

**MANAGEMENT TRANSPARENCY IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE JOB PERFORMANCE AND
SATISFACTION**

by

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Abstract

An emerging reality among government agencies is the impact that transparent communication and authentic leadership have on employees. This quantitative study investigated transparent communication and authentic leadership's impact on employees' job performance and satisfaction in county government employees. The sample population included 500 employees at all levels of county government. The sample population answered survey questions that focused on their communication and interaction with their manager. Additionally, the research questions answered whether the manager's communication impacted their job satisfaction and performance. The results of the analysis indicated that statistically significant relationships existed between relational transparency and self-awareness, and communication, autonomy, and feedback. The results from this study highlight the need to train public sector leaders in government on transparent communication and authentic leadership techniques. These techniques will provide the leaders with communication strategies for providing honest and constructive feedback about the employees' job performance. The recommended future research to consider is separating the multiple predictors into specific variables that would lead to a different outcome. For instance, the study would have a hypothesis that emphasized the impact of job satisfaction and relational transparency. This future investigation and examination would deliver the researcher with additional understanding of the lack of job satisfaction and average performance within a county governmental setting.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to God first and then to my parents, Pearlie Mae and John, Sr. (deceased) who raised to be the best that I could be. To my sister, Delores and my brother, John who have always been in my corner. Also, to my biggest supporter, my husband, Michael, who kept me encouraged to keep moving forward throughout this journey. To my cherished friend and fellow dissertation partner, Debra, who was instrumental in me enrolling into this PhD program.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Present day public service organizations are constantly undergoing a variety of conversions such as restructuring or downsizing. A key component to successful restructuring and downsizing is clear and consistent communication. A lack of clear and consistent communication between leaders and employees causes a significant problem within an organization's core information structure (Whitworth, 2011). The ongoing disconnect and inconsistency in communication make it apparent that organizations and human resources departments need to develop an advanced and comprehensive communication plan (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007).

Organizations need leaders who communicate with directness, truthfulness, and disclosure, who can develop a workplace of transparency in communication, and who motivate their employees to provide good service to everyone (George, 2003). Transparent communication is having a clear comprehension and flow of information. Transparent communication is information that is disclosed, and that would be an acceptable criterion of honesty and sufficient inclusiveness. According to Rawlins (2008), sufficient inclusiveness gives attention to the necessities of the recipient and not of the transmitter.

A developing certainty of the success of companies and organizations is the impact that transparent communication and authentic leadership have on employees. The managers' communication with their employees is about affirmation and having a shared decision-making and goal-setting process. Managers who display authentic leadership attributes inspire and

encourage employee participation, assist in conflict resolution, and promote shared decision-making with employees (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

Leadership communication styles that demonstrate shared decision-making and partnerships are attributes of a successful manager. Rawlins (2008) inferred that the public service sector would benefit from continued investigation of transparent communication and authentic leadership traits that are defined as being open, honest, candid, and trustworthy. The public perceives government transparency as unique to internal operations of finance and accounting. Lastly, the research has shown that there is a relationship between transparent communication and employee job satisfaction (George et al., 2007; Rawlins, 2008).

Further study of the relationship between authentic leadership, job satisfaction, and performance should occur within county governmental entities. Government transparency as described by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) focused on sharing significant and beneficial information to the community and opening it to public scrutiny. When the emphasis is on the public perception of internal financial operations, with less emphasis on subjective perception of transparency, employees' job satisfaction and performance are impacted.

Transparent communication as defined by Schnackenberg (2002) consists of three components: disclosure, clarity, and accuracy. Disclosure is the quantity of information presented and the degree to which it is available to interested parties. Clarity is the extent the sender clearly provides information and the receiver correctly comprehends it. Accuracy is the originator's perceived truthfulness of the information presented.

Researchers later defined transparent communication as openness, accuracy, and candidness between managers and employees (Neves & Vaccaro, 2013; Schnackenberg &

Tomlinson, 2014). Other studies that focused on authentic leadership and communication transparency were done in the field of nursing. Research in the discipline of nursing on authentic leadership and transparency communication concluded that when administrators were authentic and transparent, the nurses realized an opportunity to experience empowerment, and advanced in their job performance (Wong & Laschinger, 2012). Additionally, Wong and Laschinger (2012) found that government administrators continue to discuss the challenges of the lack of effective communication between managers and their subordinates.

A quantitative, correlational design was used to investigate the relationship between authentic leadership traits and managers' communication style and the impact on employee job satisfaction and performance in public sector settings (Cozby & Bates, 2012). Quantitative research is defined as the collection of statistical data and analysis of that data by applying statistically-based procedures. The essence of quantitative research is to gather statistical information that describes an actual experience or phenomenon (Creswell, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Transparent communication and authentic leadership are major factors in job performance and satisfaction of employees (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May 2004; Men, 2014; Men & Stacks, 2014). Transparency communication and authentic leadership are skills needed for effective leadership. Early research done in the 1990's of transparent communication indicated a need to further study governmental transparency communication between managers and their employees (Jaros, 1997; Rosengren, 1999).

Wang and Hsieh (2013) confirmed the need to implement clear guidelines that promote communication transparency, authentic leadership traits, and that focus on the

correlation between employee job satisfaction and performance in county government. More recently, research revealed a need for managers to focus their leadership style of openness when interacting and assigning tasks to employees (Fairbanks, Plowman, & Rawlins, 2007; Walumbwa et al., 2008, 2010).

Authentic leadership theory proposes that managers who are more unpretentious progressed in their years of experience, and exhibited mental attributes that may include courage, positivity, flexibility, and self-efficiency. Moreover, an authentic leader tends to possess an all-encompassing ethical viewpoint and promotes a work environment that reinforces that manager bringing forth more self-discernment and self-controlled open-minded behaviors.

The leader who engages with employees through honest dialogue and shares information openly with understanding and candor provides an opportunity for employees to build trust and a strong camaraderie with the leader. The authentic leadership behavior of the leaders encourages their followers' genuineness and growth, giving rise to security and consistent performance (Avolio & Gardner 2005; Gardner et al., 2005). George (2003) concluded that county governments need authentic managers who lead with disclosure, clarity, and accuracy in their communication style and action, positively impacting employee job performance and satisfaction.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of this study is to ascertain if there is a statistically significant relationship between managers using transparent communication and authentic leadership traits and employees' job satisfaction and performance. Seamless communication and positive leadership behaviors build a culture of trust and inspire employees to provide better customer service and

performance (George, 2003; Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey, & Oke, 2011). Managers using authentic leadership traits lead with disclosure, clarity, and accuracy, and in their communication style impact employees' job performance and satisfaction. The leader who fosters candid dialogue and shares openly with employees strengthens the leader-follower relationship. Walumbwa et al. (2011) confirmed that leaders who frequently engage their employees using disclosure, clarity, and accuracy found an increased level of trust that leads to sincere and honest dialogue from employees.

A quantitative study revealed that the managers' level of transparency does affect the employees' perceived confidence in the manager (Wang & Hsiehthe, 2013; Pengera & Ćerne, 2014). The workers' confidence in their manager supports an improved employee job performance and willingness to take on new projects and assignments. Further, Walumbwa et al. (2011) discussed four elements of authentic leadership traits: being aware of whom you are as a leader, having a reasonable reaction, adopting a moral viewpoint, and establishing relational transparency.

The results from the study revealed that the leaders who practiced self-examination and evaluated their psychological state improved their relationships with their employees. The frequent use of self-examination enhanced the ability to contemplate their emotional state and identify their goals and ambitions. According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), authentic leaders realized and accepted their basic values, emotional state, uniqueness, and intentions or objectives, which are the four components of self-awareness.

Authentic leaders who interact with employees based on candidness, honesty and trust saw increased productivity from their employees. The trust established by the manager supports

a comprehensive, transparent process of working with the employee on various projects, whether complex or simplistic in nature (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Authentic leaders welcome genuine and straightforward relationships with employees. The leader who engages employees with open dialogue and openly shares information with clarity and accuracy strengthens the attribute of trustworthiness.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for the public sector to provide insight into how the practice of transparent communication and authentic leadership affects public sector employee job satisfaction and performance. Additionally, the research seeks to expand the application of transparent communication and authentic leadership through the creation of targeted human resource strategies. Recent research has revealed a need for managers to have candid and honest communication when interacting and assigning tasks to employees (Fairbanks et al., 2007; Walumbwa et al., 2008, 2010).

Existing scholarly research has shown that there is a relationship between transparent communication and employee job satisfaction (George et al., 2007; Rawlins, 2009). The gap in the research becomes apparent in the lack of information and investigation of transparent communication, authentic leadership, job satisfaction, and performance being done within county governmental entities. The lack of transparency in communication and authentic leadership exhibited by leaders causes employees to seek other employment and increases employee attrition (Walumbwa et al., 2010).

This research linked a relationship between transparent communication and authentic leadership and their impact on employee job performance and satisfaction in county government.

The research furthered denoted that there was a significant relationship between transparent communication and job satisfaction and performance, concluding that managers and employees would benefit from adoption of transparent communication and authentic leadership practices in their organization (Granados, Gupta, & Kauffman, 2008, 2010, 2012).

Rationale

Transparent communication theory is defined as sincerity from the leader and thorough discourse with the followers (Men, 2014). According to Rawlins, substantial completeness is concerned with the needs of the receiver, rather than those of the sender. The inclusion of authentic managers, who exhibit honesty and helpfulness, and who promote trusting and helpful interpersonal relationships, adds to the growth of employees' mental well-being. The employees then are free to share their feelings and can work in a less stressful work environment. The pressure to produce is lessened, which enables employees to perform more efficiently (Pengera & Ćerne, 2014).

This study is a quantitative and correlational study used to investigate the relationship between a manager's communication style and its impact on employee job satisfaction and performance in public sector settings. The sample population in this study includes employees at all levels of county government: budget and analysis, contracts and purchasing, health department, intergovernmental and legislative affairs, finance, and the office of emergency services. The research was constructed to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between managers using transparent communication and authentic leadership traits and employees' job satisfaction and performance.

Previous studies were limited to investigating transparent communication and employees' job satisfaction and performance in the areas of finance and public relations. This study investigated open communication and authentic leadership's impact on employees' job performance and satisfaction in a governmental setting (Wong & Laschinger, 2012; Men, 2014; Neves & Vaccaro, 2013; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014). This research focused on the public sector and the leaders who manage with clarity, accuracy, and disclosure in their communication style and the impact on their employees. There is a gap in the research regarding leaders who foster an environment of transparency in communication, along with encouraging their employees to provide feedback and assist with critical decision-making (George, 2003; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

Research Questions and Hypothesis Statements

R₁: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of recognition in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₁: It is hypothesized that relational transparency predicts job satisfaction in the forms of recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision.

R₂: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of promotion in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₂: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of promotion.

R₃: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of communication in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₃: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of communication.

R₄: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of supervision in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₄: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of supervision.

R₅: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of feedback from the job itself in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job performance (autonomy and feedback from the job itself).

H₅: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of feedback from the job itself.

R₆: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of autonomy in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job performance in county government employees (autonomy and feedback from the job itself).

H₆: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of autonomy.

Definition of Terms

Authentic Communication

Authentic communication is having candid dialogue and openly sharing information about one's self to the followers. Authentic communication discloses one's honest viewpoint and feelings (Men, 2014).

Authentic Leadership Theory

Authentic leadership theory is defined as being aware of yourself, possessing a moral perspective, and relational transparency (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Through self-examination, authentic leaders examine and consider their psychological state: their contemplations, emotional state, and ambitions. Authentic leaders gain knowledge and recognize their primary values, emotions, character, and motives or goals, which are the four elements of self-awareness according to Avolio and Gardner (2005).

Employees

Employees are defined in this study as individuals who hold various types of positions in the county such as clerical, maintenance, administration, finance, and healthcare.

Job Performance

Job performance is the overall anticipated asset to the workplace of distinct behaviors that a person demonstrates over a specific period; the performance is routinely measured on an annual basis (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002)

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is characterized as the fulfillment of a state of mind. Specifically, job satisfaction is the state of mind fulfillment stemming from the appraisal of the individual's job success and how much the success is valued (George et al., 2007; Rawlins, 2009).

Managers

In the context of this research, the definition of managers refers to individuals throughout the County who are a part of the X and Y units. These individuals are responsible for supervising, managing, and evaluating various employees who are a part of a bargaining unit of the County.

Organization

Organization is defined as a non-profit, corporation, or government entity that employs people to perform a variety of activities for specific outcomes or results (Daft, 2012). For this study, an organization is a group of individuals formed to achieve some purpose; an organization is seen as leading the activities of many individuals so that a particular goal can be accomplished (Denhardt & Catlaw, 2014).

Transparent Communication

Transparent communication is a method of communication that produces trust and credibility. It is further defined as noteworthy facts, contribution and accountability that necessitate open discussion and ongoing communication (Rawlins, 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2008, 2010). The definition of transparent communication most aligned to public service leadership in organizations is transparency as disclosure, accuracy, and clarity among managers and employees (Neves & Vaccaro, 2013; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

Transparent Communication Theory

Transparent communication theory is a multidimensional framework that capsulizes participation, substantial information, and accountability across professional, managerial settings (Rawlins, 2008, 2009; Men & Stacks, 2014; Men, 2014).

Assumptions and Limitations

There are key research assumptions to consider for this study. The assumptions are theoretical, topical, and methodological assumptions. Theoretical assumptions are based on the selection of theories that best define the research project (Creswell, 2003). Topical assumptions provide structure for the chosen topic of the study that addresses the need and purpose of the study. Methodological assumptions assist in guiding the appropriate quantitative research method for the study based on individual responses through numerical results (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013). This study will incorporate the theoretical, topical, and methodological assumptions that will support the philosophical framework, the data, and results of this research.

Theoretical Assumptions

The choice of a research approach infers certain theoretical assumptions; these theoretical assumptions drive the research activity, the methodology chosen, and the research questions (Cozby & Bates, 2012). The theoretical assumption is that transparent communication consists of a multidimensional framework that capsulizes disclosure, clarity, and accuracy (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014). There is an assumption that authentic leadership and communication transparency influence employees' job satisfaction and performance (Abramis, 1994; Avolio & Gardner, 2005, Pengera & Ćerne, 2014). One assumption is that the dialogue of transparent communication theory and the impact on employee job satisfaction within the workplace works using the dimensions of disclosure, clarity, and accuracy.

Further, it is assumed that the transparent communication dimensions will motivate public service leadership to create models that manage transparency in communication and begin to implement a set of strategies that specifically address disclosure, clarity, and accuracy. Lastly, transparent communication is a multidimensional communication framework that includes disclosure, clarity, and accuracy across professional settings. This theoretical foundation directly relates to the hypothesis that managers' transparency as defined by disclosure, clarity, and accuracy relates to employee job satisfaction (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

Topical Assumptions

There is an assumption that managers' leadership style and communication has an impact on employee's job performance and job satisfaction (Wang & Hsieh, 2013). Moreover, it is assumed that leadership transparency sets the foundation for a variety of outcomes, such as employee's confidence in the manager, little hesitation from the follower to connect with the

leader, and productivity in job performance, and positive reaction to the job itself (Vogelgesang & Lester, 2009). Lastly, it is assumed by research that when leadership is inconsistent in displaying transparent communication, the opposite behaviors are exhibited by the employee.

Methodological Assumptions

Methodologically, the assumption is that the researchers will use logical positivism to concentrate on interpreting participants' responses through numbers instead of interpreting participants' experiences through stories or open-ended questions (Cohen et al., 2013).

Epistemologically, knowledge acquisition will be objective and quantifiable, obtained through scientific and duplicated research methods; the survey uses questions that have been field-tested and pilot-tested to ensure their validity and reliability. Axiologically, the research gathered should be unbiased and neutral; this study is using an anonymous online survey to ensure lack of bias and neutrality (Cohen et al., 2013). Ontologically, the environment will be constant, stable, observable, and measurable, as each participant will be asked the questions in the same structure using a valid measurement tool to obtain the participant's factual answer (Cohen et al., 2013). The assumption is that the participants will provide straightforward and honest responses to the survey.

Limitations

The participants of the study are specific to county government employees, thus limiting the results due to the lack of representatives of employees from other branches of government. Additionally, the willingness of individuals in the organization to respond honestly is a limitation of the study. Another limitation is that the county government has not established human resource policies that include transparent communication comprising disclosure, clarity, and

accuracy that address employees' job performance and satisfaction. A final limitation may be in how biased the participants will be in answering the survey questions; their answers may not accurately reflect their actual job performance and what they feel is expected of them (Evans & Mathur, 2005).

Nature of the Study/Theoretical Framework

Transparent communication framework using authentic leadership traits is guiding this proposed investigation. There are three interrelated principles of transparent communication theory: (a) disclosure is the amount of information shared and the availability to those identified individuals, (b) clarity is the extent to which the sender clearly communicated information and the receiver relevantly understood it and, (c) accuracy is the extent that the sender perceived that the information was accurate (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014). Authentic leadership traits focused on genuine and straightforward relationships with employees. The leader who engages employees with candid dialogue and openly shares information with clarity and accuracy exhibits the attribute of trustworthiness.

Research revealed that the managers' level of transparency does affect the employees' perceived trust in the managers (Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Pengera & Černe, 2014). Authentic leaders interact with employees based on candidness and honesty; trust will prevail without reservation from the followers. The trust established by the leader supports a comprehensive, transparent process of working with the employees on various projects, whether complex or simplistic in nature (Walumbwa et al., 2011).

The component of authentic leadership that interfaced with transparent communication is relational transparency. Relational transparency comprises demonstrating accessibility and

transparent relations with co-workers. It represents an individual's genuine internal core measured using the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, Conditions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire, Global Job Satisfaction Survey, and General Performance scale (Wong & Laschinger, 2012). Managers express their unpretentious inner self when openness is shown, self-disclosure, and trust (Abrams, 1994; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Pengera & Çerne, 2014). This type of conduct inspires trust through the manager–employee relationship, in an atmosphere of sharing information, and actual insights and opinions are expressed (Kernis, 2003).

The use of authentic leadership traits of openness, honesty, and self-reflection are important across a variety of professional fields. Finance, politics, and technology organizations have provided training to leaders on authentic leadership that focuses on transparency, being aware of their values and demonstrating ethical behavior. Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, and Avey (2009) concluded that some organizations are considering how to choose and cultivate leaders who will lead with standards that reflect authentic leadership and who construct long-term goals within the workplace. Researchers continue to investigate ways organizations have incorporated authentic leadership that constructs and promotes a positive work environment.

Shepherd and Sutcliffe (2011) identified transparent communication as a vital element in building employees' morale and positive engagement with their managers. The increasing understanding among researchers is that transparent communication is a practice that managers can adopt across several domains within an organization. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) confirmed that organizations change their infrastructure by implementing transparent communication. Organizations that desire to do so ensure that managers are provided the needed tools to make the change (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The remainder of this study includes Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5. Chapter 2 provides a literature review summarizing the core theories that frame this study. The topics of Chapter 2 include changing dynamics of organizational communication, a conceptual model of transparent communication, and the characteristics of leadership transparency, authentic leadership traits, job performance, and job satisfaction. Chapter 3 addresses the research methodology used, the steps taken to collect the data, and the data analysis process used throughout the study. Chapter 4 presents the data results of the study. Chapter 5 includes a thorough discussion of the findings, as well as the study limitations and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to the Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to provide background information and to make a case as to the importance of this research. Reviewing past research helps to frame the present study and identifies gaps in the existing literature (Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins, 2012). An evolving inevitability of the success for the public sector is the impact that managers' transparency in communication and authentic leadership have on employees (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Rawlins (2008) inferred that government sector would benefit from continued investigation of transparent communication and authentic leadership traits that are defined as being open, honest, candid, and trustworthy. This literature review includes historical and current views of transparent communication and authentic leadership theories, job satisfaction, and job performance.

Review of the Literature

Transparent Communication Theory

The evolution of transparent communication theory has changed over the years with the emergence of the managers and employees incorporating a transparency guideline in public relations and finance departments (Rawlins, 2008, 2009; Men & Stacks, 2014; Men, 2014). In general, effective, transparent communication is a management function, which includes managing social interactions among employees and influencing people so that the goals of the organization are achieved (McBride, 2002). Transparent communication theory assumes that knowing the importance of liability risks, employee involvement, and employee input are essential for transparent communication. According to the transparent communication theory, the

trust of employees, respect for leaders, and loyalty to the organization lead to employee job satisfaction (Men & Stacks, 2014; Men, 2014). Later research by Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014), concentrated on the characteristics of transparency in organizations, the attributes of transparency as a multidimensional communication construct, leadership transparency in communication and the impact on employees' job satisfaction and performance.

Definition of Transparent Communication

Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) analyzed past research to develop a theoretical definition of transparency in communication and conveyed the dimensions of disclosure, clarity, and accuracy. Their analysis clarified the processes that organizations can adopt and how those processes will impact transparency in communication viewpoints. According to Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014), transparency in communication consists of three multi-dimensional constructs: disclosure, clarity, and accuracy.

Disclosure is the quantity of information presented and the degree to which it is available to interested parties. Moreover, the disclosure is also about the relevancy of the information revealed. Williams (2008) identified four distinct methods linked to disclosure: audience consideration, information clarification, certification, and dissemination of information to internal and external listeners.

Of the four methods of disclosure, certification of information and dissemination of information are linked to transparency in communication. Also, what is connected to disclosure is the use of audience consideration and clear information to differentiate pertinent information from the unnecessary information. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) concluded the primary

purpose of disclosure in transparency communication is that the information provided is helpful to the receiver in decision-making.

Clarity is focused on the choice of media, contextual sensitivity, linguistic coherence, noise management, and relevance to allow understanding to take place. Clarity is a measure of how the audience perceives the communication. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) summarized that for information to have clarity and be transparent, the information must be readily understood, and the receiver must grasp the importance of the information. Clarity is distinguished from disclosure based on the ease of the meaning expressed rather than the relevance of the information coming from the manager to the employee. Finally, Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) stated that clarity depends on how skillfully the manager linguistically conveys information to intended receiver.

Accuracy is the degree to which information is perceived as precise by the sender. Walumbwa et al. (2011) defined accuracy as the presentation of valid information that is without bias. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) noted that Granados et al. (2008, 2010; 2012) defined accuracy as presenting reliable information to the receiver, and as the main conduit for disclosure and clarity for communication to be transparent. Walumbwa et al. (2011) viewed accuracy as embedded in the elements of honesty and candidness, unlike disclosure and clarity. The reliability of information is key to transparency within an organization and accuracy is the key component of the multi-dimensional construct of transparent communication.

Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) noted that disclosure, clarity, and accuracy worked together in transparent communication. When employees see information as being helpful with decision-making, disclosure is improved. Clarity is improved as employees have information that

is pertinent, and accuracy is better when employees feel that information is dependable. The multi-dimensional approach to transparent communication is a unique construct that impacts the relationship between the manager and the employee (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2011). Each of these dimensions contributes uniquely to overall levels of transparency by increasing stakeholder confidence in the quality of information received from the organization. Further study was recommended by Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) on the impact of these dimensions and authentic leadership on job performance and satisfaction.

Transparent Communication in Organizations

Transparent communication within organizations has become a major area of focus among communication professionals. The body of research suggested that transparent communication is an essential component of organizations, facilitating organizational trust (Schnackenberg and Tomlinson, 2014), employee job satisfaction (Men and Stacks, 2014; Men, 2014), and a reduction in absenteeism of employees (Vogelgesang & Lester, 2009). The increasing attention to the importance of transparent communication has not extended to the governmental agencies and their employees (Rawlins, 2008; Men, 2014).

The concept of leadership in transparent communication originated from researchers who focused on authentic leadership advancement; the researchers found transparent communication to be an essential aspect of successful leadership (Men, 2014). Many facets of transparent communication, as stated by Vogelgesang and Lester (2009), provided insight into how leaders can share information and engage their employees in meaningful dialogue. In this communication style, leaders and staff are readily available to obtain and receive other

viewpoints, and remain straightforward about intents and motivations of decision-making processes (Men & Stacks, 2013; Men, 2014).

A leader who practices transparent communication provides relevant material when meeting with employees, is eager to involve and receive feedback from staff, and yet is clear about objectives and rationales for how decisions are made (Vogelgesang & Lester, 2009). Walumbwa et al. (2011) concluded that independently, all three principles of transparency are necessary, but not sufficient for information to be considered transparent. When managers use all three principles as a unit, there is trust, and create a strong camaraderie (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Public service leaders can use transparent communication to provide pertinent material when meeting with subordinates.

Transparent communication provides several benefits within organizations. Transparent communication allows managers to convey information effectively when working with employees (Schnackenberg, 2002). Schnackenberg (2002) investigated how clear communication impacted leadership, specifically focusing on disclosure. Further reviewed by Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) found that transparent communication was discussed in the development of organizational trust, organizational identity, perceptions of leadership, and employees' job satisfaction, and performance. The significant factor addressed in these studies was the subordinates' perception of transparent communication from their leaders and the resultant benefits to their organizations (Schnackenberg, 2002; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014). The cumulation of this research indicated that the use of leader transparency in communication was essential and should be an ongoing practice of managers and leaders (Schnackenberg, 2002; Schnackenberg & Schnackenberg, 2014).

Several researchers have also examined the relationships between transparent communication and organizational trust. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) conducted a correlational study to evaluate the relationship between organizational trust and disclosure, clarity, and accuracy. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) indicated that a by-product of the multi-dimensional model of transparent communication was the increased level of trust within the organization among the managers and employees. Vogelgesang and Lester (2009) also found that an increase in trust between leader and staff and increased staff involvement resulted from transparent communication practices.

Wang and Hsieh (2013) surveyed nurses to determine if the leader's use of transparency in communication influenced the nurses' perceived trust in their manager. Wang and Hsieh (2013) concluded that when administrators were transparent and authentic, the nurses experienced empowerment and their perceived confidence in their managers increased. Wang and Hsieh (2013) determined that the leader's use of the multi-dimensional approach to transparency in communication and authentic leadership traits do have an effect on the employees' perceived trust in the manager. This level of confidence closely associated with relational transparency, one of the characteristics of authentic leadership theory.

The positive aspects of transparent communication have led researchers to conclude that it should be adopted within organizations. Vogelgesang and Lester (2009) found that organizations should empower and equip their leaders and managers by incorporating leader transparency in communication constructs within their human resource management training. Also, Schnackenberg (2002) evaluated how transparent communication gained momentum in the areas of government, politics, technology, law enforcement, and large corporations. However,

the body of literature included less on the factor of job satisfaction and transparent communication.

Some research has shown that there is a relationship between transparent communication and employee job satisfaction (George et al., 2007; Rawlins, 2009), yet this research was slightly outdated. Further study was recommended by Neves and Vaccaro (2013) to investigate the impact that manager's transparent communication had on employee job performance and satisfaction. Coupling transparent communication with authentic leadership style, as in the present study, might further highlight the connections among leadership communication behaviors and employee job satisfaction.

An additional gap found in the transparent communication literature included the relationship between managers and employees in the public sector. Walumbwa et al. (2011) stated that the field of transparency in communication, specifically as disclosure, clarity, and accuracy, recognized the gap in the literature in the areas of government, politics, technology, law enforcement, and large corporations. This gap in the literature encouraged further research of transparency in communication of all three constructs due to the continuous evolution of transparency within organizations. In particular, Walumbwa et al. (2011) concluded that county governments should recruit individuals who lead with disclosure, clarity, and accuracy in their communication style and decision-making.

Authentic Leadership Theory

Historical Overview

Authentic leadership is an evolving theory designed to bring awareness to leaders' self-control, relational explanations, and individual reflection (Avolio, 2007; Gardner, Cogliser,

Davis, & Dickens, 2011). The early inception of authentic leadership theory began with Greek philosophers, as authento, meaning having absolute power (Gardner et al., 2011). The leading Greek philosophers focused on self-reflection; thus, the exploration of personal authenticity became significant to the philosophers during their era (Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2011). The quest for meaning pushed the Greek philosopher Socrates to focus on self-analysis, while Aristotle continued the exploration by researching ethics that lead the search to a greater good and self-realization (Gardner et al., 2011). The Greek philosophers set the pace for the next generation of researchers of authentic leadership to pursue an in-depth investigation of how authenticity from leaders influences their followers and to pursue the values of their leaders (Peterlin, Penger, & Dimovski, 2009).

The instrumental structures of Barnard (1962) offered advanced models for top executives and recommended that leaders practice self-actualization and personal reflection. Luthans and Avolio (2003) continued the early work of Barnard (1962) by extending their authentic leadership research to examine how policy-making leaders provoked growth in other organizational leaders. Specifically, the researchers recommended that leaders emulate authentic behavior as a way of life and not just in the workplace. The researchers concluded that a more detailed model of authentic leadership was necessary to examine relational variables that accompany distinct characterizations.

The progression of authentic leadership research has caused the field to broaden the theoretical investigations into identifiable classifications: (a) authentic leadership theory, (b) authenticity/self-identity, (c) effective processes, (d) attribution theory/social perception, (e) positive organizational behavior (POB), and (f) well-being/vital engagement (Gardner et al.,

2011). The extension of the investigation into the above classifications has provided other avenues of research to other related theorists. Early behavioral science research found that organizations that articulated the operations of the organization fostered beneficial experiences within the group. In the administrative situation, the perception of transparency is presumed to increase positive organizational results, such as increased confidence, commitment, and performance.

Researchers have recently defined authentic leadership as leader behavior that elicits and encourages both positive psychological competencies and a positive ethical environment. Also, authentic leadership behavior fosters a greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, a balanced processing of information, the promotion of positive self-development, and relational transparency exhibited by leaders working with followers (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Authentic leadership was once considered a precursor instrumental in assisting leaders in examining their moral decisions (Gardner & Avolio, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Finance, politics, and technology organizations trained managers on authentic leadership that focused on transparency, awareness of their values, and ethical behavior. Clapp-Smith et al., (2009) concluded organizations that are considering how to choose and cultivate leaders should lead with standards that reflect authentic leadership behavior and construct long-term goals within the workplace.

Definition of Authentic Leadership

Contemporary definitions of authentic leadership are similar to the initial concepts. The definition of authentic leadership as expanded by Avolio et al. (2004) suggested that when a leader is open to followers and stakeholders with information that is relevant to the workplace,

he or she is considered authentic. Authentic managers express their genuine inner self when they show openness, self-disclosure, and trust in close relations with followers (Abrams, 1994; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Pengera & Ćerne, 2014). This type of conduct encourages confidence through the leader–employee connection in an environment of sharing information, and genuine insights and thoughts are voiced (Kernis, 2003).

Several characteristics define an authentic leader. Walumbwa et al. (2008) conducted a study that established authentic leadership as self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. Self-awareness denotes how well a leader understands his or her inner core and how he or she views the world. Self-awareness also denotes being mindful of the impact or influence the leader may have on others (Walumbwa et al., 2008). According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), authentic leaders ascertain and acknowledge their core ethics, emotions, individuality, and intentions or goals, which are the four elements of self-awareness.

Through self-examination, authentic leaders analyze and assess their psychological state: their thoughts, emotional condition, and aspirations. Internalized moral perspective indicates an adopted and integrated type of self-control; thus, the self-control is guided by core moral values that are not bound by organization guidelines. The significance of a leader having integrated personal self-control is the ability to make unbiased decisions based on what is ethical. Balanced processing refers to a leader's ability to assess all pertinent information before deciding objectively, and to seek other viewpoints that might oppose the leader's point of view (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

The element of authentic leadership that intermingled with transparent communication is

relational transparency. Relational transparency refers to sharing one's personal thoughts and expressing valid opinions and ways of thinking with employees and other relevant individuals (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Relational transparency is showing one's true self without pretense. As well, relational transparency is freely revealing how one feels without showing improper emotions. Relational transparency comprises accessibility to co-workers, honesty, self-exposure, genuine connection with followers, and trust (Gardner et al., 2005).

Authentic Leadership in Organizations

Researchers continue to investigate ways organizations have incorporated authentic leadership constructs and promoted positive work environments. Contemporary authentic leadership research revealed a variety of organizational benefits related to authentic leadership. Such research revealed that the use of authentic leadership traits of openness, honesty, and self-reflection are important across a variety of professional fields. For example, these kinds of behaviors cultivate trust in the manager–employee relationship, an environment of imparting information, and voicing of insights and beliefs (Kernis, 2003).

Authentic leadership may also increase job performance and job satisfaction (Pengera & Çerne, 2014; Valsania, León, Alonso, & Cantisano, 2012; Darvis & Rezaei, 2011). Based on the research, authentic leadership has positive influences on organizations and thus should be implemented to increase productivity and job satisfaction. Valsania et al., (2012) proposed that organizations utilize authentic leaders when developing human resource guidelines linked to the processes of employment, promotion, and training.

Wang et al. (2014) concluded that leaders should continue being transparent and open about their feelings when interacting with their employees. However, the studies were conducted

in the private sector, which may have different core values than the public sector (Men, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2011). The review of the literature did not reveal a combined study of authentic leadership and transparent communication and their influence on job satisfaction and performance. There is a lack of information and investigation of transparent communication, authentic leadership, job satisfaction, and performance within public sector employees.

Job Performance

Job performance consists of the activities and methods that further an agency objectives (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). Several research studies have focused on the relationship between communication and job satisfaction and overall administrative efficiency. Anderson and Level (1980) indicated that not enough efforts had targeted studying the direct correlation between manager communication and job performance. Early studies into the connection between communication and job performance suggested that any successful organization had to accomplish their success through communication that directly relates to positive job performance by the employee (Avolio et al., 2004; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002; Thayer, 1961).

The body of research indicated that specific communication practices on the part of leaders may influence employees' job performance. The first essential component is in successful communication through feedback. Aguinis, Gottfredson, and Joo (2012) noted that an important task of any manager is to offer constructive and concrete feedback to employees concerning their performance. Effective communication provides clear direction and understanding concerning previous occurrences, which includes an appraisal of how well the employees have performed their assigned tasks (Collins & Stukas, 2006). When managers do not provide precise and positive feedback, employees are unclear of communicated goals and expectations, which can

result in unwanted performance outcomes (Drummond, 2009).

When managers provide feedback regarding the employee's job performance, the goal is to offer information concerning the difference between expected performance and actual performance. When communicated effectively, the feedback forms a link between how employees perceive their performance and actual present levels of functioning; this leads to realistic levels of performance (Langdon, 1999). Unfortunately, studies indicated that many managers have failed to communicate this discrepancy, impacting performance in a less favorable manner (Jefferson, 2010; Schrader & Simpson, 2006). How well the manager communicates to employees concerning their job performance, should be a primary factor for increasing job performance.

Some hesitancy on the part of leaders to address job performance, may stem from a misunderstanding of employees' feelings about feedback. Effective communication offers the employee tools that can support him or her to compose an informed choice of the best way to function. Aguinis et al. (2012) determined that formulating and providing a precise message established upon ongoing communication and interaction can influence how the feedback is received. Researchers indicated that an increased understanding of employees' wishes, including their desire to receive clear and honest communication, assisted in enriching performance in the workplace (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Other literature has highlighted the connection between transparent communication and job performance.

Job Performance and Transparent Communication

Managers should have a clear and transparent process when communicating with employees. Avolio et al. (2004) stated that leaders who are transparent in their communication

activate a willingness by their workers to work harder at improving their job performance and in achieving the objectives of the organization. According to Jefferson (2010), transparency is critical in the communication process when a manager is working with employees concerning their performance. Leaders who communicate openly and with full disclosure inspire their employees to work at an optimal level, thus encouraging an improved job performance and work ethic (Avolio et al., 2004). The company, the manager, and especially the employee benefit from a transparent and thorough process for performance feedback, which is typically instituted by the organization's human resources unit (Kreitner, Kinicki, & Buelens, 2002).

Transparent communication can lead to improvements in the working environment that may increase productivity. To minimize problems with feedback concerning an employee's job performance, managers should engage in frequent conversations and discussion about the employee's job responsibilities and expectations (Jefferson, 2010). Miller, Fedor, and Ramsay (2006) determined that transparent communication from managers is strongly associated with constructive communication, although transparency alone does not always change an employee's job performance. Aguinis et al. (2012) also proposed that how a manager communicates and gives feedback is a vital predictor of an employee's progress and job performance. However, managers frequently are insecure when communicating needed information about employee performance, and the resulting lack of transparency impacts employees negatively, through decreased job satisfaction (Aguinis et al., 2012).

Other researchers have posited that transparent communication could increase job performance. Allen and Cherrey (2000) concluded improved communication and transparency increased employee motivation and performance. Improved job performance was associated with

the manager's capability to communicate realistic methods to advance future performance (Jawahar, 2010; Jefferson, 2010). These studies were conducted within the private sector, which has different characteristics and employee-leader relationships than the public sector.

Studies within the public sector have determined an indirect relationship between job performance and transparent communication. In their quantitative study conducted within the public sector, Vogelgesang and Lester (2009) stated that when the managers foster an environment of transparency in communication, the employees work willingly as a team, which improves efficiency and performance in their workplace. Vogelgesang and Lester (2009), therefore, determined an indirect relationship between transparent communication and job performance.

Transparent communication may even encourage public sector employees to perform beyond their job duties; Neves and Vaccaro (2013) investigated authentic leadership and transparency constructs among managers and staff within government workplaces. Neves and Vaccaro (2013) revealed that when managers were transparent in their communication and interacted with candidness and openness, a significant increase was evident in the employees' willingness to volunteer for projects above and beyond their regular duties. However, Neves and Vaccaro (2013) did not make a direct link between the performance of job functions and transparent communication. Thus, studies within the public sector of job performance and transparent communication reveal only a potential relationship between the two variables.

Job Performance and Authentic Leadership

Continued research showed a need for managers to exhibit a leadership style of openness when interacting with and assigning tasks to employees (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

Such authentic leadership behavior led to improved employee performance. A quantitative study conducted by Wang et al., (2014) surveyed 800 managers and employees to determine the impact that an authentic leader's behavior would have on employees' performance. The results revealed improved employee job performance and a stronger leader-employee relationship (Wang et al., 2014). Wang et al. (2014) concluded that an authentic leader's behavior positively impacted an employee's job performance.

Genuine managers who promote trusting and cooperative interpersonal relationships also promote employees' mental well-being (Pengera & Çerne, 2014). The employees are thus free to share their feelings and can work in a less stressful work environment. The pressure to produce is lessened, productivity increased, and performance is enhanced (Pengera & Çerne, 2014).

The specific influences relating authentic leadership to increased performance may include organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). A study was conducted by Valsania et al., (2012) to investigate the influence of the authentic leadership constructs of relational transparency, self-awareness, balanced processing, and moral perspective on OCB for 220 employees. OCB measured as voluntary behavior that came from a prescribed incentives system within an organization.

The outcome of the study indicated that overall authentic leadership style had a positive impact on OCB. Relational transparency had the only substantial impact on OCB contrasted with the other constructs of authentic leadership: (a) self-awareness, (b) balanced processing, and (c) moral perspective. The results revealed authentic leadership style as having a positive impact on employees' OCB when leaders were displaying authentic leadership. Similarly, Azanza, Moriano, and Molero (2013) linked authentic leadership style to increased volunteerism among employees.

Job Satisfaction

Several definitions exist for job satisfaction. Morris and Venkatesh (2010) noted that job satisfaction was frequently hypothesized as the following characteristics: (1) the actual job, (2) relations with employees, co-workers, and managers, (3) promotion outlook, (4) work environment, and (5) compensation package. Job satisfaction is a multifaceted concept that includes employee feelings about a variety of both intrinsic and extrinsic job elements. However, different definitions emphasize alternative employee feelings or perceptions in the assessment of job satisfaction.

Some definitions highlight the relationship between employee expectations and realities of their work. For example, Lawler (1973) defined job satisfaction as the distinction between all the components an individual believes he should obtain from his position and all those things he experiences. Mosadeghrad and Rosenberg (2008) defined job satisfaction as an employee's emotional response to a situation when the comparison of the actual outcomes and desired results occurs. Aydin and Ceylan (2009) also defined job satisfaction as a combination of psychological responses to specific expectations of what a person wants from the occurrence.

Other definitions describe job satisfaction as an emotional state of mind felt by an employee based on specified job criteria. Nebiat and Asresash (2013) and Robbins and Judge (2013) proposed that job satisfaction involves how much gratification an employee obtains from his or her employment. Misener, Haddock, Gleaton, Rahman, and Ajamieh (1996) defined employee job satisfaction as a viewpoint that individuals have about their positions and their workplaces in which they perform these jobs. This attitude encompasses specific aspects of satisfaction related to pay, benefits, promotion, work conditions, supervision, organizational

practices, and relationships with co-workers. Similarly, Bakhshi, Kumar, and Rani (2009) noted that job satisfaction is a state of mind displayed by employees toward their work environment. Further, Bakhshi et al. (2009) postulated that job satisfaction included of comparative, intellectual, and demonstrative factors.

For the present study, job satisfaction will be defined as a mindset that employees have about their jobs, the tasks performed, and those that supervise them. This mindset embodies distinctive features of satisfaction related to compensation, career advancement, work environments, supervision, organizational procedures, and interactions with co-workers (Rue & Byars, 2003, Morris & Venkatesh, 2010; Aziri, 2011). The varying definitions of job satisfaction may lead to confusion within the construct and inconsistency within the results, which causes a researcher to indicate how he or she measures job satisfaction (Jex & Bliese, 1999). Jex and Bliese (1999) reported some inherent differences when investigating job satisfaction, due to individual differences in how job satisfaction is perceived and experienced.

Although pay and promotion may be significant to one employee's job satisfaction, another employee's satisfaction may be affected more by special assignments or work projects. Thus, the challenge of measuring job satisfaction should be brought to the center of the discussion (Jex & Bliese, 1999). Spector (1997) addressed this problem by recommending that research explore different characteristics of an individual's workplace involvement and the significance of importance for a particular feature when investigating job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction in Organizations

Job satisfaction is essential to obtaining and keeping well-qualified individuals (Aziri, 2011). Jaros (2007) cited Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component construct, which discovered

people who had positive working interactions have higher levels of loyalty, and in the long run, higher levels of job satisfaction. Retention and attraction of highly skilled individuals have been noted as a need in the current state and local government workforces (Center for State and Local Government Excellence, 2016). Job satisfaction is an essential element especially in large institutions such as county government and hospitals where training and retention are highly critical. Such organizations should adopt human resource communication strategies that provide managers with tools that incite job satisfaction.

Researchers have revealed several aspects that influenced job satisfaction within organizations. Skansi (2000) concluded that when employees are satisfied with work, the employees develop an enriched emotional state of mind that relates to job satisfaction at their workplace. Leadership style is important in developing satisfaction (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). For example, employees who operated under the leadership of authentic managers were more satisfied in their organization (Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Pengera & Ćerne, 2014).

Research specific to job satisfaction within the public sector suggested that communication may have a significant relationship with these employees' satisfaction. McBride (2002) investigated the impact that organizational and leadership communication had on employee job satisfaction in a government setting, and determined that communication within an organization increased job satisfaction. The participants in McBride's (2002) survey expressed concerns about how often pertinent information was communicated within government settings, suggesting poor communication may have been interfering with job satisfaction.

Wright and Davis (2003) also surveyed public sector employees to determine if effective communication impacts job satisfaction and performance, and concluded that the current

communication practices negatively influenced employee job satisfaction. Wright and Davis (2003) noted that public sector workplaces should increase communication with employees concerning job duties, including limitations to routine controls. The goal of the increased communication is to enrich the levels of employee job satisfaction by boosting employee perceptions of their job specifications, which is consistent with transparent communication theory. However, neither McBride (2002) nor Wright and Davis (2003) specifically examined transparent communication's influence on job satisfaction.

Research in the public sector also suggested leadership practices consistent with authentic leadership style could improve job satisfaction. Rad and Yarmohammadian (2006) found that an encouraging leadership style, shown through open communication, respect, and recognition could significantly further the satisfaction of government workers in the workplace. However, the research did not include a specific investigation of authentic leadership, which may be particularly effective within government workplaces. Communicating truthfulness in the government workplace emphasized by researchers as being a major factor in developing employees' job satisfaction (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006; De Nobile & McCormick, 2008).

Job Satisfaction and Transparent Communication

Transparent communication theory indicated that an organization's internal communication is linked to an employee's job satisfaction. Transparent communication has shown that employees clearly identify with their organization when managers share information openly and freely (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Randall, 1990). Burke and Wilcox (1969) proposed that there be a connection between communication openness, managers, and employees' satisfaction with their job and administration.

Several studies investigated the relationship between communication openness and job satisfaction (Baird, 1974; Burke & Wilcox, 1969; Klauss & Bass, 1982; Miles, Patrick, & King, 1996; De Nobile & McCormick, 2008). An investigation performed by Richmond, McCroskey, and Davis (1982) determined that managers who practiced open communication with their staff obtained higher employee satisfaction results than did other managers.

Further research conducted by Klauss and Bass (1982) indicated that communication candidness forecasted job satisfaction. Additionally, Wheelless, Wheelless, and Howard (1983) found that university employees determined that candidness in leader-follower interaction related to job satisfaction among employees and supervisors. McBride (2002) also revealed a direct correlation between employee job satisfaction and organizational communication, as well as between communication and job performance, among government employees. Thus, the body of the literature suggested that open lines of communication, and frequency of communication, led to increased job satisfaction. However, researchers did not discuss the specific relationships between transparent communication and job satisfaction in a county governmental setting.

Job Satisfaction and Authentic Leadership

Researchers have also determined that authentic leadership, coupled with specific organization environments, increased job satisfaction. Darvis and Rezaei (2011) conducted a quantitative study among 80 employees at a technology company to examine the impact of authentic leadership on job satisfaction and team participation. The research results indicated a significant increase in satisfaction and commitment from the employees when their leaders exemplified authentic leadership behaviors. Further, the study discovered that a team approach with the managers illustrating authentic leadership practices positively affected job satisfaction.

Likewise, Azanza et al. (2013) attempted to associate authentic leadership traits with a fluid organizational culture, based on encouragement and innovation. There were 571 participants from various private organizations. Results showed that authentic leadership style was not only associated with a more flexible work culture but also optimistically forecasted employees' job satisfaction. Employees that perceived their leaders as displaying authentic leadership traits reported elevated levels of job satisfaction and performance (Azanza et al., 2013).

Existing academic research has shown that there is a relationship between transparency communication and employee job satisfaction (George et al., 2007; Rawlins, 2009). However, there is a shortage of adequate evidence regarding transparency communication, authentic leadership, job satisfaction, and job performance within county governmental settings. This gap warrants further research and investigation.

Critique of Previous Literature

Over the last ten years, turnover in the government sector has necessitated examination of employee performance and job satisfaction. According to the Center for State and Local Government Excellence (2016), over 90% of 330 examined human resource managers in government agencies mentioned retention of experienced workers as a concern in their administrations. The report also pinpointed that over half (58%) of participants specified a need to increase the productivity of their current employees. Public sector employees have specific characteristics and needs that are different from the private sector. Therefore, knowing what factors is essential to increase both employee performance and job satisfaction in a governmental setting.

Transparent communication by leaders increases organizational outcomes, including job performance (Neves & Vacarro, 2013; Vogelgesang & Lester, 2009). Some research suggested that open communication, which is similar to transparent communication, also, increased job satisfaction (Baird, 1974; Burke & Wilcox, 1969; De Nobile & McCormick, 2008; Klaus & Bass, 1982; Miles et al., 1996). Investigation of government employees was not linked specifically link transparent communication to job satisfaction. Wright and Davis (2003) noted that public sector organizations needed to seek out new opportunities to increase job satisfaction among their employees, specifically through improved communication. Neves and Vacarro's (2013) study of the influence of authentic leadership and open communication with government employees did not examine job satisfaction. This study will address the significant gap in the literature related to transparent communication and the relationship to job performance and satisfaction in the government sector.

Studies have also revealed that authentic leadership may also increase job performance (Azanza et al., 2013; Pengera & Ćerne, 2014; Valsania et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2014) and job satisfaction (Azanza et al., 2013; Darvis & Rezaei, 2011). Researchers have also demonstrated that the job environment influenced the success of authentic leadership in relation to job satisfaction (Azanza et al., 2013; Darvis & Rezaei, 2011; Men, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2011).

As discussed earlier, an aspect of authentic leadership, relational transparency, is similar to transparent communication. However, review of the literature did not reveal a combined study of authentic leadership and transparent communication and the influence on job satisfaction and performance. The closest available study, conducted by Neves and Vacarro (2013), demonstrated that within a government setting, authentic leadership and transparent

communication led to increased OCB among employees. However, Neves and Vacarro (2013) did not examine job performance or satisfaction as variables in their study.

Combining authentic leadership and transparent communication, as Neves and Vacarro (2013) did, may provide increased accuracy of the mechanisms through which the two concepts increase job performance and satisfaction. Other studies conducted in the public sector indicated potential connections between job performance and communication (McBride, 2002; Wright and Davis, 2003) and authentic leadership traits (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). However, there is a lack of information and investigation of transparent communication, authentic leadership, job satisfaction, and performance within county government employees, which the present study was designed to address.

Summary of the Literature Review

This study sought to evaluate the statistical strength of the relationship between transparent communication and authentic leadership and employee job satisfaction and performance. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) recognized the need for additional study of transparency communication and authentic leadership's impact on employees' job performance and satisfaction in a governmental setting. This literature review revealed that there is noteworthy research on transparency communication, authentic leadership, employee performance, and job satisfaction, particular within the private sector. However, a gap in the literature existed regarding the effects of authentic leadership and transparent communication on employee job satisfaction and performance in the public sector.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative and correlational study was to examine the analytical relationships between transparent communication, self-awareness, and job satisfaction (George, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2011; Men, 2014). Conrad and Serlin (2011) stated that a quantitative and correlational approach quantifies variables that are void of manipulation and provides an analysis of the data looking for the relationship between the variables. The numerical instrument determines the concentration and trend of the correlation.

The purpose of correlational design is to ascertain how much of a correlation that two or more of the variables may have based on statistical information. When researchers use the correlational approach, the researchers are looking for several factors that occur with the relationships of the variables and are seeking to analyze those relationships (Cohen et al., 2013; Creswell, 2008). Quantitative research fixed firmly in numerical data and statistical evidence is pragmatic, constructive, unbiased, and recognizes a methodical procedure that uses statistical information to measure what guides the technical approach and produces results (Carr, 1994).

This study chose to consider the statistical significance of the relationship between transparent communication and authentic leadership and employee job satisfaction and performance in county government. The independent variables examined included attributes of authentic leadership. The dependent variables examined included attributes of job satisfaction and job performance.

Research Questions and Hypothesis Statements

A multiple linear regression analysis was used for the following research questions and hypotheses:

R₁: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of recognition in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₁: It is hypothesized that relational transparency predicts job satisfaction in the forms of recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision.

R₂: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of promotion in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₂: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of promotion.

R₃: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of communication in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₃: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of communication.

R₄: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of supervision in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job satisfaction in county government employees (recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision).

H₄: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of supervision.

R₅: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of feedback from the job itself in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job performance (autonomy and feedback from the job itself).

H₅: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of feedback from the job itself.

R₆: Do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of autonomy in county government employees?

H₀: There is not a statistically significant relationship between relational transparency and job performance in county government employees (autonomy and feedback from the job itself).

H₆: It is hypothesized that relational transparency and self-awareness predict job performance in the form of autonomy.

Research Design

This research design used a quantitative method to assess the statistical strength of the relationship between transparency communication and authentic leadership and employee job satisfaction and performance in county government employees. Creswell (2003) determined that quantitative research approaches include a problem statement, research questions, assumptions, variables to be measured focusing on specific demographics, and a statistical approach to collecting the data. Moreover, quantitative research methodology includes obtaining quantifiable data that will demonstrate the hypothesis, select a relevant numerical method, and illustrate the findings using diagrams, charts, or tables.

Key within a quantitative research project is the alignment of research questions with the methodologies. This study was constructed to determine how managers using authentic leadership traits lead with clarity, accuracy, and disclosure in their communication style and how their actions impact county government employees' job performance and satisfaction. This research extended past transparent communication research in the governmental financial setting to an overall study of transparent communication and authentic leadership's impact on employees' job performance and satisfaction in a governmental setting (Wong & Laschinger, 2012; Men, 2014; Neves & Vaccaro, 2013; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

Target Population and Sample

Population

The target population in this study included employees at all levels of county government: budget and analysis, contracts and purchasing, health department,

intergovernmental and legislative affairs, finance, and the office of emergency services. The population consisted of male and female participants with diverse races and ethnicities. This local county government was chosen because of the diverse caliber of participants that qualified to participate in the study. The inclusion criteria for participants for this study included full-time county government employees in the County Executive Office Department, the Health Department, and management classification who were willing to volunteer to take the survey online.

Sample

According to Lenth (2011), determining sample size is a critical step in developing a quantitative study. The sample should effectively depict the population to safeguard against generalization of the sample population (Cochran, 1977). The sample size included male and female full-time county government employees who held executive, management, and entry-level positions in the County Administration Office Departments and the Health Department.

Participants were over 18 years of age and volunteered to take the survey online. The County Administrative Officer (CAO) and County Information Technology Director (ITD) gave permission for the researcher to conduct data collection and to collect demographic information associated with their department of employment and gender. The CAO and the ITD requested that no other demographic information should be collected.

Power Analysis

The initial population size was 500, and a sample size of 100 was calculated using Cochran's (1977) sample size formula for continuous data along with Cochran's (1977) correction formula. The correction formula was used because the sample size was larger than 5%

of the population. The null hypothesis will be rejected with 5% alpha if there is a 5% possibility of a Type I error (rejecting your null hypothesis although it is true). There were 101 participants in the sample size. The sample size included males and females and was racially and ethnically diverse.

Procedures

Participant Selection

Random sampling was the method used for this study. The use of random sampling lessens the possibility that findings are because of other influences (Hopkins, 2000). The participant selection began with obtaining a site permission request from the ITD and the CAO. The researcher agreed to answer additional questions the participants had concerning their involvement in this study.

Protection of Participants

The participants were notified by email explaining the study. All participants were emailed using blind copy to maintain their anonymity. The email explained the need for their participation, the nature of the study, the steps used for collecting data, and the importance of completing the survey. Lastly, the email included attachments providing the study overview, the research, the Adult Informed Consent form, and the procedures for taking the survey.

Data Collection

Creswell (2003) confirmed that the negotiating terms and conditions with the identified gatekeeper are critical in defining the depth of the research and the researcher's role. The researcher obtained permission from the Capella University IRB committee. Next, the researcher met with the ITD and presented a letter explaining the research study and requesting permission

to send out emails to the County employees. The researcher met with the CAO of the sample population to explain the study. During the meeting, the researcher presented a letter that included what the researcher planned to do. The letter described the intentions and the basis of the research.

Once approval was granted by the CAO, the researcher sent an email to the Interim Director of Health that included the approval letters from the ITD and CAO, requesting permission to send the online survey to the Health Department employees. The County Administrative Officer (CAO) and ITD gave permission for the researcher to perform data collection and permitted the researcher to collect demographic information linked to the department of employment and gender. The CAO and ITD did not give permission for any other demographic information to be collected.

The participants were sent an email describing the guidelines of the study, including why they were being asked to participate. Within the body of the email, the researcher provided the participants with information regarding the nature of the study to establish rules and conditions for collecting the data. To begin the survey, participants were instructed to click on the link provided in the email message. The link to the online survey was in the body of the email sent to the participants; the link opened the online survey with the consent form being the initial page of the survey. If a respondent answered no on the consent question, the survey ended, and a notification screen appeared.

The survey was available for four weeks and during the four weeks, email reminders were sent on three separate occasions. The first one was sent at the beginning of the second week, the second reminder was sent at the end of the third week, and the third and final email

was sent two days before the fourth week ended. Once the timeline was complete, the researcher transferred the raw data from Survey Monkey to IBM SPSS.

Storage of the data was on a password-protected computer and backed up on a password protected flash drive that was purchased from iPlus USB Inc. This company manufactures most of the components in the United States, with 100% completed in the United States. Further, to certify the manufacturing of the product in the United States, the product has a seal attached; the seal is called the USA-C Certificate by a third-party certification (<http://www.iplususb.com>). The information will be kept for a period of 7 years after the publication of the dissertation based on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

Data Analysis

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006) stated that if the data analysis of the study is correlational, selecting one of the correlational analyses is applicable. There are different types of correlational analysis. Correlation coefficient analysis involves one independent variable and one dependent variable; both positioned on a range. Regression analysis includes at least two independent variables that are constant and/or contrast and one dependent variable that lies on a continuum. The data analysis of this study includes descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing of the variables. The data was analyzed using multiple linear regression correlational analyses.

Descriptive Statistics

Permission was granted to the researcher from the CAO and ITD provided permission for the researcher to conduct data collection and approved the researcher to collect demographic information related to department of employment and gender information. The CAO and ITD did not grant permission for collecting any other demographic information.

The participants were from the Auditor/Controller, Contracts/Purchasing, Accounts Payable/Receivable, Budget/Analysis, and Health Department. The Health Department had 75 participants. The Budget/Analysis department had four participants. There were 71 females and 30 male participants. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics for County Departments and Gender

Descriptive Statistics	<i>N</i>	%
County Departments		
Auditor/Controller	6	6
Contracts/Purchasing	6	6
Accounts Payable/Receivable	10	10
Budget/Analysis	4	4
Health Department	75	75
Total	101	101
Gender		
Female	71	70
Male	30	30
Total	101	100

Hypothesis Testing

Discriminant analysis or logistic regression comprises at least two independent variables and one dependent variable that are categorical. Canonical correlation analysis uses at least two independent variables, and at least two dependent variables and both sets of variables are either continuous and/or dichotomous (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). Multiple linear regression is a methodology applied to illustrate the relationships of one or more independent variables with one dependent variable.

Multiple linear regression analysis with a significance p value of 0.05 and a confidence interval of 95% was used to determine whether to reject or accept the research null hypotheses.

Types of data analyzed:

- (a) The types of data for this analysis were ordinal data.
- (b) The raw data from the ALQ, JDS and JSS measurements was exported into a SPSS database.
- (c) Managing and processing of the data were managed using the SPSS.
- (d) Preparation of data for analysis – The data entered in the SPSS database was checked by the researcher for accuracy. The researcher conducted a spot-checking of participant data groups to search for discrepancies. To further check the demographics, the researcher used the database program to sum the columns of the spreadsheet and then look for differences in the totals.

Instruments

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire

The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) designed by Avolio et al., 2004; 2007) was the measurement tool selected to determine the employees' perception of authentic leadership. The ALQ consists of 16 components separated into the four authentic leadership dimensions. Of the four dimensions, relational transparency and self-awareness are the subscales to be used. Confirmatory factor analysis has verified the validity of the four dimensions of authentic leadership.

The components were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = *not at all*, to 4 = *frequently if not always* (Walumbwa et al., 2008). The ALQ was analyzed for internal

stability reliability using Cronbach's coefficient alpha; the results revealed .74 up to .85, which are acceptable reliabilities (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Neider & Schriesheim, 2011). The validity of the ALQ was examined by extensively assessing used dependent variables such as job satisfaction, the internal consistency was .82, relational transparency results yielded .73, and organizational structure results were .75. The results revealed that the internal stability appraisals were above the universally recognized .70 coefficient alpha reliability levels and supported the validity of the ALQ (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Cooper, Scandura & Schriesheim, 2005).

Job Satisfaction Survey

Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) questionnaire by Spector (1994) was utilized to measure the scale of job satisfaction among employees consisting of nine sub-scales (salaries, fringe benefits, recognition, promotion, communication, working conditions, nature of the job, supervision, and co-workers). The subscales included recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision. This questionnaire has 36 items (four items in each domain). A six-point Likert scale to measure the responses to each item was used (from strongly disagree 1 to strongly agree 6 (Spector, 1997).

The reliability and construct validity occurred within a time span of 18 months between the test and retest. The results of the reliability of the subscales revealed that the stability was moderate. The validity testing of the subscales was confirmed using a multi-trait, multi-method with the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) as the validity instrument; the results revealed that the validity between the subscales was moderate to low (Saane, Sluiter, Verbeek, & Frings-Dresen, 2003).

Job Diagnostic Survey

A subscale of the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) as developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975) measured job performance. The JDS measures the following five core elements: (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback from the job itself). Skill variety is the extent to which a job requires the use of several different skills and talents in the completion of the work. Task identity is doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome that is a whole and identifiable piece of work.

Task significance is the extent to which a job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people—whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment. Lastly, feedback from the job itself indicates the degree to which completing the day-to-day responsibilities expected by the employer ends in the worker receiving specific and well-defined communication on the efficacy of the individual's performance.

The subscales used in this study were autonomy and feedback from the job itself. These subscales measured job performance, specifically: (a) quality of performance, (b) quantity of performance, and (c) overall job performance. The instrument is derived from the framework of how communication and job design affects work performance. The internal consistency reliability of the scales of the JDS was measured, and the discriminant validity of the items was considered satisfactory. Additionally, the variables were measured, and their relationships were statistically reliable at $p < .05$ (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). A revised version was investigated by Idaszak and Drasgow (1987) that revealed the reliability and validity did not change the outcome of several predictors such as satisfaction, motivation, and productivity (Kulik, Oldham & Langner, 1988).

Reliability

When discussing measurements or instrumentations, reliability and validity are important. Reliability is usually focused on whether the measurement methods or approaches will deliver the consistent result at diverse times, meaning when used by different researchers. Knowing this is critical when researchers are utilizing standardized instruments (Hammersley, 2008). Reliability of standardized measurements should yield the same results consistently. If the instrument fails to measure all it should measure, there is a propensity to doubt the dependability of the instrument. The reliability or credibility of an instrument is based upon the extent that the instrument can continually deliver the same results (Hammersley, 2008).

Validity

Validity is important to quantitative research, although assessing validity is challenging to execute. Validity refers to systemic errors in measurement; it is whether the researcher measures what should be measured, or if systematic errors exist due to internal, external, statistical conclusion, or construct threats to validity (Swanson & Holton, 2005). Moreover, if an instrument is not considered reliable, then the instrument is not valid. If the instrument does not compute all the expected measures, there is an inclination to scrutinize the significance of the instrument.

Ethical Considerations

Based on the *Belmont Report* (Beauchamp, 2008), the ethical principle of respect for the person is about the use of human subjects in research experiments. The respect of person principle states that participants must be made aware of the impact that the research could have

on them, and, that the participants must be treated as autonomous. Thus, to adhere to this principle, researchers must not leave the participants uninformed or do anything that would compromise the autonomy of the participants. The beneficence ethical principle expects researchers to treat participants in an ethical manner through valuing their opinions and shielding the participants from any damage. The researchers should be clear on what is considered detrimental to those who participant in their study.

Further stated in the *Belmont Report* (Beauchamp, 2008), the justice principle focuses on the researchers being responsible for the equality of the subjects within the research. Specifically, no individual can be deprived of a needed benefit without cause, and a burden cannot be placed arbitrarily on any individual in the study. This study underwent a thorough examination by the Capella University Institutional Review Board (IRB) before the start of the research. According to Creswell (2009), the researcher should take the required steps to safeguard against harm or conflict of interest of the participants. The review process for the IRB focused on the following:

- Protecting the privacy of participants and confidentiality of their data or records
- Respecting the autonomy and dignity of participants
- Ensuring that decisions concerning participation are voluntary
- Minimizing risks while maximizing benefits to participants
- Ensuring participants have adequate information to make informed decisions
- Ensuring that the benefits and risks of research are equally distributed
- Protecting vulnerable populations

The IRB examined the study to ensure that it followed the regulatory standards for ethical research with human participants (Capella, 2012). Ethical considerations were addressed throughout the study in the following steps: Only the researcher had access to the external website account and results. Resulting survey data will be held electronically with password protection on a flash drive accessible only to the researcher, and the external website account will expire at the end of the research period thus destroying the information on the website.

Any physical research information, including the flash drive, will be placed in a locked file cabinet accessible only to the researcher at a private location and will be kept for a period of seven years after the publication of the dissertation based on Capella University guidelines. The level of Survey Monkey was the Platinum Plan that includes the HIPPA-enabled feature, unlimited questions and with 1000 responses via the web, social or email, pop-up online surveys, unlimited collectors, and track email responses.

Expected Findings

The researcher anticipated mixed results. The mixed results agreed with the literature review that concluded there were statistically significant relationships between transparent communication and job satisfaction. However, past results from the literature provided inconclusive outcomes between authentic leadership styles and job performance. Studies found a direct correlation between relational transparency and an indirect effect on job performance (Avolio, 2007; Gardner et al., 2011).

Earlier behavioral science research found employees who worked in organizations whose managers and leaders shared candidly and openly with employees, performed at higher levels than employees in organizations that did not have managers who exhibited the same authentic

leadership traits (George, 2003; Wong & Laschinger, 2012; Men, 2014). The researcher expected that the study would find comparable results. The researcher also expected that there would be a relationship between the independent and dependent variables; however, what was not known was if there would be any statistical significance.

Summary

This chapter included a description of the study, research design, population, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. IBM SPSS statistics software was used to conduct all statistical analysis. This study used multiple linear regression analysis to evaluate the statistical implication of the relationship between transparent communication and authentic leadership and employee job satisfaction and performance (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). The independent variables examined were the attributes of authentic leadership. The dependent variables examined were the attributes of job satisfaction and job performance (Wong & Laschinger, 2012; Men, 2014; Neves & Vaccaro, 2013; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014).

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative and correlational study was to investigate the predictive relationships between transparency communication, self-awareness, and job satisfaction (George, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2011). Transparency communication and authentic leadership theories build a culture of trust and inspire employees to provide better customer service, performance, and transparency communication. Managers using authentic leadership traits lead with disclosure, clarity, and accuracy; this communication style has an impact on employees' job performance and satisfaction (George, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2011). Through the current analysis, the researcher assessed the relationships existing among relational transparency, self-awareness, recognition, promotion, communication, supervision, autonomy, and feedback.

The results of the data analysis are presented in this chapter. Descriptions of the sample and descriptive statistics for the composite scores are included. A reliability analysis and a summary of the findings are presented. The in-depth results and analysis of the research questions are detailed in this chapter. A conclusion is provided to highlight salient details of the analysis and findings.

Description of the Sample

The study sample consisted of 101 employees from a county government in California. The population included 500 employees from various departments including budget and analysis, contracts and purchasing, health department, inter-governmental and legislative affairs, finance, and the office of emergency services.

Eligible participants included male and female full-time county government employees who held executive, management, and entry-level positions in the County Executive Office Departments and the Health Department. Participants were over 18 years of age and were willing to volunteer to take the survey online. The County Administrative Officer (CAO) and ITD director provided permission for the researcher to conduct data collection and allowed the researcher to collect demographic information related to department of employment and gender. No other demographic information was gathered per the request of the CAO and the ITD director.

The sample consisted of participants from the following departments: Auditor/Controller, Contracts/Purchasing, Accounts Payable/Receivable, Budget/Analysis, and Health Department. The majority of participants were employed with the Health Department ($N = 75$, 74%). There were few participants from the Budget/Analysis department ($N = 4$, 4%). Females comprised the majority of the sample ($N = 71$, 70%). Frequencies and percentages for department and gender are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages for County Department and Gender

Variable	<i>N</i>	%
County Departments		
Auditor/Controller	6	6
Contracts/Purchasing	6	6
Accounts Payable/Receivable	10	10
Budget/Analysis	4	4
Health Department	75	74
Gender		
Female	71	70
Male	30	30

Descriptive Statistics for Composite Scores

Composite scores were calculated for the relevant scales of the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS), Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), and Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ). Relational transparency and self-awareness were calculated from items included on the ALQ. Recognition, promotion, communication, and supervision were calculated from items included on the JSS. Autonomy and feedback were calculated from items included on the JDS.

Autonomy scores ranged from 2.71 to 6.86, with a mean of 5.30 ($SD = 0.89$). Feedback scores ranged from 2.50 to 6.75, with a mean of 5.00 ($SD = 1.06$). Self-awareness scores ranged from 11.00 to 20.00, with a mean of 15.33 ($SD = 1.86$). Relational transparency scores ranged from 11.00 to 20.00, with a mean of 15.06 ($SD = 2.13$). Recognition scores ranged from 4.00 to 24.00, with a mean of 14.17 ($SD = 5.46$). Promotion scores ranged from 4.00 to 23.00, with a mean of 11.61 ($SD = 5.25$). Communication scores ranged from 5.00 to 24.00, with a mean of 13.86 ($SD = 4.56$). Supervision scores ranged from 4.00 to 24.00, with a mean of 18.60 ($SD = 5.62$).

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Composite Scores

	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Autonomy	97.00	2.71	6.86	5.30	0.89
Feedback	101.00	2.50	6.75	5.00	1.06
Self-Awareness	101.00	11.00	20.00	15.33	1.86
Relational Transparency	96.00	11.00	20.00	15.06	2.13
Recognition	100.00	4.00	24.00	14.17	5.46
Promotion	99.00	4.00	23.00	11.61	5.25
Communication	99.00	5.00	24.00	13.86	4.56
Supervision	100.00	4.00	24.00	18.60	5.62

Reliability Analysis

An inter-item reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess the reliability of the composite scores that were created. The Cronbach's alpha is used to assess the mean correlation between each pair of items and the number of items on a scale and it is known as the coefficient alpha (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2012). Cronbach's alpha coefficients were evaluated using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2016) where $> .9$ Excellent, $> .8$ Good, $> .7$ Acceptable, $> .6$ Questionable, $> .5$ Poor, $< .5$ Unacceptable.

The recognition, promotion, and supervision scales demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .88$). The communication scale demonstrated acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .76$). The autonomy and feedback scales demonstrated questionable reliability with Cronbach's alpha scores of .67 and .60, respectively. Relational transparency demonstrated poor reliability ($\alpha = .54$) and the self-awareness scale demonstrated unacceptable reliability ($\alpha = .40$). Cronbach's alpha scores for the composite scores are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability for Composite Scores

Composite Score	α	Number of items
Autonomy	.67	7
Feedback	.60	4
Self-awareness	.40	4
Relational Transparency	.54	4
Recognition	.88	4
Promotion	.88	4
Communication	.76	4
Supervision	.88	3

Summary

Multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to address the research questions guiding this study. The results of the regression analysis for research question one, with relational transparency and self-awareness predicting recognition, were not significant. The results of the regression analysis for research question two, with relational transparency and self-awareness predicting promotion, were not significant. The results of the regression analysis for research question three, with relational transparency and self-awareness predicting communication, were significant.

The results of the regression analysis for research question four, with relational transparency and self-awareness predicting supervision, were not significant. The results of the regression analysis for research question five, with relational transparency and self-awareness predicting feedback, were significant. Finally, the results of the regression analysis for research question six, with relational transparency and self-awareness predicting autonomy, were significant. The researcher cautions the reader in drawing inferences based on the analyses because the scales representing the predictor variables (i.e., relational transparency and self-awareness) showed poor and unacceptable reliability.

Analysis of the Research Questions

To address the first research question, do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of recognition in county government employees, the researcher conducted a multiple linear regression. The predictor variables for the analysis were

relational transparency and self-awareness. The criterion variable for the analysis was recognition.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were assessed. The assumption of normality was assessed through examination of a P-P plot. Normality assumes that the data follows a symmetrical, bell-shaped distribution. The assumption is met if the data does not deviate from the normality line included in the P-P plot. The data did not deviate from the normality line (see Figure 1) therefore the assumption was met. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was assessed through examination of a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted variables. Homogeneity of variance assumes equal error variances and the assumption is met if the data points are approximately equally distributed around zero and rectangularly arranged.

The data was equally distributed around zero (see Figure 2) so the assumption was met. The absence of multicollinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. The absence of multicollinearity assumes that the predictor variables in the regression are not too closely related. VIF values above 10 are considered evidence of multicollinearity (Stevens, 2009). All VIF values were below 10 (see Table 4). Therefore the assumption was met.

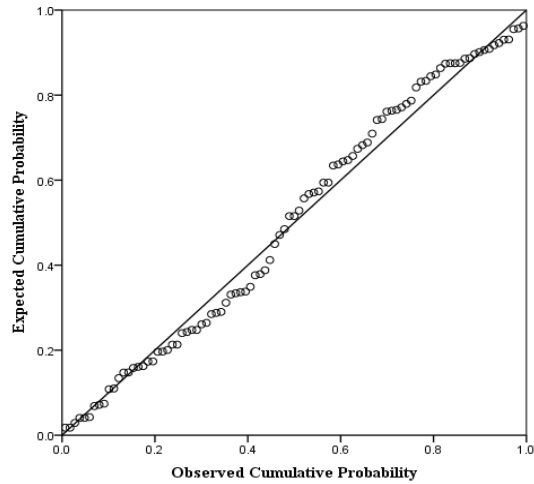


Figure 1. Normal P-P Plot.

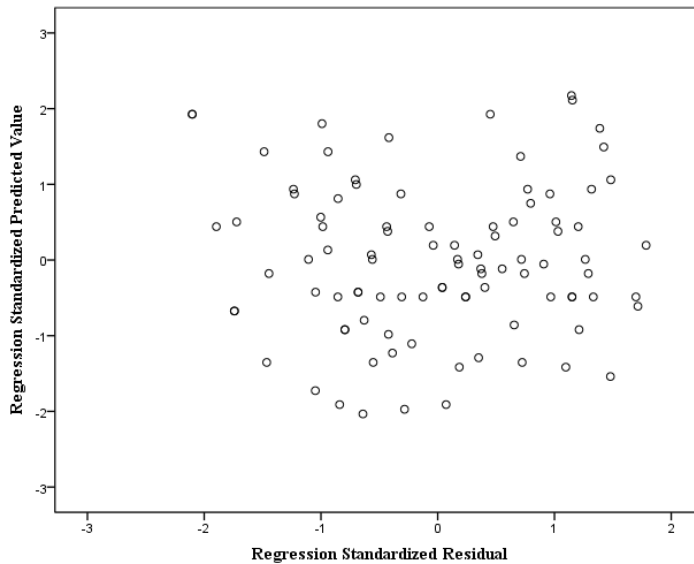


Figure 2. Scatterplot Residuals vs. Predicted Values.

The results of the overall regression model were not significant, $F(2,92) = 0.91, p = .41$, $R^2 = .00$, indicating that the model comprised of relational transparency and self-awareness did not significantly predict recognition. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis one in favor of the alternate hypothesis. Relational transparency and self-awareness did not predict

recognition. Because the model was not statistically significant, the researcher did not interpret the individual predictors. The full results of the regression are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Recognition

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Relational Transparency	0.38	0.29	0.14	1.28	.20	1.20
Self-awareness	-0.05	0.34	-0.02	-0.14	.89	1.20

Note. $F(2,92) = 0.91, p = .41, R^2 = .00$.

To address the second research question, do relational transparency and self-awareness predicted job satisfaction in the form of promotion in county government employees, the researcher conducted a multiple linear regression. The predictor variables for the analysis were relational transparency and self-awareness. The criterion variable for the analysis was promotion.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were assessed. The assumption of normality was assessed through examination of a P-P plot. The data did not deviate strongly from the normality line (see Figure 3) therefore the assumption was met. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was assessed through examination of a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted variables. The data was equally distributed around zero (see Figure 4) so the assumption was met. The absence of multicollinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. All VIF values were below 10 (see Table 5). Therefore the assumption was met.

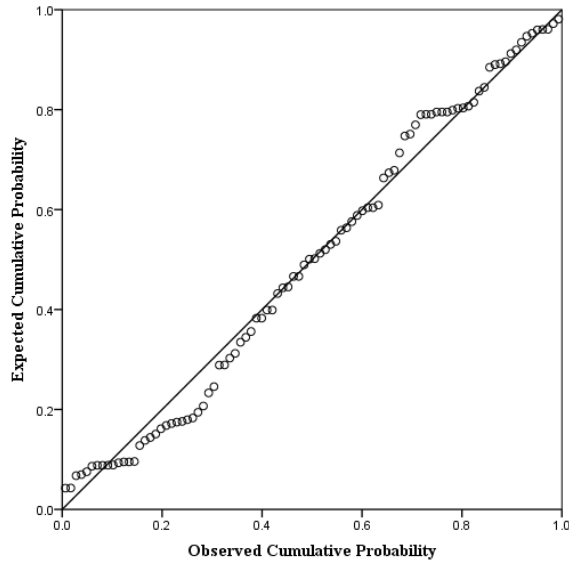


Figure 3. Normal P-P Plot.

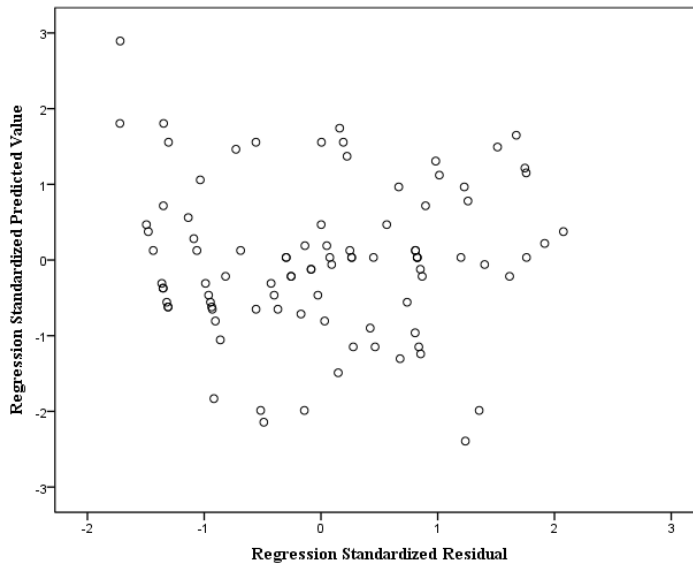


Figure 4. Scatterplot Residuals vs. Predicted Values.

The results of the overall regression model were not significant, $F(2,91) = 1.34, p = .27$, $R^2 = .01$, indicating that the model comprised of relational transparency and self-awareness did not significantly predict promotion. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis two in favor of the alternate hypothesis. Relational transparency and self-awareness did not predict

promotion. Because the model was not statistically significant, the researcher did not interpret the individual predictors. The full results of the regression are reported in Table 5.

Table 5

Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Promotion

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Relational Transparency	-0.23	0.29	-0.09	-0.78	.44	1.26
Self-awareness	0.54	0.33	0.19	1.64	.10	1.26

Note. $F(2,91) = 1.34, p = .27, R^2 = .01$.

To address the third research question, do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of communication in county government employees, the researcher conducted a multiple linear regression. The predictor variables for the analysis were relational transparency and self-awareness. The criterion variable for the analysis was communication.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were assessed. The assumption of normality was assessed through examination of a P-P plot. The data did not deviate strongly from the normality line (see Figure 5) therefore the assumption was met. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was assessed through examination of a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted variables. The data was equally distributed around zero (see Figure 6) so the assumption was met. The absence of multicollinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. All VIF values were below 10 (see Table 6). Therefore the assumption was met.

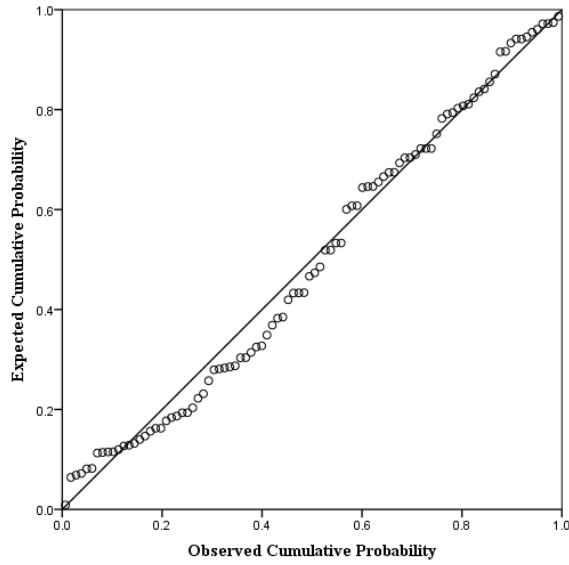


Figure 5. Normal P-P Plot.

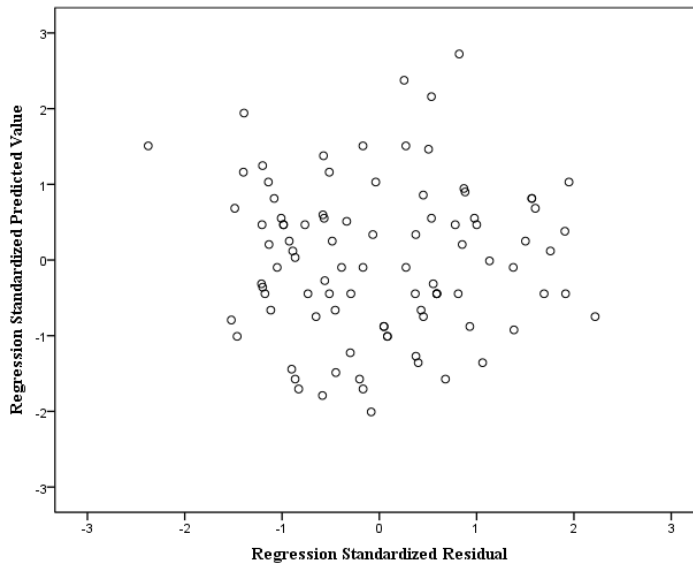


Figure 6. Scatterplot Residuals vs. Predicted Values.

The results of the overall regression model were significant, $F(2,91) = 3.52, p = .03, R^2 = .05$, indicating that the model comprised of relational transparency and self-awareness significantly predicted communication. However, the low R^2 value indicates poor overall model fit. The model accounted for 5% of the variance in communication. Therefore, the researcher

rejected null hypothesis three in favor of the alternate hypothesis. Because the model was statistically significant, the researcher interpreted the contribution of the individual predictors based on the variance in communication. Neither relational transparency ($B = 0.43, t = 1.77, p = .08$) nor self-awareness ($B = 0.27, t = 0.97, p = .33$) were statistically significant predictors of communication. The statistical significance assessed in the overall model may have been due to chance rather than a significant prediction from the independent variables. The full results of the regression are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Communication

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Relational Transparency	0.43	0.25	0.20	1.77	.08	1.26
Self-awareness	0.27	0.28	0.11	0.97	.33	1.26

Note. $F(2,91) = 3.52, p = .03, R^2 = .05$.

To address the fourth research question, do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of supervision in county government employees, the researcher conducted a multiple linear regression. The predictor variables for the analysis were relational transparency and self-awareness. The criterion variable for the analysis was supervision.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were assessed. The assumption of normality was assessed through examination of a P-P plot. The data deviated from the normality line (see Figure 7) therefore the assumption was not met. However, with a sufficiently large sample size (i.e., $N = 30$) the multiple linear regression analysis may be robust to violations to normality (Stevens, 2009). The assumption of homogeneity of variance was

assessed through examination of a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted variables. The data was equally distributed around zero (see Figure 8) so the assumption was met. The absence of multicollinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. All VIF values were below 10 (see Table 7). Therefore the assumption was met.

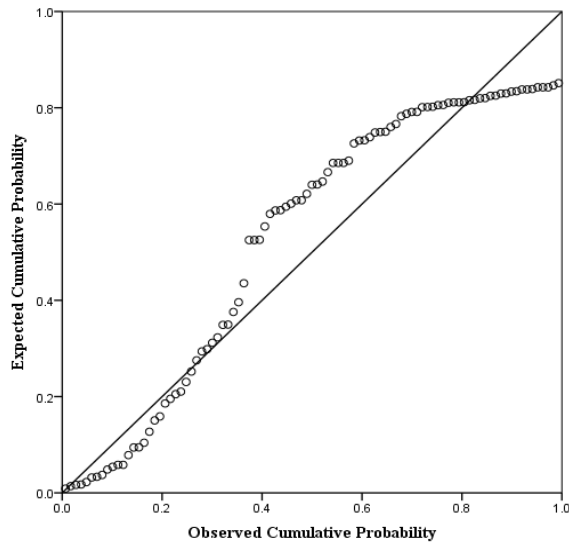


Figure 7. Normal P-P Plot.

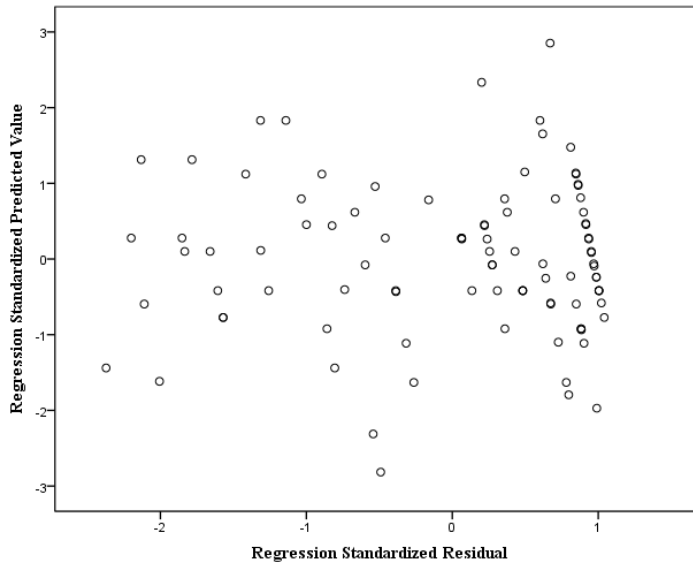


Figure 8. Scatterplot Residuals vs. Predicted Values.

The results of the overall regression model were not significant, $F(2,92) = 0.49, p = .61, R^2 = -.01$, indicating that the model comprised of relational transparency and self-awareness did not predict supervision. Therefore, the researcher did not reject null hypothesis four in favor of the alternate hypothesis. Relational transparency and self-awareness did not predict supervision. Because the model was not statistically significant, the researcher did not interpret the contribution of the individual predictors on the variance in supervision. The full results of the regression are reported in Table 7.

Table 7

Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Supervision

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Relational Transparency	0.30	0.31	0.11	0.98	.33	1.25
Self-awareness	-0.20	0.35	-0.07	-0.57	.57	1.25

Note. $F(2,92) = 0.49, p = .61, R^2 = -.01$.

To address the fifth research question, do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of autonomy in county government employees, the researcher conducted a multiple linear regression. The predictor variables for the analysis were relational transparency and self-awareness. The criterion variable for the analysis was autonomy.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were assessed. The assumption of normality was assessed through examination of a P-P plot. The data did not deviate strongly from the normality line (see Figure 9) therefore the assumption was met. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was assessed through examination of a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted variables. The data was equally distributed around zero (see Figure 10) so the assumption was met. The absence of multicollinearity was assessed using Variance

Inflation Factor (VIF) values. All VIF values were below 10 (see Table 8). Therefore the assumption was met.

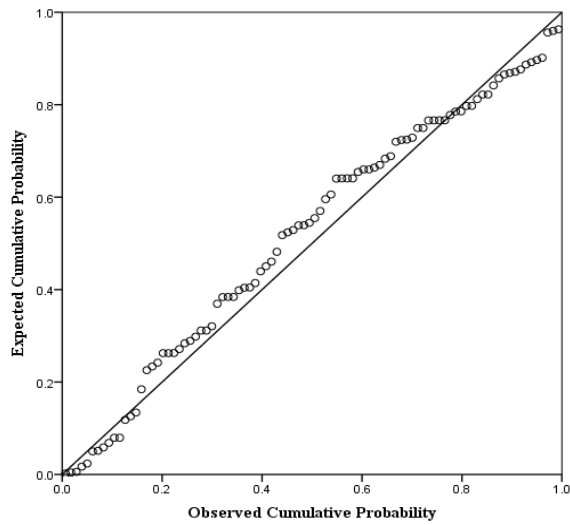


Figure 9. Normal P-P Plot.

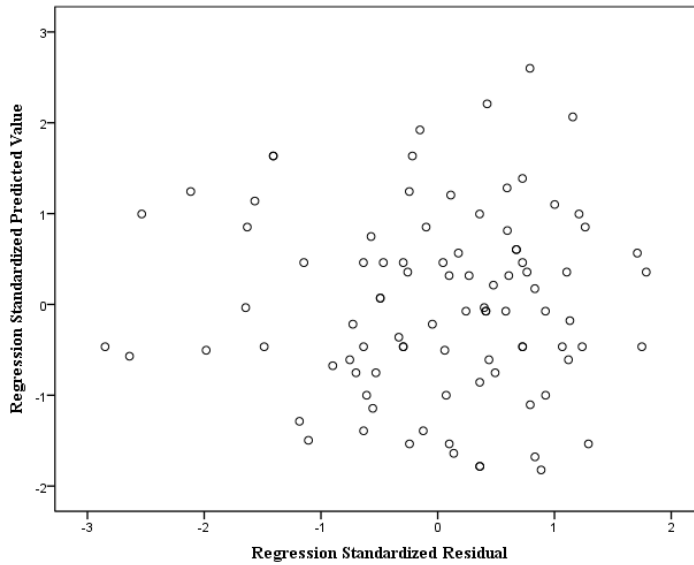


Figure 10. Scatterplot Residuals vs. Predicted Values.

The results of the overall regression model were significant, $F(2,89) = 6.17, p < .001, R^2 = .10$, indicating that the model comprised of relational transparency and self-awareness predicted autonomy. Therefore, the researcher rejected null hypothesis five in favor of the alternate hypothesis. Relational transparency and self-awareness predicted autonomy. Relational transparency and self-awareness contributed to 10% of the variance in autonomy. Because the model was statistically significant, the researcher interpreted the contribution of the individual predictors on the variance in autonomy. Relational transparency was a statistically significant predictor, $B = 0.12, t = 2.66, p = .01$. This finding indicates that for each one unit increase in relational transparency, there was a 0.12 unit increase in autonomy. The full results of the regression are reported in Table 8.

Table 8

Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Autonomy

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Relational Transparency	0.12	0.05	0.30	2.66	.01	1.25
Self-awareness	0.04	0.05	0.09	0.85	.40	1.25

Note. $F(2,89) = 6.17, p < .001, R^2 = .10$.

To address the sixth research question, do relational transparency and self-awareness predict job satisfaction in the form of feedback, the researcher conducted a multiple linear regression. The predictor variables for the analysis were relational transparency and self-awareness. The criterion variable for the analysis was feedback.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were assessed. The assumption of normality was assessed through examination of a P-P plot. The data did not deviate strongly from the normality line (see Figure 11) therefore the assumption was met. The

assumption of homogeneity of variance was assessed through examination of a scatterplot of residuals versus predicted variables. The data was equally distributed around zero (see Figure 12) so the assumption was met. The absence of multicollinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. All VIF values were below 10 (see Table 9). Therefore the assumption was met.

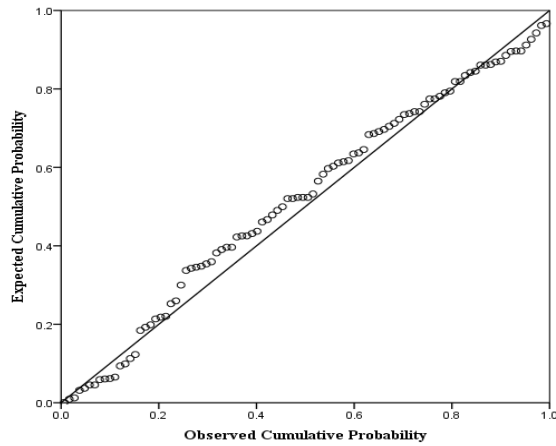


Figure 11. Normal P-P Plot.

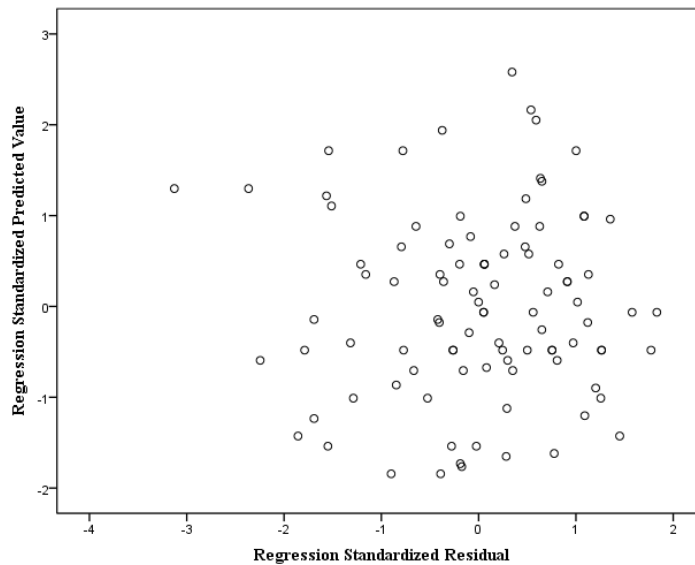


Figure 12. Scatterplot Residuals vs. Predicted Values.

The results of the overall regression model were significant, $F(2,93) = 10.33, p < .001, R^2 = .16$, indicating that the model comprised of relational transparency and self-awareness predicted feedback. Therefore, the researcher rejected null hypothesis six in favor of the alternate hypothesis. Relational transparency and self-awareness predicted feedback. Relational transparency and self-awareness contributed to 16% of the variance in feedback. Because the model was statistically significant, the researcher interpreted the contribution of the individual predictors on the variance in feedback. Relational transparency was a statistically significant predictor, $B = 0.19, t = 3.63, p < .001$. This finding indicates that for every one unit increase in relational transparency there was a 0.19 unit increase in feedback. The full results of the regression are reported in Table 9.

Table 9

Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Feedback

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Relational Transparency	0.19	0.05	0.38	3.63	.00	1.24
Self-awareness	0.05	0.06	0.09	0.87	.39	1.24

Note. $F(2,93) = 10.33, p < .001, R^2 = .16$.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to investigate the relationship between transparency communication, authentic leadership, and job satisfaction. Data was gathered from 101 county government employees from a county in California. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to assess the predictive relationships between relational transparency, self-awareness, and recognition, promotion, communication, supervision, autonomy, and feedback. The findings of the analysis indicated that statistically significant

relationships existed between relational transparency and self-awareness, and communication, autonomy, and feedback. Null hypotheses one, two, and four were not rejected. The null hypotheses were rejected for research questions three, five, and six. Neither independent variable demonstrated a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of communication. Relational transparency was a statistically significant predictor of autonomy and feedback.

A description of the sample was included in this chapter. Descriptive statistics for the composite scores were presented, and a reliability analysis was provided. A summary of the findings was included followed by a detailed analysis of the findings. Chapter 5 will provide an overall view of the study. A discussion of the findings and implications of the results will be presented. Recommendations for future research and limitations of the study will be included.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study examined the relationship between transparent communication, authentic leadership, and the impact on county government employees' job satisfaction and performance. Multiple linear regression analysis was utilized to measure the predictive relationships between relational transparency, self-awareness, and recognition, promotion, communication, supervision, autonomy, and feedback. Chapter 5 includes an overall discussion of the results, implications of study results, limitations, and recommendations for future research arising from the findings of this study. Chapter 5 highlights the researcher's elaboration on what was expected to be or not discovered from this study and why.

Discussion of Results

This study investigated whether transparent communication and authentic leadership had an impact on employee job performance and satisfaction in a county governmental setting. A review of the literature indicated the need to have improved employee job performance and increased job satisfaction in county governments, and it was essential to recognize the dynamics that affect county government employees' job performance and satisfaction. The results of the analyses indicated that statistically significant relationships existed between relational transparency and self-awareness, and communication, autonomy, and feedback.

Null hypotheses one, two, and four were not rejected. The null hypotheses were rejected for research questions three, five, and six. Neither independent variable demonstrated a

statistically significant contribution to the prediction of communication. Relational transparency was a statistically significant predictor of autonomy and feedback.

As stated in Chapter 4 in the summary findings section, null hypotheses were rejected for research questions three, five, and six. The rejection of the questions three, five, and six means that when managers use the attributes of relational transparency and self-awareness this predicted job satisfaction in the form of communication. However, due to the low R^2 value that indicated poor overall model fit, the predictors were interpreted individually. The model accounted for 5% of the variance in communication. Because the model was statistically significant, the researcher interpreted the role of the individual predictors based on the variance in communication.

Neither relational transparency ($B = 0.43$, $t = 1.77$, $p = .08$) nor self-awareness ($B = 0.27$, $t = 0.97$, $p = .33$) were statistically significant predictors of communication. One explanation for the poor model fit is that when predicting human behavior, the behavior of humans is not easily predicted. The low R^2 value may also be due to response variability. The statistical significance assessed in the overall model may have been due to coincidental rather than a significant prediction from the independent variables. These results can furnish a reference point to determine how managers and employees view communication and the attributes of relational transparency and self-awareness.

The results of analysis of question five rejected the null hypothesis. The results of question five means that when managers exemplify the traits of relational transparency and self-awareness with employees, the independent variables predicted autonomy. Relational transparency and self-awareness contributed to 10% of the variance in autonomy. Each time relational and self-awareness were used there was a 10% increase in autonomy. The variance is

significant enough that the model was statistically significant. The researcher interpreted the influence of the individual predictors on the variance in autonomy.

The results of analysis of question six rejected the null hypothesis. The results indicate the managers using the independent variables of relational transparency and self-awareness predicted job performance in the form of feedback. Relational transparency and self-awareness contributed to 16% of the variance in feedback. This finding denotes that for every one unit of increase in relational transparency there was a 0.19 unit increase in feedback. The variance is significant enough that the model was statistically significant. The researcher interpreted the influence of the individual predictors on the variance in feedback.

Discussion of Results in Relation to the Theoretical Literature Review

Transparent Communication

Men and Stacks (2014) encapsulated transparent communication as the accessibility of information to employees whether negative or positive and maintaining the integrity of the information. Transparent communication is sharing information to employees that is clear, precise, expedient, and impartial with the objective of enriching the job performance of the employees. Lastly, Men and Stacks (2014) emphasized the importance of transparent communication within organizations that ultimately leads to the accountability of procedures, methods, and activities.

The purpose of transparent communication is not merely to enrich the information flow, but to improve employee involvement and understanding (Men, 2014). When employees receive clear and precise information, their decision-making is improved. Men and Stacks (2014) concluded that transparent communication was a key element within a public service organization

and further defined transparent communication as providing meaningful, responsible, and precise information. When employees have information that is significant and responsible with input, the attributes of confidence, responsibility, and satisfaction are exemplified (Men & Stacks, 2014). The multi-defined approach to transparent communication is a distinctive construct that impacts the relationship between the manager and the employee (Walumbwa et al. 2011; Men, 2014; Men & Stacks, 2014).

Wang and Hsieh (2013) concluded that the manager's use of the multi-dimensional approach to transparent communication and authentic leadership does have an impact on the employees' recognized trust in the manager. Lastly, Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2014) indicated that an unexpected result of this multi-dimensional model of transparent communication is the enhanced level of trust within the organization among the leaders and employees. This level of trust is closely associated with relational transparency, one of the characteristics of authentic leadership theory.

This study addressed transparent communication using the predictors relational transparency and self-awareness and their impact on job performance and satisfaction. The results indicated that statistically significant relationships existed between relational transparency, self-awareness, and communication, autonomy, and feedback.

The results recognized that when a manager provided clear, pertinent, accurate, and reliable information, employees were satisfied with their jobs and were more productive when performing their work tasks. The results from research question six indicated that for each unit of increase in relational transparency there was a 0.19 unit increase in feedback. However, the results of research question two indicated that relational transparency and self-awareness did not

significantly predict job satisfaction in the form of promotion for county government employees. This means even though supervisors may communicate with openness and honesty, the managers' behavior may not be a key factor in the employee receiving a promotion in the workplace.

Authentic Leadership Theory – Relational Transparency and Self-Awareness

Anderson and Level (1980) concluded that there is a direct correlation between manager communication and job performance, specifically that authentic leadership as relational transparency had an impact on job performance. Walumbwa et al. (2011) later introduced results from their research that relational transparency involves sharing one's personal thoughts and expressing one's true opinions and ways of thinking with employees. Further studied by Miller et al. (2006), authentic managers who chose to use relational transparency concluded that relational transparency is strongly associated with an employee's job performance. Authentic managers who encourage sincere and supportive interpersonal relationships aid in employees' mental well-being. Pengera and Çerne (2014) concluded that the pressure to produce is lessened, productivity is increased, and performance is enhanced. Also, Pengera and Çerne (2014) indicated that there were positive and significant parallels among authentic leadership style, job satisfaction, performance, and team involvement.

The findings of this study revealed similar conclusions for relational transparency, which is an attribute of authentic leadership. This finding indicated that for each unit where there was an increase in relational transparency, there was a 0.19 unit increase in feedback. This finding supports the assumption that managers who disclose information and provide concise feedback to the employee impact the employee's performance. Thus, this study supports Pengera and

Çerne (2014) who determined that managers who offered substantial feedback inspired employees to perform at a higher level.

Anderson and Level (1980) indicated that not enough efforts have brought attention to studying the direct correlation between manager communication and job performance. More importantly, researchers found that leaders who were transparent in their communication activated a willingness by their employees to work harder at improving their job performance and in achieving the objectives of the organization (Avolio et al., 2004). Miller et al. (2006) concluded that transparent communication from managers is strongly associated with constructive communication or feedback about the job itself, but does not always change an employee's job performance.

This study's results revealed that statistically significant relationships existed between relational transparency and self-awareness, communication, autonomy, and feedback. Jawahar (2010) surmised that the likelihood of improved performance is associated with the manager's ability to communicate to employees recommended methods to advance future performance. Further concluded by Jawahar (2010), leaders who communicated openly and with full disclosure of what is expected of their employees inspire their employees to work at an optimal level, thus encouraging an improved job performance and work ethic. Past studies' results of job performance found that communication in the form of feedback was critical in advancing employee motivation and performance (Allen & Cherrey, 2000; Collins & Stukas, 2006).

The implications of this study's results indicated a need for human resource departments to engage management teams in the development of programs that will provide training focused on communication strategies for providing honest and constructive feedback about the

employees' job performance. The training should focus on how managers and employees can communicate freely and honestly about the job activities and how this training affects employees' job performances. Another implication for practice within a government workplace would be to provide a forum to discuss the various types of leadership and the types of leadership styles that impact the day-to-day activities of managers and employees.

Managers' communication is about affirming and having a shared decision-making and goal-setting process with their employees. Results from this study revealed similar findings that were revealed by past literature. In this study, authentic leadership behaviors did have a statistically significant relationship with job performance in the form of feedback and autonomy. Wang and Hsieh (2013) confirmed the need to implement clear guidelines that promote transparent communication, using authentic leadership traits of self-awareness, relational transparency, and focusing on the correlation between employee job satisfaction and performance in county government.

The results of this study revealed that relational transparency and self-awareness did not predict recognition. The results from this study differed from Wang and Hsieh (2013), who concluded that the inclusion of both theories of transparent communication and authentic leadership had a positive impact on job satisfaction in the form of recognition. This study revealed that managers, organizations, and employees would collectively benefit from adoption of transparent communication and authentic leadership practices in their organization (Granados et al., 2008, 2010, 2012).

Clapp-Smith, et al. (2009) concluded that organizations should consider how to choose and cultivate leaders that will lead to standards that reflect authentic leadership and construct

long-term goals within the workplace. A collective conclusion from the literature was that organizations need leaders who will lead with clarity, accuracy, and disclosure in their communication style and action, who can develop an integrated system of transparent communication, and who will motivate employees to provide the best service to clients (George, 2003; Men, 2014). Contemporary researchers focused mainly on transparent communication and leadership styles that positively impacted job satisfaction and performance in government employees. The researchers concluded that further study was needed to investigate what was revealed about the authentic leaders and transparent communication in other non-government workplace employees (Rawlins, 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2011; Wong & Laschinger, 2012).

This section discussed the implications of this research in relation to the existing literature. Existing literature discussed communication meltdowns among managers, employees, and organizations. The organizations have experienced poor employee morale and staff turnover due to the lack of communication. The concept of transparent communication exhibited by leaders originated from researchers who focused on authentic leadership advancement; the researchers found transparent communication to be a key aspect of successful leadership and employee job satisfaction.

The results from this study highlighted the importance of constructive communication or feedback about the job itself, impacts the employees' job performance. This indicates that managers who place more emphasis on connecting with employees through feedback will see an improved job performance. Further noted from this study was that relational transparency and self-awareness did not predict recognition in the way previous studies revealed. This is significant because previous research indicated when managers clearly articulate expectations to

their employees, the job performance improved. Hence, this study's results substantiate the need for further investigation of the impact that relational transparency and self-awareness have on employees' job satisfaction.

Implications of the Results

In the discussion of the results section, the findings from this study are summarized. This section discussed the results in the context of what are the theoretical and functional implications. Results from this study revealed different results than from past literature. The theories of transparent communication and authentic leadership provided a theoretical framework for this study. The insight of the existing literature about the impact of transparent communication and authentic leadership styles on job performance and satisfaction furnished a foundation from which the hypotheses of this study were developed.

The conclusions of this study found that statistically significant relationships existed between relational transparency, self-awareness, communication, autonomy, and feedback. Neither independent variable demonstrated a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of communication. Relational transparency was a statistically significant predictor of autonomy and feedback. Future implications look towards human resources departments providing their current and future managers with training that have modules on authentic leadership, transparent communication, and employees. These kinds of behaviors would cultivate trust in the manager-employee relationship while imparting information and giving genuine insights. Employees would be free to express their true selves without pretense and work in a less stressful work environment.

Limitations

All research studies have inherent limitations. The limitations may include research design, instrument validity, and reliability, or participants' biases in responding to the survey. Opponents of quantitative research, Sale, Lohfeld, and Brazil (2002) indicated that one of the main challenges in conducting quantitative research is the limited focus of the variables in the research questions and hypotheses.

Sale et al. (2002) further stated that a limited focus to the examination of the research questions gives rise to an opportunity for possibly overlooking a far-reaching research investigation. Thus, the first limitation of this study was the bias of the employees' response to the survey questions, and the narrow focus of the variables used in the survey questions. The participants' answers may not have accurately reflected their true feelings concerning their supervisors, and they may not have been comfortable enough to be honest about their job satisfaction. (Evans & Mathur, 2005).

The second limitation identified was with the results of Cronbach's alpha assessment of relational transparency and self-awareness. Relational transparency demonstrated poor reliability ($\alpha = .54$) and the self-awareness scale demonstrated unacceptable reliability ($\alpha = .40$). Because of the poor scores assessed using Cronbach's alpha assessment, there are limitations on whether the same set of scales would obtain the same responses if the same questions were reassigned and re-assessed to the same participants. Variables resulting from assessment scales are proven to be reliable only when those variables deliver stable and reliable answers over a repeated administration of the assessment (Cronbach, 1951).

The third limitation was the use of one single source of participants that were specific

to one county government's employees, thus limiting the results due to the lack of representation of employees from other branches of government such as city and state. Lastly, due to a limited budget for the project, the researcher was not able to expand the scope of the participants beyond the local county government.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study investigated the impact of the theories of transparent communication and authentic leadership traits on employee job performance and satisfaction. This section offers recommendations for future research and practice. The first recommendation is to consider doing further research of dividing predictors into single variables to seek a more accurate outcome in accordance with behavior. For example, the research would have a hypothesis that focuses on the impact of job satisfaction and relational transparency. In addition, a research study could be conducted with a hypothesis that focused solely on managers and not a mixed group of participants. This future research and analysis would provide the researcher with more insight into the factors concerning the lack of job satisfaction and mediocre performance within a county governmental setting.

The second recommendation is for county governments to include in their employee learning development programs, seminars that focus on positive leadership styles such as authentic leadership and transparent communication focusing on disclosure, clarity, and accuracy. The third recommendation for future research is to investigate transparent communication and authentic leadership and their impact on job performance and satisfaction for county government employees, using a mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative design. This research project would gather two perspectives first, the interpretation of participants' experiences through

case studies of county employees and secondly, the collection numerical data of the participants and conduct an analysis of both type of results.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether transparent communication and authentic leadership impact employee job satisfaction and performance. Transparent communication and authentic leadership theories build a culture of trust and inspire employees to provide better customer service, performance, and transparent communication (George, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2011). Moreover, if there were a significant relationship found between manager's transparent communication, job satisfaction, and performance, the managers and employees would benefit from adoption of transparent communication and authentic leadership practices in county governments (Granados et al., 2008, 2010, 2012).

The findings of the analysis indicated that statistically significant relationships existed between relational transparency, self-awareness, communication, autonomy, and feedback. Null hypotheses one, two, and four were not rejected. The null hypotheses were rejected for research questions three, five, and six. Neither independent variable demonstrated a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of communication. Relational transparency was a statistically significant predictor of autonomy and feedback.

This research identified that statistically significant relationships existed between relational transparency, self-awareness, communication, autonomy, and feedback in a public-sector setting. The importance of organizations establishing a culture of openness and trust to improve employees' job performance and satisfaction was stressed by a study conducted by Ghosh (2013). The researcher hopes that county government agencies would use the results of

this study to aid in improving the lack of communication between managers and their employees. Additionally, the researcher is optimistic that the improved communication would also have an influence on improving job satisfaction and performance among county employees. Lastly, the researcher is hopeful that the information from this study assists county government administrators in expanding and implementing improved policies that relate to employment, training, and other personnel matters pertaining to generating a working atmosphere advantageous to improved job performance and increased job satisfaction for county government employees.

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Capella University's Academic Honesty Policy ([3.01.01](#)) holds learners accountable for the integrity of work they submit, which includes but is not limited to discussion postings, assignments, comprehensive exams, and the dissertation or capstone project.

Established in the Policy are the expectations for original work, rationale for the policy, definition of terms that pertain to academic honesty and original work, and disciplinary consequences of academic dishonesty. Also, stated in the Policy is the expectation that learners will follow APA rules for citing another person's ideas or works.

The following standards for original work and definition of *plagiarism* are discussed in the Policy:

Learners are expected to be the sole authors of their work and to acknowledge the authorship of others' work through proper citation and reference. Use of another person's ideas, including another learner's, without proper reference or citation constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty and is prohibited conduct. (p. 1)

Plagiarism is one example of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own. Plagiarism also includes copying verbatim or rephrasing ideas without properly acknowledging the source by author, date, and publication medium. (p. 2)

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Research misconduct includes but is not limited to falsification, fabrication, plagiarism, misappropriation, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. (p. 1)

Learners failing to abide by these policies are subject to consequences, including but not limited to dismissal or revocation of the degree.

Statement of Original Work and Signature

I have read, understood, and abided by Capella University's Academic Honesty Policy ([3.01.01](#)) and Research Misconduct Policy ([3.03.06](#)), including Policy Statements, Rationale, and Definitions.

I attest that this dissertation or capstone project is my own work. Where I have used the ideas or words of others, I have paraphrased, summarized, or used direct quotes following the guidelines set forth in the *APA Publication Manual*.

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