

LEADERSHIP AND HEALTH: AN EXAMINATION OF AUTHENTIC  
LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS AND PHYSICAL HEALTH BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between authentic leadership characteristics and physical health behaviors, as defined by the Goolsby Leadership Model (Quick, Macik-Frey, & Cooper, 2007). Physical health was measured by physical activity, cigarette smoking, and fruit and vegetable consumption, which are three of four controllable health risk factors that are related to many of the negative consequences of chronic disease (National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2009). Authentic leadership was measured using the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) by Walumbwa et al. (2008), which measured four components of authentic leadership and produced an overall authentic leadership score.

The overall leadership score did not have any significant relationships with the physical health behaviors but three authentic leadership components did have significant relationships with physical health. Specifically, self-awareness had significant relationships with physical activity and fruit consumption. Balanced processing had a significant relationship with physical activity and vegetable consumption and internalized moral perspective had a significant relationship with fruit consumption. Cigarette smoking did not have any significant relationships with the four components or the total authentic leadership score. While leadership behaviors and physical health do not have a strong relationship, they are both important in the workplace.