

Authentic leadership, trust and followers' emotions: the experience of HRMs during organizational change processes

Agote Errazquin, Laida

Univ. de Deusto. Camino de Mundaiz, 50. 20012 Donostia

laidaagote@gmail.com

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Gero eta interes handiagoa dagoen arren, oraindik ia ez dira emozioen aurrekariak ikertu antolaketa-aldaketen testuinguruan. Dagoen bibliografiara ekarpena egiteko ahaleginean, Giza Baliabideetako 102 zuzendarien esperientzia aztertu dugu Espainian, karratu partzial gutxienekoetan oinarritako egitura-ekuazio ereduen bidez. Emaitzek erakusten dutenez, egiazko lidergoak eragina du jarraitzaileen konfiantza eta emozio positiboetan. Gainera, konfiantza lidergo egiazkoaren eta emozio negatiboen arteko bitartekaria ere bada.

Giltza-Hitzak: Egiazko lidergoak. Konfiantza. Emozioak. Antolaketa-aldaketa. Giza Baliabideetako Zuzendaria.

A pesar del creciente interés, aún no se han investigado apenas los antecedentes de las emociones en contextos de cambio organizacional. En un intento por realizar una contribución a la bibliografía existente, hemos analizado la experiencia de 102 directores de recursos humanos en España mediante modelos de ecuaciones estructurales basados en mínimos cuadrados parciales. Los resultados muestran que el liderazgo auténtico influye en la confianza y las emociones positivas de los seguidores. Además, la confianza actúa de mediador en la relación entre liderazgo auténtico y emociones negativas.

Palabras Clave: Liderazgo auténtico. Confianza. Emociones. Cambio organizacional. Director de Recursos Humanos.

Malgré l'intérêt croissant, les antécédents des émotions dans les contextes de changement des organisations ont à peine été étudiés. Dans l'idée de faire un apport à la biographie existante, nous avons analysé l'expérience de 102 directeurs de ressources humaines en Espagne en employant des modèles d'équations structurales basés dans des minimums carrés partiels. Les résultats montrent que le leadership authentique influe dans la confiance et les émotions positives des partisans. De plus, la confiance agit comme médiateur dans la relation entre le leadership authentique et les émotions négatives.

Mots-Clés : Leadership authentique. Confiance. Émotions. Changement des organisations. Directeur de Ressources Humaines.

1. INTRODUCTION

Changes have become increasingly common context in organizations (Kiefer; 2005); being downsizing, layoffs, and departmental reorganizations especially common during economical crises as the one we are facing right now. Implementing successfully these changes can be critical for their future as, for example, a strategic reorganization can be the turning point of a company to which an economic crisis had doomed to ruin. Therefore, the necessity to constantly adapt to the environment in order to remain competitive urges companies to be aware of the underlying factors that explain the success of organizational changes.

Acknowledging this managerial concern, researchers have tried for long to find the key success factors of change processes taking mainly a cognitive perspective. However, researchers currently recognize that "affect is inherent to the human experience, and thus inherent to any situation in which humans interact with each other and their environment, including at work" (Barsade; Gibson; 2007:51). It is now considered that emotions guide people when adapting to new environments; so they are a vital part of change that do not always have negative consequences as it used to be thought (Kiefer; 2002). For this reason, emotions are nowadays considered especially relevant in change contexts (Ashton-James; Ashkanasy; 2005) and are being analyzed as a factor that can help explain the outcomes of organizational changes.

Although the interest in emotions in the organizational context has been intense and increasingly popular, there are still many theoretical and methodological opportunities left (Brief; Weiss; 2002). In particular, research has focused more on the consequences of emotions than on explaining how and why they occur and how they can be explained (Giæver; 2009a). Thus it is proposed that more research on antecedents of emotions during organizational change is needed in order to understand better the factors underlying successful change implementation (Lines et al.; 2010); and this is exactly what this investigation attempts to do.

Together with emotions, leaders' behavior and level of trust in the leader are considered fundamental elements for the success of change processes, and have also been proposed to influence emotions. On the one side, and in spite of the general belief that leaders' behavior are a fundamental source of employees' emotions at work, few articles have tried to demonstrate this thought (e.g. Bono et al.; 2007, Seo et al.; 2007, Erez et al.; 2008, Rowold; Rohmann; 2009, Peterson et al.; 2012, Liang; Chi; 2013). The number of investigations diminishes if our interest is on a relatively new leadership style, authentic leadership (AL); and gets even smaller if we focus on organizational change contexts. On the other side, trust is considered an important element in the effectiveness of leadership because it is crucial for getting individual work towards a common goal (Dirks; 2000) and it is associated to important organizational outcomes. However, the role of trust and emotions in leading and following is still under-researched. Therefore, questions concerning whether

and how authentic leaders may influence followers' emotions, how they can build trust in the leader, or whether trust plays any role in the relationship between leaders' behaviors and followers' emotions remain to be unanswered.

Our research addresses all these gaps in the leadership and emotions literatures by examining why authentic leadership matters, and how it may influence followers' level of trust in the leader and emotions during organizational change processes. When we talk about authentic leadership we refer to:

"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". (Walumbwa et al.; 2008:94)

Moreover, this empirical study will be centered on human resource managers and their direct boss' AL behaviors. Based mainly on appraisal theories of emotions, direct boss' leadership attributes will be considered triggering events of HRMs' emotional reactions. In particular, their perceptions of their direct boss' AL behavior and the level of trust in their leader will be analyzed as antecedents of HRMs' positive and negative emotions during organizational change processes. To the best of our knowledge this is the first attempt to explore the relation between followers' AL perception, trust and emotions in organizational change contexts. In spite of the importance of accomplishing successful changes in organizations, and the belief that leadership behavior, trust in the leader and experienced emotions are relevant for change success is hardly doubted; only partial explanations of the relationships between these variables are available in the literature, some in change situations and other in different contexts. But no single research that empirically tested the association among these three concepts during organizational change processes could be found.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Emotions during organizational change

Emotions, considered here as *relatively intense and short-living affective reactions to a specific event*, are usually classified in positive and negative according to their valence. Positive emotions are the result of a favorable appraisal towards the approach or achievement of own goals (e.g. happiness, pride, relief, hope). Conversely, negative emotions are the result of an unfavorable appraisal towards the approach or achievement of own goals (e.g. anger, disappointment, frustration, rage) (Bisquerra; 2009).

Emotions are expected to surface more frequently and intensely during change processes than in non-change situations (Kiefer; 2002). Organizational changes, *process by which organizations move from their present state to*

some desired future state in order to foster the achievement of one or more organizational objectives, are considered emotional due to the increased likelihood of experiencing challenging and potentially threatening issues (Kiefer; 2005) explained by the uncertainty inherent to changes processes. Especially in the beginning, organizational changes are a context of uncertainty for all the ones involved, what can make employees feel vulnerable and insecure. Hence, organizational change seems to be an appropriate context for examining emotions at work.

In fact, the number of papers that study emotions in organizational change contexts has increased in the last years contributing to a better understanding of the field (Fugate et al.; 2002, Huy; 2002, Kiefer; 2002, Huy; 2005, Kiefer; 2005, Matheny; Smollan; 2005, Bartunek et al.; 2006, Seo et al.; 2007, Szabla; 2007, Avey et al.; 2008, Lines et al.; 2009, Balogun et al.; 2010, Gæver; Hellesø; 2010, Lines et al.; 2010). Many of these investigations have in common that they are grounded on appraisal theories of emotions, especially if they analyze emotions' antecedents and consequences. In these cases it is outstanding the number of papers that mention the affective events theory (AET) (Weiss; Cropanzano; 1996).

Taking Lazarus' (1991) appraisal theory and other cognitive theories into the organizational context, Weiss & Cropanzano (1996) propose that the emotional reactions lived at work generally begin with the appraisal of an event occurred in the organization. A change in the circumstances, in what the employee is currently experiencing becomes the triggering event of the emotional experience. Affective events have been described in the work context as incidents, the consequence of the interaction between the employee and his labor environment that stimulates the individual assessment processes, triggering an emotional experience (Basch; Fisher; 2000, Bisquerra; 2009). For example, when a person is excited about a recent promotion, the promotion would be the work event that triggers the emotion of excitement.

Taking previous work and suggestions on what it is still left to investigate into consideration, this paper will focus on HRM's perception of their direct boss' authentic leadership behavior and level of trust on them as antecedents of emotions during change.

We decided to focus on the direct boss because, among managers, it is the nearest one, with whom workers spend more time and, for that, who can most frequently and intensely influence on employees' emotions.

2.2. The influence of authentic leadership perception on emotions and trust

Luthans and Avolio (2003) introduced the idea of AL development to offer a more positive way for conceptualizing leadership development (Avolio et al.; 2009). Authentic leadership is built upon four dimensions (i.e. balanced processing, internalized moral perspective, relational transparency,

and self-awareness) which have been generally accepted since its empirical validation (Walumbwa et al.; 2008). *Balanced processing* refers to objectively analyzing relevant data before making a decision. Such leaders also solicit views that challenge their deeply held positions. *Internalized moral perspective* refers to being guided by internal moral standards and values, which are used to self-regulate one's behavior. Such leaders try to avoid group, organizational, and societal pressures when they make their decisions. *Relational transparency* refers to presenting one's authentic self through openly sharing information and feelings as appropriate for situations. Such leaders try to avoid the display of inappropriate emotions and their behavior promotes trust. And *self-awareness* refers to the demonstrated understanding of one's strengths, weaknesses, and the way one makes sense of the world (Walumbwa et al.; 2008, Avolio et al.; 2009).

According to Gooty, Connelly et al.'s (2010) literature review on leadership, affect and emotions are deeply intertwined with the process of leading, leader outcomes and follower outcomes. In fact, Avolio, Gardner et al. (2004) presented a framework in which they suggested that emotions could be a key variable to explain the process by which authentic leaders influence followers' outcomes. Most researchers try to explain the relation between leaders' behaviors and followers' emotions based on the affective events theory, which is grounded on appraisal theories.

When trying to understand how and why emotions arise, most researchers base their proposals on Lazarus' (1991) appraisal theory of emotions; as Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) did to develop the AET, a theory of emotions at work. The appraisal theory of emotions considers that these are specific reactions to events, indicating the importance of the episode to the individual. However, the stimulus that activates the appraisal process does not need to be literally an event, but can also be a stable feature that is salient (Elfenbein; 2007). Events related to interactions with coworkers, customers, and supervisors are among the greatest emotional impact for workers, with leaders' behaviors looming particularly large (Elfenbein; 2007). Therefore, leader's behaviors can be the event that activates the appraisal process giving birth to emotional experiences.

According to Lazarus' (1991) appraisal theory of emotions, two appraisal stages take place before an emotion arises. First, there is an automatic appraisal in which the possible consequences of a situation are taken into consideration. After this, a secondary appraisal takes place in which cognitive processes evaluate the personal capacity to cope with the situation. In other words, in the primary appraisal the person asks him/herself: does this affect my survival or wellbeing? If the answer is affirmative, emotional response activates and the secondary appraisal drives the person to ask him/herself: am I able to cope with this situation? If the answer is again affirmative, the emotional response intensity is reduced. But if it is negative, the person has a sense of loose of control that activates even more the physiologic response. Taking this general

theory into an organizational change context, and considering the authentic leader's behavior the eliciting event, the emotion arising process could be the following: first, primary appraisal occurs when an employee evaluates whether the authentic leader's behavior during the change is relevant to his/hers well-being or personal goals. If it is the case, secondary appraisal follows. In this stage, the employee receives more information about the leader and experience his/hers behavior in a daily basis. This information is influenced by the degree of congruence between individual's goals and authentic leader's goals, trust in the leader, or emotional ties to the leader. The result of this secondary appraisal will determine which emotion arises and its intensity. Generally speaking, as AL is considered a positive form of leadership, it is expected that authentic leaders' behaviors have positive consequences and elicit primarily positive emotions. More in concrete, authentic leaders expected behaviors such as: sharing information, asking for others thoughts, taking decisions based on high moral values and not biased by external pressures, taking into account others viewpoints, and willing to rectify standpoints when necessary; are expected to make their own goals become also the goals of their followers, enhance trust in the leader, and develop emotional ties to the leader. In this way, during the secondary appraisal it is favored the emergence of positive emotions and at the same time the reduction of negative emotions.

Few articles have tried to empirically demonstrate the widespread belief that leadership behaviors are a key source of employees' emotions at work, but the ones that have indeed tried to prove it (e.g. Bono et al.; 2007, Seo et al.; 2007, Erez et al.; 2008, Rowold; Rohmann; 2009, Peterson et al.; 2012, Liang; Chi; 2013) offer promising results. However, none of them analyzes the relationship between authentic leadership and emotions during organizational change processes, as it is our purpose. Hence, we propose:

H1a: The perception of authentic leadership behavior is positively related to the experience of positive emotions during organizational change.

H1b: The perception of authentic leadership behavior is negatively related to the experience of negative emotions during organizational change.

Rousseau, Sitkin et al. (1998:395) widely defined trust as "*a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another*". Trust in the leader is considered a relevant factor for the successful implementation of organizational changes (Zhu et al.; 2004, Oreg; 2006, Sørensen; Hasle; 2009) because it is crucial for getting individual work towards a common goal (Dirks; 2000), especially under high levels of perceived uncertainty.

According to Dirks and Ferrin's (2001, 2002) meta-analysis, leadership style can increase trust in the leader. This is, leaders can gain or lose followers' trust with their behavior. Leaders who do not show consistency between words and actions, or who frequently lie are hardly trusted by their employees. On

the contrary, with their supporting behavior, authentic leaders are expected to build trust in their followers. Transparency is a main characteristic of authentic leaders and it is also considered central to building trust. For this reason it is proposed that AL relational transparency can build followers' trust in the leader (Avolio; Wernsing; 2008, Walumbwa et al.; 2008, Norman et al.; 2010, Wong et al.; 2010). Leaders that are self-aware, whose values are based on high moral principles and who act upon their values, have no reason for not openly sharing information and expressing their true thoughts and feelings to followers (Avolio; Wernsing; 2008). Authentic leaders are transparent, congruent between their beliefs, words, and actions, honest, they show concern for employees, they have high ethical standards, integrity and credibility, and are willing to give and receive feedback. All these characteristics are proposed to help authentic leaders to build followers' trust in them. In fact, it has been empirically found before that AL influences trust directly at an individual level (Wong; Cummings; 2009, Wong et al.; 2010, Hassan; Ahmed; 2011, Zamahani et al.; 2011) and at a group level (Clapp-Smith et al.; 2009, Walumbwa et al.; 2011), and indirectly at an individual level through personal identification (Wong et al.; 2010). Hence, it is proposed:

H2: The perception of authentic leadership behavior is positively related to the level of trust in the leader during organizational change.

2.3. The influence of trust on emotions

Trust in the leader is also considered a fundamental element in the effectiveness of leadership (Bass; 1990b) because it is associated to important organizational outcomes such as organizational citizenship behaviors, job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, or intention to quit (2001, 2002). Based also on past research on trust, Schoorman, Mayer et al. (2007) considered a very interesting area the study of the relationship between trust and emotions. However, the role of trust and emotions in leading and following is still under-researched (Gooty et al.; 2010).

Based on the research antecedents and the need for more investigation, it is proposed here that trust in the leader can enhance positive emotions and reduce negative emotions. A follower that really trusts the leader is willing to do what the leader asks for and even give the leader the benefit of the doubt because he/she trusts the leader's intention (Gardner et al.; 2005:365). If the follower really trusts the leader, whatever the leader says or does could probably be interpreted by the follower in a more positive way than if trust did not exist. For example, if the leader states that it is essential to change how things are done to improve the performance of the organization, the follower would probably agree with the leader, perceive the change as positive and do whatever it takes to make it happen. In this situation hope and enthusiasm for an improvement with the change are likely to arise, while anger and frustration may be reduced. On the contrary, if the follower does not trust the leader, any proposal coming from the leader could be suspicious for the follower,

who would look for any undercover loss or harm. In this case, although the change may be positive, negative emotions such as anger may arise. Therefore, followers that trust the leader will probably experience more positive emotions and less negative emotions, and vice versa. Hence, we propose:

H3a: Trust in the leader is positively related to the experience of positive emotions during organizational change.

H3b: Trust in the leader is negatively related to the experience of negative emotions during organizational change.

2.4. The mediating role of trust

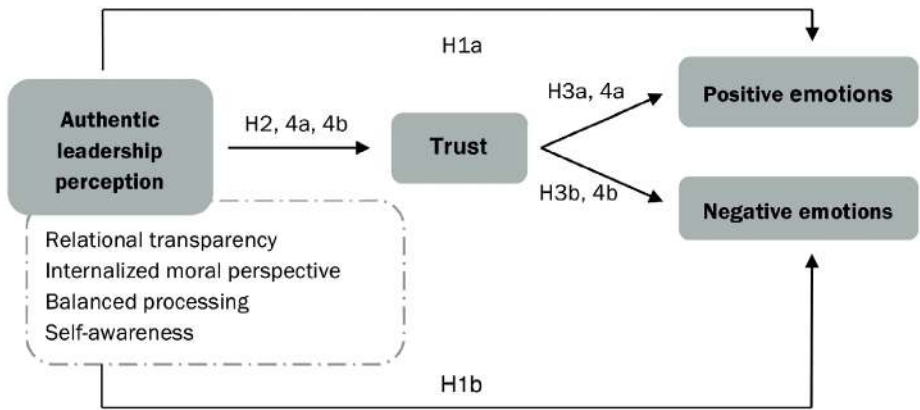
In their proposed framework, Avolio, Gardner et al. (2004) posited that identification, hope, trust and emotions could be the processes by which authentic leaders exert their influence on followers' attitudes and behaviors. Since then, the relationship between AL, trust and different followers' attitudes and behaviors has been successfully researched (Peus et al.; 2012). It has been empirically confirmed for example that trust mediates the relationship between AL and performance (Clapp-Smith et al.; 2009), voice behavior (Wong; Cummings; 2009), and work engagement (Hassan; Ahmed; 2011). These are promising results that let us think trust might also mediate the relation between AL and a different kind of followers' outcomes; this is followers' emotions. In fact, and although they did not presented an explicit proposition, Avolio, Gardner et al. (2004) suggested there could also be an association between AL, trust and positive emotions. According to Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang et al. (2009:232), and in reference to authentic leaders, "followers may be more willing to place trust in the leader's future actions because they can use past experiences to predict future responses". Positive past behavior provides behavior predictability, which "seems to be a particularly relevant facet of trust in the examination of its relation with authentic leadership" (Peus et al.; 2012:335). Moreover, trust enables followers to perceive leader's actions to be genuine (Zhu et al.; 2013). In this way, trust helps followers to judge the leader in a favorable light, favoring in turn the experience of more positive emotions and less negative emotions. As authentic leaders are expected to behave in a manner perceived as trustworthy, followers are expected to feel more positive emotions and less negative emotions. Therefore, we propose:

H4a: The relationship between the perception of authentic leadership behavior and the experience of positive emotions is mediated by the level of trust in the leader.

H4b: The relationship between the perception of authentic leadership behavior and the experience of negative emotions is mediated by the level of trust in the leader.

The following figure represents the conceptual model being tested.

Figure 1. Representation of the conceptual model



3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Sample framing and data collection

A multi-organizational approach for data gathering was chosen because we decided to center our attention on different HRMs' experience during organizational changes. The research focused on Spanish companies that had gone through change processes and with more than fifty employees because it was considered that smaller ones would not probably have the human resource manager role.

The information gathering process went on from February to December 2012. HRMs were first contacted by telephone, and afterwards further information and access to the questionnaire was sent by e-mail. At the beginning of the questionnaire anonymity was guaranteed and clarified what we were referring to with "organizational change" and "direct boss". According to the change to report about, HRMs were asked to think about a recent, but already implemented, change that involved an important transformation of the organization (e.g. technological change, departmental restructuring, strategic reorientation, etc.).

This process resulted in 146 answers (which means a response rate of 4.3%) but only 102 (70%) of them were usable. The reason for most of the rejections is that the change implementation process was not finished at the moment of fulfilling the questionnaire. Each HRM belonged to a different company and reported on just one direct boss, so there are no repeated respondents, direct bosses, or companies in the sample. When asked for the scope of their responsibility, 39.2% of the respondents reported being the HRM of a company which did not belong to any business group, 36.3% the HRM of one or more divisions of a business group, and 23.5% reported being the HRM

of a business group¹. Additionally to human resource management, 44.1% of those that were surveyed reported to hold at least another responsibility, duty or position in the company such as communication manager, quality manager, or operations chief. When asked for how long had their direct boss actually been their direct boss, 56.9% of the HRMs reported that for less than 5 years, 25.5% between 6 and 10 years, 14.7% between 11 and 15 years, and 2% for more than 15 years². And when asked for the areas of the company that the change affected, in 45.1% of the cases respondents reported that the change affected technology, 78.43% processes, 53.92% service, 62.75% strategy, 81.37% structure, 89.22% people, and 55.88% culture.

3.2. Constructs and measures

Authentic leadership perception is the exogenous construct of the model. The specific measures used have been obtained from the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) developed by Avolio, Gardner et al. (2007)³. This questionnaire captures the degree of AL behavior of a person, which in our case is HRMs' perception of their direct boss authentic leadership behavior. HRMs were asked how frequently each of the statements presented fitted their direct boss' leadership behavior during the change process using a 5-point Likert scale⁴. Examples of the measures used are: "sought feedback to improve interactions with others" for self awareness; "said exactly what he/she meant" for relational transparency; "demonstrated beliefs that were consistent with actions" for internalized moral perspective; and "listened carefully to different points of view before coming to conclusions" for measuring balanced processing.

Trust in the leader is the first endogenous construct and it refers to the extent to which the HRM is willing to be vulnerable (i.e. voluntarily take risk) at the hands of his/her direct boss. Trust was measured with 6 items based on Schoorman & Ballinger's (2006) proposal. HRMs reported to what extent they agreed with each of the statements referred to their trust in their direct boss during the change process. Some examples of the questions used for measuring trust are: "if my direct boss would have asked why a problem occurred, I would have spoken freely even if I was partly to blame" and "increasing my vulnerability to criticism by my direct boss would have been a mistake".

1. The 1% missing corresponds to a respondent who did not answer to the question.

2. The 0.9% missing corresponds to a respondent who did not answer to the question.

3. The full questionnaire and permission to use it had to be asked to the authors.

4. There were basically two types of questions: frequency and level of agreement. In **frequency** questions HRMs were asked to answer how frequently each of the statements presented were true using the following scale: (1) Not at all; (2) Once in a while; (3) Sometimes; (4) Fairly often; (5) Frequently, if not always. In **agreement** questions HRMs were asked to answer to what extent they agreed each of the statements presented using the following scale: (1) I totally disagree; (2) I disagree; (3) I neither agree nor disagree; (4) I agree; (5) I totally agree.

Finally, positive and negative emotions are the second group of endogenous constructs of the investigation. Based primarily on Fiebig and Kramer's (1998) research, positive emotions construct (POSEMO) was measured with 7 items (i.e. relief, gratitude, hope, happiness, energized, confirmed, and pride) whereas negative emotions (NEGEMO) was measured with 10 items (i.e. rage, frustration, anger, hopelessness, shame, disappointment, disgust, contempt, anxiety, and surprise). HRMs were asked to judge how frequently each of the emotions fitted with what they felt during the change process.

The nature of all the constructs in the model is reflective. In a construct with reflective indicators these reflect the construct, which is the origin or cause of the indicators. In other words, the construct precedes the indicators in a causal sense. Reflective indicators are determined by the construct and, therefore, if the level of the construct changes the indicators covary in the same level and direction (Chin; Gopal; 1995, Chin; 1998b).

3.3. Multivariate analysis

To test the hypotheses of the investigation, structural equation modeling (SEM) based on partial least squares (PLS) will be used. This particular analysis technique was chosen because it recognizes that scientific theory involves both empirical and abstract variables and, on the other hand, its goal is to link data to theory (Fornell; 1982). It allows to incorporate prior knowledge to the empirical analysis (Cepeda; Roldán; 2004).

In comparison to the covariance-based approach (an alternative SEM approach), PLS fits better to predictive applications and theory development (exploratory analysis) (Wold; 1979); and it avoids two important problems of the covariance-based approach: those related to non-unique or otherwise improper solutions (Fornell; Bookstein; 1982), and to the use of small data samples (Fornell; 1982). Thus, PLS can be a powerful analysis method due to its minimum requirements according the variables measurements scales, sample size and residual distributions (Chin et al.; 2003). As this is an exploratory analysis and the data sample is not very large, PLS was considered more adequate than the covariance-based approach.

The sample size obtained, 102 usable answers, is large enough to perform a statistical study based on a partial least squares approach to structural equation modeling by means of PLS-Graph software (Chin; Frye; 2003). The sample required is that which would support the most complex multiple regression of the model. To identify this regression is necessary to observe which of the following options is greater: (a) the number of indicators on the most complex formative construct or (b) the largest number of antecedent constructs leading to an endogenous construct in the structural model. Whichever is greater has to be multiplied by ten in order to obtain the minimum sample size required (Barclay et al.; 1995, Chin; Newsted; 1999).

In our case only option “b” makes sense because all the constructs of the model are reflective in nature. Positive and negative emotions are the endogenous constructs with the largest number of antecedent constructs having an influence on them: 5 each in the first order model (i.e. AL balanced processing, internalized moral perspective, relational transparency, self-awareness, and trust) and 2 in the second order model (i.e. AL perception and trust). Following the rule above, 50 is the minimum sample size required for the first order model and 20 for the second order model.

PLS analysis consists of two consecutive stages although measurement and structural parameters are concomitantly estimated (Barclay et al.; 1995). First, the measurement model must be evaluated in order to assess its validity (i.e. it really measures what it wants to be measured) and reliability (i.e. it does it in a stable and consistent way). This will guarantee that the theoretical concepts are properly measured through the observed variables. Afterwards, the structural model evaluation can take place in order to analyze the weight and the extent of the relation between constructs, testing the research hypotheses.

4. RESULTS

4.1. First order model evaluation

As previously mentioned, AL perception is a second order construct, which gathers four first order factors: relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and self-awareness. Therefore, it is necessary to create a first order model and make all the basic verifications before running all the tests in the second order model.

The first verification to do for the measurement model evaluation is the individual item reliability, which showed that 9 out of 39 items loaded under 0.707. From these, four had to be excluded because of their low loadings (i.e. ALTRANS5 with 0.4901, TRUST5 with 0.0421, NEGEM01 with 0.4980, and NEGEM09 with 0.5566) and five were kept because they loaded above 0.65, very close to the limit. Once these items were excluded, the model was run again and confirmed that all the remaining items loadings were above 0.707 or close to this limit. Afterwards, we checked out construct reliability (Composite reliability Min. ALBALAN 0.850; Max. ALAWARE 0.904; minimum limit of 0.7), convergent validity (Average variance extracted Min. POSEMO 0.565; Max. ALAWARE 0.701; minimum limit 0.5), and discriminant validity; confirming that everything was correct and therefore the quality of the measurement model is adequate.

4.2. Second order measurement model evaluation

Once the first order model was validated, second order model was created and the measurement model evaluated.

For this to be done, individual item reliability was checked, verifying that all the 23 items loaded above 0.707 or close to this limit, so there was no need to drop out of the research any other item. Construct reliability showed to be very good since all the constructs rated high in composite reliability. Being the lowest acceptable value 0.7 in early stages of investigation, the lowest value obtained here was 0.869 for trust, and the highest 0.944 for authentic leadership. And convergent validity values were also good as they were above the limit of 0.5 for average variance extracted, being the lowest value obtained 0.566 for positive emotions and the highest 0.808 for authentic leadership.

In Table 1 individual item reliability (measured through item loading), composite reliability and convergent validity (measured through AVE) are reported.

Table 1. Second order measurement model evaluation - Part I

Constructs and measures	Loading	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
AL		0.944	0.808
ALTRANS	0.9132		
ALMORAL	0.8899		
ALBALAN	0.8698		
ALAWARE	0.9224		
TRUST		0.869	0.572
TRUST1	0.8082		
TRUST2	0.7061		
TRUST3	0.7269		
TRUST4	0.8465		
TRUST6	0.6803		
POSEM0		0.901	0.566
POSEM01	0.6548		
POSEM02	0.7304		
POSEM03	0.7833		
POSEM04	0.7746		
POSEM05	0.8137		
POSEM06	0.7511		
POSEM07	0.7493		

Constructs and measures	Loading	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
NEGEMO		0.902	0.569
NEGEMO2	0.7380		
NEGEMO3	0.6189		
NEGEMO4	0.7556		
NEGEMO5	0.8365		
NEGEMO6	0.8060		
NEGEMO7	0.7490		
NEGEMO8	0.7558		

In order to finish the measurement model evaluation, discriminant validity should be checked. Table 2 shows that it has been substituted the diagonal of the correlation matrix of the constructs with the square root of the average variance extracted of each construct. For discriminant validity, diagonal elements should be larger than off-diagonal elements in the corresponding rows and columns. As can be seen, all the constructs share more variance with their own indicators than with other constructs in the model. Therefore, discriminant validity is also adequate.

Table 2. Second order measurement model evaluation - Part II (Discriminant validity)

	TRUST	POSEMO	NEGEMO	AL
TRUST	(0.756)			
POSEMO	0.506	(0.752)		
NEGEMO	-0.538	-0.529	(0.754)	
AL	0.725	0.603	-0.462	(0.899)

Note: Diagonal elements (values in parentheses) are the square root of the variance shared between the constructs and their measures, relative to the amount due to measure error (AVE). Off-diagonal elements are the correlations among constructs.

4.3. Second order structural model evaluation

Once the quality of the measurement model has been evaluated, the quality of the structural model evaluation has to be guaranteed. This is, the strength of the research hypotheses should be analyzed and the predictive capacity of the model tested. Table 3 shows the results obtained for the evaluation of the structural model.

**Table 3. Second order structural model evaluation -
Influence of trust on positive and negative emotions,
and authentic leadership on trust, positive and negative emotions**

Endogenous Construct	Parameter	TRUST	AL	Total amount of variance explained (R ²)	Cross validated redundancy (Q ²)
TRUST	Path	N.A.	0.725***		
	Correlation	N.A.	0.725		
	Contribution to R ²	N.A.	52.56%	52.56%	0.2419
POSEMO	Path	0.144	0.499***		
	Correlation	0.506	0.603		
	Contribution to R ²	7.29%	30.09%	37.38%	0.1201
NEGEMO	Path	-0.428***	-0.151		
	Correlation	-0.538	-0.462		
	Contribution to R ²	23.03%	6.98%	30.00%	0.0374

Note: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05, [†]p<0.1 (based on t₄₉₉, one-tailed test)

As predicted, the positive effect that authentic leadership exerts on trust is statistically significant, therefore hypothesis H2 is accepted. In fact, this effect is quite high. As can be seen, the path coefficient between AL and trust is 0.725 at a confidence level of 99.9% and it explains 52.56% of the variance of trust.

Authentic leadership exerts also a significant positive impact on positive emotions, but has no significant impact on negative emotions. Therefore hypothesis H1a is accepted, while hypothesis H1b is not. The path coefficient between AL and positive emotions is 0.499 at a confidence level of 99.9% and its contribution to the amount of variance explained of positive emotions is slightly above 30%.

Finally, trust mitigates negative emotions, but it does not have any significant impact on positive emotions. Thus, hypothesis H3b is accepted, while H3a is not. The path coefficient between trust and negative emotions is -0.428 at a confidence level of 99.9% and it explains 23.03% of the amount of variance explained of negative emotions.

As can be seen, the predictive capacity of the model is doubly checked. On the one hand, all three endogenous constructs' total amount of variance explained are above the 10% quality threshold advocated by Falk and Miller (1992) and, on the other hand, cross validated redundancy measures are above zero.

4.4. Mediation test

Two different approaches can be used for mediation test: the traditional approach and the Sobel test. Following the traditional approach two models have to be run for mediation to be tested. In the first model the mediator variable should be excluded (i.e. trust) and independent (i.e. authentic leadership) and dependent variables (i.e. positive and negative emotions) should be linked in order to check that the relations between the exogenous variable and the endogenous variables are significant.

**Table 4. Mediation test -
Influence of authentic leadership on positive and negative emotions**

Endogenous Construct	Parameter	AL	Total amount of variance explained (R ²)
POSEMO	Path	0.607***	
	Correlation	0.607	
	Contribution to R ²	36.84%	36.84%
NEGEMO	Path	-0.464***	
	Correlation	-0.464	
	Contribution to R ²	21.53%	21.53%

Note: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05, ^Tp<0.1 (based on t₄₉₉, one-tailed test)

As shown in Table 4, authentic leadership exerts significant impact on emotions: positive influence on positive emotions and negative influence on negative emotions. It also accounts for 37% of the variance explained of positive emotions, and for 22% of the variance explained of negative emotions. Therefore, the first condition of mediation to exist is fully satisfied in both cases.

And the second is a model in which all the variables are included. In fact, this is the model analyzed in the previous section (see Table 3). In this model it should be checked that the relation between the mediator variable (i.e. trust) and the endogenous variable (i.e. positive and negative emotions) is significant. As can be seen, the relationship between trust and positive emotions is not statistically significant. Therefore, trust does not mediate the relation between AL and positive emotions, so hypothesis H4a cannot be accepted. However, the relation between trust and negative emotions is statistically significant, satisfying the second condition established for mediation to exist.

And the third condition for mediation is that the path value (β) of the relation between the exogenous variable (i.e. authentic leadership) and the endogenous variable (i.e. negative emotions) in the complete model should be lower than the one in the model without mediators (Table 4). The association

between authentic leadership and negative emotions increases from -0.151, in the complete model, to -0.464, in the model without mediators. And since the relation between this two constructs in the complete model is non-significant, trust fully mediates the relation between authentic leadership and negative emotions. Therefore, hypothesis H4b is accepted. These mediation results have also been confirmed by means of the Sobel test.

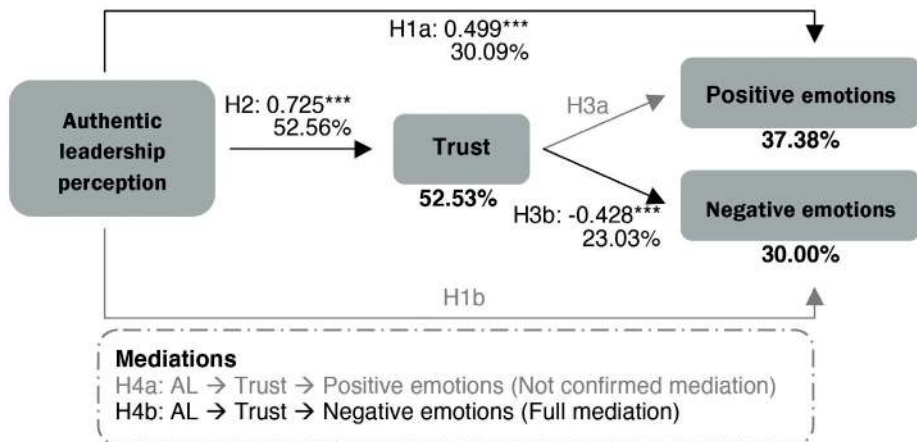
To finish with mediation, Table 5 shows the total effect of AL on emotions as a sum of the direct and indirect effects. As can be seen, the effect of AL on positive and negative emotions is quite different. Authentic leadership has a positive and mainly direct effect on positive emotions, while it has a negative and mainly indirect effect on negative emotions through trust.

Table 5. Total effect of authentic leadership on positive and negative emotions

Endogenous Construct	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
POSEMO	0.499	0.104	0.603
NEGEMO	-0.151	-0.310	-0.461

The following figure summarizes the results of the analyses of the conceptual model

Figure 2. Representation of the results



Note: Path coefficients (β), level of confidence ($***p < 0.001$ based on t_{499} , one-tailed test) and contributions to the amount of variance explained of the endogenous construct (R^2) are provided for confirmed hypotheses. Additionally, the amount of variance explained by the model of each endogenous construct is provided.

5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Despite the increasing interest in emotions at work and that they are considered a vital part of change still few investigations have focused on emotions antecedents during organizational changes. This paper is a first attempt to explore the relation between AL perception, trust and followers' emotions during change processes. Partial researches can be found linking leadership styles and/or trust and/or emotions but to the best of our knowledge none of them has linked followers' AL perception, trust and emotions in organizational change contexts. We proposed and found that HRMs' perception of their direct boss' authentic leadership behavior exerts an influence on their trust in the boss and the emotions experienced during organizational change processes.

More specifically, we found that AL perception is tightly linked to HRMs' trust in their boss. The results indicate that AL behavior influences follower's trust in the leader, which is in line with previous results as indicated by Gardner, Cogliser et al. (2011). These authors published a literature review on authentic leadership (with the cut-off date of December 31, 2010) in which they indicated that the three papers contained in the review that empirically studied this relationship supported the positive influence of AL on trust in the leader⁵. Since then, more articles supporting this relation have been published (e.g. Hassan; Ahmed; 2011, Walumbwa et al.; 2011, Zamahani et al.; 2011); however there is still more theoretical than empirical support for it.

Moreover, literature considers transparency a key element to build trust in the leader (Avolio; Wernsing; 2008, Walumbwa et al.; 2008, Wong et al.; 2010). However, going deeper in our analysis we observed that, in addition to relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and balanced processing dimensions of AL also contribute to generate trust. It seems that not only sharing information and expressing true thoughts and feelings builds trust; but that thoughtful decisions which are based on core values can also help to foster followers' trust in the leader.

Furthermore, we found that AL perception was also significantly and positively related to the experience of positive emotions. In other words, direct boss' AL behavior directly affects the emotional reaction of HRMs by fostering positive emotions. This result is in line with the ones obtained by Peterson, Walumbwa et al. (2012). In their investigation, Peterson and colleagues argue that AL influences followers' emotions based on social support theory. They posit that each dimension of AL can influence followers' emotions differently: self-awareness through an empathetic response of the leader towards the follower; relational transparency through honesty and openness; balanced processing through taking into account followers' contributions; and internalized moral perspective through followers' encouragement to act upon

5. These three papers are: Clapp-Smith, Volgelgesang et al. (2009); Wong & Cummings (2009); and Spence Laschinger et al. (2010).

their values. Therefore, each dimension should significantly impact on positive and negative emotions. However, the authors do not provide results of these independent relations, so they cannot be analyzed. Going again deeper in our analysis, we found that internalized moral perspective is the only AL dimension included in the study that significantly impacts on positive emotions. Relational transparency, balanced processing and self-awareness dimensions of AL do not seem to have an important influence on positive emotions. Therefore, this study reveals that boss' behavior based on his/hers core values and congruency with his/hers thoughts specially matters to employees, triggering positive emotional reactions. Curiously, it was the lack of ethical conduct of today's leaders what called for a new, genuine, values-based leadership (Gardner et al.; 2011), giving birth to authentic leadership. Considering the results, it seems that it is precisely this moral perspective what most influences followers' positive emotions. This fact makes us think that AL could be more tightly linked to followers' positive emotions than other leadership styles such as charismatic, transformational or transactional. Independent investigations have found positive results relating transactional, transformational and charismatic leadership to followers' emotions, especially to positive emotions. However, it would be interesting to compare these relations in a single investigation in order to determine if there is any leadership style that can better explain followers' emotions.

Additionally, it was found that trust mediates the relation between AL perception and negative emotions. Authentic leadership behavior seems to build trust in the leader, which in turn diminishes the experience of negative emotions. Conversely, and contrary to predicted, trust does not seem to contribute explaining positive emotions, and does not mediate either the relation between AL and positive emotions.

These results point out that the relation between AL, trust, positive emotions and negative emotions is quite complex and needs further investigation. An explanation for the results obtained could lie in the consideration of trust as a dynamic concept (Rousseau et al.; 1998), which is developed along the time, mainly as a response to leader's behaviors. Additionally, as suggested by Gooty, Connelly et al. (2010), beside cognitive influences, emotions could also affect the level of trust. As affect-as-information theory (Forgas; 1995, 2002) proposes, positive emotions could be used as information and, therefore, help build trust, while negative emotions could destroy it. However, given a concrete time and specific situation (as is the case of this investigation), the level of trust that a follower has in the leader could act as a filter to interpret leader's behavior, affecting in turn follower's emotions. In order to confirm this proposal new longitudinal investigations that make possible to capture the evolution of trust and the experience of positive and negative emotions as response to leadership behaviors are needed.

In light of the results obtained and the discussion presented above, we would like to offer a couple of managerial advices in an attempt to contribute to evidence-based management as demanded by Rousseau (2006).

Firstly, we consider that, given the benefits of AL, it would be advisable to develop and deliver training programs to explain managers the foundations of this leadership style, to address its importance and benefits, and to help managers engage in AL behaviors. Authentic leadership is still young in the investigation domain and quite unknown in the management field, so its diffusion could really be helpful for improving organizational management. Programs that foster AL could help to enhance trust in the leaders, generate positive emotions, and diminish negative emotions on employees. Besides, authentic leaders lead by example and care about developing authentic followers that will eventually become authentic leaders themselves. In this way, successfully working today with a small group of managers could have important outcomes in the future as the company can benefit from a snowball effect.

And secondly, companies should be aware that leaders' emotions can have numerous and important downstream consequences. In the literature it is considered that emotions can affect, among other factors: organizational commitment (Fisher; 2002, Avey et al.; 2008, Lines et al.; 2009); attitude towards change (Lines; 2005, Lines et al.; 2010); organizational citizenship behaviors (Lee; Allen; 2002, Weiss; Beal; 2005, Avey et al.; 2008, Lines et al.; 2009, Rodell; Judge; 2009); workplace deviance behaviors (Lee; Allen; 2002, Avey et al.; 2008); intention to leave and withdrawal behaviors (Brief; Weiss; 2002, Fisher; 2002, Kiefer; 2002, Kiefer; 2005); or resistance to change (Lines et al.; 2010). Furthermore, when managers share their emotions, these can, through emotional contagion (Barsade; Gibson; 2007), affect other employees' emotions; which can in turn have their own consequences on employees. Therefore, as can be seen, it would be advisable to foster positive emotions on managers, so the resulting consequences remain positive for the company and the change. Once again, authentic leadership can help to obtain this goal.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Although this investigation makes an interesting contribution, it is not without important limitations that should be kept in mind when interpreting the results and conclusions. Additionally, in order to address these limitations and to continue investigating on the relationships between AL, trust and emotions some future research directions are provided.

First of all, although the variables used in this study are logically and theoretically ordered with respect to time, it remains cross sectional; what raises important concerns regarding the direction of causality (Lazarus; 2003). Since the answers are a recall of past events, thoughts and feelings; memory bias can inflate the results and the reported relationships be contaminated by reverse causality. Longitudinal investigations could help to address this limitation. As mentioned in a previous section, longitudinal investigations can help to capture the effects of leadership on the evolution of trust and the

experience of emotions in order to understand the relationship between these variables.

Secondly, the list of positive and negative emotions included in the investigation is not exhaustive. Other emotions could be experienced during change processes. Therefore, new discrete emotions could be included in future investigations and the effects of each of them analyzed. Additionally, instead of treating emotions as a whole or in groups according to their valence, individualized examination of emotions' relationships could provide valuable information.

Furthermore, the generalization of the results is limited due to the characteristics of the sample. This study collected the experience of Spanish HRMs during organizational changes. Future investigations could focus on different targets, cultures and organizational contexts in order to determine if the results are similar to the ones obtained here.

Moreover, although AL is considered a higher order construct, information about the relationship of each dimension with other variables can provide interesting information. For instance, it has already been suggested here that analyzing the effect of each AL dimension on trust could help understand better the underlying mechanisms that build trust.

Finally, analyzing in a single investigation the effect of different leadership styles could be really useful in order to compare their relationship to emotions and trust building. Positive leadership styles such as charismatic, transformational and authentic are proposed to influence trust and emotions; however we still do not know if there is any one more effective than the rest to build trust, enhance positive emotions, and avoid or minimize negative emotions.

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