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Authentic Leadership Questionnaire: invariance between samples of Brazilian and Portuguese employees

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Abstract

The *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire* (ALQ) is used to assess *authentic leadership* (AL). Although ALQ is often used in empirical research, cross-cultural studies with this measure are scarce. Aiming to contribute to filling this gap, this study assesses the invariance of the ALQ measure between samples of Brazilian ($N = 1019$) and Portuguese ($N = 842$) employees. A multi-group confirmatory factor analysis was performed, and the results showed the invariance of the first- and second-order factor models between the Brazilian and Portuguese samples. The results are discussed considering their cultural setting, with the study's limitations and future research directions being pointed out.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, Authentic leadership, Invariance measurement, Cross-cultural study, Multi-group confirmatory factor analysis

Background

Authentic leadership model

Conceived by Luthans and Avolio (2003), the authentic leadership (AL) model considers the leader as self-effective, hopeful, resilient, and optimistic. AL is represented by high moral character, altruism, and virtuousness (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), the authentic leader presents the capacity to analyze and make decisions on ethical dilemmas. Walumbwa et al. (2008) add to AL attributes the promotion of a climate of ethical work and development of followers' psychological capacities. The theoretical model of AL is formed of four dimensions. The first, *relational transparency*, consists of presentation of the leader's genuine "self" rather than a modification with regard to the external context (Ilies et al. 2005). The second, *moral and ethics*, deals with the leader's attitudes, values, and moral standards (Walumbwa et al. 2008). The third, *balanced processing*, deals with others' consideration of the leader's deepest information and reflections (Walumbwa et al. 2008). And *self-awareness*

includes knowledge of self and one's own potential (Avolio and Gardner, 2005).

The *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire* (ALQ) is a self-administered instrument that assesses the perception of AL (Walumbwa et al. 2008) and has been applied in several cultures and organizational contexts (Gardner et al. 2011). The instrument has two versions, one for leaders to answer about themselves (self-report) and another for employees to rate their leaders.

The ALQ is used in research correlating AL with, for example, working atmosphere (Nelson et al. 2014), team effectiveness (Xiong and Fang, 2014), positive emotions (Ilies et al. 2013), and psychological capital (Laschinger and Fida, 2014). Creativity (Rego et al. 2012) and innovation (Černe et al. 2013) are also variables studied with this measure. Research samples have involved professionals in such different contexts as the navy and army (Borgersen et al. 2014), health (Laschinger and Fida, 2014), and education (Monzani et al. 2014). AL is also studied in institutions of different segments and sizes (Gardner et al. 2011; Hsiung, 2012).

The ALQ has been translated into several languages, and these versions are provided by the authors. Brazilian studies of AL (Lanzoni and Meirelles, 2011; Sobral and Gimba, 2012) have used a Portuguese version of the

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