

Designing a Model of Organizational Authenticity, Its Antecedents and Consequences at Kerman University of Medical Sciences

Afsaneh. Emamipour¹, Mohammad Jalal. Kamali^{2*}, Zahra. Anjom Shoaee³, Sanjar. Salajqeh³

¹ PhD Student of Public Administration, Ke.C., Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran

² Department of Management, Ke.C., Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran

³ Department of Public Management, Ke.C., Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: mohammadjalalkamali@iau.ac.ir

Article Info

Article type:

Original Research

How to cite this article:

Emamipour, A., Kamali, M. J., Anjom Shoaee, Z., & Salajqeh, S. (2026). Designing a Model of Organizational Authenticity, Its Antecedents and Consequences at Kerman University of Medical Sciences. *International Journal of Innovation Management and Organizational Behavior*, 6(5) 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ijimob.5642>



© 2026 the authors. Published by KMAN Publication Inc. (KMANPUB), Ontario, Canada. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The present study was conducted with the aim of developing a model of organizational authenticity and identifying its antecedents and consequences at Kerman University of Medical Sciences.

Methods and Materials: This study was applied-developmental in terms of purpose and qualitative in terms of research approach. Data were collected through a review of the relevant literature, upstream policy documents, and semi-structured interviews with 15 experts and managers from Kerman University of Medical Sciences. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, and interviews continued until theoretical saturation was achieved. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis with the assistance of MAXQDA 2018 software.

Findings: The results of the data analysis led to the identification of a set of antecedents and consequences of organizational authenticity. The antecedents of organizational authenticity included authentic leadership, value-based organizational culture, organizational justice and trust, psychological safety, employees' individual authenticity, and participation and empowerment. Furthermore, the most significant consequences of organizational authenticity included affective commitment, reduced turnover intention and absenteeism, public trust and organizational reputation, organizational citizenship behavior, intrinsic motivation, employee well-being, and creativity and innovation. The findings indicated that organizational authenticity is a multidimensional and dynamic phenomenon that emerges from the interaction of individual, managerial, and cultural factors and generates extensive outcomes for employees, organizations, and stakeholders.

Conclusion: The findings suggest that organizational authenticity in medical universities is not merely an identity-related characteristic; rather, it represents a strategic mechanism for strengthening trust, enhancing organizational cohesion, and improving performance. The proposed model can assist managers and policymakers within the healthcare system in designing management interventions grounded in authentic organizational values and in promoting organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Organizational Authenticity, Authentic Leadership, Value-Based Organizational Culture, Organizational Trust, Thematic Analysis.

1 Introduction

In today's highly dynamic, complex, and stakeholder-oriented organizational environment, authenticity has emerged as one of the most important concepts in organizational behavior and management research. Organizations are increasingly expected not only to achieve economic and operational objectives but also to act consistently with their stated values, missions, and ethical principles. In such contexts, stakeholders—including employees, customers, citizens, and policymakers—evaluate organizations based on the degree to which their actions align with their declared identities and values. This alignment has led scholars to emphasize the concept of organizational authenticity as a critical determinant of organizational legitimacy, trust, reputation, and long-term sustainability (Lim & Zhang, 2025; Zhu, 2025). Organizational authenticity reflects the extent to which organizational practices, decisions, communications, and behaviors are perceived as genuine, consistent, and aligned with the organization's core values and identity. Authentic organizations are viewed as entities that act in accordance with their espoused principles rather than merely projecting a favorable image to external audiences (Pamphile & Ruttan, 2023; Zhu, 2025).

The growing importance of organizational authenticity can be attributed to several contemporary developments. Increased transparency, digital communication platforms, stakeholder activism, and heightened public scrutiny have made it more difficult for organizations to maintain legitimacy without demonstrating genuine commitment to their stated values. In this context, authenticity functions as a strategic organizational resource that strengthens stakeholder confidence and enhances organizational resilience. Strategic authenticity has recently been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing consistency between organizational identity, communication, values, and behaviors. This perspective highlights authenticity not as a static attribute but as a dynamic organizational capability that requires continuous alignment between organizational intentions and actions (Zhu, 2025). Consequently, organizations that successfully cultivate authenticity are more likely to establish durable relationships with stakeholders and maintain a favorable reputation over time.

Within organizational settings, authenticity has traditionally been examined from an individual perspective, focusing on employees' experiences of being true to

themselves in the workplace. However, recent scholarship has emphasized that authenticity extends beyond individual behavior and can be understood as an organizational-level phenomenon. A comprehensive review of authenticity research demonstrated that authenticity encompasses multiple dimensions, including self-awareness, relational transparency, value congruence, and consistency between identity and behavior. These dimensions collectively contribute to the development of organizational authenticity and influence how employees perceive their work environment (Rook et al., 2024). Similarly, studies examining value congruence have shown that employees evaluate organizations more positively when there is consistency between the values organizations claim to uphold and the values actually reflected in their practices and policies (Pamphile & Ruttan, 2023).

The significance of organizational authenticity becomes particularly evident in knowledge-intensive and public-service organizations such as universities and healthcare institutions. These organizations rely heavily on trust, professional ethics, stakeholder engagement, and social legitimacy. Medical universities occupy a unique position because they simultaneously serve educational, research, healthcare, and community service functions. Consequently, perceptions of authenticity within these institutions can profoundly influence employee attitudes, organizational performance, and public confidence. In healthcare and academic environments, organizational authenticity contributes to ethical decision-making, collaborative relationships, and effective service delivery. Furthermore, authenticity serves as a mechanism through which organizations can strengthen stakeholder trust and maintain their social legitimacy in increasingly complex institutional environments (Lim & Zhang, 2025; Turker et al., 2023).

A central factor associated with organizational authenticity is authentic leadership. Over the past two decades, authentic leadership has become one of the most extensively studied leadership approaches in organizational research. Authentic leaders are characterized by self-awareness, transparency, ethical conduct, and balanced decision-making. Such leaders encourage open communication, foster trust, and create environments in which employees feel respected and valued. A recent review of authentic leadership research highlighted its substantial influence on organizational culture, employee attitudes, and organizational effectiveness (Lux & Lowe, 2024). Authentic leaders contribute to the development of organizational authenticity by aligning organizational practices with ethical

principles and promoting consistency between organizational values and actions.

Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates the positive effects of authentic leadership on organizational outcomes. Research has shown that authentic leadership promotes cognitive diversity and information elaboration by creating psychologically safe environments in which employees feel comfortable expressing diverse perspectives and challenging existing assumptions (Yagi et al., 2024). Other studies have reported that authentic leadership positively influences organizational behaviors through the mediating roles of psychological capital and perceived organizational support, suggesting that leadership authenticity shapes employees' perceptions of organizational integrity and fairness (Arabi et al., 2024). In healthcare settings, authentic leadership has also been linked to greater job satisfaction and improved service quality among nursing professionals, indicating its practical relevance for health-oriented organizations (Bakhtiari et al., 2024).

Another important antecedent of organizational authenticity is organizational culture. Organizational culture represents the shared values, norms, beliefs, and assumptions that guide behavior within organizations. As a foundational element of organizational life, culture influences how employees interpret organizational actions and evaluate organizational integrity. A systematic review of organizational culture literature emphasized that cultural values shape organizational effectiveness, employee behavior, and institutional performance across diverse contexts (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). When organizational cultures emphasize ethical conduct, transparency, participation, and accountability, they create conditions conducive to the development of organizational authenticity.

Research conducted within higher education institutions has demonstrated that authentic leadership and organizational culture jointly influence organizational commitment and other desirable employee outcomes (Novitasari et al., 2024). Such findings suggest that authenticity is not solely the product of leadership behavior but also emerges from broader organizational systems and cultural arrangements. Organizations characterized by strong value-based cultures are more likely to sustain authenticity because employees perceive greater alignment between organizational ideals and actual practices. This alignment strengthens trust, enhances commitment, and encourages employees to identify more strongly with

organizational goals (Novitasari et al., 2024; Pamphile & Ruttan, 2023).

Organizational justice and trust also constitute essential foundations for organizational authenticity. Employees are more likely to perceive their organizations as authentic when decision-making processes are fair, transparent, and consistent. Fair treatment signals that organizational values are genuinely enacted rather than merely communicated. Recent research within academic environments has shown that perceptions of organizational justice significantly contribute to perceptions of organizational authenticity, particularly among faculty members concerned with equity and inclusion (Wilcox et al., 2025). Similarly, trust serves as a critical mechanism through which authenticity influences employee attitudes and organizational outcomes. When employees trust organizational leaders and systems, they are more likely to engage positively with organizational initiatives and contribute to organizational success.

Psychological safety represents another important antecedent of organizational authenticity. Psychological safety refers to employees' perceptions that they can express opinions, admit mistakes, and propose new ideas without fear of negative consequences. Environments characterized by psychological safety encourage honesty, openness, and constructive dialogue, all of which are fundamental aspects of authenticity. Authentic leaders often facilitate psychological safety through transparent communication and supportive interpersonal relationships (Arabi et al., 2024; Yagi et al., 2024). Consequently, organizations that foster psychological safety create conditions that allow authenticity to flourish at both individual and collective levels.

The concept of employee authenticity further contributes to understanding organizational authenticity. Employees who feel able to express their true selves at work are more likely to experience meaningful engagement, satisfaction, and commitment. Research on workplace authenticity has demonstrated that authenticity influences employee well-being, motivation, and interpersonal relationships, while simultaneously shaping broader organizational dynamics (Rook et al., 2024). Organizations that encourage employees to act consistently with their values and identities may therefore experience enhanced organizational authenticity and improved performance outcomes.

Participation and empowerment also play important roles in cultivating organizational authenticity. When employees are involved in decision-making processes and granted meaningful autonomy, they are more likely to perceive

organizational practices as legitimate and trustworthy. Participatory organizational structures promote transparency, accountability, and shared ownership of organizational goals. Moreover, digital technologies increasingly facilitate stakeholder participation and collaborative governance, particularly within public-sector organizations. Such technologies enhance opportunities for co-production and co-creation, thereby strengthening perceptions of organizational responsiveness and authenticity (Pauluzzo et al., 2024).

Beyond its antecedents, organizational authenticity generates numerous positive outcomes for employees and organizations. One of the most significant consequences is enhanced employee performance. Experimental evidence has demonstrated that employees who perceive their organizations as authentic exhibit higher levels of work performance compared to those who perceive lower levels of authenticity (Eldor, 2025). Authentic organizational environments create conditions that encourage employees to invest greater effort, demonstrate stronger commitment, and align their behaviors with organizational objectives.

Organizational authenticity also contributes to employee engagement, workplace well-being, and trust. Research examining authentic leadership found that trust in leaders mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and employee well-being, highlighting the importance of authenticity for fostering healthy work environments (Baquero, 2023). Employees who perceive authenticity within their organizations are more likely to experience psychological well-being, intrinsic motivation, and meaningfulness in their work. These outcomes contribute to both individual flourishing and organizational effectiveness.

Furthermore, organizational authenticity enhances organizational identification and employee voice behaviors. Employees who identify strongly with their organizations are more likely to contribute ideas, express concerns, and participate actively in organizational improvement efforts. Research has demonstrated that organizational communication emphasizing inclusion, diversity, and authenticity strengthens employee identification and encourages constructive voice behaviors (Men et al., 2024). Such behaviors are particularly valuable in academic and healthcare settings where continuous improvement and innovation are essential.

From an external stakeholder perspective, organizational authenticity significantly influences organizational attractiveness, legitimacy, and reputation. Organizations perceived as authentic are more likely to attract talented

employees, retain stakeholder support, and maintain positive public images. Research on corporate social responsibility authenticity has shown that stakeholder perceptions of authenticity enhance organizational attractiveness and strengthen organizational legitimacy (Turker et al., 2023). Similarly, stakeholder engagement processes that are perceived as authentic contribute to corporate reputation through enhanced legitimacy and trust (Lim & Zhang, 2025). These findings underscore the strategic importance of authenticity for organizational sustainability and competitiveness.

Despite growing scholarly interest in authenticity, significant gaps remain in understanding organizational authenticity as a multidimensional organizational phenomenon. Much of the existing literature has focused on authentic leadership, individual authenticity, or value congruence, while relatively limited attention has been devoted to developing comprehensive models that simultaneously examine the antecedents and consequences of organizational authenticity, particularly in healthcare and higher education contexts (Lux & Lowe, 2024; Rook et al., 2024). Moreover, the majority of existing studies have been conducted in private-sector organizations, leaving important questions regarding authenticity within public and health-oriented institutions unanswered (Asif et al., 2025; Wilcox et al., 2025).

Given the strategic importance of medical universities in education, research, healthcare delivery, and community development, identifying the factors that shape organizational authenticity and understanding its consequences represent important theoretical and practical priorities. Developing a comprehensive model of organizational authenticity can provide valuable insights for managers and policymakers seeking to enhance organizational effectiveness, employee well-being, stakeholder trust, and institutional legitimacy within medical universities.

Therefore, the present study aimed to develop a model of organizational authenticity and identify its antecedents and consequences at Kerman University of Medical Sciences.

2 Methods and Materials

In terms of approach, this research was conducted as an exploratory mixed-methods study (qualitative–quantitative). In the qualitative phase, the main objective was to identify the components, dimensions, and initial structure of the model of the antecedents and consequences of

organizational authenticity. The statistical population of the qualitative section consisted of managers and experts at Kerman University of Medical Sciences. Sampling was conducted using purposeful sampling, and individuals were selected based on criteria such as relevant educational background, managerial experience, and familiarity with the research topic. Ultimately, 15 experts participated in the qualitative phase. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews. The interviews continued until theoretical saturation was achieved. Data analysis was performed using thematic analysis within a six-stage process, including familiarization with the data, initial coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and reporting. MAXQDA software was used to manage and analyze the data. The validity and reliability of the qualitative phase were examined and

confirmed based on Guba and Lincoln's criteria, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Regarding ethical considerations, informed consent was obtained from all participants at all stages of the study, confidentiality of information was observed, and participants' right to withdraw from the study at any stage was preserved. In addition, the results were reported in aggregate form without mentioning participants' names.

3 Findings and Results

In this section, interviews were conducted with 15 experts and specialists regarding the antecedents and consequences of organizational authenticity. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of the Statistical Sample Based on Experts' Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Variable Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	10	66.0
	Female	5	34.0
	Total	15	100.0
Work Experience	Less than 10 years	1	6.0
	11 to 15 years	2	13.0
	16 to 20 years	3	20.0
	21 to 25 years	4	26.0
	26 to 30 years	3	20.0
	More than 30 years	2	13.0
	Total	15	100.0
Age	31 to 40 years	2	13.0
	41 to 50 years	7	46.0
	51 years and older	6	40.0
	Total	15	100.0
Position	University President	1	6.0
	University Vice Presidents	3	20.0
	Financial Affairs Manager	3	20.0
	Education Manager	3	20.0
	Hospital Management	2	13.0
	Human Resources Management	3	20.0
Education	Master's Degree	11	74.0
	Doctoral Degree	4	26.0
	Total	15	100.0

In this study, 15 interviews were conducted. In the following tables, selected excerpts from the interviewees' statements and the related semantic themes are presented. Thematic analysis is an iterative and recursive process in which movement back and forth between the stages of the method was carried out over time in this study as follows: Stage 1. Familiarization with the data: In order for the

researcher to become familiar with the depth and breadth of the data content, it is necessary to become immersed in them to some extent. Immersion in the data usually involves repeated reading of the data and active reading, meaning the search for meanings and patterns. At this stage, by repeatedly rereading the texts and moving back and forth among the content of the interview transcripts, the researcher

attempted to gain an accurate understanding of the content and themes of the subject and to establish maximum alignment among the materials.

Stage 2. Generating initial subthemes: The second stage began when the researcher had read the data and become familiar with them. This stage involved generating initial subthemes from the data. Subthemes represent a feature of the data that appears interesting to the analyst. The data that have been thematized differ from the units of analysis, namely themes. These subthemes are, in fact, concepts and meanings embedded in a sentence or paragraph, which the researcher identifies by becoming immersed in the interview texts and attempting to answer the research questions. Thematization can be conducted manually or through software programs. In this study, the researcher performed thematization using software. Initially, the interview texts were summarized; then, by annotating the summarized texts or using color-coding, the subthemes were identified. Subsequently, they were matched with the summarized data representing each subtheme, and finally, the summarized texts were organized within the framework of subthemes. To achieve this, the researcher analyzed the transcribed and summarized interview texts sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph and coded the interviews by writing the relevant subtheme at the end of each meaningful sentence or paragraph.

Stage 3. Searching for themes: This stage involved categorizing different subthemes into subsidiary themes and organizing all summarized thematized data within the framework of subsidiary themes. In fact, the researcher began analyzing the subthemes and considered how different themes could be combined to form an overarching theme. At this stage, the researcher grouped closely related subthemes into the same category to form subsidiary themes. What was important at this stage was the coherence between subthemes and subsidiary themes, which the researcher ensured through a back-and-forth movement among the interview texts.

Stage 4. Reviewing themes: The fourth stage began when the researcher had developed a set of themes and reviewed them. This stage included two processes: reviewing and refining the themes. The first process involved reviewing the summarized thematized data. In the second process, the validity of the themes was considered in relation to the entire

dataset. If the thematic map functions well, the researcher can proceed to the next stage. However, if the map does not correspond well with the dataset, the researcher must return and continue thematization until a satisfactory thematic map is developed. At the end of this stage, the researcher should have sufficient awareness of what the different themes are, how they fit together, and the overall story they tell about the data. After completing the analysis of the interview texts, the researcher re-examined all subthemes as well as subsidiary themes to ensure coherence and thematic continuity among them. The researcher also considered whether the extracted subthemes and subsidiary themes were aligned with the research questions, and the result was affirmative.

Stage 5. Defining and naming themes: The fifth stage began when a satisfactory thematic map had been developed. At this stage, the researcher defined and re-reviewed the themes presented for analysis and then analyzed the data within them. Through defining and reviewing, the nature of what each theme discusses becomes clear, and it is determined which aspect of the data each theme contains.

At this stage, by classifying subsidiary themes into main themes, the researcher attempted to clarify the relationships among different subsidiary themes. This back-and-forth movement among various subsidiary themes, as well as repeated review of the research questions and objectives, provided the researcher with an opportunity to move closer to designing the final research model and to prepare the elements required for the quantitative test.

Stage 6. Preparing the report: The sixth stage began when the researcher had a set of fully refined themes. This stage involved final analysis and report writing. In this study, the manifestation of this stage is the conceptual model presented at the end of the qualitative section of Chapter Four. In fact, after conducting thematization and dividing subthemes into subsidiary themes and subsidiary themes into main themes, the researcher answered the research questions based on this process.

After theoretical saturation of the interviews was achieved, the analysis of qualitative data was completed. The processing and analysis of qualitative data were performed using MAXQDA 2018 qualitative data analysis software. The responses provided by the interviewees to each of the questions in this study are presented in the following tables.

Table 2*Interviewees' Responses Regarding the Antecedents of Organizational Authenticity*

Interviewee Code	Excerpt from the Interviews
I.1	"When we have a meeting with the university president, he speaks transparently and candidly about financial challenges and future plans. As a faculty member, I feel that not only are our opinions heard, but before important decisions are made, all aspects and information are examined in a balanced and fair manner. This honesty and adherence to ethical principles by senior management have created a deep sense of trust in me."
I.2	At this university, values such as serving patients and observing professional ethics are not merely slogans on the wall. Over the years of my work, I have seen how these values have become institutionalized in both minor and major decisions. Here, "integrity" is a non-negotiable principle, and all of us consider ourselves obligated to observe it.
I.3	One of the things that has kept me at this university is the sense of justice I perceive in the distribution of opportunities and performance evaluations. For example, in the most recent appointments, a person was promoted to a managerial position based on actual competencies and experience, not personal connections. This fairness has made me fully trust the system and the judgment of my colleagues.
I.4	"In our departmental meetings, I can disagree, even by proposing unconventional ideas, or acknowledge my mistakes without any concern about ridicule or reprimand. Our department head always emphasizes that 'this is a learning environment, not a judgmental one.' This freedom of action has made me feel that I can be my true self and express my opinion honestly."
I.5	"As a professor, I always try to be the same person in my interactions with students as I am in private. I know my strengths and weaknesses and do not try to create an idealized and unrealistic image of myself. This honesty with myself helps me to be truthful and authentic in my interactions with colleagues and students as well."
I.6	"The department manager has given us full authority over how we present course content, and we even have the final say regarding the purchase of educational equipment related to our unit. Feeling that we have a role in our professional destiny and that managers trust our judgment multiplies our motivation for active participation."
I.7	As a faculty member, I feel that not only are our opinions heard, but before important decisions are made, all aspects and information are examined in a balanced and fair manner.
I.8	Over the years of my work, I have seen how these values have become institutionalized in both minor and major decisions. Here, "integrity" is a non-negotiable principle, and all of us consider ourselves obligated to observe it.
I.9	In the most recent appointments, a person was promoted to a managerial position based on actual competencies and experience, not personal connections.
I.10	Our department head always emphasizes that "this is a learning environment, not a judgmental one." This freedom of action has made me feel that I can be my true self and express my opinion honestly.
I.11	Honesty and adherence to ethical principles by senior management have created a deep sense of trust in me.
I.12	Honesty with myself helps me to be truthful and authentic in my interactions with colleagues and students as well.
I.13	Feeling that we have a role in our professional destiny and that managers trust our judgment multiplies our motivation for active participation.
I.14	I can disagree, even by proposing unconventional ideas, or acknowledge my mistakes.
I.15	This fairness has made me fully trust the system and the judgment of my colleagues.

Table 3*Interviewees' Responses Regarding the Consequences of Organizational Authenticity at Kerman University of Medical Sciences*

Interviewee Code	Excerpt from Interviews on the Consequences of Organizational Authenticity at Kerman University of Medical Sciences
I.1	Despite having better job offers from private institutions, I have stayed here. The reason is that I believe in the mission and values of this university. For me, this is not merely a workplace; it has become part of my identity, and I am proud to serve in this organization.
I.2	"Over the past ten years, I have never thought about leaving the university. Even during difficult days, I come to work willingly because we have an honest and supportive environment. This sense of belonging has caused me not only to have no unjustified absences myself, but also to see that my colleagues attend work with a high level of commitment."
I.3	"When people speak in public forums, the name of our University of Medical Sciences is associated with attributes such as 'trustworthy' and 'responsive.' Patients trust us because they know that, behind the scenes, work is done honestly and with the aim of providing better service. This credibility is a major form of social capital for us."
I.4	"Consider yesterday: one of our colleagues voluntarily helped a distressed student complete his thesis proposal outside working hours. This was not part of his job description, but he considers himself part of this organization and spares no effort for its success. This spirit exists among many of us."

I.5	“Salary is important, but what truly satisfies me is the feeling that my work is meaningful and is carried out in a healthy environment free from hypocrisy. When I see that I can be my true self and that my work has a positive impact, I experience an inner peace and deep satisfaction that money cannot buy.”
I.6	“Because we know that if we have a new idea, we can present it without fear of failure or blame, we are always thinking about improving our work methods. It was this open atmosphere that enabled me to present my innovative plan for an electronic evaluation system, which ultimately led to significant savings in the university’s time and resources.”
I.7	For me, this is not merely a workplace; it has become part of my identity, and I am proud to serve in this organization.
I.8	This sense of belonging has caused me not only to have no unjustified absences myself, but also to see that my colleagues attend work with a high level of commitment.
I.9	Work is done honestly and with the aim of providing better service. This credibility is a major form of social capital for us. This feeling has caused me not only to have no unjustified absences myself, but also to see that my colleagues attend work with a high level of commitment.
I.10	It was this open atmosphere that enabled me to present my innovative plan for an electronic evaluation system, which ultimately led to significant savings in the university’s time and resources.
I.11	When I see that I can be my true self and that my work has a positive impact, I experience an inner peace and deep satisfaction that money cannot buy.
I.12	Individuals consider themselves part of this organization and spare no effort for its success. This spirit exists among many of us.
I.13	We are always thinking about improving our work methods. We are always thinking about improving our work methods. It was this open atmosphere that enabled me to present my innovative plan for an electronic evaluation system.
I.14	I have never thought about leaving the university. I come to work willingly because we have an honest and supportive environment.
I.15	I experience an inner peace and deep satisfaction that money cannot buy. When I see that I can be my true self and that my work has a positive impact, I experience an inner peace and deep satisfaction that money cannot buy.

Table 4

Experts’ Opinions on the Factors Along with Their Frequency for the Antecedents and Consequences of Organizational Authenticity at Kerman University of Medical Sciences

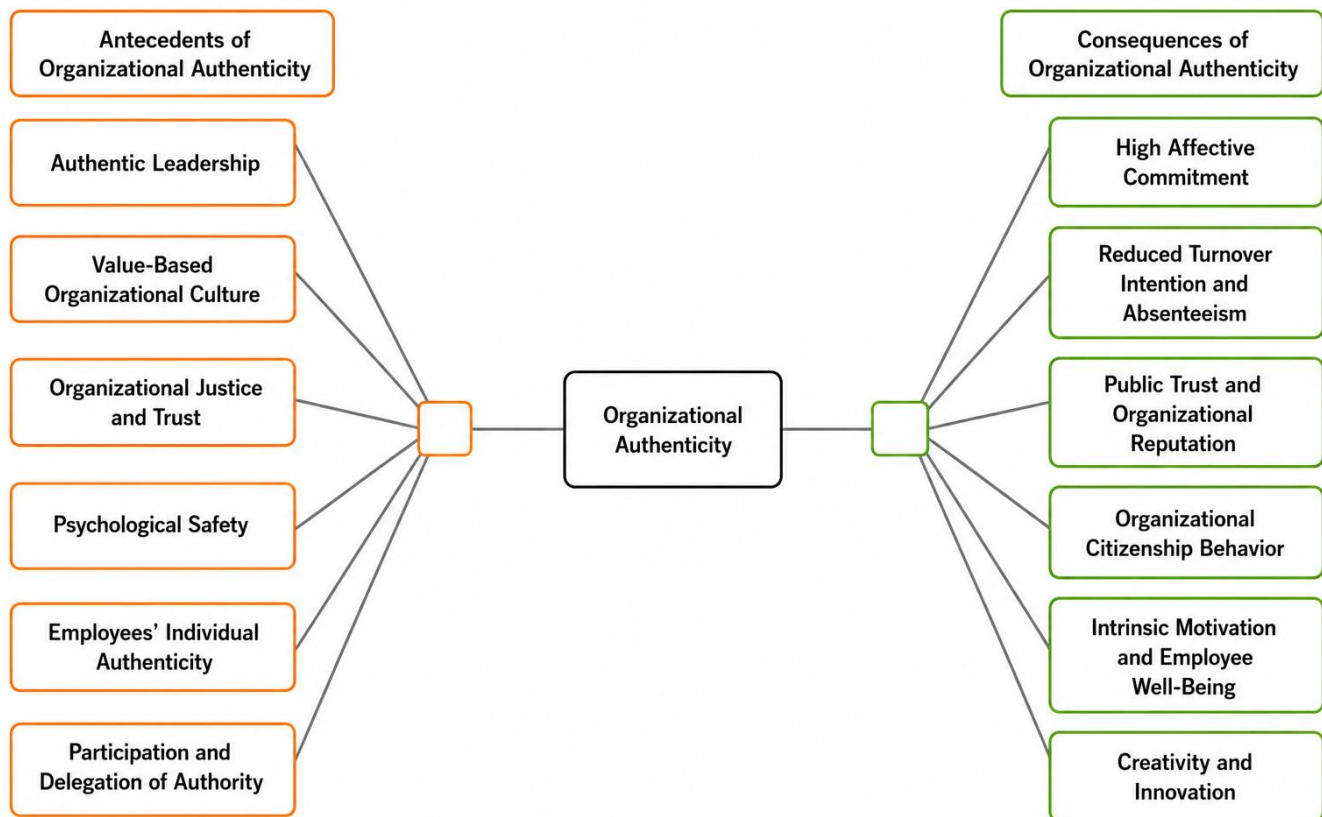
Extracted Factors: Antecedents of Organizational Authenticity	Frequency
Authentic Leadership	5
Value-Based Organizational Culture	7
Organizational Justice and Trust	3
Psychological Safety	4
Employees’ Individual Authenticity	5
Participation and Delegation of Authority	3
Extracted Factors: Consequences of Organizational Authenticity	Frequency
High Affective Commitment	3
Reduced Turnover Intention and Absenteeism	5
Public Trust and Organizational Reputation	6
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	5
Intrinsic Motivation and Employee Well-Being	4
Creativity and Innovation	5

Then, after interviewing these individuals, the factors were extracted. It should be noted that theoretical saturation was achieved after conducting the interviews. In other words, no new extracted codes related to the consequences of organizational authenticity at Kerman University of Medical Sciences were added to the set of codes in the fifteenth interview, and the extracted codes were repetitive.

After theoretical saturation was reached, the interview and coding process was completed. The coding process and textual analysis of the interviews were performed using MAXQDA 2018 qualitative data analysis software. The final output of the extracted antecedent and consequence factors of organizational authenticity at Kerman University of Medical Sciences is presented below.

Figure 1

Final Output of Experts' Opinions for the Research Model



4 Discussion

The present study aimed to develop a model of organizational authenticity and identify its antecedents and consequences at Kerman University of Medical Sciences. The findings revealed that organizational authenticity is shaped by a set of interrelated antecedents, including authentic leadership, value-based organizational culture, organizational justice and trust, psychological safety, employees' individual authenticity, and participation and delegation of authority. Furthermore, the study identified several important consequences of organizational authenticity, namely high affective commitment, reduced turnover intention and absenteeism, public trust and organizational reputation, organizational citizenship behavior, intrinsic motivation and employee well-being, and creativity and innovation. Collectively, these findings suggest that organizational authenticity is a multidimensional phenomenon emerging from the interaction of leadership, cultural, structural, and individual

factors and producing significant outcomes at the employee, organizational, and stakeholder levels.

One of the most important findings of this study was the identification of authentic leadership as a key antecedent of organizational authenticity. Participants repeatedly emphasized transparency, ethical conduct, balanced decision-making, and honesty among senior managers as fundamental factors contributing to perceptions of authenticity. This finding is consistent with the growing body of literature suggesting that authentic leadership creates the psychological and ethical foundations necessary for authentic organizational functioning. Authentic leaders model integrity and consistency between values and behaviors, thereby shaping employees' perceptions of organizational genuineness. Previous research has shown that authentic leadership positively influences employee attitudes and organizational outcomes by fostering trust, transparency, and ethical decision-making (Lux & Lowe, 2024). Similarly, Yagi et al. demonstrated that authentic leadership facilitates cognitive diversity and information elaboration by creating environments characterized by

openness and trust (Yagi et al., 2024). The findings of Arabi et al. further support this conclusion by showing that authentic leadership enhances positive organizational behaviors through psychological capital and perceived organizational support (Arabi et al., 2024). In healthcare settings specifically, authentic leadership has been associated with greater job satisfaction and higher service quality among nursing staff, indicating that authenticity-oriented leadership practices are particularly valuable in health-related organizations (Bakhtiari et al., 2024). Therefore, the prominence of authentic leadership in the present study highlights the central role of leaders in cultivating organizational authenticity within medical universities.

Another major finding concerned the role of value-based organizational culture as a significant antecedent of organizational authenticity. Participants consistently emphasized that organizational values such as integrity, ethical behavior, professional responsibility, and service orientation were embedded in daily practices rather than merely existing as formal statements. This finding aligns with the view that organizational authenticity requires consistency between organizational identity and organizational actions. A value-based culture reinforces this consistency by ensuring that organizational decisions reflect underlying ethical principles and shared beliefs. Previous studies have similarly emphasized the importance of culture in shaping organizational behavior and effectiveness. The systematic review conducted by Tadesse Bogale and Debela identified organizational culture as a fundamental mechanism through which values, norms, and expectations influence organizational functioning (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). Likewise, research conducted in university settings found that authentic leadership and organizational culture jointly contribute to organizational commitment and positive employee attitudes (Novitasari et al., 2024). The findings of the present study extend this literature by demonstrating that a strong value-based culture serves as an essential organizational condition for the emergence and maintenance of authenticity.

The findings also highlighted organizational justice and trust as important antecedents of organizational authenticity. Participants frequently referred to fairness in promotions, evaluations, and decision-making processes as critical sources of trust in organizational systems. These perceptions of fairness appeared to strengthen beliefs that organizational actions were consistent with stated values, thereby enhancing perceptions of authenticity. This finding is

consistent with recent scholarship emphasizing the close relationship between justice and authenticity. Wilcox et al. found that perceptions of organizational justice significantly influence perceptions of organizational authenticity in academic environments, particularly among faculty members concerned with equity and fairness (Wilcox et al., 2025). Similarly, authenticity has been linked to stakeholder trust because authentic organizations are perceived as reliable, transparent, and ethically consistent (Lim & Zhang, 2025). The present findings suggest that fairness and trust function as foundational mechanisms through which organizational authenticity is established and sustained in higher education and healthcare institutions.

Psychological safety emerged as another important antecedent of organizational authenticity. Participants described work environments where employees could express opinions, admit mistakes, and challenge prevailing assumptions without fear of negative consequences. Such conditions allowed individuals to express themselves honestly and contribute more effectively to organizational processes. This finding is theoretically consistent with the notion that authenticity flourishes in environments characterized by openness and interpersonal trust. Previous research has shown that authentic leadership contributes to psychological safety by encouraging transparency and respectful communication (Yagi et al., 2024). Furthermore, psychologically safe environments promote information sharing, collaboration, and learning, all of which reinforce authentic organizational interactions (Arabi et al., 2024). The present findings therefore suggest that psychological safety not only benefits employee well-being but also serves as a structural condition supporting organizational authenticity.

The identification of employees' individual authenticity as a significant antecedent further reinforces the multilevel nature of authenticity. Participants emphasized self-awareness, honesty, and consistency between personal values and behaviors as important characteristics contributing to authentic organizational environments. This finding aligns closely with the conceptualization of authenticity presented by Rook et al., who argued that workplace authenticity encompasses multiple dimensions of self-expression and value congruence (Rook et al., 2024). Employees who feel comfortable expressing their genuine identities contribute to organizational cultures characterized by trust, openness, and integrity. Consequently, organizational authenticity appears to emerge not only from

leadership and organizational systems but also from the authentic behaviors of organizational members themselves.

Another important antecedent identified in the study was participation and delegation of authority. Participants reported that having opportunities to contribute to decisions and exercise professional judgment enhanced their sense of ownership and trust in the organization. These findings support contemporary perspectives emphasizing employee involvement as a driver of organizational legitimacy and authenticity. Participation signals that organizational leaders value employees' perspectives and trust their expertise, thereby strengthening perceptions of organizational sincerity. Research on co-production and co-creation in public-sector organizations suggests that participatory structures increase transparency, responsiveness, and stakeholder engagement (Pauluzzo et al., 2024). The findings of the present study indicate that similar mechanisms operate within medical universities, where participation contributes significantly to organizational authenticity.

Regarding the consequences of organizational authenticity, one of the most prominent findings was the emergence of strong affective commitment among employees. Participants frequently described emotional attachment to the university and a sense of pride in belonging to the institution. This finding is consistent with previous research demonstrating that authenticity strengthens employees' identification with organizational values and goals. Novitasari et al. found that authentic leadership and supportive organizational cultures positively influence organizational commitment (Novitasari et al., 2024). Similarly, organizations perceived as authentic are more likely to foster strong emotional bonds because employees believe that organizational actions reflect meaningful and trustworthy values (Pamphile & Ruttan, 2023). The findings therefore suggest that organizational authenticity serves as a powerful mechanism for developing employees' emotional attachment to their organizations.

The study also found that organizational authenticity contributes to reduced turnover intention and absenteeism. Participants emphasized that supportive and honest organizational environments encouraged them to remain with the university despite alternative employment opportunities. This finding aligns with evidence suggesting that authentic organizational environments enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty. Authentic leadership has been shown to improve employee attitudes by reducing negative perceptions associated with organizational politics

and increasing trust in organizational processes (Asif et al., 2025). Likewise, organizations characterized by authenticity are likely to experience greater employee retention because individuals perceive stronger alignment between personal values and organizational practices (Pamphile & Ruttan, 2023). Consequently, organizational authenticity may represent an important strategy for retaining skilled personnel in healthcare and educational institutions.

Another major consequence identified in the study was enhanced public trust and organizational reputation. Participants indicated that the university enjoyed a positive reputation because stakeholders perceived it as trustworthy and responsive. This finding is consistent with stakeholder-oriented perspectives on authenticity. Research has demonstrated that authenticity strengthens organizational legitimacy and enhances reputation among external stakeholders (Lim & Zhang, 2025). Similarly, studies examining corporate social responsibility authenticity have shown that authenticity significantly influences organizational attractiveness and stakeholder evaluations (Turker et al., 2023). The findings of the present study suggest that organizational authenticity functions as an important reputational asset for medical universities, contributing to both public trust and institutional legitimacy.

The findings further revealed that organizational authenticity promotes organizational citizenship behavior. Participants described employees voluntarily helping colleagues and students beyond formal job requirements. Such behaviors reflect a strong sense of organizational identification and commitment. This finding is consistent with previous research demonstrating that authentic leadership and authentic organizational environments encourage employees to engage in discretionary behaviors that support organizational effectiveness (Baquero, 2023). Employees who perceive their organizations as authentic may feel a stronger sense of moral obligation and collective responsibility, motivating them to contribute beyond minimum performance expectations.

The study also identified intrinsic motivation and employee well-being as important consequences of organizational authenticity. Participants reported experiencing meaning, satisfaction, and psychological comfort when working in authentic environments. These findings strongly align with existing literature emphasizing the positive relationship between authenticity and well-being. Baquero found that authentic leadership enhances workplace well-being through trust and employee engagement (Baquero, 2023). Similarly, authenticity allows

employees to express their true selves, thereby increasing psychological well-being and intrinsic motivation (Rook et al., 2024). The present findings suggest that organizational authenticity creates environments where employees experience both professional fulfillment and psychological health.

Finally, creativity and innovation emerged as important outcomes of organizational authenticity. Participants reported that open and supportive environments encouraged them to generate and implement innovative ideas. This finding is theoretically consistent with research indicating that authenticity, trust, and psychological safety facilitate creativity by reducing fear of failure and encouraging experimentation. Authentic leaders have been shown to promote cognitive diversity and information sharing, both of which contribute to innovative performance (Yagi et al., 2024). Furthermore, Eldor's field experiment demonstrated that organizational authenticity positively influences employee performance, suggesting that authentic environments enhance not only routine performance but also innovative contributions (Eldor, 2025). Therefore, authenticity appears to function as a catalyst for organizational learning, adaptation, and innovation.

5 Conclusion

Overall, the findings of the present study support contemporary perspectives that conceptualize organizational authenticity as a strategic organizational capability rather than merely an ethical or symbolic characteristic. Consistent with recent conceptual developments, authenticity emerges through alignment between organizational identity, values, communication, leadership, and behavior (Zhu, 2025). The results also demonstrate that authenticity generates significant benefits for employees, organizations, and external stakeholders, reinforcing its importance as a managerial and strategic priority in healthcare and higher education institutions.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the qualitative phase was conducted within a single medical university, which may limit the transferability of the findings to other organizational and cultural contexts. Second, the study relied on participants' subjective perceptions and experiences, which may be influenced by personal biases and organizational circumstances. Third, although theoretical saturation was achieved, the relatively small number of participants may not fully capture all dimensions

of organizational authenticity. Finally, the cross-sectional nature of the data collection process prevents examination of how perceptions of organizational authenticity evolve over time.

Future studies should examine the proposed model quantitatively using larger and more diverse samples across multiple universities and healthcare institutions. Comparative studies between public and private organizations may provide deeper insights into contextual differences in the development of organizational authenticity. Longitudinal research designs are also recommended to investigate causal relationships and changes in authenticity perceptions over time. Additionally, future researchers may explore the role of emerging organizational factors such as digital transformation, remote work arrangements, organizational resilience, and stakeholder engagement practices in shaping organizational authenticity.

Managers and policymakers in medical universities should prioritize the development of authentic leadership competencies, including transparency, ethical decision-making, and balanced information processing. Organizations should also strengthen value-based cultures by ensuring consistency between formal policies and actual managerial practices. Creating psychologically safe work environments, promoting organizational justice, and increasing employee participation in decision-making processes can further enhance perceptions of authenticity. Moreover, institutional efforts aimed at strengthening trust, communication, and employee empowerment may improve organizational commitment, innovation, employee well-being, and public confidence. By integrating authenticity into leadership practices and organizational systems, medical universities can enhance both organizational effectiveness and stakeholder satisfaction.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to all individuals helped us to do the project.

Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding

According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

References

- Arabi, F., Heidari, E., & Hasanpour, A. (2024). Examining the Effect of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Behaviors Considering the Mediating Role of Psychological Capital and Perceived Organizational Support. *Behavioral Studies in Management*, 1-28.
- Asif, M., Ma, Z., Li, M., Xie, G., & Hu, W. (2025). Authentic Leadership: Bridging the Gap between Perception of Organizational Politics and Employee Attitudes in Public Sector Museums.
- Bakhtiari, Z., Sadeghi, A., Maleki Jamasbi, M., & Tapak, L. (2024). Relationship between Authentic Leadership of Nursing Supervisors, Job Satisfaction, and Quality of Nursing Services in Medical Education Centers. *Avicenna Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Care*, 32(2), 130-139.
- Baquero, A. (2023). Authentic Leadership, Employee Work Engagement, Trust in the Leader, and Workplace Well-Being: A Moderated Mediation Model. *Psychology research and behavior management*, 16, 1403-1424. <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S407672>
- Eldor, L. (2025). The Relationship between Organizational Authenticity Perceptions and Employees' Work Performance: Evidence from a Field Experiment. *Journal of Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063241310153>
- Lim, J. S., & Zhang, J. (2025). Stakeholder Engagement and Authenticity in Corporate Social Advocacy: Pathways to Corporate Reputation via Perceived Legitimacy. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 37(5), 470-497. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2025.2494517>
- Lux, A. A., & Lowe, K. B. (2024). Authentic Leadership: 20-Year Review Editorial. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 30(6), 1634-1641. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2024.59>
- Men, L. R., Thelen, P. D., & Qin, Y. S. (2024). The Impact of Diversity Communication on Employee Organizational Identification and Employee Voice Behaviors: A Moderated Mediation Model. *Public Relations Review*, 50(4), 102492.
- Novitasari, D., Utami, H., Purnawan, J., Choirida, & Amiruddin, J. (2024). Examining the Impact of Authentic Leadership and Organizational Culture on Organizational Commitment in Universities: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach. *International Journal of Social and Management Studies*, 5(1), 72-84. <https://doi.org/10.5555/ijosmas.v5i1.393>
- Pamphile, V. D., & Ruttan, R. L. (2023). The (Bounded) Role of Stated-Lived Value Congruence and Authenticity in Employee Evaluations of Organizations. *Organization Science*, 34(5), 1234-1251. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2022.1578>
- Pauluzzo, P., Fedele, P., Dokalskaya, I., & Garlatti, A. (2024). The Role of Digital Technologies in Public Sector Co-Production and Co-Creation: A Structured Literature Review. *Financial Accountability & Management*, 40(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/faam.12391>
- Rook, C., Leroy, H., Zhu, J., & Anisman-Razin, M. (2024). The Different Ways of Being True to Self at Work: A Review of Divergence among Authenticity Constructs. *Human Relations*, 78(8), 1061-1089. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267241288109>
- Tadesse Bogale, A., & Debela, K. L. (2024). Organizational Culture: A Systematic Review. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2340129>
- Turker, D., Can, Ö., & Aras-Beger, G. (2023). How Authenticity of Corporate Social Responsibility Affects Organizational Attractiveness: Stakeholder Perceptions of Organizational Ideology. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 30(1), 87-102. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2444>
- Wilcox, A., Koontz, A., Gau, J. M., Jasinski, J. L., Reinhart, D. R., & Walters, L. J. (2025). Advancing Equity in Academia: STEM Faculty Perceptions of Organizational Justice and Organizational Authenticity. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000609>
- Yagi, K., Iida, J., & Fujii, K. (2024). The Positive Role of Authentic Leadership in Organizations: Cognitive Diversity and Information Elaboration. *Frontiers in psychology*, 15, 1276585. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1276585>
- Zhu, L. (2025). Conceptualizing and Measuring Strategic Authenticity: A Reflective-Formative Second-Order Model. *Journal of Business Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2025.115582>