

THE EFFECT OF AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE CARING BEHAVIOR WITH THE MEDIATION OF SELF-EFFICACY

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ARTICLE INFO	Abstract
Diterima: 02 Mei 2026 Direvisi: 21 Mei 2026 Disetujui: 14 Juni 2026 Tersedia Daring: 25 Juli 2026 Keywords : Authentic Leadership; Employee Caring Behavior; SEM-PLS; Self-Efficacy; SmartPLS	<i>This study was motivated by high work demands, dual roles, operational risks, and the need for coordination among employees of PT. Adhi Guna Putera Padang Branch in the operational area of TUKS Port, Teluk Sirih Steam Power Plant. This study aimed to analyze the effect of authentic leadership on self-efficacy and employee caring behavior, the effect of self-efficacy on employee caring behavior, and the mediating role of self-efficacy. A quantitative approach with a census method was applied to 75 respondents from a target population of 79 employees. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Square-based Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS. The results showed that authentic leadership had a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy ($\beta=0.707$; $t=11.076$; $p=0.000$) and employee caring behavior ($\beta=0.586$; $t=4.767$; $p=0.000$). Self-efficacy had no significant effect on employee caring behavior ($\beta=0.242$; $t=1.845$; $p=0.065$) and did not mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and employee caring behavior ($\beta=0.171$; $t=1.647$; $p=0.100$). This study concludes that employee caring behavior is more strongly shaped by the direct effect of authentic leadership than through self-efficacy. The implication emphasizes the importance of strengthening open communication, leadership role modeling, cross-functional coordination, and a knowledge-sharing culture.</i>
ABSTRAK	

Kata Kunci:

Efikasi Diri; Kepedulian Karyawan; Kepemimpinan Otentik; SEM-PLS; SmartPLS..

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh tingginya tuntutan kerja, peran ganda, risiko operasional, dan kebutuhan koordinasi pada karyawan PT. Adhi Guna Putera Cabang Padang di wilayah operasional Pelabuhan TUKS PLTU Teluk Sirih. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan otentik terhadap efikasi diri dan kepedulian karyawan, pengaruh efikasi diri terhadap kepedulian karyawan, serta peran mediasi efikasi diri. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode sensus terhadap 75 responden dari 79 populasi sasaran. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner skala Likert dan dianalisis menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling berbasis Partial Least Square dengan bantuan SmartPLS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan otentik berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap efikasi diri ($\beta=0,707$; $t=11,076$; $p=0,000$) dan terhadap kepedulian karyawan ($\beta=0,586$; $t=4,767$; $p=0,000$). Efikasi diri tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kepedulian karyawan ($\beta=0,242$; $t=1,845$; $p=0,065$) dan tidak terbukti memediasi hubungan kepemimpinan otentik dengan kepedulian karyawan ($\beta=0,171$; $t=1,647$; $p=0,100$). Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa kepedulian karyawan lebih kuat dibentuk melalui pengaruh langsung kepemimpinan otentik dibandingkan melalui efikasi diri. Implikasi penelitian menekankan pentingnya penguatan



1. INTRODUCTION

PT. Adhi Guna Putera is a national logistics support company that plays a crucial role in the primary energy supply chain in Indonesia, particularly through port services and coal loading and unloading to support power plant operations. Empirical phenomena occurring in the operational area of the TUKS Port (Terminal for Self-Use) of the Teluk Sirih PLTU indicate high work pressure due to the complexity of national distribution. Based on field observations, significant problems were found related to the dual roles of employees, where one staff member often has to handle various responsibilities simultaneously, ranging from processing *clearance* in/out documents, fleet tracking, to operational coordination at the dock. This condition triggers the risk of excessive workloads (*work overload*) which has an impact on reducing the level of employee awareness of the accuracy of documentation and standard operating procedures. For example, data desynchronization often occurs between the production and logistics departments due to the still manual communication system, which ultimately causes delays in unit delivery and potential failure to detect early obstacles in the field. This lack of awareness is not just a technical problem, but a symptom of a weakening psychological attachment of employees to their work responsibilities in the midst of a high-risk work environment (Putra, 2019).

The urgency of the problem in this research lies in the increasing operational complexity and workload of PT. Adhi Guna Putera employees that has not been accompanied by strengthening the psychological capacity of individuals in the field. As a company supporting primary energy logistics, operational effectiveness is highly dependent on the ability of employees to carry out various roles simultaneously, ranging from administrative management, fleet coordination, to cross-functional communication (Sijabat et al., 2021).

In this context, authentic leadership is crucial, as transparent and integrity-driven leaders can build trust and encourage open communication within teams. Without a role model as a leader, employees tend to experience decreased self-efficacy, which is the belief in their ability to complete tasks amidst complex work pressures. This low self-efficacy ultimately leads to a decreased employee engagement, both for their work and for their colleagues. If this condition is not addressed promptly, it has the potential to disrupt the company's operational effectiveness, particularly in maintaining the reliability of logistics processes, which are a crucial part of the national energy supply chain in the Sumatra region (Fahmi, 2024).

The relevance of this research to the development of human resource management science is closely related to efforts to test complex variable relationship models through a deductive approach (Ginting et al., 2021). Theoretically, authentic leadership is believed to influence effective employee behavior through psychological mechanisms, in this case self-efficacy. Understanding employee attitudes such as caring and motivation is crucial for managers to make informed decisions in the workplace. This research attempts to fill this gap in the literature by positioning self-efficacy an individual's belief in their ability to complete a task as a mediating variable linking leader behavior with pro-social or caring employee actions. The use of this mediation analysis is highly relevant to explaining how leadership factors indirectly influence behavior, but rather through strengthening employees' internal mentality.

By using the *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM) analysis technique suggested in modern management research, this study is expected to contribute to the development of leadership theory in the context of the maritime and logistics industry, while also providing empirical evidence regarding the importance of human psychological aspects in improving organizational performance in an uncertain environment.

Expert opinion emphasizes that to test the relationship of complex variables (such as mediation of self-efficacy), the SEM (*Structural Equation Modeling*) approach is highly recommended to provide analytical sharpness (Ferdinand, 2014). Employee attitudes such as commitment and concern are influenced by their perceptions of leadership styles in the workplace. Self -*efficacy* is identified as an important determinant factor in health behavior change and performance, because it influences an individual's confidence to complete tasks correctly amidst obstacles (Nugraha & Hasanah, 2021). By combining the issues of double workload, high physical risks in coal-fired power plants, and the need for transparent (authentic) leaders, this study aims to prove how self-efficacy can be a psychological bridge to increase employee concern for the sustainability of company operations (Herliana, 2017).

The novelty of this research lies in the combination of authentic leadership variables with employee concern mediated by self-efficacy in the specific context of the primary energy logistics support industry. Most previous research in the operational area of the Teluk Sirih PLTU has focused more on technical aspects and physical risk analysis, such as the identification of 13 hazard sources in the boiler section. This research attempts to fill this gap by shifting the focus to employee psychological mechanisms, where self-efficacy is positioned as a bridge that explains how the transparency and morality of an authentic leader can be transformed into real caring actions in the field. In addition, the use of *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM) analysis with *the Partial Least Square* (PLS) approach provides methodological novelty because it is able to test complex mediation models on a relatively limited population without requiring the assumption of a normal distribution.

The geographical and demographic context of this research is centered on PT. Adhi Guna Padang Branch which operates in the TUKS PLTU Teluk Sirih Port area, Bungus Teluk Kabung District, Padang City. Geographically, this location has a strategic role as a primary energy distribution center that supports the reliability of electricity supply

throughout West Sumatra. From a demographic perspective, the research population includes 79 employees who face the reality of working in a coastal environment with heavy operational challenges, ranging from extreme weather to the risk of significant work accidents in Padang City. The characteristics of respondents at this location are unique because they work in an organizational structure that demands cross-functional coordination between dock management, coal loading and unloading, and port clearance document management. Given its location in a special area (industrial zone), the social and professional interactions of these employees are greatly influenced by the company's safety culture and the efficiency of ship berthing times which are the main targets of organizational performance (INDONESIA, 2021).

A literature review of previous research provides a strong empirical foundation for the development of the model in this study. First, research by Ardiningrum et al. (2023) revealed that the boiler section at the Teluk Sirih PLTU has a very high level of dangerous risks, requiring strict supervision through SOPs and consistent *safety briefings*. Second, Ridho et al. (2023) in their study of Adhi Guna Putera's operations at the Nagan Raya PLTU found that miscommunication between ship agents and the loading and unloading team was a major obstacle that could be overcome through coordination. Leadership with integrity has a significant influence on improving employee motivation and performance in value-based organizations. Fourth, Dimyati & Subagi (2016) demonstrated the importance of mediating variables in explaining the relationship between service quality and employee affective behavior in the logistics services industry (Widyastuti & Kremer, 2021).

The contribution of this research covers practical and theoretical aspects that are expected to provide added value to PLN Group, especially PT. Adhi Guna Putera. Practically, the findings of this study can be a reference for management to evaluate human resource (HR) development strategies through strengthening authentic leadership styles to minimize administrative errors and operational delays due to lack of employee concern. This study also contributes to strengthening the implementation of *Good Corporate Governance* (GCG) principles through transparency and accountability of leaders at the Port operational level (Rahmi, 2022). Theoretically, this study enriches the Treasury of HR management knowledge by providing empirical evidence regarding the role of self-efficacy as a mediator in the relationship between leadership and prosocial behavior in the maritime industry. The use of the SEM-PLS method in this study also provides a methodological contribution in demonstrating the effectiveness of data analysis techniques on small samples (limited populations) to produce statistical conclusions that still have high generalizability for the organization. Through this approach, companies can build a more responsive, standardized distribution system, and based on strengthening the internal mentality of employees to support the smooth running of the national energy supply chain (Ismail & Razak, 2020).

A *research gap* is a gap in research identified due to differences in the results of several studies that share the same hypothesis. Although numerous studies have been conducted on the relationship between leadership style and employee psychological well-being, several research gaps remain, *underpinning* the importance of this research.

2. METHOD

Research is defined as a systematic, organized, data-driven, critical, and objective effort to investigate a specific problem with the aim of finding answers or solutions. In general, research methodology literature classifies research into several main categories based on its purpose, level of explanation, and the nature of the data. Based on its purpose, Sekaran distinguishes research into two types (Ikhwan et al., 2024):

- a. Applied Research is research conducted to solve problems faced by managers in the work environment so that timely solutions are needed.
- b. Basic/Fundamental Research (Basic Research) is research conducted primarily to contribute to the development of science and management theory.

Based on the level of explanation or type of research questions asked, research is divided into (Siregar & Pratiwi, 2021):

- a. Exploratory research, namely research that is carried out if not much information is known about the phenomenon or the results of previous research are still unclear.
- b. Descriptive research, namely research aimed at describing the characteristics of objects (such as people, organizations, or products), certain events or situations through data collection.
- c. Causal research, namely research conducted to test hypotheses regarding causal relationships between variables.

Based on the nature of the data and analysis techniques, research is divided into qualitative approaches (data in the form of words) and quantitative approaches (data in the form of numbers).

In this study, the population was determined to be all employees of PT. Adhiguna Putera, Padang Branch who work in the operational area of TUKS Port (Terminal for Self-Use) PLTU Teluk Sirih. Based on the company's internal data, the total population in this study was 79 employees. This location selection was based on PT. Adhi Guna Putera's strategic role in supporting the operational reliability of the power plant through port services in West Sumatra Province.

A sample is a subgroup consisting of several members of a population. This subset is taken from several members selected to represent the characteristics of that population. According to Uma Sekaran, a single member of a sample is called a subject (Purwanto & Evicasari, 2021). Given the relatively limited population size, namely 79 Organic Employees and TAD Employees (Expert Power), the researcher decided to use all members of the population as respondents. The sampling technique used was Census or Saturation Sampling (Acquah et al., 2025). A census is a count or study of all elements in a population. By conducting a census, researchers no longer use sample statistics to estimate parameters but instead directly calculate actual population parameters (Alharbi et al., 2026). The census method is highly appropriate because the population is located in a single, accessible work location, allowing for efficient time and cost management even when surveying all employees. Data obtained from the population will provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied at PT. Adhi Guna Putera, Padang Branch, without sampling error (Al Suwaidi et al., 2025).

This research uses systematically collected data to answer research questions and provide a basis for managerial decision-making. Sekaran explains that the data is classified based on its nature and method of acquisition.

In this study, the types of data used consist of two main forms:

- a. Quantitative data is data in the form of numbers, generally collected through structured instruments such as questionnaires. In the context of PT. Adhi Guna Putera, this data includes respondents' response scores to research variables, measured using a Likert scale.
- b. Qualitative data is verbal data generated from organizational descriptions, company profiles, or open-ended responses. This data is used to provide descriptive context regarding the operations of the TUKS PLTU Teluk Sirih Port.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent characteristics in this study were used to provide a general overview of the employee profiles used as the research data source. Respondent characteristics are important for explaining the context of the data before further analysis of the variables Authentic Leadership, Self-Efficacy, and Employee Care. The characteristics described include respondent participation level, gender, age, highest education level, department, length of service, and primary position. The target population in this study was 79 people. Of these, 75 people completed the questionnaire completely and were used in the analysis, while 4 people did not complete the questionnaire (Awad et al., 2025). Thus, the response rate of the study was $75/79 \times 100\% = 94.94\%$, while the non-response rate was 5.06%. This response rate indicates that the data used in the study covered a large portion of the target population. Descriptively, the response coverage is considered very good because almost the entire population participated in completing the questionnaire. However, the results of the study remain limited to the employee population that is the object of the study and are not intended to be generalized outside the research context without caution (Ataei et al., 2025).

The distribution of respondents' responses was used to observe the general trend of perceptions across all research questions. The total number of responses analyzed was 2,550, derived from 75 respondents, multiplied by 34 questions. Based on 4.5, the most frequently chosen score was 4 or Agree, with 1,317 responses or 51.6% of the total questionnaire items. 5 or Strongly Agree, with 450 responses or 17.6%. Meanwhile, Neutral scores totaled 633 responses or 24.8%, Disagree scores totaled 144 responses or 5.6%, and Strongly Disagree scores totaled 6 responses or 0.2%. This pattern indicates that respondents' perceptions generally tended to be positive towards the questionnaire items asked, although there was still room for improvement in certain questionnaire items that reflect the research indicators. Data Test Results (Born et al., 2025).

These are the evaluation of the measurement model (*outer model*) and the evaluation of the structural model (*inner model*). The *outer model evaluation* is used to ensure that the indicators used are able to measure the construct validly and reliably. Meanwhile, the *inner model evaluation* is used to assess the strength of the relationship between variables, the model's ability to explain endogenous variables, and the results

of hypothesis testing through path coefficient values, *t*-statistics, *p*-values, and *bootstrapping results* (Brewer & Devnew, 2022).

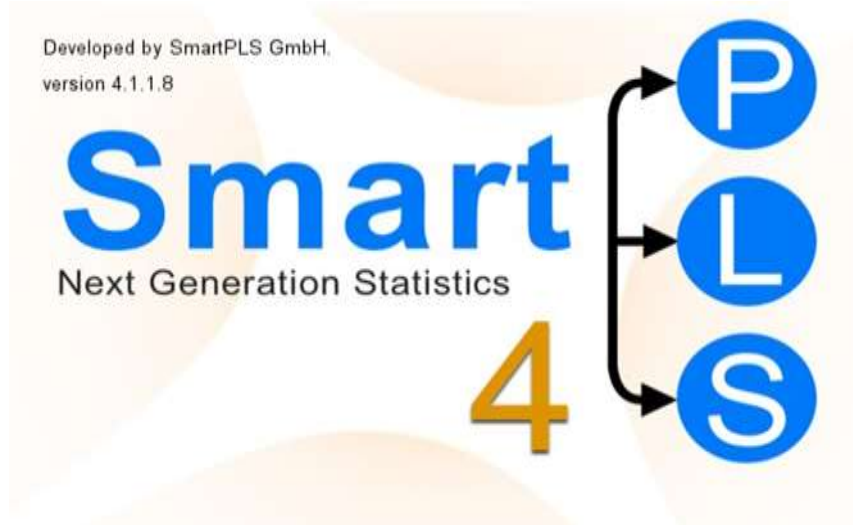


Figure 1. SmartPLS 4 software version 4.1.1.8

The tables in this subsection are designed to present the main results of SmartPLS output, including *outer loadings*, AVE, construct reliability, discriminant validity, R-square, direct effects, mediation effects, and a summary of hypothesis decisions. The values in these tables are based on the final SmartPLS output, so the interpretation in this section remains based on the model testing data and not solely on the previous descriptive analysis.

Based on Table 4.28, the R-Square value for Self-Efficacy (M) is 0.499. This value indicates that Authentic Leadership (X) is able to explain 49.9% of the variation in Self-Efficacy, while the remaining 50.1% is explained by other factors outside this research model. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for Employee Concern (Y) is 0.603. This means that Authentic Leadership (X) and Self-Efficacy (Bryan & Vitello-Cicciu, 2022). (M) together are able to explain 60.3% of the variation in Employee Concern, while the remaining 39.7% is explained by other factors outside the model. Thus, the model's explanatory power for both endogenous variables is in the moderate *category*.

Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

The direct effect hypothesis test was conducted to determine whether the relationship between variables in the research model was statistically proven. The relationships tested included the effect of Authentic Leadership on Self-Efficacy, the effect of Self-Efficacy on Employee Care, and the effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Care (Chen & Chen, 2014). The hypothesis decision was based on the path coefficient value, *t*-statistic, and *p*-value from the *bootstrapping results*. In this study, the hypothesis was declared accepted if the *t*-statistic value > 1.96 and *p*-value < 0.05 at a significance level of 5%.

Table 1. Results of Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship between variables	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P-Value	Decision
H1	Authentic Leadership (X) → Self-Efficacy (M)	0.707	11,076	0.000	Accepted
H2	Self-Efficacy (M) → Employee Care (Y)	0.242	1,845	0.065	Rejected

Based on the table, the effect of Authentic Leadership (X) on Self-Efficacy (M) has an *original sample value* of 0.707, a *t-statistic* of 11.076, and a *p-value* of 0.000. Since the *t-statistic value* is > 1.96 and the *p-value* is < 0.05, H1 is accepted. This means that the stronger the authentic leadership practices perceived by employees, the higher their self-efficacy. Furthermore, the influence of Self-Efficacy (M) on Employee Concern (Y) has an *original sample value* of 0.242, a *t-statistic* of 1.845, and a *p-value* of 0.065. Because the *t-statistic value* is <1.96 and the *p-value* is >0.05, H2 is rejected. This means that self-efficacy has not been proven to have a significant direct influence on employee concern at the 5% significance level (Fallatah et al., 2017).

Meanwhile, the influence of Authentic Leadership (X) on Employee Concern (Y) has an *original sample value* of 0.586, a *t-statistic* of 4.767, and a *p-value* of 0.000. Because the *t-statistic value* is > 1.96 and the *p-value* < 0.05, H3 is declared accepted. This means that authentic leadership has been proven to have a direct and significant effect on employee concern. Thus, the direct relationships that are proven to be significant are X to M and X to Y, while the relationship between M to Y is not yet significant (Cho & Kim, 2026).

Mediation Testing

Mediation testing was conducted to determine whether Self-Efficacy acts as an intermediary variable in the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Caring. The mediation relationship tested was Authentic Leadership → Self-Efficacy → Employee Caring. Testing was conducted by looking at the *specific indirect effect value*, *t-statistic*, and *p-value*. If the indirect effect is significant, then Self-Efficacy can be stated to have a mediating role in the research model (Indrayanti et al., 2025).

Table 2. Mediation Test Results

Hypot hesis	Mediation Relationship	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P-Value	Decision
H4	Authentic Leadership (X) → Self-Efficacy (M) → Employee Care (Y)	0.171	1,647	0.100	Not supported

Based on the Table, mediation testing was conducted to see whether Self-Efficacy (M) was a mediator in the relationship between Authentic Leadership

(X) and Employee Care (Y). The test results show an *original sample value* of 0.171, a *t-statistic* of 1.647, and a *p-value* of 0.100. Since the *t-statistic* is <1.96 and the *p-value* is >0.05, the indirect effect is declared insignificant. Thus, H4 is not supported, so Self-

Efficacy has not been proven to mediate the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Care at the 5% significance level.

Simply put, these results mean that although Authentic Leadership has been shown to influence Self-Efficacy and also has a direct influence on Employee Awareness, the indirect pathway through Self-Efficacy is not statistically strong enough. In other words, the increase in Employee Awareness in this study is explained more by the direct influence of Authentic Leadership than through the intermediary of Self-Efficacy. Therefore, Self-Efficacy remains important as a variable influenced by Authentic Leadership, but has not been proven to be a significant mediator of Employee Awareness (Laschinger et al., 2015).

Table 3. Summary of Hypothesis Decisions

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Statement	Results	Decision
H1	Authentic Leadership influences Self-Efficacy.	Significant	Accepted
H2	Self-efficacy influences employee concern.	Not significant	Rejected
H3	Authentic Leadership Influences Employee Care.	Significant	Accepted
H4	Self-Efficacy mediates the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Caring.	Not significant	Rejected

Based on the table, the results of the hypothesis testing show that H1 and H3 are accepted, while H2 is rejected and H4 is not supported. H1 is accepted because Authentic Leadership is proven to have a significant effect on Self-Efficacy. H3 is also accepted because Authentic Leadership is proven to have a significant effect on Employee Care. Meanwhile, H2 is rejected because Self-Efficacy has not been proven to have a significant direct effect on Employee Care. H4 is not supported because Self-Efficacy has not been proven to mediate the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Care. Thus, the results of the SmartPLS test show that Authentic Leadership has an important role in increasing Self-Efficacy and Employee Care, while Self-Efficacy is not strong enough as a direct influence or mediator on Employee Care in this research model.

Discussion

The discussion in this subchapter is structured according to the results of the hypothesis testing, as the discussion pattern emphasizes the influence between variables. Therefore, the discussion focuses on the influence of Authentic Leadership. (X) on Self-Efficacy (M), the influence of Self-Efficacy (M) on Employee Care (Y), the influence

of Authentic Leadership (X) on Employee Care (Y), and the mediating role of Self-Efficacy in the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Care. In addition to SmartPLS results, the discussion also integrates descriptive results, *gap analysis*, and open-ended answers so that the meaning of the findings can be understood more fully in the organizational context (Li & Peng, 2026).

The Influence of Authentic Leadership (X) on Self-Efficacy (M)

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing in Table 4.31, Authentic Leadership (X) is proven to have a positive and significant effect on Self-Efficacy (M). This is indicated by the *original sample value* of 0.707, a *t-statistic* of 11.076, and a *p-value* of 0.000. A *t-statistic value* > 1.96 and a *p-value* < 0.05 indicate that the relationship meets the significance criteria at the 5% level. Thus, H1 is declared accepted, so that the stronger the Authentic Leadership perceived by employees, the higher their Self-Efficacy.

Substantively, these results demonstrate that authentic leadership behavior can strengthen employees' confidence in their abilities. Leaders who are open, honest, consistent, and able to provide clear direction make employees feel more aware of job demands and more confident in facing difficult tasks. In this context, Authentic Leadership is understood not only as a morally sound leadership style but also as a work environment factor that can foster employee self-confidence in carrying out their work.

These results are also supported by the descriptive findings of the study. Authentic Leadership is in the high category, which shows that respondents generally assess that leaders have demonstrated: (1) self-awareness, (2) transparency,

relationships, (3) balanced information processing, and (4) internal moral perspective. At the same time, Self-Efficacy is also one of the main strengths of respondents, especially seen from the M.1.1 indicator with a mean of 4.32 which shows employee confidence in solving difficult problems if they try hard enough. The agreement between the descriptive results and the SmartPLS results strengthens the meaning that positive perceptions of leadership are related to strong employee self-confidence.

This relationship is increasingly visible from the respondents' open answers. Many respondents mentioned: (1) support from superiors, (2) clear direction,

(3) open communication, (4) discussion, (5) *mentoring*, and (6) responsiveness of leaders are things that help them in their work. This shows that Self-Efficacy is not only formed from personal abilities, but also from work experience supported by superiors. However, the *gap analysis* still shows that several aspects of Authentic Leadership need to be strengthened, namely: (1) openness of leaders in admitting mistakes, (2) consistency of decisions based on internal moral standards, and (3) the ability to listen to various points of view before making decisions.

In an organizational context, the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Self-Efficacy is crucial because employees work in environments that demand precision, coordination, and preparedness to face pressure. Employees need self-confidence to complete tasks, make decisions, and remain calm when faced with obstacles. In situations like these, the presence of a leader who provides direction, encourages discussion, and sets an example can be a source of psychological support for employees. Thus, authentic

leadership serves as a factor that helps employees build a sense of competence in facing job demands.

Theoretically, these findings support *the Social Cognitive Theory*, which explains that individual self-confidence can be formed through the interaction between: (1) personal factors, (2) the environment, and (3) behavior. In this study, Authentic Leadership acts as a social environmental factor that influences personal factors in the form of Self-Efficacy. Leaders who act as role models, provide support, and demonstrate consistent behavior can become role models for employees. Through the process of: (1) observation, (2) work experience, and (3) social persuasion from superiors, employees can build confidence that they are able to complete tasks and face work challenges.

The results of this study are in line with previous research which stated that Authentic Leadership plays a role in strengthening Self-Efficacy. These findings are in line with: (1) Laschinger et al. (2015), which showed that Authentic Leadership creates positive working conditions and strengthens nurses' self-confidence in facing job demands; (2) Fallatah et al. (2017), which found that Authentic Leadership is related to employees' psychological resources, including Self-Efficacy; (3) Bryan and Vitello-Cicciu (2022), which showed that perceptions of Authentic Leadership are related to increased Self-Efficacy; and (4) Alharbi et al. (2026), which emphasized that leadership and Self-Efficacy are related to increased decision-making capacity. Thus, the results of this study strengthen empirical evidence that leaders who are honest, open, morally consistent, and able to be role models can increase employees' confidence in their abilities (Madan, 2026).

The implication of this finding is that companies need to maintain and strengthen Authentic Leadership practices at the direct superior level. Strengthening can be done through: (1) two-way communication, (2) providing clear direction, (3) constructive feedback, (4) *mentoring*, and (5) consistency between leadership words and actions. In addition, leaders need to create a work environment that allows employees to feel safe to: (1) ask questions, (2) express obstacles, and (3) learn from work experiences. These efforts are important because employee self-efficacy is not only influenced by individual abilities, but also by the quality of leadership support they experience in their daily work (Özdemir et al., 2026).

The Influence of Self-Efficacy (M) on Employee Concern (Y)

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing in Table 4.31, Self-Efficacy (M) has not been proven to have a direct, significant effect on Employee Awareness (Y). This is indicated by the *original sample value* of 0.242, a *t-statistic* of 1.845, and a *p-value* of 0.065. A *t-statistic value* <1.96 and a *p-value* >0.05 indicate that the relationship has not met the significance criteria at the 5% level (Razi et al., 2026). Thus, H2 is rejected, so Self-Efficacy cannot be stated as a factor that directly increases Employee Awareness in this research model (Sánchez-García et al., 2025).

Substantively, these results indicate that employee self-confidence in completing work does not automatically translate into caring social behavior toward coworkers. Employees can have high self-confidence in facing tasks, solving problems, and acting

safely, but this does not necessarily lead to habits of helping, sharing knowledge, or building collaboration (Rahmani et al., 2023). In other words, while Self-Efficacy is an important individual strength, Employee Caring requires more relational support and a shared work culture (Sandhåland et al., 2017).

Descriptively, Self-Efficacy (M) is in the high to very high category. This is evident from the respondents' strong confidence in: (1) solving difficult problems, (2) dealing with unexpected events, (3) remaining calm when facing work pressure, and (4) carrying out tasks safely. However, Employee Caring (Y) still shows several areas that need to be strengthened, particularly in the dimensions of Interpersonal Trust and Collaborative Culture. This difference indicates that a strong individual psychological state does not automatically equate to strong caring behavior in work relationships (Remondi et al., 2022).

The gap analysis results also support this explanation. Indicator Y.1.3 on employee engagement in sharing knowledge and expertise has the largest *gap*, making it a priority for attention. Respondents' open-ended responses also indicated that areas of greatest need relate to: (1) open communication, (2) discussion, (3) involvement, (4) coordination, (5) appreciation, (6) training, and (7) *knowledge sharing*. These verbatim themes are more

In an organizational context, the H2 finding is understandable because work that demands coordination and collaboration cannot rely solely on individual employee self-confidence. Confident employees can complete tasks independently, but caring for coworkers requires interaction, trust, and a habit of mutual assistance. If a strong communication system, cross-functional coordination, or a culture of sharing has not been established, high Self-Efficacy will not necessarily translate directly into high Employee Care.

Theoretically, these findings can still be explained through *Social Cognitive Theory*. This theory positions behavior as the result of the interaction between: (1) personal factors, (2) the environment, and (3) behavior. In this case, Self-Efficacy is an important personal factor, but caring behavior also requires social environmental support. This means that employee self-confidence can be the initial capital, but new caring behavior will more easily emerge if the work environment provides support, collaborative norms, and examples of mutually helpful behavior.

The results of this study differ from several previous studies that found that self-efficacy significantly influences positive employee behavior. Chen and Chen (2014) and Razi et al. (2026) showed that self-efficacy can be an important predictor of safe behavior or safe performance. However, the results of this study are more in line with Cho and Kim (2026), who showed that self-efficacy does not always have a significant effect on compliance behavior when organizational environmental factors are taken into account. Thus, the findings of H2 reinforce the view that the role of self-efficacy is contextual and can depend on the support of organizational culture, communication, and a work climate that encourages social behavior (Schmuck et al., 2024).

The Influence of Authentic Leadership (X) on Employee Care (Y)

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing in Table 4.31, Authentic Leadership (X) is proven to have a positive and significant effect on Employee Awareness (Y). This is indicated by the *original sample value* of 0.586, a *t-statistic* of 4.767, and a *p-value* of 0.000. A *t-statistic value* > 1.96 and a *p-value* < 0.05 indicate that the relationship meets the significance criteria at the 5% level. Thus, H3 is declared accepted, so that the stronger the Authentic Leadership perceived by employees, the higher the Employee Awareness (Steffens et al., 2021).

Substantively, these results demonstrate that authentic leadership can be a direct driver of caring in workplace relationships. Leaders who are open, honest, consistent, and engaging with employees can create a work environment that encourages employees to help each other, share information, and support their colleagues. In other words, employee caring is influenced not only by individual character but also by the quality of leadership that shapes the daily work climate.

The results of this study are in line with several previous studies which show that Authentic Leadership can encourage positive behavior, interpersonal support, and caring in organizations. These findings are in line with: (1) Ataei et al. (2025), who found that Authentic Leadership has a positive effect on collaborative culture and interpersonal trust; (2) Al Suwaidi et al. (2025), who showed that Authentic Leadership has an effect on safety compliance and participation; and (3) Indrayanti et al. (2025), who explained that Authentic Leadership can encourage behavioral change through empowerment and relational trust.

The implication of these findings is that companies need to make Authentic Leadership the foundation for strengthening a caring culture. These efforts can be made through: (1) increasing two-way communication, (2) involving employees in problem-solving, (3) fostering cross-functional discussions, (4) appreciating helpful behavior, (5) strengthening a culture of *knowledge sharing*, and (6) consistent leadership in modeling caring behavior. In this way, employee caring can develop into a real and recurring work practice within the organization.

The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy (M) in the Relationship between Authentic Leadership (X) and Employee Caring (Y)

Based on the results of the mediation test in Table 4.32, Self-Efficacy (M) has not been proven to mediate the relationship between Authentic Leadership (X) and Employee Caring (Y). This is indicated by the *original sample value* of 0.171, *t-statistic* of 1.647, and *p-value* of 0.100. The *t-statistic value* < 1.96 and *p-value* > 0.05 indicate that the indirect effect has not met the significance criteria at the 5% level. Thus, H4 is not supported, so Self-Efficacy cannot be stated as a significant mediator in the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Caring.

In an organizational context, the insignificant mediation results are understandable because employee caring requires a broader social interaction system. Employees with high Self-Efficacy may feel capable of completing their own tasks, but caring for others requires a supportive work environment, norms of mutual assistance, and habits of

information sharing. Therefore, Authentic Leadership appears to more directly shape Employee Caring through communication, role modeling, engagement, and work support, rather than through first increasing Self-Efficacy.

Theoretically, this finding can be explained through *Social Cognitive Theory*, which positions behavior as the result of interactions between: (1) personal factors, (2) the environment, and (3) behavior. Self-Efficacy is an important personal factor, but caring behavior is also greatly influenced by the social environment. In this model, Authentic Leadership as a social environmental factor has been shown to directly influence Employee Self-Efficacy and Caring. However, the personal pathway through Self-Efficacy is not yet strong enough to be the main link to Employee Caring (Wong et al., 2022).

The implication of these findings is that companies cannot simply strengthen employee Self-Efficacy as an effort to increase Employee Awareness. Strengthening Self-Efficacy remains important through: (1) training, (2) *mentoring*, (3) work direction, and (4) feedback. However, increasing Employee Awareness also needs to be directed directly through: (1) strengthening open communication, (2) a culture of mutual assistance, (3) knowledge-sharing forums, (4) cross-functional coordination, and (5) appreciation for collaborative behavior. Thus, the role of leadership remains key because Authentic Leadership has been shown to be more powerful in explaining Employee Awareness through direct channels than through the mediation of Self-Efficacy.

Synthesis of Research Results Discussion

The synthesis of the discussion shows that the results of this study form a fairly clear pattern. Of the four hypotheses tested, two were accepted, one was rejected, and one was not supported. H1 was accepted because Authentic Leadership had a significant effect on Self-Efficacy. H3 was also accepted because Authentic Leadership had a significant effect on Employee Awareness. Meanwhile, H2 was rejected because Self-Efficacy did not have a significant direct effect on Employee Awareness, and H4

This pattern indicates that Authentic Leadership is the most powerful variable in the research model. Authentic Leadership not only increases Self-Efficacy but also directly influences Employee Caring. This means that open, honest, consistent, responsive, and engaging leadership behaviors are crucial factors in building self-confidence and fostering caring behaviors in work relationships. Therefore, the leadership quality of direct superiors is a key driver in shaping employees' psychological and social well-being.

Self-efficacy remains a significant strength in this study, but its position is stronger as a variable influenced by Authentic Leadership than as a direct determinant of Employee Caring. Descriptively, Self-efficacy is in the high to very high category, but structurally, it has not been proven to have a significant effect on Employee Caring. This suggests that employee self-confidence is an individual asset that needs to be maintained, but caring behavior requires broader support in the form of communication, trust, involvement, collaboration, and a culture of mutual assistance.

gap analysis and open-ended responses provide additional explanations for the SmartPLS results. Indicator Y.1.3, regarding knowledge and expertise sharing, is

prioritized due to its largest *gap*. Meanwhile, respondents' open-ended responses indicate the need for: (1) open communication, (2) discussion, (3) coordination, (4) involvement, (5) appreciation, (6) training, and (7) *knowledge sharing*. This suggests that Employee Awareness is more strongly shaped through relational and collaborative work practices than through individual beliefs alone (Wu et al., 2026).

Managerial Implications

Managerial implications are formulated based on the results of hypothesis testing, descriptive analysis, *gap analysis*, and open-ended responses from respondents. The results indicate that Authentic Leadership plays a significant role because it significantly influences Employee Self-Efficacy and Caring. Meanwhile, Self-Efficacy has not been proven to directly influence Employee Caring and has not been proven to be a mediator. Therefore, managerial implications need to be directed at strengthening leadership, maintaining self-efficacy, and developing a more collaborative and caring work culture.

Respondents' open-ended responses provide practical insights that management needs to consider. The most frequently occurring themes relate to: (1) open communication, (2) direction or solutions, (3) discussion or involvement, (4) support, (5) training or development, (6) appreciation, and (7) coordination. These themes indicate that employees need leadership that not only provides instructions but also is present in the work process, opens up space for dialogue, helps resolve obstacles, and provides recognition for employee contributions.

Managerial action priorities can be prioritized in stages. In the short term, companies can strengthen communication and coordination through *briefings*, work discussions, and regular feedback. In the medium term, companies can develop training, *mentoring*, and *coaching programs* to maintain employee self-efficacy. In the long term, companies need to build a collaborative culture through knowledge-sharing forums, appreciation for caring behavior, and work mechanisms that consistently encourage cross-functional engagement.

Table 4. Summary of Managerial Implications

Focus Implications	Basis of Findings	Direction of Managerial Action	Priority
Authentic Leadership (X)	$X \rightarrow M$ and $X \rightarrow Y$ are significant	a. Strengthening two-way communication	Short-medium term
		b. Increasing information transparency	
		c. Maintaining leadership consistency	
		d. Involving employees in discussions	
		e. Showing exemplary behavior	

Self-Efficacy (M)	M is high, but M → Y is not significant	f. Provide relevant training	Medium term
		g. Providing mentoring	
		h. Doing coaching	
		i. Provide clear work directions	
		j. Providing constructive feedback	
		k. Providing support when facing obstacles	
Employee Care (Y)	Y.1.3 have a gap the biggest	a. Building a <i>knowledge sharing forum</i>	Short-long term
		b. Holding cross-functional discussions	
		c. Conduct routine coordination	
		d. Giving appreciation for mutually helpful behavior	
		e. Strengthening interpersonal trust	
Collaborative Culture	H2 and H4 are not significant, indicating that concern is not sufficiently built from self-efficacy alone.	a. Building a collaborative work system	Long-term
		b. Instilling norms of mutual assistance	
		c. Get used to sharing knowledge	
		d. Encourage cross-functional engagement	

Limitations of Discussion

The discussion in this study has several limitations that need to be considered to ensure a fair interpretation of the results. First, this research was conducted within a specific organizational context, namely PT. Adhi Guna Putera, Padang Branch, and the employees who served as respondents in the study. Therefore, the results reflect the conditions, perceptions, and characteristics of the respondents in that work environment. The findings of this study are not intended to be directly generalized to all other companies or industries without considering differences in organizational context, work culture, job characteristics, and prevailing leadership systems (Xu et al., 2025).

Second, although the number of respondents used in the analysis covered a significant portion of the target population, some respondent characteristic categories were relatively small. This is particularly important when interpreting the descriptive analysis of respondent groups by department, length of service, or primary position. Therefore, differences in mean scores between groups should be understood as

reflecting initial trends, not as a basis for concluding definitive differences between groups.

Third, descriptive analysis, *gap analysis*, and open-ended responses were used as supporting information in the discussion. These analyses help explain respondents' perception patterns and areas of concern, but they were not used to infer causal relationships. Therefore, results such as mean scores, *gap priorities*, and open-ended response themes should be read as corroborating interpretations, not as stand-alone inferential evidence.

Fifth, the SmartPLS test results indicate that Self-Efficacy has no significant effect on Employee Care and has not been proven to be a mediator. This finding does not imply that Self-Efficacy is unimportant, but rather indicates that in this research model, its role is not strong enough to explain Employee Care directly or indirectly. Therefore, interpretation of Self-Efficacy requires caution, especially when linked to social behavior and work culture, which are more influenced by relational factors.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research results outlined in the previous chapter, conclusions are drawn to address the research objectives and summarize the results of hypothesis testing regarding the relationship between Authentic Leadership, Self-Efficacy, and Employee Caring. The following conclusions also consider respondent characteristics, operational work conditions, and practical findings from descriptive analysis, *gap analysis*, open-ended responses, and statistical data testing.

gap analysis, open-ended responses, and SmartPLS testing, Authentic Leadership is the variable that has the most prominent role in the research model at PT. Adhi Guna Putera Padang Branch. This conclusion is based on 75 respondents from 79 target populations or a response rate of 94.94%, with respondent characteristics dominated by the Operational Department as many as 48 people or 64.0%, 1–5 years of service period as many as 47 people or 62.7%, and the last education of SMK/SMA/MA as many as 47 people or 62.7%. This composition shows that the research results mainly reflect the perceptions of operational employees with initial to intermediate work experience and educational backgrounds close to field work practices. The impact is that the main needs of employees are not only on the theoretical concept of leadership, but on leadership that is actually present through clear direction, open communication, mentoring, work examples, and knowledge transfer. Thus, the practical conclusion that can be drawn is that strengthening Authentic Leadership in companies needs to be directed at leadership patterns that are close to daily operational activities, easy for employees to understand, and able to build a work culture that helps each other and shares knowledge.

H1 is accepted, namely Authentic Leadership has a significant effect on Self-Efficacy. This shows that the stronger the leadership behavior that is open, consistent, responsive, and involves employees, the higher the employee's self-confidence in completing work and facing work pressure. This finding is relevant to the characteristics of respondents who mostly come from field and operational positions, especially Foreman as many as 17 people or 22.7%, Technicians as many as 10 people or 13.3%,

and Operators as many as 9 people or 12.0%, because these job groups require clear direction, support, and leadership in carrying out daily work. Practical examples, leaders can improve employee Self-Efficacy through: (1) *briefings* before work begins, (2) explanations of work risks and priorities, (3) mentoring for new or inexperienced employees, (4) providing examples of safe work methods, (5) assistance in making decisions when operational obstacles occur, (6) re-checking employees' understanding of work instructions, (7) providing feedback after work is completed, and (8) strengthening motivation when employees face work pressure. In this way, employees not only understand what needs to be done, but also feel more confident that they can complete the work correctly, safely, and according to company standards.

H2 was rejected, namely that Self-Efficacy has not been proven to have a significant direct effect on Employee Awareness. This finding indicates that although employees feel capable of completing work, facing pressure, and working according to standards, this self-confidence has not automatically transformed into caring behavior towards coworkers. This condition is relevant to the characteristics of respondents who are dominated by 1-5 years of work experience as many as 47 people or 62.7% and 6-10 years as many as 26 people or 34.7%, and the majority are in the Operational Department. In a work environment like this, employees do need Self-Efficacy to complete their own tasks, but Employee Awareness is formed more through the habit of working together, cross-position communication, and the transfer of experience from more experienced employees to newer employees. A practical example, concern can be strengthened through: (1) the habit of reminding each other of work risks before (Yasin et al., 2026).

H3 is accepted, namely Authentic Leadership has a significant effect on Employee Care. This result shows that open, honest, consistent leadership, and providing space for involvement can create a work climate that encourages employees to help each other, share information, and care for their colleagues. This finding is relevant to the work environment of PT. Adhi Guna Putera Padang Branch which is dominated by operational activities, especially because many respondents come from the Operational Department, Foreman, Technician, and Operator positions, and early to mid-term work periods. In a work environment like this, employee care is not enough just in the form of good intentions, but needs to emerge in real actions in the field. In practical terms, authentic leadership can strengthen Employee Awareness through: (1) leaders setting an example by getting involved directly when the team faces obstacles, (2) leaders opening discussions before risky work is carried out, (3) leaders encouraging Foreman, Technicians, and Operators to remind each other of safety standards, (4) leaders ensuring that work information is understood by all team members, (5) leaders inviting senior employees to mentor newer employees, (6) leaders giving appreciation to employees who help coworkers, (7) leaders following up on work problems openly, and (8) leaders building a habit of sharing experiences after the work is completed. Thus, the practical conclusion is that Employee Awareness in a company is more easily formed when superiors not only give instructions, but are also present, set an example, open a space for communication, and build a habit of helping each other in daily work.

H4 was not supported, as Self-Efficacy has not been proven to mediate the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Caring. This means that although authentic leadership can increase employee self-confidence, this self-confidence is not enough to automatically encourage caring for coworkers. In the context of PT. Adhi Guna Putera Padang Branch, this finding is important because the majority of respondents come from operational environments, have early to mid-career experience, and many have a vocational high school/high school/Islamic high school education background. This group of respondents tends to require a direct, simple, easy-to-follow, and repetitive work mechanism so that caring becomes a work habit, not just a personal awareness. Practical examples that companies can do are: (1) creating a *buddy system* or work pair between experienced employees and new employees, (2) making daily notes of obstacles and solutions that can be read across shifts or across positions, (3) running a short *toolbox sharing* before or after work, (4) creating an improvement idea board that can be filled by Foreman, Technician, Operator, and support unit, (5) creating a forum for sharing experiences after obstacles, minor incidents, or near misses, (6) setting an agenda for sharing one work lesson every week, (7) compiling a list of good practices from field employees that can be used as shared examples, and (8) giving special recognition to employees who actively share knowledge with colleagues. Thus, the practical conclusion of H4 is that companies need to build a direct path from authentic leadership to a culture of caring through a work system that makes knowledge, experience, and caring move between employees, not only through increasing individual self-confidence. Based on the results of research on the relationship between Authentic Leadership, Self-Efficacy, and Employee Caring at PT. Adhi Guna Putera, Padang Branch, concluded that authentic leadership plays a crucial role in shaping employee self-confidence and fostering caring among employees. The research findings indicate that open, consistent, honest leadership, and a close relationship with daily work activities are key factors relevant to the characteristics of the company's operational work. (Zhou et al., 2026).

1. Authentic leadership is a prominent factor in the research model. This suggests that employees need leadership that not only provides instructions but also provides clear direction, open communication, role modeling, and support in their daily work.
2. H1 was accepted, namely that Authentic Leadership has a significant effect on Self-Efficacy. This means that the stronger the open, consistent, and supportive leadership behavior, the higher the employee's self-confidence in completing work, dealing with pressure, and making appropriate work decisions.
3. H2 was rejected, stating that self-efficacy has not been proven to have a significant direct effect on employee caring. This finding suggests that individual self-confidence does not automatically drive caring behavior toward coworkers. Employee caring requires more collaborative working habits, communication, and a culture of mutual assistance in the workplace.
4. H3 was accepted, namely that Authentic Leadership has a significant influence on Employee Caring. This means that honest, open, consistent, and involving leadership

can create a work climate that encourages mutual assistance, information sharing, and caring among coworkers.

5. H4 was not supported, namely that Self-Efficacy has not been proven to mediate the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Employee Caring. Thus, the influence of Authentic Leadership on Employee Caring is better understood as a direct influence, not through increased Self-Efficacy. Companies need to build caring through leadership patterns and work systems that encourage communication, collaborative learning, and the habit of helping each other.

Overall, this study concludes that Authentic Leadership is a key factor in improving Employee Self-Efficacy and Caring. However, Self-Efficacy is not yet strong enough to be a bridge between leadership and caring, so the formation of employee caring needs to be guided through a collaborative work culture and concrete leadership practices in daily operational activities.

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