

Authentic military leadership and its effect on job satisfaction and performance – The mediating role of commitment to the leader and self-leadership

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ABSTRACT

Leading soldiers is a unique challenge, as the special military tasks are usually associated with high psychological and physical stress. A trusting relationship between the leader and their soldiers can make it easier to carry out military assignments and to deal with the pressures. Authentic leadership is relationship-oriented leadership behavior that is aimed at building such a relationship. In this study, authentic leadership in the Austrian Armed Forces at the company management level was examined. Using a two-level model, the effects of authentic leadership on job satisfaction and work performance as well as the role of commitment to the leader and self-leadership of soldiers were examined. For this purpose, 100 company leaders (team level) were rated by three directly commanded soldiers (Individual level, N = 300). The results show that authentic leadership has significantly positive effects on job satisfaction and work performance, which are mediated by the commitment to the leader. Commitment to the leader also has a significantly positive effect on soldiers' self-leadership, which has an indirect effect on work performance. The relationship-oriented, authentic leadership behavior has proven itself very successful in the military context.

Keywords

Authentic leadership – commitment to the leader – self-leadership – job satisfaction – work performance