced information processing: A	.737					
Self-awareness: B	.442	.823				
Relational transparency: C	.315	.521	.778			
Internalized moral perspective: D	.337	.335	.441	.879		
Psychological well-being: E	.209	.302	.509	.540	.777	
Job performance: F	.348	.319	.445	.277	.341	.843

all correlations are significant at $p<0.01$ (2-tailed), diagonal value: square root AVE

Extracted (AVE) values for all construct concepts exceed 0.5, securing convergent validity[17] and to test discriminant validity, the squared value of each correlation coefficient and its AVE value were compared, and whether the former is lower than the latter[18]. It was found that in all the potential variables, squared values of a pair of factors and AVE value of each factor satisfied the requirement. So, discriminant validity was secured.

3.3 Results

To identify reliability and inner consistency, construct reliability (CR) values of construct concepts were identified, and all the values were over 0.7, reliability was secured[14]. To identify causal relations among concepts in this research model, this study made a structural equation model. Goodness-of-fit of the model was $\chi^2=402.331$, $df=171$, $p<.001$, $\chi^2/df=2.352$, $GFI=.921$, $AGFI=.895$, $CFI=.942$, $IFI=.960$, and $TLI=.932$; $RMSEA$ was .050, lower than the critical value .08, satisfying the criteria of goodness-of-fit of the model[17].

Table 4 shows the results of hypothesis tests. Specifically, authentic leadership of boss as his members perceive is divided into sub-categories: balanced information processing, self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective.

Hypothesis 1-1: balanced information processing will have significant effect on psychological well-being was accepted because its path coefficient = .841, $t=17.451$ satisfies the criteria. Hypothesis 1-2: self-awareness will have significant effect on psychological well-being was also accepted (path coefficient = .753, $t=18.890$).

Hypothesis 1-3: relational transparency will have significant effect on psychological well-being was rejected (path coefficient = .144, $t=1.431$). Forth, internalized moral perspective was found to have significant effect on psychological well-being (path coefficient = .785, $t=18.055$). Finally, hypothesis 2: psychological well-being will have significant effect on job performance was accepted (path coefficient = .714, $t=15.807$).

Table 4. Structure model path analysis

H	Path	Estimate	S.E	C.R	p
1-1	Balanced information processing --> Psychological well-being	.841	.053	17.451**	.001
1-2	Self-awareness --> Psychological well-being	.753	.047	18.890**	.000
1-3	Relational transparency --> Psychological well-being	.021	.031	0.912	.477
1-4	Internalized moral perspective --> Psychological well-being	.785	.041	18.055**	.001
2	Psychological well-being --> Job performance	.714	.032	15.807**	.000

**=t-statistic (≥ 1.96) sig. level of $p<0.05$

4. Conclusion

Air service business gets increasingly competitive due to deregulation and continuous growth of low cost carriers. All the carriers try to acquire competitive edge in the global market. As cabin service is provided by flight attendants in closed space, role of flight attendants and leadership of manager are very important. Accordingly, this study set the research model that in the effect of authentic leadership on organizational performance of members, psychological well-being of members plays mediating role, and extracted construct factors, and did empirical analysis. The findings of empirical analysis are as follows.

First, among the types of authentic leadership as cabin crew perceive, balanced information processing was found to have positive effect on psychological well-being. Namely, the more boss tends to listen to opinions of his members before making decisions, and consider rational alternatives, the higher psychological well-being of flight attendants goes.

Second, among the types of authentic leadership as cabin crew perceive, self-awareness was found to have positive effect on psychological well-being.

It means that the more cabin crew perceive that their boss explains something clearly, and give feedback to improve relationship with his members, the more his members feel competent that they can do something well, feel capable, and the higher psychological well-being of flight attendants goes.

Third, among the types of authentic leadership as cabin crew perceive, relational transparency was found not to have significant effect on psychological well-being, rejecting hypothesis 1-3. That is, the fact that boss clearly expresses his ideas to others and honestly admits his mistakes does not improve psychological well-being of his members. Such a result seems to be caused by the fact that cabin crew do not consider relational transparency as important, unlike other factors in authentic leadership.

Forth, among the types of authentic leadership as cabin crew perceive, internalized moral perspective was found not to have significant positive effect on psychological well-being, which means that the more cabin crew perceive that their boss behaviors along with his beliefs, the more they feel happy, and they feel happier working in airplane than doing something else.

Authentic leaders suggests high moral standards to his members and guide his members to follow them, and plays a role model of them. And, authentic leader discuss their weaknesses transparently and honestly, they grow together.

Finally, psychological well-being as cabin crew perceive was found to have significant effect on job performance. That is, the more one is confident that one can do something well, the more one performs the work. Accordingly, to improve job performance of crew members, authentic leadership is important. Unlike other leaderships suggested up to now such as transformational leadership, ethical leadership and servant leadership, authentic leadership plays a positive role by serving as role model to his members and promoting self-development of

the leader.

This study did survey to big carriers in Korea. In the future, it seems necessary to expand this research to cabin crew of low cost carriers. And, there should be more deep research on psychological well-being.

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