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The role of Employees' Dynamic Capabilities in shaping job performance through fake and authentic leadership

1. Introduction

Employees' Dynamic Capabilities (EDCs) (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2020) are proving to be an important factor shaping contemporary organizational performance. In principle, this seems natural for at least two reasons. Firstly, in strategic management theory, the resource approach is no longer sufficient (Teece et al. 1997). Nowadays, gaining a competitive advantage requires not only the ability to have the resources but also the ability to allocate them appropriately: preferably anticipating or also reacting to changes in the environment. The concept of dynamic capabilities of organizations by Teece, Pisano and Shuen (Teece et al. 1997) responds to the need for a dynamic view of organizations operating in turbulent environments. Secondly, employees are nowadays considered the most important resource of an organization. Their competences, in the form of knowledge, skills and attitudes, influence the effectiveness of achieving the goals set for the organization. According to the concept of human resource management, an organization's goals are achieved through the people it employs (cf. Syed, Jamal 2012; Saridakis et al. 2017). Combining both of those reasons, the idea of developing EDCs (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2020) should be assessed as legitimate, considering both the importance of human resources in an organization, as well as the necessity of their dynamic adaptation to the changes taking place in the environment and in the organization in the context of achieving the goals set for

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that organization. Such a view is confirmed by numerous studies in this area (cf. Al Wali et al. 2020; Bocoya-Maline et al. 2024; Wang et al. 2024).

The impact of EDCs on organizational performance has been confirmed and presented primarily in an EDC-based model of job performance (Bieñkowska, Tworek 2020). The results of the study made it possible to confirm that EDCs influence job performance primarily through person-job fit, followed by job-related attitudes such as work motivation, job satisfaction, and work engagement (Bieñkowska, Tworek 2020). Further research confirmed that EDCs have a significant influence not only on the organization as a whole (Tworek et al. 2023), but also on human resources and organizational reliability (Bieñkowska et al. 2020), as well as, for example, on innovative work behavior (Al Wali et al. 2020). It has also been confirmed that the impact of EDCs on organizational performance, as well as on job performance, occurs during the crisis caused by a Black Swan event, which was particularly relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis (Bieñkowska et al., 2021; Tworek et al., 2023). The above studies show that the concept of EDCs has the potential to play an important role in the management of contemporary organizations, not only in human resource management.

However, when considering the functioning of the employees in the organization, it is also important to discuss the role of the EDCs in terms of the context in which an employee with more or fewer EDCs operates. A fundamental element of an employees' broader work environment is their leader (who shapes this work environment) (Amabile et al. 2004; Omilion-Hodges, Ptacek, 2021), who influences employees in a specific, direct way in order to achieve an intended goal in the context of achieving the vision, mission and strategy of the organization as a whole. The way in which a leader influences employees can vary and is referred to as the concept of leadership. Leadership itself can be understood either as a trait of the leader's person or as a process of influence on subordinates aimed at achieving goals set by the leader (Bieñkowska, Tworek 2024). "Leadership has been described as a process, but most theories and research on leadership look at a person to gain understanding" (Horner 1997, p. 270). In this context, "Leadership is typically defined by the traits, qualities, and behaviours of a leader" (Horner 1997, p. 270).

There are many theories of leadership today. In the context of this study, three classical ones seem to be particularly important: contingency-based theory by Fiedler (Fiedler 1967) situational leadership theory by Hersey and Blanchard (Hersey, Blanchard, 1977), and goal-path theory by House and Mitchell (House, Mitchell 1974). Situational leadership theory allows for the consideration of different leadership styles appropriate to the specific situations an organization faces (internal and external environment) (cf. also Northouse 2021), while path-goal theory

treats leaders as those who are primarily responsible for helping their employees (followers) develop behaviors enabling them to achieve goals or desired outcomes (Horner 1997). The above makes it reasonable to conclude after Horner (Horner 1997, p. 272) that "there are many appropriate ways to lead or styles of leadership."

There is a distinction to be made between positive (constructive) and negative (destructive) leadership styles in contemporary literature. Positive ones enhance the results achieved by employees and by the organization as a whole, especially in terms of the goals it achieves, and negative ones generally undermine the aforementioned results (cf. e.g. Einarsen et al. 2007; Burns 2017). The literature discusses many aspects of the influence of positive and negative leadership styles on employees and the organization (cf. e.g. Alimo-Metcalfe 2013; Northouse 2021). Also, attempts are made to explain the mechanisms that accompany (build and explain) this influence (e.g. Starratt, Grandy, 2010; Boddy 2017; Palmen et al. 2021; Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024; Khalid et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2024). However, the mechanism of EDCs' influence on the relationship between a particular type of leadership and the job performance of employees has not yet been addressed, neither in theoretical nor in empirical terms, which constitutes a research gap. However, the existing research studies suggest that it must be assumed that such an influence exists, as the characteristics of the employees either mitigate or boost the influence of the leader on employees and on the organization as a whole (cf. Carmeli et al. 2013; Audenaert, Decramer 2018; Freiherr von Fircks 2024; Jia et al. 2024). In this context, the research questions arise: do (and in what way) EDCs have the potential to strengthen the positive influence of positive leadership on employees' job performance, and, conversely, do EDCs have the potential to mitigate the negative impact of negative leadership on employees' job performance? Moreover, whether EDCs' ability to mitigate the influence of negative leadership on employees' job performance should be seen as an asset or a threat to both employees and the organization should be examined.

In this context, the study will aim to examine the role of EDCs in the mechanism of shaping job performance by negative leadership (using the example of fake leadership), as well as in the mechanism of shaping job performance by positive leadership (using the example of authentic leadership). Both styles have been chosen as being clearly positioned at the two opposite ends of leadership styles - regarding their influence on employees and the organization (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). Authentic leadership is characterized by a pro-organization and pro-employee orientation, while fake leadership is characterized by an anti-organization and anti-employee orientation (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). Achieving the described aim will help to fill the identified research gap in the area of organizational behavior within the management sciences.

2. Fake and authentic leadership - models of influence on job performance

Fiedler's contingency-based theory (Fiedler 1967), situational leadership theory by Hersey and Blanchard (Hersey, Blanchard, 1977), and goal-path theory by House and Mitchell (House, Mitchell 1974), as mentioned in the introduction, allows for the consideration of different leadership styles. In general terms, they can be divided into negative and positive ones, taking into account the positive or negative impacts of different leadership styles on employees and the organization as a whole. Einarsen, Aasland and Skogstad (Einarsen et al. 2007) developed a two-dimensional model of destructive and constructive leadership behavior. Basing on that, Bieńkowska and Tworek (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024) developed a three-dimensional approach that distinguishes between the orientation of leadership traits (self-orientation vs. collective orientation) in addition to the leader's behavior toward the employees and the organization. In both cases, positive (constructive) and negative (destructive) leadership styles can be distinguished. Constructive leadership styles combine a focus on both mission achievement and the well-being of the team and employees. "Constructive leaders combine human qualities such as honesty, respect, sincerity, fairness, and honour with organisational/team strengths such as confidence, focus, achievement and a drive for the greater good. Team members respect and place trust in constructive leaders, in contrast to what happens when they are led by a disruptive leader" (Burns 2017, p. 34). Destructive leadership styles are the opposite of that. Pelletier (Pelletier 2010, p. 375) defined destructive leadership as "systematic and repeated behavior by a leader, supervisor or manager that undermines the legitimate interests of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the goals, objectives, resources and effectiveness of the organization and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates."

Leadership has long been recognized as a key determinant of employee attitudes and performance (Avolio et al. 2004; Northouse 2021). Positive leadership has been associated with increased trust, engagement, and performance outcomes (Walumbwa et al. 2008; Wang, Hsieh 2013). Conversely, destructive or toxic leadership undermines employee well-being and organizational effectiveness (Einarsen et al. 2007; Pelletier 2010; Boddy 2017). This is why it seems relevant to analyze both mechanisms through which leadership can influence employees, their attitudes and performance.

In the present study, the concepts of authentic and fake leadership were chosen as extreme examples in the three-dimensional approach of Bieńkowska and Tworek (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). Authentic leadership has the pro-organization and pro-employee orientation and takes into account the collective

orientation of leader traits, whereas fake leadership has the anti-organization and anti-employee orientation and takes into account the self-orientation of leader traits (Bieńkowska, Tworek, 2024).

The concept of authentic leadership was developed by Cameron and colleagues (Cameron et al. 2003) and Walumbwa and colleagues (Walumbwa et al. 2008). Authentic leadership will be understood following Luthans and Avolio "as a process that draws on both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, resulting in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behavior on the part of leaders and colleagues, fostering positive self-development" (Luthans, Avolio 2003, p. 243). In contrast, Walumbwa and colleagues (Walumbwa et al. 2008, p. 94) defined "authentic leadership as a pattern of leader behavior that draws on and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate to foster greater self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced information processing and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with subordinates, fostering positive self-development." In this context, the authentic leadership can be understood as – first of all - comprising of full spectrum of positive traits and behaviors of a leader, who is focused on the collective goals and exhibits pro-employee and pro-organizational behaviors. Moreover as connected to sincere and authentic intent of a leader exhibited in their behaviors toward themselves, the employees and the organization as well as showing leader's mindfulness to be transparent in relationship with employees, without any hidden intentions toward them or the organization, which is a basis for mutual trust (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024).

The concept of fake leadership was developed by Bieńkowska and Tworek (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). It will be understood as a pattern of behavior aimed at fulfilling the individual goals of a leader, regardless of means necessary to do so, coupled with the need to hide the real intent of the leader, mitigating intra-organizational trust and employee self-assessment and self-esteem. In this context, fake leadership is understood as – above all – exhibiting full spectrum (not isolated instances) of traits and behaviors, with leader's focus on the individual goals, regardless of their value for the employees or organization, and anti-employee and anti-organizational behaviors. Moreover as comprising of leader's intentional engagement in negative behaviors toward employees and the organization as a whole, as well as showing leader's mindfulness in hiding the intent from employees and manifesting traits and behaviors aligned with authentic leader, engaging in positive behaviors towards them and the organization (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024).

The two distinctive leadership styles have very different ways of influencing an employee's job performance. In each case, intra-organizational trust and classic job-related attitudes are important. Authentic leadership has a positive

influence on job performance through trust, work motivation, work engagement, and organizational commitment) (cf. George 2003; Avolio et al. 2004; George et al. 2007; Wang, Hsieh 2013; Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). Fake leadership has a negative influence on job performance through trust, work motivation, work engagement, and organizational commitment (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). Mechanisms of the influence of both styles on employees' job performance are described by Bieńkowska and Tworek (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). Diagrams of both impacts are presented in Figure 1.

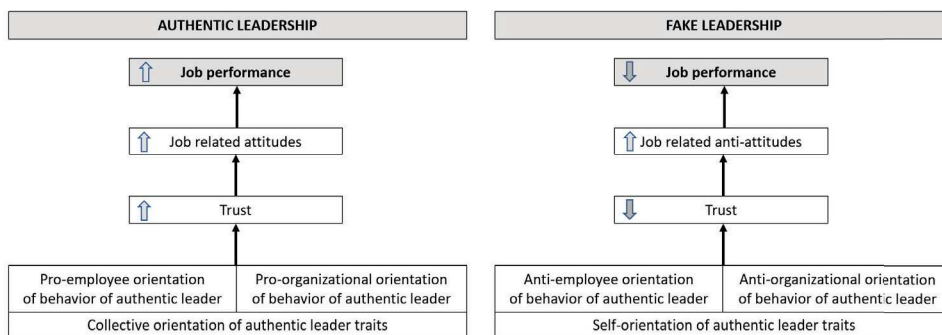


Figure 1. Models of influence on authentic and fake leadership on job performance.
Source: own elaboration based on (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024)

3. Employees' Dynamic Capabilities and their role in shaping job performance by fake and authentic leadership

Dynamic capabilities theory emphasizes the ability to sense, seize, and reconfigure resources in response to environmental change (Teece et al. 1997). While originally conceptualized at the organizational level, recent studies highlight the micro-foundations of dynamic capabilities at the employee level (Bocoya-Maline et al., 2024; Wang et al. 2024), linking them to adaptability, proactive behavior, and performance outcomes.

In essence, the EDCs are responsible for employees' ability to adapt to the environment (organizational or external), which is by its very nature in constant change today. The components of EDCs explicitly refer to abilities to be sensitive to changes in the environment, to adapt to changes in the environment, to proactively solve problems arising in the workplace (if they occur), and include innovations in the workplace, as well as the abilities for continuous personal

development and learning (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2020). They are therefore related to the job performance of the employees and, consequently, the organization's response to changes in the environment. They translate into both employee job performance (see: EDC-based model of job performance (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2020)) and organizational performance (see: Tworek et al. 2023).

At the same time, as indicated earlier, the leader is an element of the environment significantly affecting employees and the organization. The leader's impact on employees in fact has a similar mechanism, which is also used by the EDCs. Both influence job-related attitudes. In the case of EDCs, such impact occurs through a person-job fit (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2020), and in the case of leadership, such impact occurs through intraorganizational trust (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). Moreover, it should be noted that leadership is a factor external to the employees, while EDCs are internal characteristics of the employees. Therefore, it seems natural to assume that EDCs and leadership enter into a mutual relationship.

Despite extensive research on leadership and dynamic capabilities, limited attention has been paid to their interaction effects at the employee level, particularly in explaining how individual capabilities condition leadership influence mechanisms. Existing studies suggest that employee characteristics may moderate leadership effectiveness (Carmeli et al. 2013; Audenaert, Decramer 2018), but the specific role of Employees' Dynamic Capabilities (EDCs) remains underexplored.

3.1. Authentic leadership and EDCs

An authentic leader is intrinsically interested in harnessing the potential of employees and in achieving the goals of the organization as a whole through this potential. At the same time, the exploitation of the employee's potential implies, among other things, the delegation of autonomy to employees (Avolio et al. 2004; Walumbwa et al. 2008), which should be accompanied by commitment and responsibility for the entrusted goals within the limits set by the organization (Wang, Hsieh 2013; Frederrick et al. 2016; Corriveau 2020;). Authentic leadership, understood in this way, naturally influences the job performance of employees (cf. George 2003; Avolio et al. 2004; George et al. 2007; Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024).

EDCs are a response not only to the changing and dynamic environment, resulting in the fact that the nature of today's work and workplaces are also dynamic, but also to the need to redefine expectations of today's employees, who are the main organizational resource determining the possibility of sustainable development (Bieńkowska, Tworek, 2020). The literature rarely discusses the link between authentic leadership and dynamic capabilities. It is usually discussed in the context of the organization as a whole. Kleynhans and colleagues

(Kleynhans et al. 2021) stated that authentic leadership has the potential to positively influence the dynamic capabilities of the organization as a whole, and such a relationship is mediated by trust within the organization. Their research concerned the dynamic capabilities of the organization as a whole, not those of the employees. However, it confirms that authentic leadership shapes dynamic capabilities. The question concerning the dynamic capabilities of the employees, not those of the organization as a whole, is addressed by Semedo and colleagues (Semedo et al. 2016), who connected authentic leadership to the performance of the employees, showing that job resourcefulness (an element of EDCs) plays a crucial role in this relationship. It is also known that authentic leadership supports elements that are part of EDCs, such as proactive attitudes of employees (cf. e.g. Sumanth et al. 2023).

At the same time, it is important to state that employees with low EDCs will inherently be less able to proactively adapt to changes in the organization and its environment than employees with high EDCs. They will be less able to solve emerging problems, even if they perceive that they are occurring. Finally, they will be less sensitive to the need for continuous learning. Thus, it can be argued that, despite the capabilities, efforts, and endeavors of an authentic leader, they will not be able to respond to their behavior and be influenced in the way that those with high EDCs will: contributing to the increase of both intra-organizational trust, job-related attitudes and job performance. This situation is similar to that described by Hu and colleagues (Hu et al. 2018), where they showed that it is possible to identify some personal determinants that influence the effectiveness of authentic leadership on employees. They proved that there are “positive predictive effects of authentic leadership on proactive behaviour but also further revealed a mediating effect of psychological capital in the relationship between authentic leadership and proactive employee behaviour. It has also revealed moderating effects of compassion at work in the relationships between authentic leadership and psychological capital, and between psychological capital and proactive behaviour” (Hu et al. 2018, p. 6). In the case discussed in the study, such a factor is directly connected to EDCs. Hence, it may be concluded that employees with low EDCs are less responsive than employees with high EDCs, especially to factors that would have to cause a change in their attitudes and behavior toward work, even though, as noted earlier, authentic leadership naturally supports proactive behavior of employees (Yamak, Eyupoglu 2021; Sumanth et al. 2023).

Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H1: The higher the EDCs, the stronger the authentic leadership and positive influence on job performance, mediated by intraorganizational trust, work engagement, organizational commitment, and work motivation.

The job performance model of authentic leadership based on trust and job-related attitudes moderated by EDCs is shown in Figure 2.

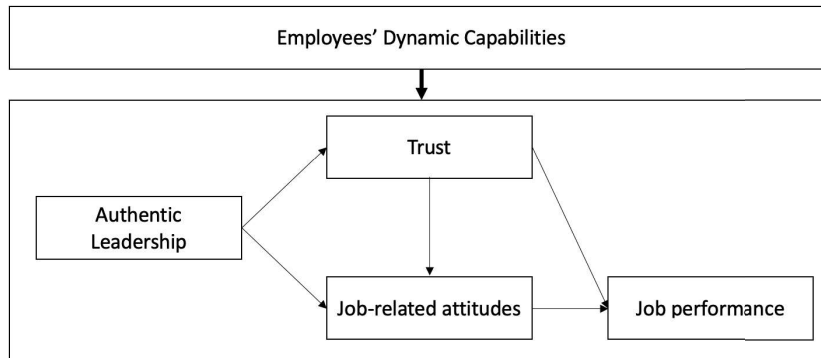


Figure 2. Job performance model of authentic leadership based on trust and job-related attitudes moderated by Employees' Dynamic Capabilities

Source: own work based on (Bierkowska, Tworek 2024)

3.2. Fake leadership and EDCs

A fake leader effectively expects obedience from their employees and passive performance of tasks according to their expectations. In doing so, this leader restricts freedom and abstracts from responsibility in the sense of the autonomous action of people in organizations.

In this context, the attitudes of employees toward the negative behavior of the fake leader seem interesting. It seems to be important to consider the issue of employees' EDCs in analyses of these attitudes. It seems that employees with low EDCs, even if they disagree with the views and actions of the fake leader, will not be able to demonstrate proactive attitudes toward such behavior and attitudes, even if they perceive the necessity for such attitudes, which in itself is unlikely. In contrast, when employees with high EDCs do not agree with the views and behaviors of the fake leader, they lose trust in the leader (which seems to be key in the described relationship). Hence, they may inherently be able to adopt a proactive stance aimed at mitigating the negative impact of fake leadership on job performance, but it is not clear whether they will do so (this is influenced by other factors). However, it seems that it is not entirely clear which path will lead to such an effect. Indeed, two situations can be imagined.

The first situation is when a proactive stance may aim to proactively counteract the fake leader's actions, which are judged to be bad and detrimental

to employees and the organization, and subsequently to counteract the effects of the negative impact of the fake leadership on employees and the organization. Often, this means in practice that it is necessary to unequivocally oppose these actions (Bebbington 2014; Grabarczyk-Ponimasz 2021) and – even if only partially – take control of the situation. Knowing that the fake leader is using forbidden techniques, employees can start to defend themselves by restoring healthy (or healthier) relationships within the organization, and thus weakening the negative impact of the fake leader on both employees and the organization. Grabarczyk-Ponimasz (Grabarczyk-Ponimasz 2021) states that employees who are willing and able to do so are characterized by higher independence and social responsibility, supported by the ability to take risks and act proactively. Hence, it seems that employees with high EDCs will be more prone to such behaviors. Moreover, it should be noticed that EDCs equip employees with the ability to not resort to conformity (out of fear), leading to a vast decrease in job performance, but to retain some level of organizational trust and through teamwork maintain a less negatively impacted level of job performance. EDCs may enable employees to establish façades of conformity, allowing them to not be exposed to the entire set of fake leader negative behaviors, but simultaneously retaining some of their job performance (Liang 2022).

The second situation is when a proactive stance taken may imply bribery- or fear-driven conformism as a reaction to the perceived leader's behavior in the organization in the form of anti-employee and anti-organizational actions. This is because the fake leader teaches fear management (based on bribery and fear), which is consistent with obedience by authoritarianism emphasizing respect for authority and "relations of domination and subordination as the main relations existing in a hierarchical world" (Grabarczyk-Ponimasz 2021, p. 82). "This is accompanied by a tendency to use stereotypes, i.e. simplified ideas about those who are placed outside of one's own group" (Grabarczyk-Ponimasz 2021, p. 83). It seems that it is possible here to adapt, or even to adopt an ally attitude, in the face of such extreme conditions, perhaps preceded by a distorted rationalization of the situation. Such an attitude is also more achievable for employees with high EDCs. Perhaps in the short term this will mitigate the negative impact of the fake leadership on the job performance of these employees. However, the positive impact of such an option on the organization is questionable. Especially employees outside the so-called allied group will still decrease the performance parameters of the organization as a whole.

Therefore, the following hypothesis should be formulated:

H2: The higher the EDCs, the weaker the fake leadership's negative influence on job performance, mediated by intraorganizational trust, work engagement, organizational commitment, and work motivation.

The job performance model of fake leadership, based on trust and job-related attitudes, moderated by Employees' Dynamic Capabilities, is presented in Figure 3.

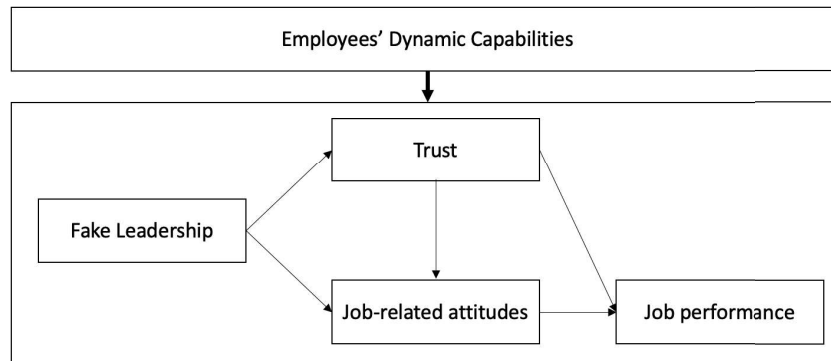


Figure 3. Job performance model of fake leadership based on trust and job-related attitudes moderated by Employees' Dynamic Capabilities
Source: own work based on (Bierkowska, Tworek 2024)

4. Research methodology

The proposed theoretical model was verified based on empirical research. Two stages of empirical research were used for the analysis and verification of the hypotheses concerning fake leadership and authentic leadership (and its role in shaping job performance among organizations with high and low levels of EDCs among employees).

The first stage was conducted as a pilot study to validate the measurement tool, followed by the second stage, which comprised the main research. The empirical study employed a questionnaire as the primary research instrument. This questionnaire included a developed measurement scale (questions) for authentic and fake leadership variables, along with previously validated, less extensive measurement scales (questions) for each variable included in the models, as well as various control variables. Top and mid-level managers from organizations operating in Poland, who possess a comprehensive understanding of their organizations, completed the questionnaire, with only one questionnaire per organization being submitted.

The first stage focused on verifying the quality of the questionnaire as a research tool, encompassing all proposed measurement scales (questions). It was

completed by 25 carefully selected, competent judges who were top-level managers. Their feedback allowed for revisions of several questions to ensure they would be clearly understood by respondents. The second stage, which constituted the main research, aimed to analyze and verify the proposed hypotheses and was conducted in the first quarter of 2023.

4.1. Sample overview

The empirical research was carried out using the CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interview) method. The sample was constructed using a purposive sampling approach targeting organizations operating in Poland across multiple sectors. Respondents were recruited via professional research panels to ensure access to individuals holding managerial roles with sufficient organizational insight. Each organization was represented by a single respondent (top or mid-level manager), which ensured independence of observations and avoided clustering effects. No organization contributed more than one completed questionnaire. A total of 289 organizations participated in the study. Table 1 provides a detailed description of the sample, indicating that geographical location was the only limiting factor. The study concerned organizations, not individual respondents; therefore, the sample description is given accordingly. Although the sample selection was not representative, the diversity of the organizations and their varied industries allowed meaningful conclusions to be drawn. Additionally, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) index was calculated for each variable and model to confirm that the sample size and diversity were sufficient for the intended statistical analyses.

Table 1
Sample overview

		Size of employment			
		fewer than 10	10-50 people	50-250 people	over 250 people
Primary source of revenue	production	11	16	26	17
	trade	8	28	23	13
	services	9	28	51	35
	education	0	5	12	3
Total		28	77	112	68

Source: (Bieńkowska, 2024)

For the purpose of the study, the sample was divided into two groups: organizations characterized by low levels of EDCs (74 organizations) and high levels of EDCs (214 organizations).

4.2. Description of variables

To verify the proposed theoretical hypotheses, the following variables were employed: Fake Leadership, Authentic Leadership, Intraorganizational Trust, Organizational Commitment, Work Engagement, Work Motivation, Job Performance, and Employees' Dynamic Capabilities. The variables were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," with a midpoint of "Neither Agree nor Disagree." The questionnaire was developed by the authors based on established theoretical frameworks and previously validated scales. Measurement items for key constructs were adapted from existing literature where available (e.g., Walumbwa et al., 2008, for authentic leadership), while the scale for fake leadership was developed and validated in prior research (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024). All items were reviewed and refined during the pilot study.

Fake Leadership (FL) encompassed three latent dimensions – self-orientation, employee orientation, and organizational orientation – measured with 14, 22, and 12 items, respectively.

Authentic Leadership (AL) was evaluated using a similar 5-point Likert scale, with 13 items focused on the traits and behaviors characteristic of a true leader.

Intraorganizational Trust (Trust) measured employees' trust toward management and the organization, including perceptions of fair treatment, using three items on a 5-point Likert scale.

Organizational Commitment (OrgCom) assessed employees' happiness and sense of belonging within the organization through three items on a 5-point Likert scale.

Work Engagement (WrkEng) measured employees' attitudes toward their job, including enthusiasm and job immersion, using three items on a 5-point Likert scale.

Work Motivation (Motiv) evaluated employees' willingness and readiness to perform tasks, including the effort put into them, using three items on a 5-point Likert scale.

Job Performance (JobPer) assessed task proficiency, meticulousness, and work discipline with four items on a 5-point Likert scale.

Employees' Dynamic Capabilities (EDC) measured the approach to the need for adaptability among employees and proactive behaviors on a 5-point Likert scale.

Each of these variables was carefully measured to ensure the reliability and validity of the data collected, facilitating a robust analysis of the proposed hypotheses.

4.3. Measurement scales verification

To conduct the statistical analysis for verifying the proposed hypotheses, all measurement scales used in the study were analyzed and validated (the detailed process was published in book (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024)). The initial step involved confirming that the collected data exhibited a normal distribution. The subsequent step focused on analyzing the measurement scales through three statistical tests. A Cronbach's Alpha analysis was used to verify the coherence and reliability of the measurement scale. A Cronbach's α value above 0.7 indicates average reliability, while values above 0.8 are considered highly satisfactory (Drost 2011), which was the case for all variables within this study. This analysis was performed using IBM SPSS. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) assessed the coherence and internal consistency of the measurement scale. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should exceed 0.5, indicating that the latent variable explains a sufficient percentage of the variance. Model fit statistics should fall within these limits: $\chi^2/df < 5.000$; $TLI > 0.800$; $CFI > 0.800$; $GFI > 0.800$; $RMSEA < 0.2$ (Hopwood and Donnellan, 2010), which was the case in all models obtained for measurement scales in this study. The CFA was also conducted using IBM SPSS. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test evaluated the adequacy of the sample size for the analysis. KMO values above 0.5 are deemed sufficient for further analysis (Kaiser 1974, 2000), which was the case for all variables within this study. Additionally, as a third step, discriminant validity was tested to ensure that all latent variables representing different theoretical concepts are statistically distinct. The results of the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait) ratio tests yielded values below 0.65 (Ab Hamid et al. 2017), indicating that the chosen variables are appropriate for further analyses, including correlation, regression, and path analysis. The results of these tests are presented in Table 2 for all variables included in the study. The findings confirm that the selected measurement scales are internally consistent, reliable, and coherent, making them suitable for further analysis.

Table 2
Scales reliability and internal consistency analysis

Variable name	Variable name	Number of items	AVE	KMO	Cronbach's Alpha	N
Fake Leadership	FL	3 (14, 22, 12)	0.951	0.757	0.974	280
Authentic Leadership	AL	13	0.716	0.968	0.967	281
Intraorganizational Trust	Trust	3	0.742	0.721	0.823	287
Organizational Commitment	Org-Com	3	0.570	0.524	0.706	289
Work Engagement	WrkEng	3	0.663	0.689	0.744	289
Work Motivation	Motiv	3	0.753	0.697	0.836	289
Job Performance	JobPer	4	0.638	0.672	0.806	289
Employees' Dynamic Capabilities	EDC	5	0.734	0.698	0.888	289

Source: based on own work and (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2024)

4.4. Multigroup path analysis results

After the first step concerning scales analysis, the main statistical reasoning based on a multigroup path analysis was performed using the IBM SPSS Amos software. Two sets of multigroup path analysis models were developed: one for authentic leadership and one for fake leadership.

The statistically significant and well-fitted models were obtained through multigroup path analysis, and for both of them, baseline comparison showed that the unconstrained models' characteristics were within the margins for them to undergo statistical reasoning. Based on them, the full assessment of the model was performed. The fit of the model was assessed with a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) (sufficient values above 0.8) and RMSEA (sufficient values below 0.2). The model obtained for authentic leadership was statistically significant and well-fitted: $\text{Chi}^2(6) = 36.303$; $p = 0.001$; CFI = 0.981; TLI = 0.886; RMSEA = 0.091 (PCLOSE = 0.001). The model obtained for fake leadership was also statistically significant and well-fitted: $\text{Chi}^2(6) = 20.833$; $p = 0.001$; CFI = 0.989; TLI = 0.925; RMSEA = 0.093 (PCLOSE = 0.001). In both models, the sufficient RMSEA values were obtained based on structural weights, intercepts,

and residuals, showing a very good fit in the model (calculated when CMIN has a chi-square distribution under the assumption that the fitted model is correct). Moreover, sufficient values of CFI and TLI were also obtained for both models, establishing that goodness of fit is sufficient to form conclusions based on the obtained model.

4.4.1. Model for authentic leadership

The overview of the authentic leadership model obtained for organizations with high values of EDCs is presented in Table 3, and for organizations with low values of EDCs is presented in Table 4. Total and indirect effects occurring in the model are presented in tables 5–8.

Table 3
Regression estimates for authentic leadership model – high levels of EDCs

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Trust	←	AL	0.731	0.041	17.825	<0.001
WrkEng	←	Trust	0.502	0.054	9.332	<0.001
WrkEng	←	AL	0.343	0.051	6.754	<0.001
OrgCom	←	AL	0.280	0.047	5.914	<0.001
OrgCom	←	Trust	0.344	0.054	6.380	<0.001
OrgCom	←	WrkEng	0.147	0.058	2.524	0.012
Motiv	←	WrkEng	0.342	0.062	5.497	<0.001
Motiv	←	OrgCom	0.228	0.073	3.138	0.002
Motiv	←	AL	0.316	0.054	5.861	<0.001
Motiv	←	Trust	0.174	0.062	2.809	0.005
JobPer	←	Motiv	0.416	0.058	7.146	<0.001
JobPer	←	OrgCom	0.406	0.073	5.599	<0.001

Table 4
Regression estimates for authentic leadership model – low levels of EDCs

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Trust	←	AL	0.430	0.108	3.997	<0.001
WrkEng	←	Trust	0.513	0.096	5.367	<0.001

Table 4 cont.

WrkEng	←	AL	0.214	0.097	2.203	0.028
OrgCom	←	AL	0.074	0.092	0.808	0.419
OrgCom	←	Trust	0.238	0.103	2.307	0.021
OrgCom	←	WrkEng	0.347	0.107	3.245	0.001
Motiv	←	WrkEng	0.276	0.102	2.700	0.007
Motiv	←	OrgCom	0.014	0.104	0.132	0.895
Motiv	←	AL	0.075	0.083	0.912	0.002
Motiv	←	Trust	0.794	0.095	8.335	<0.001
JobPer	←	Motiv	0.262	0.094	2.794	0.005
JobPer	←	OrgCom	0.372	0.127	2.921	0.003

Table 5

Total Effects for authentic leadership model – high levels of EDCs

	AL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	0.731	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	0.709	0.502	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	0.635	0.418	0.147	0.000	0.000
Motiv	0.830	0.441	0.376	0.228	0.000
JobPer	0.604	0.353	0.216	0.501	0.416

Table 6

Indirect effects for authentic leadership model – high levels of EDCs

	AL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	0.367	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	0.356	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.000
Motiv	0.515	0.267	0.034	0.000	0.000
JobPer	0.604	0.353	0.216	0.095	0.000

Table 7

Total Effects for authentic leadership model – low levels of EDCs

	AL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	0.430	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	0.435	0.513	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	0.328	0.416	0.347	0.000	0.000
Motiv	0.541	0.941	0.281	0.014	0.000
JobPer	0.263	0.401	0.202	0.375	0.262

Table 8

Indirect effects for authentic leadership model – low levels of EDCs

	AL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	0.221	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	0.253	0.178	0.000	0.000	0.000
Motiv	0.466	0.147	0.005	0.000	0.000
JobPer	0.263	0.401	0.202	0.004	0.000

Tables 3 and 4 show the relations within the models obtained for high and low levels of EDCs in an organization. It is important to underline two main differences. The first concerns the relations with statistical significance. In the case of low levels of EDCs, some relations within the model are not statistically significant. The influence of authentic leadership on organizational commitment is not statistically significant. However, the influence of authentic leadership on trust, work engagement, and work motivation remains statistically significant. In the case of high levels of EDCs, all relations within the model are statistically significant, showing that various paths of authentic leadership have a positive influence on job performance. The second concerns the strength of the relations. In the case of high levels of EDCs, the relations between authentic leadership and trust, work engagement, and work motivation is much stronger than in the case of low levels of EDCs. Also, as shown in tables 6 and 8, the indirect and total effects occurring in the model obtained for high levels of EDCs are much stronger than those obtained for low levels of EDCs. Taken together, this makes it reasonable to accept hypothesis H1, stating that the higher the EDCs, to stronger the positive influence of authentic leadership on job performance.

4.4.2. Model for fake leadership

The overview of the fake leadership model obtained for organizations with high values of EDCs is presented in Table 9, and for organizations with high values of EDCs is presented in Table 10. Total and indirect effects occurring in the model are presented in tables 11-14.

Table 9
Regression estimates for fake leadership model - high levels of EDCs

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Trust	←	FL	-0.300	0.091	-3.291	<0.001
WrkEng	←	Trust	0.548	0.095	5.796	<0.001
WrkEng	←	FL	-0.128	0.079	-1.618	0.106
OrgCom	←	FL	-0.033	0.073	-0.457	0.648
OrgCom	←	Trust	0.246	0.103	2.388	0.017
OrgCom	←	WrkEng	0.360	0.106	3.397	<0.001
Motiv	←	WrkEng	0.284	0.102	2.786	0.005
Motiv	←	OrgCom	0.021	0.104	0.199	0.842
Motiv	←	FL	-0.040	0.065	-0.605	0.545
Motiv	←	Trust	0.800	0.096	8.369	<0.001
JobPer	←	Motiv	0.262	0.094	2.794	0.005
JobPer	←	OrgCom	0.372	0.127	2.921	0.003

Table 10
Regression estimates for fake leadership model - low levels of EDCs

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Trust	←	FL	-0.567	0.058	-9.695	<0.001
WrkEng	←	Trust	0.746	0.045	16.435	<0.001
WrkEng	←	FL	-0.067	0.047	-1.421	<0.001
OrgCom	←	FL	-0.079	0.039	-2.031	0.042
OrgCom	←	Trust	0.425	0.056	7.546	<0.001
OrgCom	←	WrkEng	0.282	0.057	4.970	<0.001
Motiv	←	WrkEng	0.446	0.060	7.411	<0.001
Motiv	←	OrgCom	0.338	0.069	4.887	<0.001
Motiv	←	FL	-0.196	0.039	-5.011	<0.001

Table 10 cont.

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Motiv	←	Trust	0.167	0.064	2.620	0.009
JobPer	←	Motiv	0.417	0.058	7.165	<0.001
JobPer	←	OrgCom	0.405	0.072	5.593	<0.001

Table 11

Total effects for fake leadership model – high levels of EDCs

	FL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	-0.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	-0.292	0.548	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	-0.212	0.444	0.360	0.000	0.000
Motiv	-0.367	0.965	0.291	0.021	0.000
JobPer	-0.175	0.417	0.210	0.377	0.262

Table 12

Indirect effects for fake leadership model – high levels of EDCs

	FL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	-0.164	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	-0.179	0.197	0.000	0.000	0.000
Motiv	-0.327	0.165	0.007	0.000	0.000
JobPer	-0.175	0.417	0.210	0.005	0.000

Table 13

Total effects for authentic fake model – low levels of EDCs

	FL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	-0.567	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	-0.490	0.746	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	-0.457	0.635	0.282	0.000	0.000
Motiv	-0.664	0.715	0.541	0.338	0.000
JobPer	-0.462	0.556	0.340	0.547	0.417

Table 14
Indirect effects for fake leadership model – low levels of EDCs

	FL	Trust	WrkEng	OrgCom	Motiv
Trust	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
WrkEng	-0.423	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OrgCom	-0.379	0.210	0.000	0.000	0.000
Motiv	-0.468	0.548	0.095	0.000	0.000
JobPer	-0.462	0.556	0.340	0.141	0.000

Tables 9 and 10 show the relations within the models obtained for high and low levels of EDCs in an organization. It is again important to underline two main differences. The first concerns the relations with statistical significance. In case of high levels of EDCs, not all relations within the model are statistically significant. The influence of fake leadership on work engagement, organizational commitment, and work motivation is not statistically significant. Only the influence of fake leadership on trust remains statistically significant. In the case of low levels of EDCs, all relations within the model are statistically significant, showing that various paths of fake leadership have a negative influence on job performance. The second concerns the strength of the relations. In the case of high levels of EDCs, the only remaining relation – between fake leadership and trust – is much weaker (-0.300) than in the case of low levels of EDCs (-0.576). Also, as shown in tables 12 and 14, the indirect and total effects occurring in the model obtained for high levels of EDCs are much weaker than those obtained for low levels of EDCs. Hence, it also becomes reasonable to accept hypothesis H2, stating that the higher the EDCs, to weaker the negative influence of fake leadership on job performance.

5. Discussion

The empirical research results on the role of Employees' Dynamic Capabilities (EDC) in shaping job performance under different leadership styles, specifically fake and authentic leadership, have significant implications for organizational behavior and human resource management. These findings align closely with the existing literature, particularly the theories on dynamic capabilities and leadership, contributing to their development, especially in the context of three theories: situational leadership by Hersey and Blanchard (Hersey, Blanchard, 1977), contingency theory by Fiedler (Fiedler 1967) and path-goal theory by House and Mitchell (House, Mitchell 1974).

Dynamic capabilities, as discussed by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (Teece et al. 1997), emphasize the importance of not only possessing resources but also the ability to adapt and reconfigure them in response to environmental changes. This concept is echoed in the findings of Bieńkowska and Tworek (Bieńkowska, Tworek 2020), which confirm that EDCs significantly influence job performance through mechanisms such as Person-Job fit (P-J fit), work motivation, job satisfaction, and work engagement. The results obtained from this study further develop the theory concerning the significance of dynamic capabilities in the context of leadership, highlighting the adaptive nature of their role in shaping job performance through leadership.

Authentic leadership, characterized by a focus on genuine leader-follower relationships and ethical behavior, has been shown to positively influence job performance, and the obtained results confirm this, particularly for organizations with high levels of EDCs. The empirical research indicates that authentic leadership enhances intraorganizational trust, work engagement, organizational commitment, and work motivation, all of which contribute to improved job performance. This contributes to the theoretical framework (e.g. Bass, Steidlmeier 1999; Gardner et al. 2011), confirming that authentic leaders, by fostering trust and engagement, can effectively leverage the dynamic capabilities of their employees to achieve higher performance levels. Moreover, it seems that even with lower levels of EDCs, the positive influence of authentic leadership on job performance remains in place, showing that this particular leadership style is aiming at true support for employees, regardless of their level of capabilities.

Conversely, fake leadership, which is detrimental and characterized by self-serving behaviors and manipulation, negatively impacts job performance (Bieńkowska, Tworek, 2024). However, the empirical research vastly contributes to that theoretical framework, showing the importance of EDCs in that process. The findings as a whole are consistent with the literature that suggests negative leadership styles undermine employee morale and productivity (Northouse 2021; Alimo-Metcalfe 2013), and even some groups of employees who support a fake leader are unable to significantly improve the overall job performance, which is more meaningfully negatively influenced by this leadership style. However, a critical insight and contribution from the study concerns the moderating role of EDCs in the relation between fake leadership and job performance. It shows that high levels of EDCs can mitigate the adverse effects of fake leadership by enabling employees to adapt and respond proactively to negative behaviors, as employees are better equipped to not resort to conformity. EDCs also mitigate the decrease in intra-organizational trust, making it possible to maintain some level of job performance. The study also reveals that the negative effects of fake

leadership are more pronounced in organizations with low levels of EDCs. In these environments, employees are less equipped to counteract the negative influences of a fake leader, resulting in reduced trust, engagement, and overall performance.

The results align with the hypothesis that dynamic capabilities provide a buffer against unfavorable leadership, as employees with high EDCs can employ strategies to protect their performance even under poor leadership, which constitutes a topic for further studies.

An interesting aspect of future research seems to relate to the mechanism of the high EDCs mitigating effect on the negative impact of fake leadership on job performance. It seems necessary to conduct further research and, for example, to include the person-supervisor fit (P-S fit) as a component of the employee's fit with the work environment (whereby "P-E fit is broadly defined as the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched" (Kristof-Brown 2005, p. 281)). P-S fit refers to the match between employees' and supervisors' characteristics. It is assumed that it is determined by the match of values, personality, lifestyle, and work style (Chuang, Shen 2007; Vianen van et al. 2011, p. 914). Thus, if the P-S fit is high, i.e. employees share the supervisor's values, personality, lifestyle, and work style, then they will naturally accept and even imitate the supervisor's attitudes and behaviors, which will be facilitated by high EDCs, but also not hindered by low EDCs. However, with a low P-S fit and high EDCs, employees will actively oppose the leader's actions both toward the employees and toward the organization or, despite their own different views, in a conformist manner and/or due to fear of the supervisor's actions, they will conform to the supervisor's activities in an attempt to improve work outcome parameters, including job performance. Identifying a valid option requires in-depth research into the level of conformism among employees in the organization. As a whole, it provides directions for possible future research work.

6. Conclusions

This study addressed an identified research gap in the organizational behavior field of study by exploring the role of EDCs in shaping the relation between leadership styles and job performance. Previous research has extensively discussed the individual impacts of dynamic capabilities on leadership and job performance. However, this study uniquely integrates these concepts, including the specific role of EDCs, providing empirical evidence on how EDCs can influence the mechanism behind authentic and fake leadership's influence on job

performance. Hence, the aim of the study was to examine the role of EDCs in shaping job performance by the negative leadership concept using the example of fake leadership, as well as in shaping job performance by the positive leadership concept using the example of authentic leadership. The aim was successfully fulfilled, contributing various conclusions to the current body of knowledge in the examined field of research.

The obtained results showed that authentic leadership has a universally positive impact on job performance; however, still being significantly enhanced by high levels of EDCs. This leadership style fosters trust, engagement, organizational commitment, and motivation among employees, leading to improved job performance, and EDCs strengthen such positive impact, showing that authentic leadership leverages Employees' Dynamic Capabilities.

The results also showed that fake leadership negatively affects job performance, regardless of the level of EDCs. However, high EDC levels mitigate these adverse effects by enabling employees to adapt and respond proactively to negative leadership behaviors, limiting the negative impact of fake leadership on work motivation, work engagement, and organizational commitment. It shows that employees are better equipped to not only mitigate the decrease of intra-organizational trust but also to limit their resort to conformity and maintain some level of job performance. This shows the protective role of EDCs in buffering against unfavorable leadership styles, which makes a significant contribution to the contingency theory and path-goal theory of leadership.

This study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it extends dynamic capabilities theory to the micro (employee) level by demonstrating its moderating role. Second, it integrates positive and negative leadership frameworks within a single analytical model. Third, it provides empirical evidence that employee capabilities can act as both amplifiers and buffers in leadership-performance mechanisms.

The study performed has some limitations. The research was conducted among organizations in Poland, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural and organizational contexts. Future studies should consider a more diverse geographical scope to validate these results globally. The study's cross-sectional design captures a snapshot in time, which may not fully account for the dynamic nature of EDCs and leadership interactions over periods of time. Longitudinal studies should be considered in the future to observe these relations over time. The reliance on self-reported data from managers may introduce bias, as responses could be influenced by personal perceptions or organizational pressures. This results in the need to incorporate multi-source data, including subordinate feedback and objective performance metrics, in future research, which would enhance the robustness of the findings.

Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used ChatGPT 4o (version June 2024) to improve the flow of the article (corrections in English language). After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the published article.

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Summary

This article examines the role of Employees' Dynamic Capabilities (EDC) in shaping job performance through the influence of authentic and fake leadership styles. It addresses a critical gap by exploring how EDCs moderate the relations between leadership styles and job performance, mediated by intraorganizational trust, work engagement, work motivation, and organizational commitment. Data obtained from questionnaires from 289 organizations in Poland were analyzed using multigroup path analysis. The findings show that authentic leadership positively influences job performance by enhancing trust, engagement, commitment, and motivation, and the strength of this influence is higher among organizations with higher levels of EDCs. Conversely, fake leadership negatively impacts job performance, with more pronounced effects in low EDC environments. Most importantly, high EDC levels can buffer against the negative effects of fake leadership. The study highlights the importance of fostering EDCs to leverage authentic leadership benefits and mitigate fake leadership harms.

JEL codes: M12, O15

Keywords: *fake leadership, authentic leadership, Employees' Dynamic Capabilities, job performance, management*