REVIEW ARTICLE

Authenticity and atypicality in leadership: Can an atypical leader afford to be authentic?

Ozlem Ayaz[1] | Mustafa F. Ozbilgin[1] | Marios Samdanis[1] |
Dilek Torunoğlu Tinay[2]

[1]Brunel Business School, Brunel
University London, Uxbridge, UK

[2]Independent Researcher

Correspondence
Ozlem Ayaz, Brunel Business School,
Brunel University London, Kingston
Lane, Uxbridge UB8 3PH, UK.
Email: ozlem.ayaz@brunel.ac.uk

[Correction added on 17 November 2023,
after first online publication: Fourth
author name has been updated in this
version.]

Abstract

Leaders from typically privileged backgrounds, such as White, male, elite-educated and upper-class individuals, often find it easier to craft an authentic identity in professional settings than their atypical counterparts. These atypical leaders, which include women, LGBT+, ethnic minorities or those from less affluent socio-economic backgrounds, can indeed construct an authentic workplace identity. However, this often demands significant emotional investment and the navigation of challenges, such as reconciling conflicting identities, especially in institutions tailored predominantly for the typical leaders. While authenticity and diversity are highly desired qualities in leadership, we argue that authenticity remains a privilege primarily enjoyed by leaders from typical backgrounds. By drawing on Hochschild's notion of emotional labour and Castoriadis's concepts of autonomy and heteronomy, we shed light on the dynamic interplay between authenticity and atypicality. Further, we present a conceptual framework that outlines how atypical leaders can manifest authenticity in their roles, and the ensuing implications for driving organisational change rooted in diversity.

INTRODUCTION

Authenticity refers to the congruence between an individual's internal sense of self and their outwardly displayed behaviours (Harter, 2002). Often seen as a positive trait, authenticity is a relational quality attributed to individuals or groups by others (Whittle, 2021). In a workplace setting, authenticity manifests in daily interactions, where an individual's actions align with their identity. It is especially evident during moments of change or crisis, where decisions made reflect the individual's core values (Eagly, 2005).

Authenticity is highly prized in leadership roles. It is closely linked with qualities such as integrity and values that prioritize the common good (Lombard et al., 2012), an enhanced sense of autonomy (Ryan et al., 2005) and wisdom (Küpers & Statler, 2008). A leader's authenticity also holds immense significance for various stakeholders: employees, current and potential customers, and the broader society in which the organisation operates (Firing et al., 2022). Discrepancies between a leader's actions, behaviours and professed values can lead followers to experience a psychological tension called 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957). Such incongruence can also foster uncertainty about the acceptable norms within an organisation (Simons et al., 2007). At a more fundamental level, a leader's authenticity is not inherent, but it is

socially constructed. It arises in relation to others and is shaped by the prevailing norms, beliefs and values of an institutional setting (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

This study explores the authenticity of individuals who are socio-demographically atypical and under-represented in leadership positions. Their experiences are anticipated to diverge from those of typical leaders, who are the dominant group within the same institutional environment. For context, in the Western setting, typical leaders are predominantly white, male, from upper-middle-class backgrounds, able-bodied, able-minded and often have elite educational credentials (Fleming & Sturdy, 2011; Gosling, 2021). Conversely, atypical leaders in this setting identify with socio-demographic groups that have historically faced disadvantages, such as women, LGBT+, ethnic minorities, or disabled individuals, and are notably scarce in leadership roles (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). While we recognise that socio-demographic characteristics can shape behaviour through socialisation (Ely & Thomas, 2001), identity formation (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Ragins et al., 2007), role expectations (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Ng & Feldman, 2008) and societal norms (Gelfand et al., 2007), our main interest lies in socio-demographic atypicality, not the behavioural implications.

With increasing diversity in organisations, the meaning of authenticity at work has become ambiguous, raising questions about whether leaders from varied backgrounds can truly express their authentic selves (Alter, 2018; Cottrill et al., 2014; Iszatt-White et al., 2021; Ladkin, 2021; Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). We argue that typical leaders have an advantage in expressing authenticity at work. In contrast, atypical leaders might hesitate to showcase their authentic selves (O'Brien & Linehan, 2019). This is rooted in the fact that the authenticity of typical leaders, when aligned with the prevailing culture or values embraced by the majority, is more likely to be rewarded (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020).

For atypical leaders, authenticity at work may be not only risky but also emotionally taxing. For this reason, we first explore emotional labour as the source of authenticity for atypical leaders. We ask whether an atypical leader can be authentic and how emotional labour helps researchers to understand the psychological processes that are necessary if emotions are to be managed in line with traditional workplace behaviours (Hochschild, 1983). 'Emotional labour' refers to the internal struggles and efforts made by an individual to maintain a sense of self and/or satisfy the expectations of others in the workplace (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Grandey, 2000; O'Brien & Linehan, 2019; Taylor, 1998). The concept of emotional labour sheds light on why it might be more challenging for atypical leaders to be authentic compared to typical leaders. However, it does not provide a comprehensive explanation of the intricate ways in which atypical leaders construct their authenticity and manage emotional labour at work.

Therefore, we complement our analysis of atypicality and emotional labour with Castoriadis's (1987) concepts of autonomy and heteronomy. Autonomy is a condition in which individuals are critically aware that actions, norms, regulations and traditions are products of a social context, and they choose to deliberately distance themselves from them (Castoriadis, 1987). In contrast, heteronomy signifies an individual's compliance with the authority, norms or control of an agent or institution, be it ancestors, a deity or the state. For an atypical leader, whose socio-demographic background, experiences, beliefs or social allegiances differ from those of typical leaders, opportunities for authenticity may be achieved through processes of negotiation and compromise (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016; MacNeil & Mak, 2007).

Constructing authenticity is a situation of imbalance for atypical leaders, as they are more likely to construct an authentic identity by behaving autonomously, reflecting on prior experiences of inequality (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). Yet their expression of autonomy may not be rewarded by the dominant group. By following the 'heteronomy' pathway, atypical leaders may need to suppress their emotions and comply with socially constructed norms, if they are to be perceived by others as authentic (April et al., 2023). While authenticity can empower typical leaders (Kraus et al., 2011), for atypical leaders, maintaining this authenticity might not always yield the same rewards or be as achievable. Yet, authenticity for atypical leaders might extend beyond just being true to oneself. It can also encompass 'being-for-others', a way of being authentic where actions genuinely resonate with values emphasising equality, diversity and inclusion. By adopting this approach, leaders can enhance the well-being of others and cultivate an organisational culture anchored in these values (Lawler & Ashman, 2012).

This paper aims to enrich the literature on leadership and diversity by examining the intersection between atypicality and authenticity. We start with a brief overview of our review methodology and then define the concepts of atypicality and authenticity. Next we discuss authenticity and atypicality through the lens of emotional labour. To conclude, we present a conceptual framework, grounded in the ideas of autonomy and heteronomy, that delineates the pathways for an atypical leader to achieve authenticity in the workplace.

REVIEW METHODOLOGY

In this paper, we undertake a narrative review (Cronin & George, 2023; Hammersley, 2001), culminating in the

development of a new conceptual framework. Although we synthesise literature from diverse domains, including philosophy, sociology, leadership studies and organisational psychology, the narrative review is a suitable approach because our focus remains on understanding authenticity and atypicality from the 'singular perspective' of leadership (Cronin & George, 2023, p. 174). We began 'with a small number of articles and books', which were 'then used to identify key authors and other articles that are related to the particular topic' (Jones & Gatrell, 2014, p. 257).

More specifically, this narrative review began by identifying key literature as the starting point on the topics of authenticity (e.g., Lawler & Ashman, 2012), atypicality (e.g., Alter, 2018), emotional labour (e.g., Hochschild, 1983) and autonomy/heteronomy (Castoriadis, 1987). Next, we extensively explored, evaluated and synthesized relevant literature, which led to a new conceptual framework examining the authenticity and emotional labour of atypical leaders. In this narrative review and conceptual exploration, we aim to understand how leaders from atypical backgrounds can authentically express themselves in their roles. Our inquiry was spurred by the limited research focusing on atypical leaders within the domain of leadership studies.

For our review, we primarily sourced studies from the domains of organisational behaviour, industrial psychology and social psychology, emphasizing themes like self-concept, authenticity, social identity and leadership. The initial phase of our literature review was conducted using the Web of Science, ScienceDirect and PsycInfo databases. To capture a comprehensive understanding of authenticity, we employed various search terms, including 'authenticity', 'being true to oneself', 'genuineness', 'originality' and 'atypicality'. Similarly, our exploration of atypical leadership encompassed terms like 'atypical leaders', 'diverse workforce', 'LGBT', 'gender' and 'minorities' in 'leadership', 'decision-making roles' and 'senior management'. The combination of keywords such as 'leader*' and 'atypic*' yielded relatively few results. This scarcity of research on atypical leaders prompted us to broaden our search by including terms related to 'equality', 'diversity' and 'inclusion'. These terms, along with specific demographics like 'women', 'gender', 'disability', 'race', 'ethnicity' and 'LGBT', combined with leadership terms, revealed a wealth of research, particularly in the domains of race, ethnicity and gender.

Our narrative review enabled a critical juxtaposition of literature on authenticity, leadership and atypicality, uncovering new insights. Notably, existing leadership theories have often sidelined atypical leaders. Our review aims to spotlight the behavioural and emotional intricacies behind the authenticity of such leaders. It adopts a relational perspective, offering new insights into the complex and multi-dimensional nature of individuals and organisations (Ozbilgin & Vassilopoulou, 2018).

Building on this, we synthesized our findings (Cronin & George, 2023), drawing from Hochschild's concept of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) and Castoriadis's notions of autonomy and heteronomy. This synthesis culminated in a typology-based framework (Cornelissen, 2017) that captures the emotional labour efforts of atypical leaders in relation to their sources of authenticity and their alignment with the prevailing social group. In essence, our review aims to enrich the understanding of leadership in diverse settings, revealing the behavioural and emotional layers underpinning the authenticity of atypical leaders.

DEFINING AUTHENTICITY AND ATYPICALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP

Authenticity and leadership

Authenticity is a long-standing subject of inquiry in the fields of psychology (e.g., Sutton, 2018; Trilling, 1972), philosophy (e.g., Flynn, 2006) and aesthetics (e.g., Malone, 2023), while, more recently, relevant discussions have also become part of leadership studies (e.g., Gardner et al., 2011; Shamir & Eilam, 2005) and organisation theory (e.g., Lehman et al., 2019; Peterson, 2005). Authenticity is generally defined as a quality of an individual, group or culture, and is associated with attributes such as originality, novelty and tradition (Malone, 2023; Peterson, 2005; Sutton, 2018).

Leadership studies which incorporate authenticity are influenced by perspectives in psychology and philosophy that scrutinize the interactions between a leader and the external world, including those with their followers, organisational norms and institutional values (Flynn, 2006; Harter, 2002; Kempster et al., 2019). From a psychological standpoint, authenticity in leadership encompasses both personality and traditional dimensions. Within the personality dimension, authenticity is perceived as a subjective stance, where leaders believe they remain true to themselves and their intrinsic values (Einola & Alvesson, 2021; Sutton, 2018). This perspective has spurred research on authentic leaders, who are described as individuals who 'know who they are, what they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others' values/moral perspective' (Avolio et al., 2004, p. 802). Authentic leaders are described as genuine people (George & Sims, 2007) with distinctive personality traits, such as self-awareness (Whitehead, 2009), self-regulation (Luthans & Avolio, 2003) and self-knowledge (Begley, 2004). The traditional dimension of authenticity in

leadership refers to positive psychological effects, both for the leader and for others, including trust, self-development of others, the creation of a positive ethical climate in an organisation (Gardner et al., 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008) and psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999; Edmondson & Lei, 2014).

Research into leadership authenticity also has its foundations in existential philosophy (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Gardiner, 2016; Lawler, 2005; Lawler & Ashman, 2012). From this existential perspective, authenticity within the workplace is underpinned by the idea that leaders are not only 'true-to-themselves' but also cultivate an authentic 'being-for-others' state (Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Lawler & Ashman, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2004). The deliberate choices individuals make shape their identity and overall state of 'being' (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012). This ongoing identity construction process is perceived to yield a 'true self' when individuals' decisions align with their core beliefs and values (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). Drawing on Sartrean ethics, individuals possess complete freedom over and bear full responsibility for their actions, which in turn mould their identity (captured in the essence of 'what we will is what we become'). Consequently, the catalyst for authentic behaviour stems from an individual's intrinsic values, aspirations and vision (Lawler & Ashman, 2012).

Authentic leadership is fundamentally a relational construct, rooted in the dynamic interactions and relationships between leaders and their followers (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). The concept of 'being-for-others' is influenced by Jean-Paul Sartre's existential philosophy from his 1943 work *Being and Nothingness*, particularly his exploration of intersubjectivity (Sartre, 1943). Though Sartre's insights primarily address philosophical realms, we adapt the 'being-for-others' idea to the leadership context. Here, it underscores a leader's dedication to advancing the collective well-being of a diverse array of individuals with varying stakes within an organisation.

This notion of 'being-for-others' not only embodies normative and moral statements but also operates on the presumption that authentic behaviour inherently benefits others positively. For instance, while selfish individuals who genuinely act in a self-centred manner may be true to themselves, such authenticity is unlikely to be valued by others. The 'being-for-others' concept suggests that authenticity is a status conferred by others (Peterson, 2005). A claim of self-authenticity holds less weight compared to authenticity acknowledged by others. Thus, the perception of what constitutes authentic behaviour is contingent upon the value systems of both the leader and their followers. Any misalignment between these value systems can lead followers to perceive the leader's actions as inauthentic.

Authenticity is not just a state of being for an individual, but is also a discourse which can be produced, reproduced or criticized by others (Whittle, 2021). For instance, constructing an authentic identity is a highly desired quality for creative leaders such as artists, choreographers or chefs, who manage creative teams and produce creative outcomes that are interpreted by others as challenging existing conventions within their field, and often as being a genuine extension of their 'true self' (Mainemelis et al., 2015; Samdanis & Lee, 2021). However, not all creative leaders are able to express their 'true self' in public. For example, it would have been problematic for the pioneer in Pop Art, Andy Warhol, 'a queer man, to be authentic in a heteronormative context such as the USA in the 1960s' (Samdanis & Lee, 2021, p. 13; emphasizing Gopnik, 2020).

Although authentic leaders are often idolized as 'being themselves', Goffee and Jones (2005, n.p.) argue that 'great leaders seem to know which personality traits they should reveal to whom and when'. Individuals perform multiple social roles, often having both a private and often a public or professional sense of self. While individuals can consistently use their personality traits in different social roles (e.g., being optimistic in both their personal and professional lives)—a phenomenon known in psychology as 'personality consistency' (Sutton, 2018)—personality traits differ, and can sometimes conflict in different social contexts (e.g., if someone is more risk-averse in his personal life than his professional life). Authenticity appears to be a construct, 'an existential project of "essentializing" fragmented and conflicting selves' (Nyberg & Sveningsson, 2014, p. 437). This means that leaders perform their 'true selves', so that they can be perceived by others as being 'good leaders' (Nyberg & Sveningsson, 2014). Leaders can manage their authenticity by creating impressions about themselves, at the right time, to the right audience. In the age of social media, in particular, leaders tend to develop carefully curated personas, which may not be entirely fabricated, but are likely to clash with their private senses of self (Ibarra, 2015).

In the field of political leadership, Whittle (2021) analyses the rise and fall of Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the UK Labour Party from 2015 to 2020. Between 2015 and 2019, Corbyn was generally described by the British media as an authentic political leader, who was 'honest, straight talking, principled and someone who always stayed true to his beliefs' (Whittle, 2021, p. 441). In 2016, however, commentators started criticizing Corbyn as an inauthentic leader, as his 'purportedly privileged and London-centric upbringing was referenced to undermine his claims to be dedicated to furthering the interests of the working class' (Whittle, 2021, p. 450). In 2017 and 2019, parts of the media shifted the discourse on Corbyn's authenticity, claiming that it was his 'greatest strength' but also 'his most

devastating flaw', blaming 'his poor communication style and media profile, his inability to unite his party, his inability to have broad enough electoral appeal to win elections and the morality underlying his political positions' (Whittle, 2021, p. 453). Claims for authenticity take the form of discourses which are situated within a social, economic, political and historical context. These discourses can be affirmative or critical, depending on their source. In fields such as politics in which the stakes are high, discourses of authenticity about a leader are particularly likely to be ambiguous or contrasting (Alvesson & Spicer, 2010; Whittle, 2021). The authenticity of a leader is constructed from discourses that derive from the power structures of an organisational context or field.

Leadership studies on authenticity have only recently started to scrutinize the ability of leaders from disadvantaged socio-demographic backgrounds to behave authentically at work. Ladkin (2021) states that minoritized people may experience significant barriers to leadership by being true to themselves, as these behaviours may receive criticism from others. Ladkin supports this argument with the examples of the American politician and activist Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, whose 'response to blatant misogyny' was interpreted on social media 'as indicative of her being an "angry Black woman"', and the former German Chancellor Angela Merkel, whose 'concerns about deaths due to COVID' were characterized as 'hysterical' (Ladkin, 2021, p. 396).

Within an organisational context, employees and leaders may construct complex identities as a response to the person they want to be, how they want to be seen by others and how they are actually perceived by others (Ford & Harding, 2011). Their identity can also be in conflict when the self-identity that stems from their state of 'being' contradicts their social identity, as perceived by others. One might therefore expect that expressing authenticity could be more challenging for atypical leaders compared to those from typical privileged backgrounds. This is because typical leaders are often perceived by others as being more predictable, trustworthy and communicative (Schneider & Northcraft, 1999).

Atypicality and authenticity in leadership

An atypical leader is an individual, often originating from historically significant categories of socio-demographic disadvantage, such as gender, class, gender identity/sexual orientation, ethnicity/race or disability status, who is rarely associated with leadership roles (Alter, 2017). An atypical leader often emerges from one or more underrepresented social categories. Status beliefs describe relationships of socio-demographic disadvantage, as people in

a certain context may 'associate greater status and general competence with people in one social category than another, while granting those in each category some specialised skills' (Ridgeway, 2011, p. 60). When assessing what is considered to be atypical, one should take into account the idiosyncrasies of a particular context, as a minority social category may in some cases be more powerful than the majority. For instance, even though White elite leaders are a minority in the South African context, they should not be considered as atypical leaders as they often occupy positions of power (Myeza & April, 2021; Nkomo, 2011).

An atypical leader can be perceived as being authentic in the sense of staying true to themselves (Flynn, 2006; MacNeil & Mak, 2007) while defying dominant norms within organisations, which are fuelled by existing status beliefs that reinforce perceptions of tradition (Ridgeway, 2011). One may wonder what the defining characteristics of an atypical leader may be. Is it their demography (i.e., gender, race, sexual identity, class) or their behaviour which is perceived as being atypical within their context? Samdanis and Özbilgin (2020) argue that, due to experiences of inequality, demographically atypical leaders are more likely than leaders from privileged backgrounds to develop skills and qualities such as empathy, resilience, social listening and perseverance. Consequently, prior experiences significantly influence the construction of their state of 'being' both for 'themselves' and for 'others'. These experiences shape a leader's values regarding equality, diversity and inclusion, further impacting how they interact with and lead others.

The existing literature on atypical leaders has mainly addressed their key characteristics, such as empathy, resilience, inclusiveness and openness, while scrutinizing the socio-cultural and organisational conditions which have enabled their rise to leadership positions (Alter, 2017; Myeza & April, 2021; Samdanis & Lee, 2021; Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). However, atypical leaders should not be essentialized as a unified social category; each atypical leader should instead be seen as an individual who may possess 'varying degrees of atypicality based on a unique blend of status beliefs about their social identities (e.g., gender, class, race, religion)' (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020, p. 103). For example, a male from an ethnic minority who has been elite-educated and comes from a privileged socio-economic background may face less discrimination compared to someone who confronts 'intersectional' inequality, like a female from an ethnic minority with a less privileged socio-economic background (Carrim & Nkomo, 2016; Özbilgin et al., 2011). The status of each social category, such as gender, class or race, is contingent upon the context, thereby creating a social hierarchy culture (Ridgeway, 2011). Individuals in that context might

rely on this hierarchy for making pertinent evaluations, or it might manifest as societal norms and stereotypes perpetuated by the prevailing culture.

When an atypical leader emerges within an organisation, there is often an expectation that they will champion diversity. This promise is supported by an atypical leader's unique position in an organisation, as they are simultaneously insiders and outsiders (Alter, 2017; Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). They are insiders, having achieved a position of power and leadership, but also outsiders, as their mindset, skills, values and past experiences are likely to differ from those with more typical backgrounds who dominate the majority of organisations, which have generally left diversity issues unaddressed. Their position of exteriority allows them to have a unique perspective, which Alter (2017) rather poetically calls the 'stranger's gaze'. This allows them to think and act differently, positively deviating from dominant norms.

Building on these arguments, atypical leaders are anticipated to positively influence organisations by fostering an inclusive work culture. Their distinct perspectives can also potentially drive greater creativity and innovation (Alter, 2017). Although atypicality can be seen as a positive quality, individuals may not reveal it until they achieve a leadership position. For instance, given that many LGBT+ workers report significant levels of discrimination and exclusion (Connell, 2010), LGBT+ leaders are less likely to come out before they take up leadership positions which provide them with relative security and safety (Özbilgin & Erbil, 2023; Özbilgin et al., 2023).

However, consistently viewing atypical leaders as inherently pro-diversity can place undue psychological pressure on them to live up to such expectations (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). Their ability to support diversity depends, on the one hand, on their agency and intention to act as diversity champions; and, on the other hand, on the organisational and institutional factors that have facilitated their emergence as an atypical leader. While these factors may refer to a broader pro-diversity shift in those organisations which can provide greater opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, the selection of an atypical leader may often result from pseudo-diversity practices. Practices like 'tokenism' can erode genuine diversity efforts (Yoder, 1991). An organisation might promote an individual from an atypical background to project a pro-diversity image, while in reality it lacks a genuine commitment to support diversity meaningfully. Similarly, the 'glass cliff' effect can be harmful for atypical leaders when they are promoted into positions of power, because the dominant group deems this position to be risky, precarious or unrewarding (Haslam & Ryan, 2008).

The last two female UK Prime Ministers, Liz Truss and Theresa May, can be seen as atypical leaders of the otherwise male-dominated Conservative Party. According to Bores (2022), a commentator for the *Boston Political Review*, they are both examples of the 'glass cliff' effect. Both came to power in times of crisis. Theresa May 'obtained the position with little contest as no one else wanted to be Prime Minister during the tumultuous political climate [i.e., triggered by Brexit, the 2016 United Kingdom European Union membership referendum] that posed such an unpredictable future' (Bores, 2022, n.p.). In addition, Liz Truss's 'tenure as Prime Minister was sealed from the onset', facing 'speculation of removal' and rumours of receiving 'no-confidence letters' (Bores, 2022, n.p.). Truss resigned after six weeks, 'marking the shortest tenure of a Prime Minister on record', at which point 'the gender of Prime Minister switched back to male as Rishi Sunak came into power, illustrating the saviour effect as men step back in after a crisis was handed off to a female leader who had to deal with the ramifications' (Bores, 2022, n.p.).

More broadly, there is a prevailing hope that an authentic atypical leader will champion, or at the very least advocate for, diversity-driven changes within organisations. This anticipation is rooted in the idea that these leaders, shaped by their personal encounters with inequality, are inclined towards pro-diversity views and are well suited to champion such values in an organisational and institutional setting. Atypicality and authenticity are closely linked, although they do not always align seamlessly. Myeza and April (2021) highlight how Black leaders mentoring Black employees can bolster genuine resilience in predominantly White working environments. Yet, mentorship by an atypical leader can sometimes prioritize dominant interests, merely presenting a facade of valuing diversity (Lumby, 2006; Zanoni & Janssens, 2015). While the synergy of authenticity and atypicality in leadership has the potential to significantly boost organisational diversity, the extent to which demographically atypical leaders can genuinely embody this remains unclear.

ATYPICAL LEADERS: LEADING AUTHENTICITY OR ENGAGING WITH EMOTIONAL LABOUR?

Atypical leaders often emerge and operate in ways that distinguish their identity, values and norms from the dominant culture (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). For example, in a Western setting, a female, non-Christian leader from an ethnic minority might be viewed as less legitimate by the white majority compared to a standard White, male, upper-middle-class leader. This is due to status beliefs linked to the distinct identities of both leaders (Ridgeway, 2011; Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). Such an atypical leader might find herself expending more time, effort and emotion managing her multifaceted identity in

the workplace. Essentially, atypical leaders might engage in more 'emotional labour' than their more conventionally privileged counterparts (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Hochschild, 1983; Iszatt-White et al., 2021).

Emotional labour is the effort, planning and control needed to express organisationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions at work (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Hochschild (1983) introduced the concept of emotional labour in organisational settings and defined it as the overseeing of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display, which is sold for a wage, and therefore has an exchange value. Emotional labour is based on the regulation of emotions, defined as the strategic presentation of an individual's feelings to conform with the rules of the workplace in order to fit into group settings (Kim & Cho, 2013). Managing feelings is a normal part of civilized living. It is evident in everyday life and situations, such as when displaying sadness at a funeral, or joy at a party (Hochschild, 1983). Nevertheless, managing emotions at work can be stressful when a role requires a leader to display emotions that contradict their true self, creating pressure on the leader to behave in an inauthentic way (Iszatt-White, 2009; Kempster et al., 2019).

Emotional labour for leaders consists of three emotional displays: (1) surface acting, which refers to 'deliberate emotional displays that are intended to deceive other persons about what the actor actually feels' (Gardner et al., 2009, p. 471); (2) deep acting, which 'reflects actors' efforts to modify inner feelings to match emotional display rules and thereby deceive themselves' (Gardner et al., 2009, p. 471); and (3) genuine emotions, the display of 'naturally felt emotions' that are 'distinct from surface acting and deep acting as a method of displaying organisationally desired emotions' (Diefendorff et al., 2005, p. 339). The display of genuine emotions by leaders may produce higher levels of perceived leader authenticity in followers, while enabling leaders to create more favourable follower impressions than is possible through deep acting and surface acting (Gardner et al., 2009). For example, a leader may force a smile while interacting with colleagues (surface acting); adjust their mood and thoughts so that they match the happy facial expression (deep acting); or share a naturally felt emotion such as enthusiasm or anger with others (genuine emotion).

Expressing genuine emotions is often the most rewarding emotional regulation strategy. However, it might be less feasible for atypical leaders compared to their typical counterparts. Leaders who operate in environments where their true selves are wholly embraced by their followers may not need to exert emotional labour. For example, prototypical leaders can embody and perform authenticity that resonates with their followers, especially if they come from a group with shared ideologies or socio-demographic backgrounds (Brodbeck et al., 2000; Giessner et al., 2013;

Steffens et al., 2013). According to social identity theory (Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), homophilic groups tend to favour a prototypical leader over a non-prototypical one (Rast et al., 2012). This is because they 'can see parts of themselves in their leader' (Crawford et al., 2020, n.p.). Within a homophilic group, a prototypical leader can more easily demonstrate authenticity through 'being-for-others' (Lawler & Ashman, 2012).

Typical leaders may also engage less with emotional labour than atypical leaders, as their power and legitimacy derive from established norms and traditions that trigger homosocial reproduction (Kanter, 1977). This tendency is particularly strong in environments where there is a high degree of uncertainty. In such situations, the pressure to form homogenous groups is higher, as people tend to trust and feel more comfortable with those who share their outlook, social background and characteristics. Traditionalism is an influential norm, especially in hierarchical and patriarchal societies, where the roles and status of social groups are mainly categorised and ranked according to seniority, gender and age (Bardi et al., 2008; Gambrell, 2016; Schwartz, 1992; Walby, 1989).

For demographically atypical leaders, cognitive processes can greatly influence their desires, intentions and beliefs, enabling them to act authentically in the workplace. This might manifest as empathy towards those from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, external pressures, such as societal expectations of what constitutes a 'good' leader (e.g., being authoritative, assertive, upholding traditional values) in a competitive corporate environment, may hinder authenticity as 'being-for-others'. Erickson and Ritter (2001) noted that negative emotional experiences are often concealed, suggesting emotional labour is a prevalent aspect of modern work. Managing emotions, as posited by Winkler (2018), can lead to a disconnect between one's genuine identity and the facade they display. Consequently, such atypical leaders might grapple with their authenticity and identity due to a cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) that arises from the clash between their self-perception based on their socio-demographic background and how they are viewed by others—often as outliers within their environment (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020).

In reality, both typical and atypical leaders may engage with emotional regulation tactics, but to varying degrees. By interviewing 12 leaders of commercial and non-for-profit organisations, Iszatt-White et al. (2021, p. 476) found that leaders articulated self-consistency as an instance of authentic behaviour but claimed that it 'involves the emotional labour of masking certain feelings'. This is clearly paradoxical and, at some level at least, inauthentic. This finding is supported by Kempster et al. (2019), who argue that engagement with emotional labour in leadership may present an inauthentic stance. In other words, displays of expressive behaviour may not reflect the actual inner

attitudes, emotions and dispositions of leaders. However, leaders may behave in these ways because they prioritize organisational goals and outcomes over their own emotional states. Therefore, emotional labour can be seen as a strategic action that leaders make in order to produce a desired image of themselves in the minds of followers. This is a psychological stance that keeps individuals aligned with their perceptions of being a leader, and a coping mechanism that allows leaders to maintain their influence within an organisation.

While authenticity as an expression of genuine emotion can be a source of power for typical leaders, it is likely to be limiting for atypical leaders who might engage with surface or deep acting to hide their genuine emotion. Cha et al. (2019) view authenticity as a continuum, ranging from high authenticity at one end to low authenticity at the other. They argue that authenticity does not benefit everyone in an organisation equally. This is consistent with our argument that typical leaders may find expressing their genuine emotions and true selves more rewarding than atypical leaders do. In essence, typical leaders are likely to have more freedom to be authentic, whereas it is riskier for atypical leaders to express themselves authentically.

Hogan (1976) posits that individuals in atypical social positions or roles might possess identities that do not align with organisational norms, leading to potential inauthenticity. Consequently, leadership can be emotionally taxing for atypical leaders facing this added layer of inequality, placing them at higher risk of exhaustion or mental illness compared to their typical counterparts. This perspective is further elaborated by Yavuz et al. (2020), who argue that implicit or explicit deviations from established norms may subject individuals to pressure as they navigate their position within these contexts.

It is likely that an atypical leader will have to expend more emotional labour to survive in a conventional environment, while straddling the gap between conformity and self-consistency. While extensive surface acting might jeopardize the mental health of an atypical leader, displaying genuine emotion could result in conflict and power struggles within an organisation, especially if the atypical leader seeks to challenge dominant norms and alter the status quo (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). In addition, displaying a firm or genuine sense of self may guide an atypical leader to be authentic towards others, but a self-concept that is too rigid may trigger a backlash for both the leader and the project of diversity within the organisation (Bailey et al., 2017). This is because the characteristics of the dominant group are often viewed as indicators of success within a context (Schmader et al., 2001). Drawing from Ibarra (2018), we posit that an atypical leader should lead in an 'adaptively authentic' way, performing various degrees of authentic selves based on the situation.

LEADING AUTHENTICALLY: A BALANCING ACT BETWEEN AUTONOMY AND HETERONOMY

Leading authentically is challenging for atypical leaders, who have to invest emotional labour at work in order to achieve it. In this section, we delineate four pathways through which an atypical leader can act in an 'adaptively authentic' way, while analysing the associated challenges.

For atypical leaders, authenticity is a balancing act between autonomy and heteronomy (Boyd, 1998; Castoriadis, 1991; Kagitcibasi, 1996), which require different tactics of emotional labour. On the one hand, autonomy is an idealized situation where individuals have the freedom to construct and express their true identities (Komporozos-Athanasiou & Fotaki, 2015). It is a state in which individuals can define themselves, unhindered by cognitive, normative or moral constraints (Castoriadis, 1991). On the other hand, heteronomy is a state that can result in deindividuation, making individuals subject to the normative authority and rules set by others (Kagitcibasi, 1996). This control over an individual's life stems from values they have adopted and internalized. Within a heteronomous context, an individual reproduces the dominant values and norms (MacKay, 2019).

Although leading authentically is often associated with discourses of autonomy (e.g., Liu et al., 2017; Ryan & Ryan, 2019), we posit that in organisations, leaders' power often derives from bureaucratic authority inherent to their roles, making it, at least to some degree, heteronomous (Boyd, 1998). Consequently, leading authentically hinges on a leader's agency and disposition to navigate between autonomy or heteronomy. It is also influenced by the norms and power structure within an organisation that may reward, accept or penalize authentic behaviours. For atypical leaders, leading authentically depends on their perception of authenticity (i.e., whether it means being 'true-to-themselves' or 'being-for-others'); and their stance concerning autonomy or heteronomy at work. As Figure 1 shows, this conceptual space reveals four pathways: autonomous or heteronomous authenticity, and relative autonomy and heteronomy. The emotional labour requirements and consequences associated with each pathway will now be analysed.

Autonomous authenticity

The condition of autonomous authenticity represents authentic individuals who react similarly to different stimuli over time using their genuine emotions (Gardner et al., 2009; Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000; Mouzakitis, 2006). Autonomy is the ability of individuals to rely on their

FIGURE 1 A conceptual framework for the authenticity and emotional labour of atypical leaders.

self-directed choices in life, so that the meaning of authenticity derives from being true-to-themselves (Castoriadis, 2001). An atypical leader is one who authentically expresses their genuine emotions, irrespective of prevailing status beliefs, norms and traditions (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Ridgeway, 2011). The claim that an atypical leader can be authentic and unconditionally support diversity is problematic, because it implies that an atypical leader can enjoy conditions of autonomy within which their self is 'self-created', and redefine themselves through their imagination, intentions, desires and orientations (Komporozos-Athanasiou & Fotaki, 2015; emphasizing Castoriadis, 1987) with little regard for the constraints of their environment.

In addition, we anticipate that atypical leaders would rarely adopt autonomous authenticity, as they might find it challenging to stay true to themselves in environments that might be less accepting of such authentic expressions (Caza et al., 2018). While autonomous authenticity is likely to be unattainable for atypical leaders, this expression of leading authentically can be appropriated by typical leaders. Typical leaders appear to be autonomous, because moral facts and established status beliefs are likely to reinforce their legitimacy and authority (Ridgeway, 2011; Schneider & Northcraft, 1999).

In contrast, an atypical leader operates as both an insider and an outsider, navigating between states of autonomy and heteronomy. For instance, Stewart et al. (2017) found that Native American leaders possess value systems rooted in their ethnic heritage, distinct from the prevailing US culture. These leaders anchor their authenticity in an autonomously collective identity shaped by tribal affiliations and traditions. Such an identity plays a crucial role in shaping a leader's authenticity within indigenous communities. However, as these leaders venture into mainstream American contexts, particularly when expanding their business off tribal lands, they might face 'acculturation issues as indigenous firms and outside entities' (Stewart et al., 2017, p. 563). It is likely that Native American leaders will face resistance, conflict or pressure to conform to mainstream American culture, particularly if they express their genuine emotions and behave in an autonomously authentic way within this context.

Heteronomous authenticity

Heteronomous authenticity is a situation of interdependence, in which an individual's life choices are shaped by multiple associations with different identity groups (Kagitcibasi, 1996). A heteronomously authentic individual is bound not only to external conditions and values, but also to their inner self. For an atypical leader, behaving in a heteronomously authentic manner may necessitate engaging in surface acting (Gardner et al., 2011), silencing genuine emotions and responses that might be incompatible with dominant norms (Liu et al., 2017). In addition, heteronomous authenticity can be a precarious situation for an atypical leader who may experience pressure to conform to the demands of the external environment,

resulting in conflict with their inner selves, individual needs or self-identities (e.g., Riggle et al., 2017).

An example of a heteronomously authentic atypical leader is the former Chairman of Lloyds Banking Group in the UK, António Horta-Osório, who suffered from nervous exhaustion in 2011. In the financial sector, characterized by long working hours and a masculine culture (Tobias Neely, 2018), publicly addressing a mental health issue could be perceived as a sign of weakness for a leader. In the beginning, Horta-Osório attempted to keep silent (surface acting) until his symptoms persisted, forcing him to return to his home country, Portugal, where a doctor immediately admitted him to hospital. As Borrows (2022, n.p.) noted in *Management Today*: 'The *Evening Standard* called his absence from work "due to exhaustion" the most high-profile sick leave in the City [of London], and most seriously doubted his ability to return to his previous role'. Upon his return, Horta-Osório 'brought Lloyds back from the brink of financial collapse' and he developed 'a programme to support the mental health of his colleagues, the Optimal Leadership Resilience Programme' (Borrows, 2022, n.p.).

Reflecting on this account, we argue that heteronomous authenticity represents an imbalance. However, it can result in diversity gains for an organisation if atypical leaders' ability to remain true to themselves surpasses the cognitive, normative and moral pressures originating from the dominant culture.

Relational autonomy

Relational autonomy is a reflexive state in which atypical leaders value autonomy as a gesture of dissociating themselves from dominant norms, while aiming to be authentic for others (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000). It is a relational expression of authenticity, which is shaped by values such as the creation of an inclusive environment at work or social relations with others (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Lawler & Ashman, 2012; Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). Relational autonomy is a value-driven, not identity-driven, expression of authenticity. Deep acting while negotiating authenticity seems to be the only viable pathway for atypical leaders to actualize new rituals and values, such as being more inclusive and open to new ideas. For example, LGBT+ employees may initially engage with deep acting, as they may have limited options even if they wish to be themselves at work, but they eventually tend to hide their social identities because their experiences of authenticity could be constrained by the way in which they are treated at work (Kaplan, 2014). However, once they gain a position of power, LGBT+ leaders may feel more comfortable about expressing their authentic selves. For example, Tim Cook 'decided to actively champion diversity after becoming the CEO of Apple in 2011, coming out in 2014 in an essay published by Bloomberg' (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020, p. 113).

Another instance of a relationally autonomous atypical leader is Kate Gorman, the CEO and founder of Fort Mason Games, a social mobile gaming company (Harrison, 2018). Gorman started her career in the male-dominated game industry, where the gender gap is wide, not only for employees in the industry but also for audiences, as most game firms consider men to be their primary customers (Bulut, 2020). Although more women are entering the industry, the games sector maintains a gender gap, as the most prestigious and rewarding positions, such as programmers, creative directors and leaders, are occupied by men (Taylor, 2020). Most women in the gaming industry cannot influence game development or marketing strategies targeting a female audience. Within this context, Gorman initially resorted to deep acting to advance her career. Later, she dedicated herself to promoting diversity and gender equality in her company, aiming to develop games for a female audience that had largely been overlooked (Harrison, 2018).

Based on the examples provided, we argue that relational autonomy signifies an expression of authenticity that depends on the gains of atypical leaders, which enable autonomy (MacKenzie & Stoljar, 2000; Westlund, 2009). More broadly, it is constructed collectively by both atypical leaders and others who commit to common values (Leroy et al., 2015), such as promoting diversity and inclusion within a workplace or field. Consequently, relational autonomy may require additional emotional investment from atypical leaders to inspire and maintain collectives or groups of followers, while staying true to their needs and interests.

Relational heteronomy

The existence of relationally heteronomous atypical leaders appears to be paradoxical. On the one hand, atypical leaders strive for authenticity by aligning with values that enable them to be for others. On the other hand, their identity is directed and governed by others rather than being self-directed and self-governed (Sperry, 2013). Being 'other-governed' suggests that atypical leaders might engage in deep acting, conform to dominant norms and the interests of the majority, all while expecting symbolic and material returns (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020). However, 'being-for-others' and engaging in deep acting may stress the intention of an atypical leader to champion equality, diversity and inclusion in organisations. An atypical leader who aims to promote diversity should be able to manoeuvre,

TABLE 1 Key themes, propositions and future research questions.

Key themes	Propositions	Future research questions
Authenticity and typical leaders	Leaders from typically privileged socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to be comfortable expressing their true selves at work compared to those from atypical backgrounds.	• What strategies can organisations implement to make leaders and employees from disadvantaged backgrounds feel more at ease with expressing their authentic selves? • Which organisational mechanisms are effective in cultivating an inclusive culture that encourages authenticity?
Authenticity and atypical leaders	Atypical leaders are more inclined to adopt a 'being-for-others' approach to authenticity, rather than adhering to a 'true-to-themselves' philosophy in the workplace.	• What are the implications of authenticity for marginalized and atypical workers? • How is authenticity expressed in both inclusive and exclusive institutional environments?
Atypical leaders and emotional labour	Atypical leaders often require a greater investment in emotional labour than typical leaders to attain a sense of authenticity in the workplace.	• What emotional mechanisms enable marginalized individuals to express their authentic selves? • How can regulation and institutions contribute to the inclusive cultivation of emotional labour?
Atypical leaders and autonomy	Atypical leaders may pursue autonomous pathways to authenticity, but they are likely to face resistance, conflict or endure emotionally tolling situations before realizing gains for equality, diversity and inclusion in organisations.	• What motivates atypical leaders to become autonomously authentic at work? • What are the consequences for atypical leaders and diversity when acting in an autonomously authentic manner?
Atypical leaders and heteronomy	Atypical leaders may follow heteronomous pathways to authenticity, but they are likely to engage in deep acting, negotiate or compromise with the dominant group within an organisation before achieving gains for equality, diversity and inclusion.	• How is leader authenticity connected to the frameworks of symbolic power within organisations? • To what degree do atypical leaders gain symbolic capital within the power hierarchies of organisations that are either supportive or unsupportive?
Authenticity and leadership	The notion of authenticity should be re-conceptualized to take into account the experiences of leaders from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds. Such a redefined version would be driven by values and have a greater propensity to advance equality, diversity and inclusion within organisations.	• How can organisations cultivate inclusive cultures that encourage authenticity among atypical workers and leaders? • Under what circumstances do inclusive paradigms for authenticity manifest among atypical workers and leaders?

negotiate and compromise with the dominant group (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016). Therefore, being other-directed could be a deliberate tactic of an atypical leader to build alliances with dominant social groups and engage in processes of negotiation with them.

A 'tempered radical' can be considered to be a relationally heteronomous atypical leader. As a tempered radical, an atypical leader may seek for change and 'advancement within mainstream organisations and professions', while strongly believing in 'eradicating gender, race, class and other social injustices by acting in ways that are appropriate professionally, but … also "authentic" personally and

politically' (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 586). An example of this is Fiona Mackey, the former Executive Dean and Head of School in a public research-intensive UK university, who describes her experience as a tempered radical and academic feminist in an autoethnographic account (Mackey, 2021). Within the neoliberal academy, which includes UK universities, female leaders are still rare, while education and monetization appear to be co-existing yet contradictory objectives (Mackey, 2021). Mackey highlights the emotional labour required to fulfil her pastoral role in supporting colleagues and confesses that she finds change (i.e., promoting pluralism, social

justice and equality in the curriculum and the organisation) to be challenging, as it often occurs through small wins and compromises.

In this conceptual investigation, we argue that atypical leaders' expressions of authenticity are most likely value-driven (e.g., championing diversity as an expression of 'being-for-others'), relational to others (i.e., followers) and situated within institutional and organisational contexts that shape their ability to be authentic. More broadly, an atypical leader is more likely to operate within conditions of heteronomy than of autonomy (Komporozos-Athanasiou & Fotaki, 2015). This is because the essence and existence of atypical leaders is constructed not only in their individual psyches but also within the society that has constructed the boundaries which define that individual as atypical. Therefore, the meaning of authenticity needs to be questioned, because the current leadership literature (Walumbwa et al., 2008) tends to glorify the purity of the authentic leader. Atypical leaders do not fit such purist definitions of authenticity, as their performances of authenticity tend to be value-driven, involving negotiation and struggle with structures of power and domination.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Drawing from research on authenticity, we suggest that leaders from typically privileged backgrounds are more likely to express their authentic selves at work compared to atypical leaders. Dominant narratives on authenticity in leadership tend to favour preserving the power of typical leaders over challenging the status quo. They often advocate a 'be-yourself' ethos at work (Fleming & Sturdy, 2011), which can be unattainable for atypical leaders.

In this paper we stress that an expression of authenticity as 'being-for-others' is a more viable option for atypical leaders. Since this version of authenticity is driven by values rather than identity, it frequently comes with added responsibilities. Atypical leaders are often expected to serve as champions for equality, diversity and inclusion within organisations. However, these additional responsibilities come at a price, as atypical leaders must invest emotional labour to express their authenticity. In addition, atypical leaders may compromise their autonomy, as they engage in heteronomous processes of identity construction, negotiation and compromise, to claim diversity gains within organisations.

An atypical leader may feel the tension of acting according to their demographic stances (Chin & Sanchez-Hucles, 2007), which places them under pressure both to comply with the norms of the leadership elite and to remain authentic (Ford, 2006). In essence, an atypical leader often employs emotional labour to navigate power dynamics

and negotiate authenticity in terms of accommodating their unique position within an organisation. Atypicality suggests a diversion from dominant backgrounds and patrimonial behaviours (Tobias Neely, 2018). An atypical leader is therefore able to be authentic after processes of negotiation, which produce new images of authenticity that break away from established norms and traditions. An atypical leader thus has the potential to introduce new rituals and values, such as inclusion, empathy and openness to difference (Alter, 2018).

Atypical leaders can be authentic, but their experience and expression of authenticity are likely to differ from those of typical leaders. In our conceptual analysis, we outline four pathways through which atypical leaders can achieve authenticity. Each pathway requires an investment in emotional labour and is accompanied by substantial barriers and challenges. Firstly, autonomously authentic atypical leaders can express their genuine emotions and authentic selves at work. Yet, they are likely to encounter resistance, conflict or pressure to conform to dominant norms. Secondly, while maintaining a sense of their authentic selves, heteronomously authentic atypical leaders often suppress it, externally aligning their identity with the expectations of the dominant social group. This situation can be emotionally taxing and may eventually lead to diversity-driven change, once atypical leaders risk reacting against it and express their authentic self. Thirdly, relationally autonomous atypical leaders might express authenticity by advocating for diversity within organisations. However, to achieve this, atypical leaders often need to engage in deep acting until they attain a position of power, at which point they can transition to the role of diversity champions. Fourthly, relationally heteronomous atypical leaders may engage in deep acting in their effort to negotiate with the dominant group and achieve diversity gains for every member of their organisation.

While typical leaders can easily align with existing perceptions of authenticity (Giessner et al., 2013; Nkomo & Al Ariss, 2014), atypical leaders are often tasked with establishing new norms defining 'authenticity'. Atypical leaders need to invest emotional labour, which helps them with emotional management and allows them to engage in behaviours which fit perceptions of 'how leaders should be' (Bolton & Boyd, 2003). The four positions and pathways assume that atypical leaders intend to bring diversity-driven change in organisations. As argued elsewhere (e.g., Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020), not all atypical leaders are unconditionally interested in promoting the project of diversity, and their discourses, dispositions and performances should be scrutinszed when interpreting their impact on diversity beliefs in a particular social context. In other words, being authentic depends on the disposition of a leader within an organisation, because the leader

mobilises symbolic resources to construct an authentic identity.

In addition, the institutional context (both national and industrial) and the organisational environment are anticipated to influence the ability of atypical leaders to express their authenticity at work. We expect atypical leaders to use more autonomous tactics in contexts which acknowledge the importance of the EDI agenda, but to replace them with more heteronomous tactics when diversity is unregulated and neglected. For instance, these mechanisms may not be applicable to atypical leaders when they operate within environments that are stereotypically masculine and hierarchical (Zietsman & April, 2021).

However, the meaning and purpose of authenticity are different for typical and atypical leaders. For leaders from typically privileged backgrounds, authenticity is used as a mechanism of normative control that preserves norms, values and the status quo. For atypical leaders, however, authenticity is a mechanism for resistance and change, and so may not always be well received by representatives of the status quo. Therefore, atypical leaders are likely to adopt a version of authenticity that relies on Adorno's (2013) perspective: living their authentic self through negotiations and struggles over meaning. Atypical leaders can therefore control their feelings and emotional responses and create a specific social image. This enables them to survive in a heterogeneous environment, while straddling the gap between conforming to norms and remaining true to themselves and others (Samdanis & Özbilgin, 2020).

The interplay between authenticity and atypicality lies at the intersection of meso-level social and institutional routines, expectations and norms that define leadership and the micro-level agentic choices individuals make to reveal or conceal their true selves. Based on Castoriadis's (2001) concepts of autonomy and heteronomy, we highlight the influence of the meso-level context on how easily typical and atypical leaders can behave authentically. Drawing on the literature of emotional labour (Gardner et al., 2009; Hochschild, 1983), we demonstrate the connection between authenticity and atypicality at the micro-individual level. Consequently, authenticity is neither solely an individual choice nor purely an outcome of social and institutional norms. Instead, it emerges as a negotiated outcome at the intersection of meso-social/institutional norms, which influence the power dynamics within an organisational setting and the micro-level individual choices of leaders.

Ultimately, our paper reveals that authenticity is mainly the privilege of leaders from typically normative backgrounds, while being sanctioned and harder to perform for atypical leaders. We propose that if heteronomous forms of authenticity are accepted, then the authenticity of atypical leaders could also be recognised and valued.

For the authenticity of atypical leaders to be recognised, sanctions on atypicality should be replaced with mechanisms of recognising and rewarding diversity and fostering inclusion in institutions and societies.

Table 1 elaborates on these concluding insights by presenting key themes, propositions and future research questions that are relevant to expand the knowledge regarding the complexities of authenticity in leadership, particularly among atypical leaders. It serves as a guide for developing more inclusive policies and practices.

Ultimately, our analysis challenges the notion that authenticity is equally accessible to all, while unveiling the power dynamics that enable leaders from privileged backgrounds to express their authentic selves more easily than atypical leaders. Crucially, we have identified distinct pathways that atypical leaders can navigate to achieve authenticity, each with its own unique set of challenges and consequences.

ORCID

Ozlem Ayaz https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2836-6317
Marios Samdanis https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9174-5301

REFERENCES

Adorno, T. (2013). *The Jargon of Authenticity*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Algera, P.M. & Lips-Wiersma, M. (2012). Radical authentic leadership: co-creating the conditions under which all members of the organization can be authentic. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(1), 118–131.

Alter, N. (2017). The stranger's gaze. In Chanlat, J.-F. & Özbilgin, M.F. (Eds.), *Management and Diversity: Thematic Approaches*. Bingley: Emerald, pp. 87–105.

Alter, N. (2018). *The Strength of Difference: Itineraries of Atypical Bosses*. Bingley: Emerald.

Alvesson, M. & Spicer, A. (Eds.) (2010). *Metaphors We Lead By: Understanding Leadership in the Real World*. London: Routledge.

April, K., Dharani, B. & April, A. (2023). *Lived Experiences of Exclusion in the Workplace: Psychological & Behavioural Effects*. Bingley: Emerald.

Ashforth, B.E. & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(1), 20–39.

Avolio, B.J. & Gardner, W.L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 315–338.

Avolio, B.J., Gardner, W.L., Walumbwa, F.O., Luthans, F. & May, D.R. (2004). Unlocking the mask: a look at the process by which authentic leaders impact follower attitudes and behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(6), 801–823.

Bailey, C., Madden, A., Alfes, K., Shantz, A. & Soane, E. (2017). The mismanaged soul: existential labor and the erosion of meaningful work. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27(3), 416–430.

Bardi, A., Calogero, R.M. & Mullen, B. (2008). A new archival approach to the study of values and value–behavior relations: validation of the value lexicon. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(3), 483.

Begley, P.T. (2004). Understanding valuation processes: exploring the linkage between motivation and action. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 32(2), 4–17.

Bolton, S.C. & Boyd, C. (2003). Trolley dolly or skilled emotion manager? Moving on from Hochschild's managed heart. *Work, Employment and Society*, 17(2), 289–308.

Bores, S. (2022). Gender and power: Liz Truss and the glass cliff theory. *The Boston Political Review*. https://www.bostonpoliticalreview.org/post/gender-and-power-liz-truss-and-the-glass-cliff-theory

Borrows, B. (2022). Leadership burnout: inside the silent epidemic. *Management Today*. https://www.managementtoday.co.uk/leadership-burnout-inside-silent-epidemic/long-reads/article/1790732

Boyd, E.A. (1998) Bureaucratic authority in the "company of equals": the interactional management of medical peer review. *American Sociological Review*, 63(2), 200–224.

Brodbeck, F.C., et al. (2000). Cultural variation of leadership prototypes across 22 European countries. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 73(1), 1–29.

Bulut, E. (2020). *A Precarious Game: The Illusion of Dream Jobs in the Video Game Industry*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Carrim, N.M.H. & Nkomo, S.M. (2016). Wedding intersectionality theory and identity work in organizations: South African Indian women negotiating managerial identity. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 23(3), 261–277.

Castoriadis, C. (1987). *The Imaginary Institution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Castoriadis, C. (1991). *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy: Essays in Political Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Castoriadis, C. (2001). The retreat from autonomy: post-modernism as generalised conformism. *Democracy & Nature*, 7(1), 17–26.

Caza, B.B., Moss, S. & Vough, H. (2018). From synchronizing to harmonizing: the process of authenticating multiple work identities. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 63(4), 703–745.

Cha, S.E., et al. (2019). Being your true self at work: integrating the fragmented research on authenticity in organisations. *Academy of Management Annals*, 13(2), 633–671.

Chin, J.L. & Sanchez-Hucles, J. (2007). Diversity and leadership. *American Psychologist*, 62(6), 608–609.

Connell, C. (2010). Doing, undoing, or redoing gender? Learning from the workplace experiences of trans people. *Gender & Society*, 24(1), 31–55.

Cornelissen, J. (2017). Editor's comments: developing propositions, a process model, or a typology? Addressing the challenges of writing theory without a boilerplate. *Academy of Management Review*, 42(1), 1–9.

Cottrill, K., Lopez, P.D. & Hoffman, C.C. (2014). How authentic leadership and inclusion benefit organizations. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 33(3), 275–292.

Crawford, J.A., Dawkins, S., Martin, A. & Lewis, G. (2020). Putting the leader back into authentic leadership: reconceptualising and rethinking leaders. *Australian Journal of Management*, 45(1), 114–133.

Cronin, M.A. & George, E. (2023). The why and how of the integrative review. *Organizational Research Methods*, 26(1), 168–192.

Diefendorff, J.M., Croyle, M.H. & Gosserand, R.H. (2005). The dimensionality and antecedents of emotional labor strategies. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 66(2), 339–357.

Dobbin, F. & Kalev, A. (2016). Why diversity programs fail. *Harvard Business Review*, 94(7), 52–60.

Eagly, A.H. & Johnson, B.T. (1990). Gender and leadership style: a meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(2), 233.

Eagly, A.H. (2005). Achieving relational authenticity in leadership: does gender matter? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 459–474.

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350–383.

Edmondson, A.C. & Lei, Z. (2014). Psychological safety: the history, renaissance, and future of an interpersonal construct. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1(1), 23–43.

Einola, K. & Alvesson, M. (2021). The perils of authentic leadership theory. *Leadership*, 17(4), 483–490.

Ely, R.J. & Thomas, D.A. (2001). Cultural diversity at work: the effects of diversity perspectives on work group processes and outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46(2), 229–273.

Erickson, R.J. & Ritter, C. (2001). Emotional labor, burnout, and inauthenticity: does gender matter? *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 64(2), 146–163.

Festinger, L. (1957). *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Firing, K., Thorkelsdóttir, R.B. & Chemi, T. (2022). The Theatre of War: leader development between personal identity and person-in-role. *Culture and Organization*, 28(1), 330–344.

Fleming, P. & Sturdy, A. (2011). 'Being yourself' in the electronic sweatshop: new forms of normative control. *Human Relations*, 64(2), 177–200.

Flynn, T.R. (2006). *Existentialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ford, J. & Harding, N. (2011). The impossibility of the 'true self' of authentic leadership. *Leadership*, 7(4), 463–479.

Ford, J. (2006). Discourses of leadership: gender, identity and contradiction in a UK public sector organization. *Leadership*, 2(1), 77–99.

Gambrell, K.M. (2016). Lakota women leaders: getting things done quietly. *Leadership*, 12(3), 293–307.

Gardiner, R. (2016). Gender, authenticity and leadership: thinking with Arendt. *Leadership*, 12(5), 632–637.

Gardner, W.L., Cogliser, C.C., Davis, K.M. & Dickens, M.P. (2011). Authentic leadership: a review of the literature and research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(6), 1120–1145.

Gardner, W.L., Fischer, D. & Hunt, J.G.J. (2009). Emotional labor and leadership: a threat to authenticity? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20(3), 466–482.

Gelfand, M.J., Erez, M. & Aycan, Z. (2007). Cross-cultural organizational behavior. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 58, 479–514.

George, W. & Sims, P. (2007). *True North: Discover your Authentic Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Giessner, S.R., van Knippenberg, D., van Ginkel, W. & Sleebos, E. (2013). Team-oriented leadership: the interactive effects of leader group prototypicality, accountability, and team identification. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 98(4), 658–667.

Goffee, R. & Jones, G. (2005). Managing authenticity: the paradox of great leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, 83(12), 86–94.

Goldman, B.M. & Kernis, M.H. (2002). The role of authenticity in healthy psychological functioning and subjective well-being. *Annals of the American Psychotherapy Association*, 5(6), 18–20.

Gopnik, B. (2020). Warhol: A Life as Art. Penguin UK.

Gosling, J. (2021). Leadership and management in a context of deep adaptation. *Deep Adaptation: Navigating the Realities of Climate Change*, 211–223.

Grandey, A. (2000). Emotional regulation in the workplace: a new way to conceptualise emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(1), 95–110.

Hammersley, M. (2001). On 'systematic' reviews of research literatures: a 'narrative' response to Evans & Benefield. *British Educational Research Journal*, 27(5), 543–554.

Harrison, K. (2018) This CEO is cashing in on female gamers (by giving them what they want). *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/kateharrison/2018/08/28/this-ceo-is-cashing-in-on-female-gamers-by-giving-them-what-they-want/?sh=38b8c2d47825

Harter, S. (2002). *Authenticity*. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), Handbook of positive psychology (pp. 382–394). Oxford University Press.

Haslam, S.A. & Ryan, M.K. (2008). The road to the glass cliff: differences in the perceived suitability of men and women for leadership positions in succeeding and failing organizations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 19(5), 530–546.

Hochschild, A.R. (1983). *The Managed Heart: Commercialisation of Human Feeling*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Hogan, R. (1976). *Personality Theory: The Personological Tradition*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Ibarra, H. (2015). The authenticity paradox. *Harvard Business Review*, 93(1/2), 53–59.

Ibarra, H. (2018). The authenticity paradox. In George, B., Ibarra, H., Goffee, R. & Jones, G. (Eds.), *Authentic Leadership*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, pp. 39–69.

Iszatt-White, M. (2009). Leadership as emotional labour: the effortful accomplishment of valuing practices. *Leadership*, 5(4), 447–467.

Iszatt-White, M., Stead, V. & Elliott, C. (2021). Impossible or just irrelevant? Unravelling the 'authentic leadership' paradox through the lens of emotional labour. *Leadership*, 17(4), 464–482.

Jones, O. & Gatrell, C. (2014). The future of writing and reviewing for IJMR. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 16(3), 249–264.

Kagitcibasi, Ç. (1996). The autonomous-relational self: a new synthesis. *European Psychologist*, 1(3), 180–186.

Kanter, R.M. (1977). *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic Books.

Kaplan, D.M. (2014). Career anchors and paths: the case of gay, lesbian, & bisexual workers. *Human Resource Management Review*, 24(2), 119–130.

Kempster, S., Iszatt-White, M. & Brown, M. (2019). Authenticity in leadership: reframing relational transparency through the lens of emotional labour. *Leadership*, 15(3), 319–338.

Kim, K.O. & Cho, Y.C. (2013). The relationships between emotional labour and depressive symptoms among nurses in university hospitals. *Journal of the Korea Academia-Industrial Cooperation Society*, 14(8), 3794–3803.

Komporozos-Athanasiou, A. & Fotaki, M. (2015). A theory of imagination for organisation studies using the work of Cornelius Castoriadis. *Organisation Studies*, 36(3), 321–342.

Kraus, M.W., Chen, S. & Keltner, D. (2011). The power to be me: power elevates self-concept consistency and authenticity. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47(5), 974–980.

Küpers, W., & Statler, M. (2008). Practically wise leadership: toward an integral understanding. *Culture and Organization*, 14(4), 379–400.

Ladkin, D. & Taylor, S.S. (2010). Enacting the 'true self': towards a theory of embodied authentic leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(1), 64–74.

Ladkin, D. (2021). Problematizing authentic leadership: how the experience of minoritized people highlights the impossibility of leading from one's "true self". *Leadership*, 17(4), 395–400.

Lawler, J. & Ashman, I. (2012). Theorizing leadership authenticity: a Sartrean perspective. *Leadership*, 8(4), 327–344.

Lawler, J. (2005). The essence of leadership? Existentialism and leadership. *Leadership*, 1(2), 215–231.

Lehman, D.W., O'Connor, K., Kovács, B. & Newman, G.E. (2019). Authenticity. *Academy of Management Annals*, 13(1), 1–42.

Leroy, H., Anseel, F., Gardner, W.L. & Sels, L. (2015). Authentic leadership, authentic followership, basic need satisfaction, and work role performance: a cross-level study. *Journal of Management*, 41(6), 1677–1697.

Liu, H., Cutcher, L. & Grant, D. (2017). Authentic leadership in context: an analysis of banking CEO narratives during the global financial crisis. *Human Relations*, 70(6), 694–724.

Lombard, L., April, K. & Peters, K. (2012). Sustainability & authentic leadership: stumbling blocks and enablers. *Crown Research in Education*, 2(2), 74–84.

Lumby, J. (2006). Conceptualising diversity and leadership, evidence from 10 cases. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 3, 154–165.

Luthans, F. & Avolio, B.J. (2003). Authentic leadership development. *Positive Organizational Scholarship*, 241(258), 1–26.

Mackay, F. (2021). Dilemmas of an academic feminist as manager in the neoliberal academy: negotiating institutional authority, oppositional knowledge and change. *Political Studies Review*, 19(1), 75–95.

MacKay, K. (2019) Authenticity and normative authority: addressing the agency dilemma with values of one's own. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 51(3), 1–22.

Mackenzie, C. and Stoljar, N. (Eds.) (2000). *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency and the Social Self*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MacNeil, H.M. & Mak, B. (2007). Constructions of authenticity. *Library Trends*, 56(1), 26–52.

Mainemelis, C., Kark, R. & Epitropaki, O. (2015). Creative leadership: a multi-context conceptualization. *Academy of Management Annales*, 9, 393–482.

Malone, E. (2023). Country music and the problem of authenticity. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 63(1), 75–90.

Meyerson, D.E. & Scully, M.A. (1995). Crossroads tempered radicalism and the politics of ambivalence and change. *Organization Science*, 6(5), 585–600.

Morris, J.A. & Feldman, D.C. (1996). The dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labor. *Academy of Management Review*, 21(4), 986–1010.

Mouzakitis, A. (2006). Autonomy and authenticity. On the aporetic nature of time and history: Castoriadis–Heidegger. *Critical Horizons*, 7(1), 277–301.

Myeza, A. & April, K. (2021). Atypical black leader emergence: South African self-perceptions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 1–21.

Ng, T.W. & Feldman, D.C. (2008). The relationship of age to ten dimensions of job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(2), 392.

Nkomo, M.S. (2011). A postcolonial and anti-colonial reading of 'African' leadership and management in organization studies: tensions, contradictions and possibilities. *Organization*, 18, 365–386.

Nkomo, S.M. & Al Ariss, A.A. (2014). The historical origins of ethnic (white) privilege in US organisations. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 29(4), 389–404.

Nyberg, D. & Sveningsson, S. (2014). Paradoxes of authentic leadership: leader identity struggles. *Leadership*, 10(4), 437–455.

O'Brien, E. & Linehan, C. (2019). Problematising the authentic self in conceptualisations of emotional dissonance. *Human Relations*, 72(9), 1530–1556.

Peterson, R.A. (2005). In search of authenticity. *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(5), 1083–1098.

Ragins, B. R., Singh, R., & Cornwell, J. M. (2007). Making the invisible visible: fear and disclosure of sexual orientation at work. *Journal of applied psychology*, 92(4), 1103.

Rast III, D. E., Gaffney, A. M., Hogg, M. A., & Crisp, R. J. (2012). Leadership under uncertainty: When leaders who are non-prototypical group members can gain support. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48(3), 646–653.

Ridgeway, C.L. (2011). *Framed by Gender*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Riggle, E.D., Rostosky, S.S., Black, W.W. & Rosenkrantz, D.E. (2017). Outness, concealment, and authenticity: associations with LGB individuals' psychological distress and well-being. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 4(1), 54–62.

Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L. (2004). Autonomy is no illusion: self-determination theory and the empirical study of authenticity, awareness, and will. In Greenberg, J., Koole, S.L. & Pyszczynski, T. (Eds.), *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology*. New York: Guilford Press, pp. 449–479.

Ryan, R.M., LaGuardia, J.G. & Rawsthorne, L.J. (2005). Self-complexity and the authenticity of self-aspects: effects on well-being and resilience to stressful events. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 7(3), 431–448.

Ryan, W.S. & Ryan, R.M. (2019). Toward a social psychology of authenticity: exploring within-person variation in autonomy, congruence, and genuineness using self-determination theory. *Review of General Psychology*, 23(1), 99–112.

Samdanis, M. & Lee, S.H. (2021). The emergence of creative leaders within social networks: the case of Andy Warhol in the art world of New York. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.635678

Samdanis, M. & Özbilgin, M. (2020). The duality of an atypical leader in diversity management: the legitimisation and delegitimisation of diversity beliefs in organisations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 22(2), 101–119.

Sartre, J.-P. (1943). *L'être et le néant. Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*. Paris: Gallimard. (Translated by H. Barnes as *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*. London: Routledge, 1995.)

Schmader, T., Major, B., Eccleston, C.P. & McCoy, S.K. (2001). Devaluing domains in response to threatening intergroup comparisons: perceived legitimacy and the status value asymmetry. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 782–796.

Schneider, S.K. & Northcraft, G.B. (1999). Three social dilemmas of workforce diversity in organisations: a social identity perspective. *Human Relations*, 52(11), 1445–1467.

Schwartz, S.H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In Zanna, M. (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 25, pp. 1–65. New York: Academic Press.

Shamir, B. & Eilam, G. (2005). "What's your story?" A life-stories approach to authentic leadership development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 395–417.

Simons, T., Friedman, R., Liu, L.A. & McLean Parks, J. (2007). Racial differences in sensitivity to behavioral integrity: attitudinal consequences, in-group effects, and 'trickle down' among Black and non-Black employees. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(3), 650–665.

Sperry, E. (2013). Dupes of patriarchy: feminist strong substantive autonomy's epistemological weaknesses. *Hypatia*, 28(4), 887–904.

Steffens, N.K., Haslam, S.A., Ryan, M.K. & Kessler, T. (2013). Leader performance and prototypicality: their inter-relationship and impact on leaders' identity entrepreneurship. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 606–613.

Stewart, D., Verbos, A.K., Birmingham, C., Black, S.L. & Gladstone, J.S. (2017). Being Native American in business: culture, identity, and authentic leadership in modern American Indian enterprises. *Leadership*, 13(5), 549–570.

Sutton, A. (2018). Distinguishing between authenticity and personality consistency in predicting well-being: a mixed method approach. *European Review of Applied Psychology*, 68(3), 117–130.

Taylor, M. (2020). UK Games Industry Census—understanding diversity in the UK games industry workforce. Available at https://ukie.org.uk/UK-games-industry-census-2020

Taylor, S. (1998). Emotional labour and the new workplace. In Thompson, P. & Warhurst, C. (Eds.), *Workplaces of the Future: Critical Perspectives on Work and Organisations*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Tobias Neely, M. (2018). Fit to be king: how patrimonialism on Wall Street leads to inequality. *Socio-Economic Review*, 16(2), 365–385.

Trilling, L. (1972). *Sincerity and Authenticity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Uhl-Bien, M., Riggio, R.E., Lowe, K.B. & Carsten, M.K. (2014). Followership theory: a review and research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(1), 83–104.

Van Knippenberg, D. & Hogg, M.A. (2003). A social identity model of leadership effectiveness in organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 25, 243–295.

Walby, S. (1989). Theorising patriarchy. *Sociology*, 23(2), 213–234.

Walumbwa, F.O., Avolio, B.J., Gardner, W.L., Wernsing, T.S. & Peterson, S.J. (2008). Authentic leadership: development and validation of a theory-based measure. *Journal of Management*, 34(1), 89–126.

Westlund, A.C. (2009). Rethinking relational autonomy. *Hypatia*, 24(4), 26–49.

Whitehead, G. (2009). Adolescent leadership development: building a case for an authenticity framework. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 37, 847–872.

Whittle, A. (2021). Making sense of the rise and fall of Jeremy Corbyn: Towards an ambiguity-centred perspective on authentic leadership. *Leadership*, 17(4), 441–463.

Winkler, I. (2018). Identity work and emotions: a review. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 20(1), 120–133.

Yavuz, M., Özbilgin, M.F. & Kamasak, R. (2020). Exploring the interplay between deviance and loneliness at work. In Sharma, N. (Ed.), *Analyzing Workplace Deviance in Modern Organizations*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global, pp. 48–65.

Yoder, J.D. (1991). Rethinking tokenism: looking beyond numbers. *Gender & Society*, 5, 178–192.

Zanoni, P. & Janssens, M. (2015). The power of diversity discourses at work: on the interlocking nature of diversities and occupations. *Organisation Studies*, 36(11), 1463–1483.

Zietsman, D. & April, K. (2021). Homosocial reproduction: the lived workplace experiences of diverse millennial women—Part II. *Effective Executive*, 24(4), 37–61.

Özbilgin, M. & Vassilopoulou, J. (2018). Relational methods in organization studies: a critical overview. In Jemielniak, D. & Ciesielska, M. (Eds.), *Qualitative Methodologies in Organization Studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 151–177.

Özbilgin, M.F. & Erbil, C. (2023). LGBT+ in the boardroom: a rainbow agenda for change. In Tasheva, S. & Huse, M. (Eds.), *Research Handbook on Diversity and Corporate Governance*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 28–44.

Özbilgin, M.F., Beauregard, T.A., Tatli, A. & Bell, M.P. (2011). Work–life, diversity and intersectionality: a critical review and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13, 177–198.

Özbilgin, M.F., Erbil, C., Baykut, S. & Kamasak, R. (2023). Passing as resistance through a Goffmanian approach: normalized, defensive, strategic, and instrumental passing when LGBTQ+ individuals encounter institutions. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 30(3), 862–880.

How to cite this article: Ayaz, O., Ozbilgin, M.F., Samdanis, M. & Torunoğlu Tinay, D. (2024) Authenticity and atypicality in leadership: Can an atypical leader afford to be authentic? *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 26, 312–328. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12355