Study of Authentic Leadership Change Effect in Mid-Major College Athletic Departments

Rachael C. Starr
Centralis Honors Student

Nick Williams
Faculty Instructor

Dr. Daniel Ballou, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Department of Physical Education & Sport, Foust 123
Central Michigan University
Mount Pleasant, MI 48859 USA

Abstract

The study investigated the capability of newly hired athletic directors to portray authentic leadership to their mid to high level employees. The four constructs of authentic leadership: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing, as well change in leadership, were tested to examine employees' perspectives of their athletic director. An online survey using the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) was sent to participants at intercollegiate athletic departments within the 5 mid-major athletic conferences of Division I, generating a population of 193 respondents. Mean scores for each participant were measured against the rank scale for each of the four ALQ constructs. Findings indicated that, overall, it is possible for recently hired (1-5 years) athletic directors to portray authentic leadership. The constructs of self-awareness and balanced processing presented slightly lower scores; however, their averages proved that employees believed their recently hired athletic director can express authentic leadership qualities.

Keywords: authentic leadership, athletic director, leadership change, ALQ constructs

1. Introduction

In a world overwhelmed with computer screens, tablet screens, and smartphone screens, one may notice that the authenticity of individuals is becoming hard to discern. In the workplace setting, employee-to-employer, or member-to-leader communications have changed. Instead of walking to one's office to ask a question or discuss an issue, an email or text is sent. Instead of group meetings in a large conference room, online WebEx meetings with live video are planned. This new dynamic can make it more difficult, though, to evaluate a leader's authenticity in the leadership role. Many other studies have been done on leadership in the workplace, but most have focused on healthcare, education, and general business. The business/workplace side of intercollegiate athletics is rarely seen by the outside consumer – there is no stock price to monitor or product to try on or consume. In an organization with a definitive leader, it is likely that the athletic director's leadership style is the force driving employee morale and productivity. This implies that decisions are made based on this leadership style, therefore making the communication of the athletic director's style crucial to the organization's success or failure. There are many leadership styles that one may employ, and many times a combination of styles is used, but it is of interest as to which is the most beneficial, in terms of employee satisfaction and productivity.

2. Literature Review

Previously, leadership styles such as transactional and transformational leadership have been studied for their effectiveness. However, authentic leadership as developed by Avolio, Gardner, Peterson, Walumbwa, and Wernsing (2008) define as "a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context" (p. 92).

They added that this process results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development (Avolio et al., 2008). First, there must be a general understanding of what authenticity means. As Avolio and Gardner (2005) highlight, sincerity and authenticity are often confused, but have their differences. There are two key differences that separate authenticity from sincerity. Avolio and Gardner (2005) emphasize the importance of one's relationship with oneself in determining authenticity. Second, they stress that the actions of an individual must be true to their thoughts and feelings to be considered authentic (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Once the definition of authenticity is understood, it can be related to leadership.

Avolio, et al. (2008), used an extensive review of literature to form the four main constructs of authentic leadership that would later be used to form the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire. The four constructs were1) self-awareness, 2) relational transparency, 3) internalized moral perspective, and 4) balanced processing.Avolio, et al. (2008),describe the four constructs as such, "Self-awareness refers to demonstrating an understanding of how one derives and makes meaning of the world and how that meaning-making process impacts the way one views himself or herself over time. … Relational transparency refers to presenting one's authentic self (as opposed to a fake or distorted self) to others. … Balanced processing refers to leaders who show they objectively analyze all relevant data before coming to a decision. … Internalized moral perspective refers to an internalized and integrated form of self-regulation" (p. 95).

These four constructs comprise the important aspects of authenticity, specifically as it relates to leaders. First and foremost, self-awareness is needed to form opinions, feelings, emotions, beliefs, etc. that will influence how one leads. This behavior can be presented authentically or imitatively to others, portraying a certain level of relational transparency. If a leader's behavior is authentic to their self-awareness, they can make a decision based on all data and viewpoints, known as balanced processing. The leader's internalized moral perspective should prompt them to consider the decision and determine its authenticity.

Authenticity revolves around oneself and their self-perspective, self-determination, and self-regulation. Avolio and Gardner (2005) even address this focus saying that authenticity involves a sense of self that must be experienced by the individual. One can seem authentic and believe they demonstrate consistent actions to their beliefs, but an even greater power lies in one's ability to communicate their authenticity, therefore inspiring others, specifically employees or team members. Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) acknowledge this need for effective leader communication suggests future studies should evaluate all issues within an organization, including content issues, situational issues, and process issues. This will give insight into how and why organizations change. The leadership style of an athletic director undoubtedly can make an organization change. Therefore, this study aims to examine the perceptions of athletic department staff towards their athletic director in different situations and determine levels of authentic leadership.

Authentic leadership can be studied testing the general levels or competencies a leader possesses. Additionally, when a control is placed on the time an athletic director has had to portray their authenticity, we are able to analyze the perceptions of athletic department staff within a given time period. The first years of a leader's position in a new organization are vital to establishing trust, communicating a vision, and portraying a leadership style. Throughout this time, a leader should focus on cultivating organizational commitment, as Morrow (2011) points out that employees with greater commitment to an organization are more productive and less likely to quit. Greater organizational commitment comes from open communication between leader and follower. Avolio et al. (2008) claim that truly authentic leaders want to genuinely understand their leadership style so they can use it to serve others. Incorporating a time of change (old athletic director to new athletic director) into our studies of authentic leadership will provide insight into the amount of time it takes to effectively communicate/portray authentic leadership competencies. If an athletic director can be perceived as authentic, employees will be less likely to leave the organization. Avolio et al. (2008) support this by stating that authentic leaders are in touch with their personal values and they ensure they act in accordance with these values to appear transparent to their followers, establishing credibility and developing respect. Greater respect and trust leads to enhanced satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Azanza, Moriano, Molero, and Mangin (2015) researched the influence of authentic leadership on turnover intention of employees in the health, education, and administration fields. They found that authentic leadership had a negative effect on turnover intention, meaning that the more authentic the leader, the less employees wish to quit or find a new job.

Therefore, if a leader can portray authentic feelings/beliefs that can enhance leader-follower relations, their followers will be less likely to search for other jobs and more likely to remain with an organization for a longer period of time. Based on this prior research, we offer the following hypothesis and hope to find evidence for the following research questions:

- Null Hypothesis: There is no evidence to support that newly hired athletic directors communicate their authenticity to mid to high level managers within 1-5 years.
- Alternative Hypothesis: There is evidence to support that newly hired athletic directors communicate their authenticity to mid to high level managers within 1-5 years.

The study will investigate the following and attempt to find evidence based on the following research questions: Research Question 1 (Self-Awareness): It is possible for newly hired athletic directors to portray their level of self-awareness to mid to high level athletic department staff within 1-5 years. Research Question 2 (Relational Transparency): It is possible for newly hired athletic directors to portray relational transparency with mid to high level athletic department staff within 1-5 years. Research Question 3 (Internalized Moral Perspective): It is possible for newly hired athletic directors to portray an internalized moral perspective as perceived by mid to high level athletic department staff within 1-5 years. Research Question 4 (Balanced Processing): It is possible for newly hired athletic directors to portray and implement balanced processing with mid to high level athletic department staff within 1-5 years. Adoption of the hypothesis and rejection of the null hypothesis would be proven by an average score in the topic area with a score of 4 or higher (scale 1-6) on survey questions covering the topic areas listed above.

3. Methods

The study is a non-experimental, exploratory research design using cross-sectional collection of data. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling of athletics Division I athletic departments.

3.1. Participants

Participants were 193 mid-level to high-level managers from five (5) different Division I mid-level athletic conferences in the United States. To preserve the anonymity of the respondents, the identification of the individual conferences and associated institutions were not named in this report. The conferences selected were determined to be "mid-major" by the following criteria:

- National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I classification, with Football Bowl Series (FBS) secondary classification
- Middle to lower profit margin as compared to other Division I conferences
- Similarity in student population size
- Athletic department organizational structure is functional in configuration and communication throughout the department is decentralized.

The information used to determine what conferences and institutions fell generally into these criteria was found from the institution and/or athletic department websites.

3.2. Measures

Authentic Leadership To assess the authentic leadership levels of an athletic director, questions were based from a sample of Authentic Leadership Questionnaire to ensure the four dimensions were represented: self-awareness (i.e. "My Athletic Director seeks feedback to improve his/her interaction with others."), relational transparency (i.e. "My Athletic Director says exactly what he or she means."), internalized moral perspective (i.e. "I am aware of my Athletic Director's core beliefs."), and balanced processing (i.e. "My Athletic Director solicits views that challenge his or her deeply held positions.").The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire was developed and validated by Avolio et al. (2008), and has become the most reliable measure to test authentic leadership. Figure 1 was taken from Avolio et al. (2008) and shows the samples from which the questions were created. See Table 1 for a full list and text of survey questions. Available responses were on a 6 point-scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree).

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire Sample Items

Self-Awareness

1. Seeks feedback to improve interactions with others.
2. Accurately describes how others view his or her capabilities.

Relational Transparency

3. Says exactly what he or she means.
4. Is willing to admit mistakes when they are made.

Internalized Moral Perspective

5. Demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with actions.
6. Makes decisions based on his/her core beliefs.

Balanced Processing

7. Solicits views that challenge his or her deeply held positions.
8. Listens carefully to different points of view before coming to conclusions.

Figure 1. Authentic Leadership Questionnaire Sample Items used to form questions of survey.

Question #	Question	Topic Area
1	My Athletic Director seeks feedback to improve his/her interaction with others.	Self-Awareness
2	My Athletic Director knows how I view his/her capabilities.	Self-Awareness
3	My Athletic Director knows how my team views his/her capabilities.	Self-Awareness
4	My Athletic Director demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with his or her actions.	Internalized Moral Perspective
5	My Athletic Director says exactly what he or she means.	Relational Transparency
6	My Athletic Director is willing to admit his/her mistakes.	Relational Transparency
7	I am aware of my Athletic Director's core beliefs.	Internalized Moral Perspective
8	I believe he or she makes decisions based on those core beliefs.	Internalized Moral Perspective
9	My Athletic Director solicits views that challenge his or she deeply helps positions.	Balanced Processing
10	My Athletic Director solicits input from others when making decisions.	Balanced Processing
11	My Athletic Director communicates his/her plan and values during a time of change.	Communication/Support During Change
12	My Athletic Director makes me feel supported during times of change.	Communication/Support During Change

Table 1.Survey Questions – Leadership Topics

Communicating Authenticity During Change Besides the four topic areas from the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, questions on a fifth topic were included to judge the respondents' actions during change due to the choice to focus on recently hired athletic directors. The following two questions were included at the end of the survey asking for their opinion on the same 6-point scale: "My Athletic Director communicates his/her plan and values during a time of change." "My Athletic Director makes me feel supported during times of change."

Including questions such as these ensures that the athletic department is aware of the changes occurring within the department, the athletic director is communicating their values, whether authentic or not, during a time of change, and that he/she is in contact or supporting the staff during this time.

3.3. Procedure

Division I athletic departments from five (5) mid-major athletic conferences with a change in athletic director in the last 1-5 years were targeted to participate in this study. These guidelines ensured that respondents would have similar resources, organizational settings, and a recent change in athletic director. Additionally, employees chosen from the athletic department can be described as mid-level to high-level managers that would have direct relationships and communication with an athletic director. These individuals usually have direct and indirect reports, meaning the leadership style they experience is usually the leadership style or values passed on to others that they are responsible to lead. Reference the link provided in the resources for an example of an organizational chart from a Division I athletic department. In reference to the chart, individuals who are in the middle or higher part of the chart were the targeted population for this study (i.e. Associate Athletic Directors, Senior Associate Athletic Directors, Associate Athletic Directors, etc.).

An online survey instrument was used to collect the data. In all communications with possible participants, they were informed that their participation was voluntary, their responses would be kept confidential, all personal identifiers would be removed to protect their anonymity, and all digital data will be stored in secure computer files. By clicking on the link to take the survey, participants agreed to be 18 years or older and consenting to the survey. The participants were sent a preliminary email informing them of the survey they would be receiving and its purpose. The survey was then sent out with a reminder email sent seven (7) days in and an email sent 13 days in to warn the survey respondents of the closing of the survey on the 14th day. This schedule was determined by the evidence found by Ryan and Clopton (2009) to increase web based survey responses with an initial email notifying them of the survey, the invitation two (2) days later, a reminder email one (1) week following the invitation and a second reminder email two (2) weeks following the invitation. There were increases in number of responses after each reminder email was sent.

Also, to account for respondent bias, 40 out of the first 121 respondents between the initial survey invitation and a day before the reminder email were analyzed to collect the mean and standard deviation for each question. Upon the closing of the survey, another 40 out of the last 72 responses were analyzed to collect the mean and standard deviation for each question. These two samples were compared, and no statistical difference was found between the two(2) populations. The second population had a slightly lower mean on each question, however, upon the compilation of all 193 responses, the means for this second population fell in the middle of the complete respondent group, negating any respondent bias. (See Figures 2 and 3).
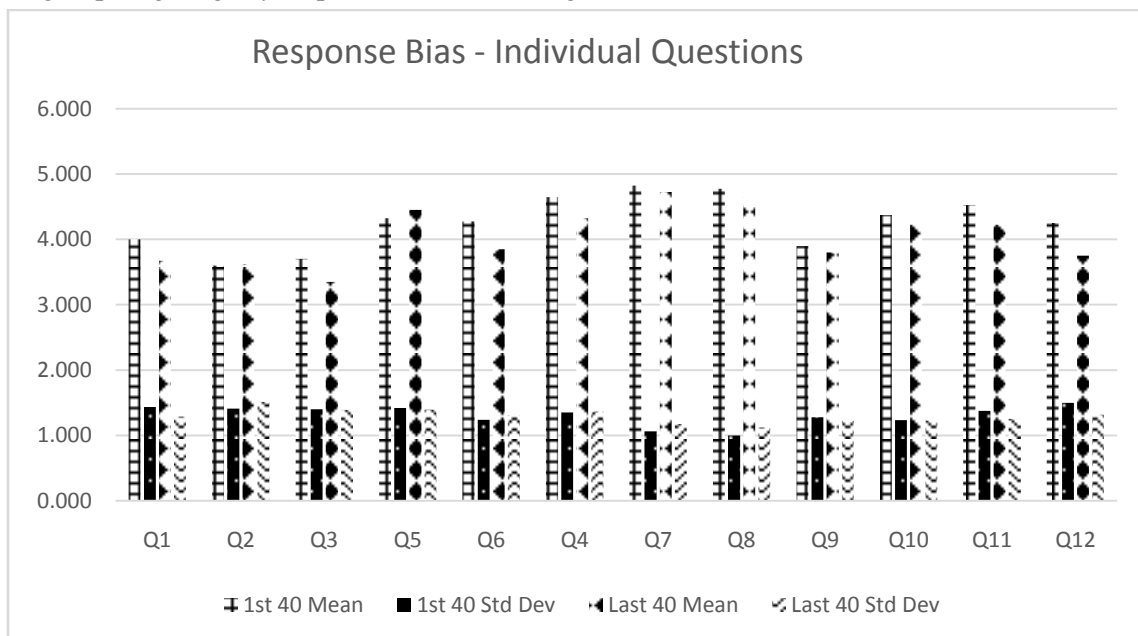

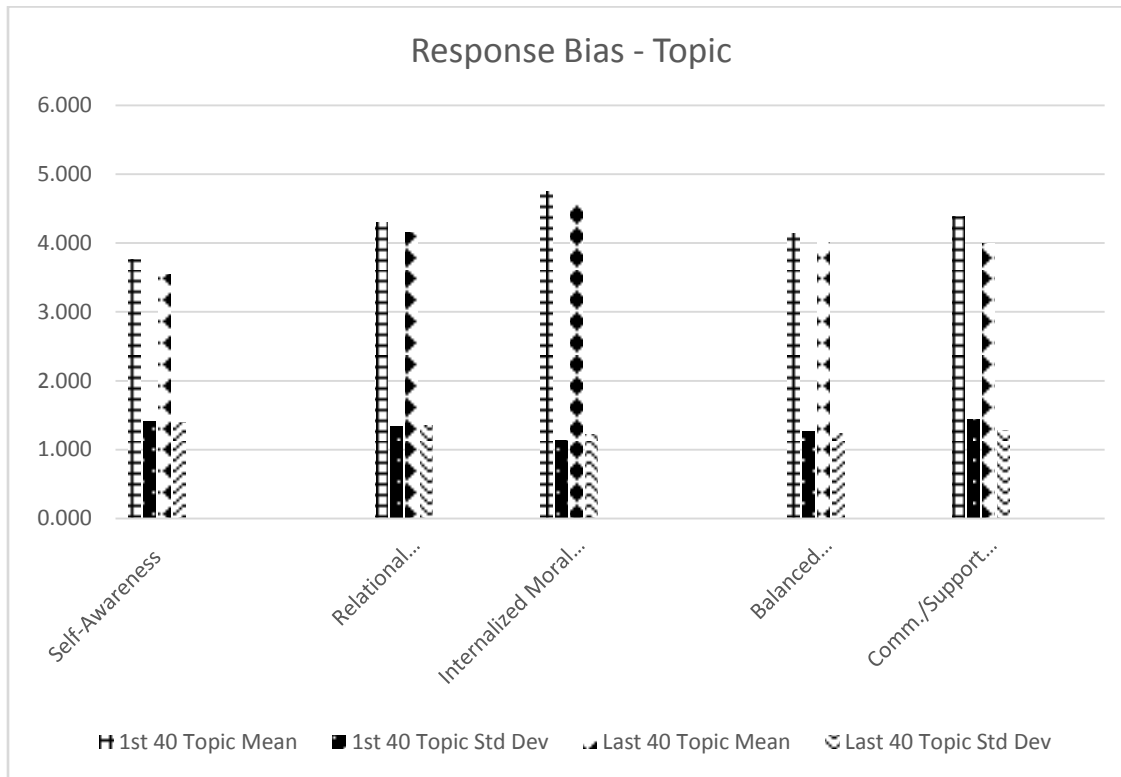**Figure 2. Response Bias Data – Individual Questions**

Figure 3. *Response Bias Data – Topic*

3.4. Demographic Data

Participants were asked their age range, gender, length of employment at current institution, and position title (see Table 2 for survey demographic questions, and Figures 4-7 for graph representation of demographic data.) From the responses collected, the majority of respondents were between 30 and 49 years of age. Respondents were asked their gender, with 62.69% responding as "Man" and 37.31% responding as "Woman". These percentages reflect the employee population of the sport management industry as researched by the North American Society of Sport Management (2011) that reported that women in high-level management positions declined in every major professional North American sport league between 2000 and 2009, with the number of female athletic directors at NCAA institutions dropping below 20%.

| Question #	Question	Answer Choices
13	What is your age range?	• 20-29 • 30-39 • 40-49 • 50-59 • 60-69 • 70-79
14	What is your gender?	• Man • Woman
15	How many years have you worked at your current institution?	• 1-5 years • 6-10 years • 11-15 years • 16-20 years • 21-25 years • 26-30 years • 31-35 years • 36+ years
16	What is your current title?	• Associate AD • Assistant AD • Director • Assistant Director • Coordinator

Table2. Survey Questions – Demographics
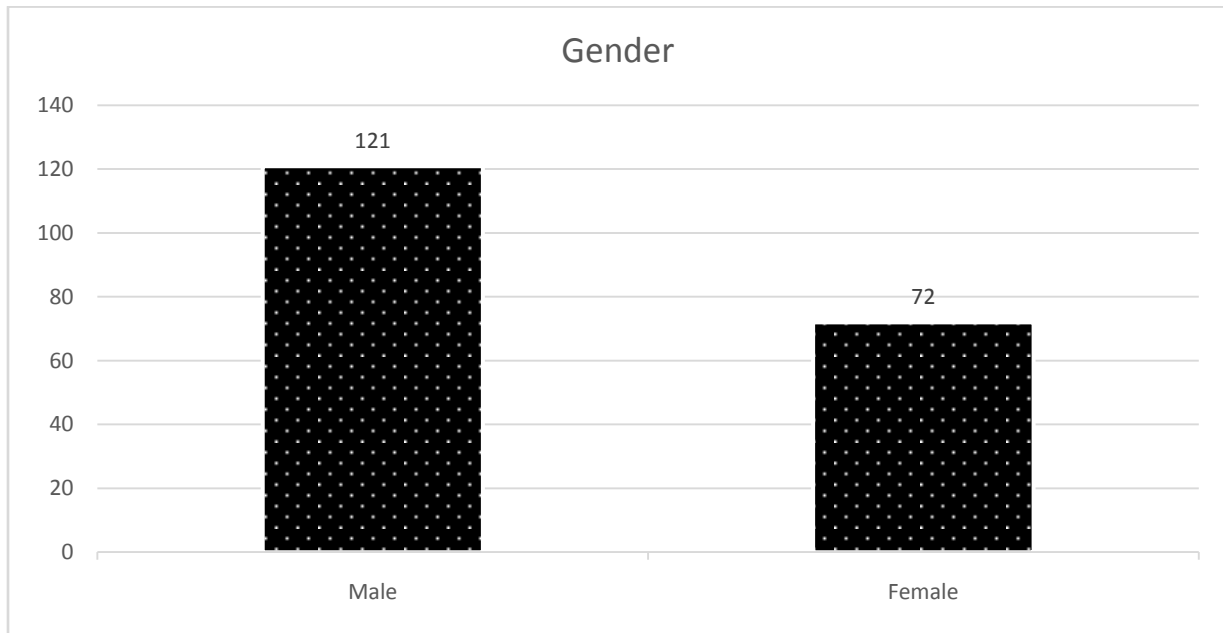
Figure 5.Survey Respondents Gender

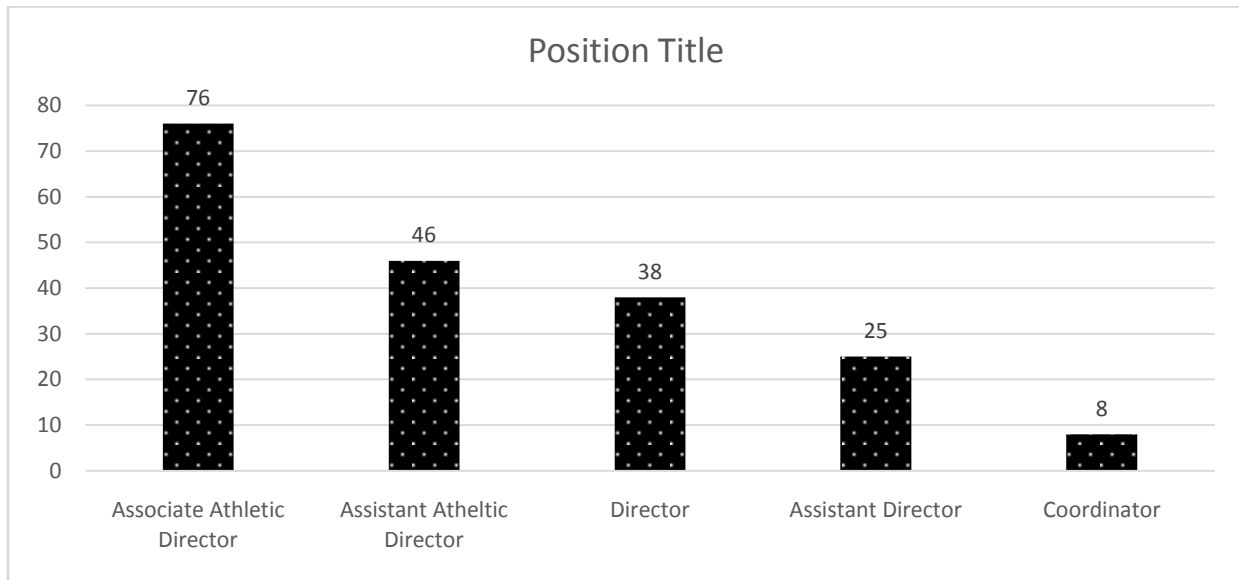**Figure 6.Survey Respondents Length of Current Employment**

Figure 7.*Survey Respondents Position Title*

When asked how many years they have worked at their current institution, the majority answered in the 1-5 years' range. Last, participants were asked for their current title, with options ranging from Coordinator to Associate Athletic Director, and an "Other" option for those whose title was not represented. Respondents answered with the following: 39.38% are Associate Athletic Directors, 23.83% are Assistant Athletic Directors, 19.29% are Directors, 12.95% are Assistant Directors, and 4.15% are Coordinators. Besides classifying as one of the previously mentioned titles, there were 33 respondents who also chose the "Other" option, with a majority (13) of respondents entering "Senior Associate Athletic Director". There were a variety of other titles also provided, such as "Athletic Finance Administrator", "Deputy Athletic Director", "HR", and "Associate Director".

4. Results

The survey topic data collected is presented in Table 3 and Figures8-11:

Area	Question Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	Area Range	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's alpha
Self-Awareness	Q1	3.9	1.37	0.23	-0.433	-0.540	0.894
	Q2	3.79	1.40		-0.380	-0.848	
	Q3	3.67	1.33		-0.254	-0.865	
Relational Transparency	Q5	4.54	1.31	0.37	-0.835	0.012	0.725
	Q6	4.14	1.28		-0.670	-0.057	
Internalized Moral Perspective	Q4	4.54	1.28	0.27	-0.955	0.371	0.889
	Q7	4.81	1.11		-0.988	0.795	
	Q8	4.65	1.15		-1.020	0.875	
Balanced Processing	Q9	3.79	1.25	0.66	-0.349	-0.286	0.774
	Q10	4.45	1.18		-0.732	0.014	
Communication/Support During Change	Q11	4.31	1.33	0.21	-0.723	-0.185	0.787
	Q12	4.09	1.46		-0.629	-0.442	

Table 3. Statistical Evaluation of Individual Survey Leadership Questions – General PopulationTable 3. General Population

- Figure 8. Gender
- Figure 9. Age

- Figure 10. Length of Time in Current Position
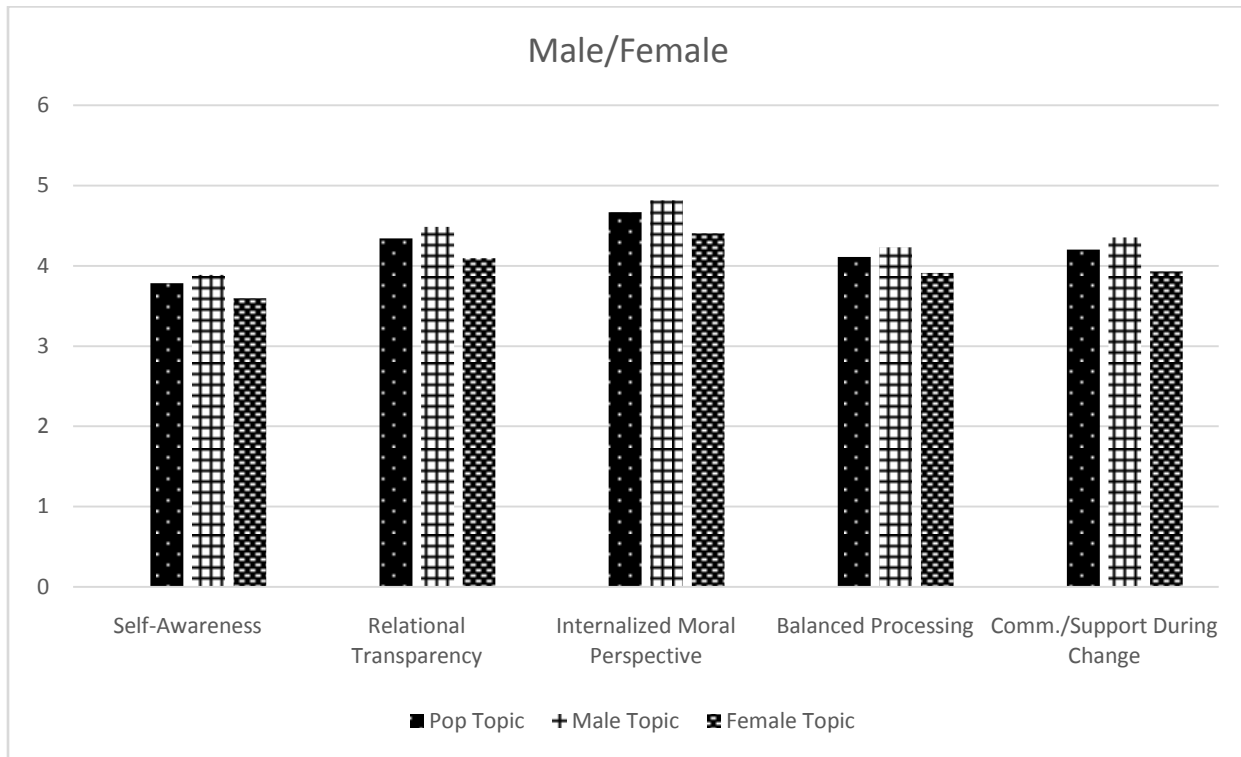- Figure 11. Position Title
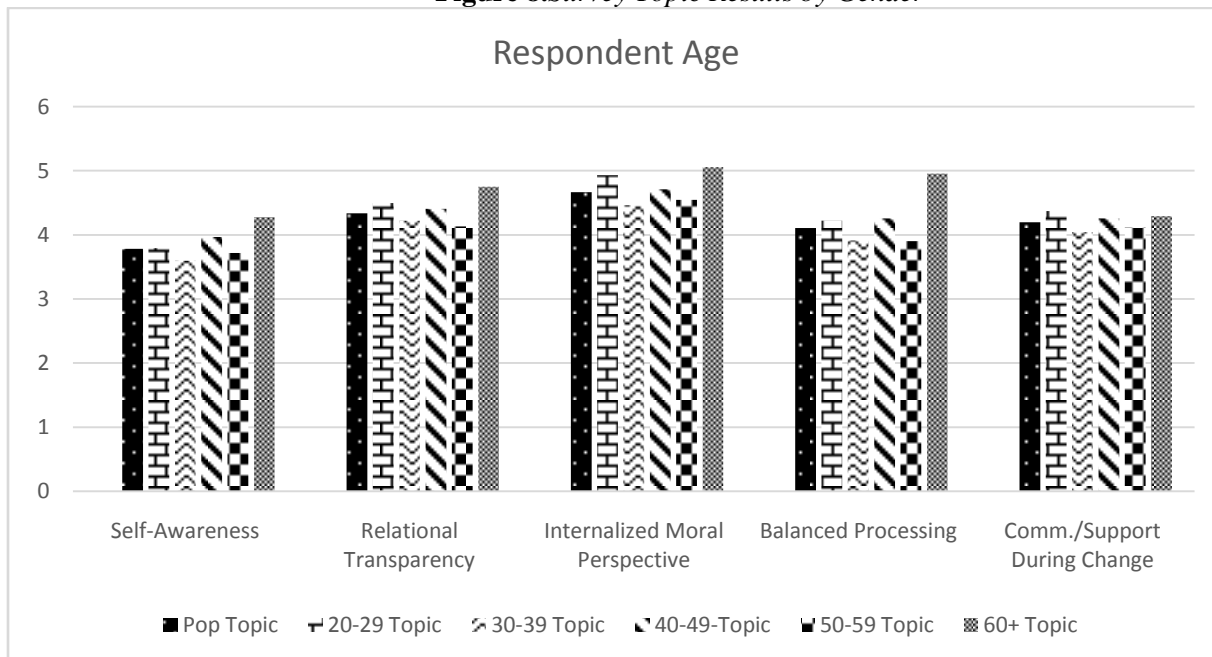

Figure 8.*Survey Topic Results by Gender*

Figure 9.Survey Topic by Respondent Age

(note: due to only 2 respondents in the 70-79 years of age category, this category was merged with the 60-69 years of age category (renamed "60+ for this figure) to preserve respondent anonymity.)
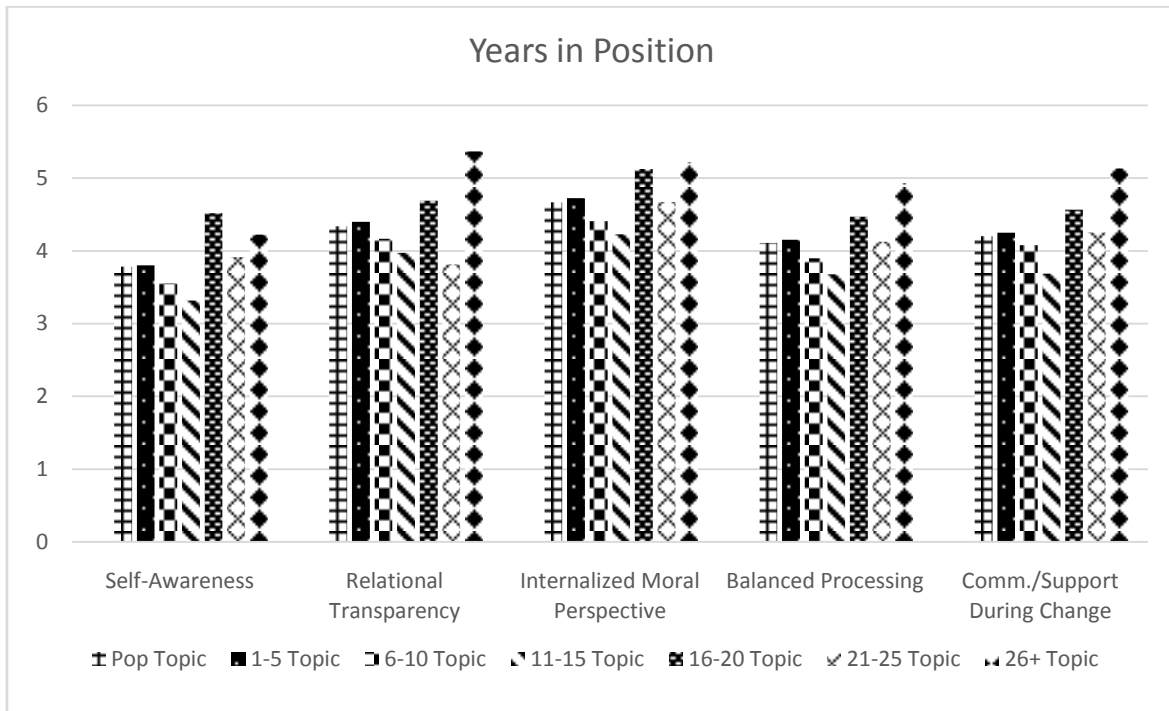
Figure 10.Survey Topic by Years in Position

(note: due to only 2 respondents in the 30+ years in position categories, these categories were merged with the 26-30 years' category (renamed ("26+ for this figure) to preserve respondent anonymity.)
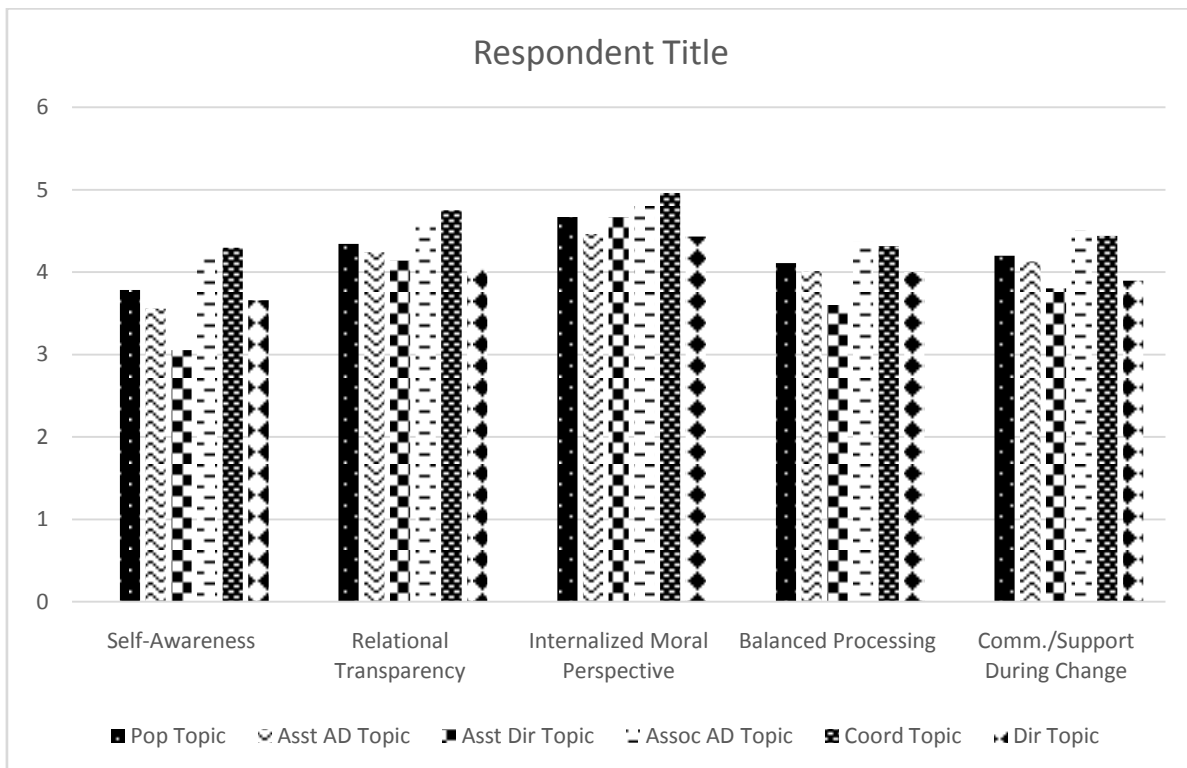

Figure 11.Survey Topic by Respondent Title

5. References

The evaluations were made using Microsoft Excel statistical calculations and the standard Statistical Package for Social Science software (SPSS), version 24, to determine the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of all answers for each question. The total responses for the study were evaluated and Table 3 outlines the general population data for mean statistic and standard deviation statistic for each question. Note: the skewness nor kurtosis scores, all within the generally accepted ±2,for the general population indicated a very normal distribution, and were not calculated for other data representations (George & Mallory, 2010). The mean scores were used to determine the average answer by respondents on the 1 to 6 scale (*1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- somewhat disagree, 4- somewhat agree, 5- agree, 6- strongly agree*).

Table 3 categorizes the questions by topic area.As a result of the pilot study finding, Question 4 was separated from 7 and 8 for clarity reasons, although all concern internalized moral perspective, and to ensure the respondent was taking the time to read the question and answer accordingly, as the questions were phrased similarly, but had different meanings that were important to understand.In reference to Table 1, Questions 4, 7, and 8 have similar wording, "My Athletic Director demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with his or her actions." "I am aware of my Athletic Director's core beliefs." "I believe he or she makes decisions based on those core beliefs." It was imperative that responders could discern the difference between each and answer accordingly. Question 4 asked about beliefs matching with actions. Question 7 asked if the employee is aware of the core beliefs, which would require communication of those beliefs. Finally, Question 8 asked if the athletic director made decisions in the workplace that are consistent with the core beliefs asked about in Question 7. By separating these questions, researchers hoped that respondents could take time to answer each question and interpret each one with its desired meaning.
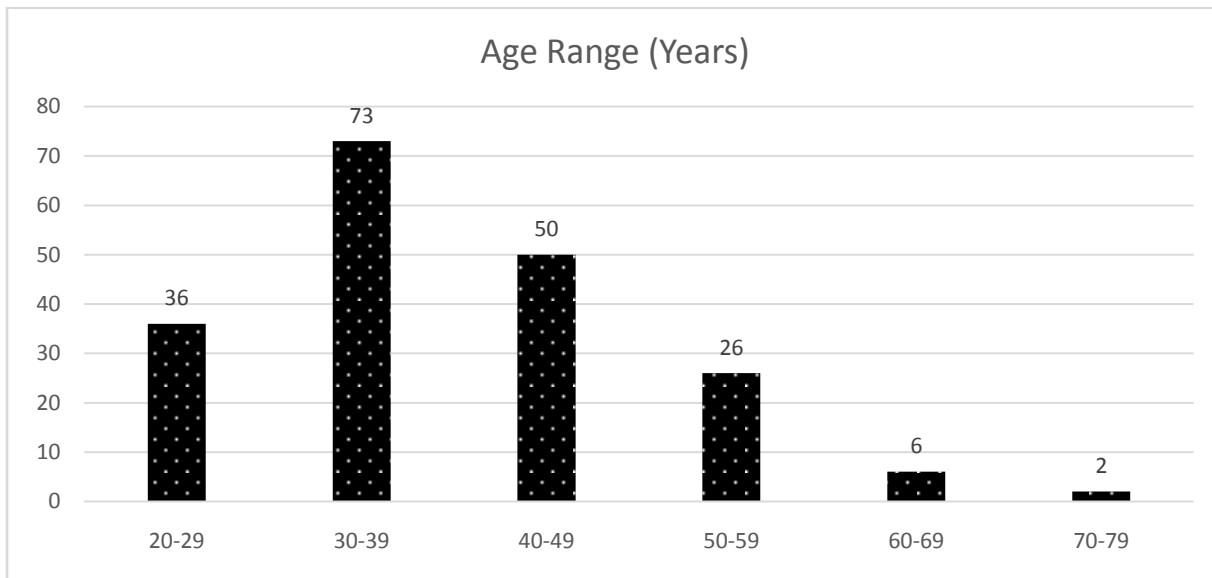

Figure 4.Survey Respondents Age Range

The range of the means for each topic area is also provided in Table 3. The ranges were collected to examine the difference in answers. The balanced processing set had the largest range. We believe this is due to the subject matter in each question. Question 9 asks, "My Athletic Director solicits view that challenges his or her deeply held positions." Question 10 asks, "My Athletic Director solicits input from other when making decisions." While both questions are in the same topic area (Balanced Processing), Question 9 requires the employee to know their leaders deeply held positions, and Question 10 asks for their observations in a workplace setting. All other ranges did not show a statistical difference between the questions within the topic area.

The alternative hypothesis stated, "There is evidence to support that newly hired athletic directors communicate their authenticity to mid- to high-level managers within 1-5 years." The results from Table 3 prove that the managers who participated indicated that their athletic director portrays self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing all during a time of change, meaning they can be described as an authentic leader.

Except for self-awareness with standard means within rounding to 4, but not quite at 4 (3.90, 3.79, and 3.67) and Question 9 relating to balanced processing at 3.79, all other constructs had means above 4, ranging from 4.1 to 4.81, with 4 representing "Somewhat Agree". The average score for all answers is 4.22, supporting the proposed hypothesis.When the survey topic data is evaluated broken out by demographic categories, there are some notable trends:Gender: When reviewed by gender, it is noted that in every category, females scored their athletic director slightly lower than the general respondent group. This does not match the literature studied, as studies done by McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2002), Peachy and Burton (2010), Wexley and Pulakos (1983), andAlimo-Metcalfe (1998) all found that there was no difference in female subordinate evaluation of their superior as compared to male evaluation.

Age/Years in Position: The Respondent Age and Respondent Years in Position survey topic data trend similarly, which would be expected (those in the younger position brackets have typically been in their current position for less time.) The highest scores were generally found for those newer to their current position (1-5 years)/youngest in age (20-29 years) and those with most time in their current position (26+ years)/oldest in age (60+ years).

Title: No specific trend was noted in this demographic set. With the purposeful selection of mid-major athletic departments, it is theorized that the roles and responsibilities associated with the title vary greatly from school to school. An "Associate Athletic Director" at one school may be very different than the "Associate Athletic Director" at a different school. Administrators at these schools engage in multiple and wide-ranging duties that are often different from school to school.

6. Discussion

The purpose of the study was to determine if newly hired directors can communicate authentic leadership to their employees at a Division I level. With the authentic leadership constructs and a time period of change, we could analyze the authenticity of a leader as perceived by their followers. The hypothesis "There is evidence to support that newly hired athletic directors communicate their authenticity to mid to high level managers within 1-5 years." was supported by the survey data, as findings yielded positive results for athletic directors, as rated by their employees.It is also consistent with previous authentic leadership research conducted by Avolio et al. (2008) stating that authentic leaders are able to portray their authentic values to others in a genuine manner and Azanza et al. (2011) finding that authentic leaders lead to happier employees with greater organizational commitment.

Based on the results for research question 1, "Is it possible for newly hired athletic directors to portray their level of self-awareness to mid to high level athletic department staff within 1-5 years?" the answer would be "not quite". With response means below 4, the conclusion falls between "Somewhat disagree" and "Somewhat agree". Based on the definition that Avolio et al. (2008) provided for self-awareness, "Self-awareness refers to demonstrating an understanding of how one derives and makes meaning of the world and how that meaning making process impacts the way one views himself or herself over time," there are some predictions for the lower scores in this construct. In order to be self-aware, one must first develop this internally, then communicate or portray it externally. The internal process could take longer for some individuals, as the definition points out by saying it is developed "over time". There is no finishing point for self-awareness, rather it is a continuum of self-awareness activities and self-contemplation that will strengthen one's self-awareness. Discussing personal matters such as these are not always present in the workplace, as it is hectic with a level of professionalism to be maintained. It is encouraged to create a more open, inviting work place to discuss such things as self-awareness or perception of the world to develop higher levels of authenticity and transparency.

The three remaining research questions addressing relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing were all supported with the results collected. This support is promising to newly-hired athletic directors as it proves that authenticity can be portrayed from a leadership position and employees/followers will acknowledge it. While the answers were not overwhelmingly "Strongly agree", all means, except for Question 9 which was addressed in the previous section, yielded positive results in between "Somewhat agree" (4) and "Agree" (5). There is room for improvement, as the more positive the perceptions of authenticity, the more trustworthy and committed a follower will become.

Understanding the amount of time it takes to portray authentic leadership and examining the employees' perceptions of their leaders is critical to a newly hired athletic director's influence and efficiency. Although the athletic director may change, athletic seasons continue on schedule, and there is little time to figure out and reconstruct an athletic department.

If a leader can portray their authenticity, it is likely that there will be an increased level of self-esteem, psychological well-being, friendliness, and other positive attributes in the employees/followers (Walumbwa, et. al., 2007). In turn, the work put in and produced will be of higher quality and on a timely schedule. The objective of this research was to determine if it was possible for athletic directors to communicate their authenticity to mid to high level athletic department staff members within 1-5 years. The results supported the hypothesis while finding evidence to support most, but not all, of the proposed research questions.

The support of the hypothesis is encouraging to newly hired athletic directors who have a responsibility to communicate their goals and values to their department. The results prove that 1-5 years is enough time to establish a perceived authentic character and positive reputation with employees. Authentic leadership leads to managerial effectiveness in overall performance, improved quality of work life, and employee satisfaction (Datta, 2015). It combats the turnover in athletics that Peachey, et. al., (2014) studied that stems from a lack of organizational commitment and a feeling of job detachment. With the characteristics of an authentic leader, such as, unconcealed self-awareness, a strong internalized moral perspective, transparent relationships, and balanced processing when making decisions, an organization will experience greater employee morale, higher efficiency in tasks and goal completion and less turnover rate within the department.

7. Limitations

As with all studies, the research yielded limitations worth noting. The results produced are not generalizable and do not apply outside ofDivision I intercollegiate athletics. Every organization would benefit from examining the perceptions of authentic leadership, however our setting is specific to the Division I level of NCAA.Additionally, other evaluations of success confound the ability to determine if the organization or athletic department is successful due to the authentic leadership style. The leader may present authentic attributes, but the department's goals and objectives may not be aligned with the strategic initiatives resulting in reduced efficiency and overall success. Determining the success of an organization proves the impact and legitimacy of authentic leadership.

8. Suggestions for Further Study

Future research should continue to study the effect of authentic leadership during times of change, its contributions to the success and efficiency of an organization, and applying it to specific industries to expand the populations the results can apply to for study. Specifically, in the sport management field, all levels of universities and conferences should be studied to improve the athletic departments of every institution. Additionally, authentic leadership as perceived by certain demographic groups should be studied to understand why groups differ in their responses. Overall, this research progressed the research of leadership in the collegiate athletics field by finding that newly hired athletic directors portray a high level of authenticity in their leadership through the authentic leadership constructs as perceived by the mid to high level managers of their athletic department. Further research into Authentic Leadership for other populations in intercollegiate athletics should be encouraged to provide a better overall assessment of the impact of Authentic Leadership behaviors. Training programs should be evaluated to determine the effectiveness of learning Authentic Leadership behaviors.

Relevant research by Cooper, Scandura, and Schriesheim (2005) found that there are four major difficulties when establishing a training program. First, ensuring the program is authentic, next, determining how to imitate trigger events during the training, third, determining whether ethical-decision making is a teachable lesson, and finally, deciding who would benefit from an authentic leadership training.First, to ensure the authenticity of the program, it would be practicable to apply the authentic leadership concepts used in the study to the training. Translating authentic leadership qualities into a written handbook could be difficult. However, careful preparation would ensure the validity and authenticity of such a material, such as making the message clear, providing actions that could be carried out based on beliefs, targeting employees who are in direct contact with the leader, and addressing opposing arguments or situations that may arise. A handbook could also specifically address how a new leader could manage those survey topics where certain demographic areas scored lower than the general population - females, middle-age/middle-of-career employees, etc. As Avolio and Gardner (2005) cite Erickson's article addressing the importance of authenticity from 1995, "authenticity is not an either/or condition, i.e., people are never entirely authentic or inauthentic.Instead, they can more accurately be described as achieving levels of authenticity" (p. 320). One should not be discouraged if their organization's or their own scores of authenticity are low, as there is always time to develop it, especially with the appropriate training.

A handbook could inform readers of authentic leadership qualities, exercises to improve authentic leadership, the appropriate way to portray authentic leadership, and display the results of employee attitudes associated with higher authentic leadership competencies.

9. References

Alexander, J. A., Battilana J., Gilmartin, M., Pache, A., Sengula, M. (2010). Leadership competencies for implementing planned organizational change. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21,* p. 422-438.

Alimo-Metcalfe, B. (1998). 360 Degree Feedback and Leadership Development. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment,6*(1), 35-44. doi:10.1111/1468-2389.00070

Armenakis, A., Arthur, B. (1999). Organizational change: A review of theory and research in the 1990s. *Journal of Management, 25*(3),293-315. doi: 10.1016/s0149-2063(99)00004-5

Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 315-338. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.001

Azanza, G., Moriano, J. A., Molero, F., &Mangin, J. L. (2015). The effects of authentic leadership on turnover intention. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal,36*(8), 955-971. doi:10.1108/lodj-03-2014-0056

Basham, L. (2012). Transformational and transactional leaders in higher education. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*. 15-37.

Bouchet, A., Hutchinson, M. (2014). Achieving organizational de-escalation: Exit strategy implementation among United States collegiate athletic departments. *Sport Management Review, 17,* 347-361.

Brown, D., Keeping L. (2005). Elaborating the construct of transformational leadership: The role of affect. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16,* 245-272.

Butterfield, D. A., & Powell, G. P. (1981). Effect of group performance, leader sex, and rater sex on ratings of leader behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance,28*, 129-141.

Cooper, C. D., Scandura, T. A., &Schriesheim, C. A. (2005). Looking forward but learning from our past: Potential challenges to developing authentic leadership theory and authentic leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 475-493. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.008

Datta, B. (2015). Assessing the effectiveness of authentic leadership. *International Journal of Leadership Studies, 9*(1),62-74.

Division I Organizational Chart of Athletic Department: http://grfx.cstv.com/photos/schools/osu/genrel/auto_pdf/2016-17/misc_non_event/Org_Chart.pdf

Gardner, W. L., Cogliser, C. C., Davis, K. M., & Dickens, M. P. (2011). Authentic leadership: A review of the literature and research agenda. The Leadership Quarterly, 22(6), 1120-1145. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.09.007

George, D., & Mallery, M. (2010). SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference, 17.0 update (10a ed.) Boston: Pearson.

Hancock, M., Hums, M. (2011). If you build it, will they come? A demographic assessment of undergraduate and graduate sport management programs in the U.S. *The North American Society for Sport Management Conference.*

Mccoll-Kennedy, J. R., & Anderson, R. D. (2005). Subordinate–manager gender combination and perceived leadership style influence on emotions, self-esteem and organizational commitment. *Journal of Business Research,58*(2), 115-125. doi:10.1016/s0148-2963(03)00112-7

Morrow, P. C. (2011). Managing organizational commitment: Insights from longitudinal research. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,79*(1), 18-35. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2010.12.008

Peachey, J. W., & Burton, L. J. (2010). Male or Female Athletic Director? Exploring Perceptions of Leader Effectiveness and a (Potential) Female Leadership Advantage with Intercollegiate Athletic Directors. Sex Roles, 64(5-6), 416-425. doi:10.1007/s11199-010-9915-y

Peachey, J. W., Burton, L. J., & Wells, J. E. (2014). Examining the influence of transformational leadership, organizational commitment, job embeddedness, and job search behaviors on turnover intentions in intercollegiate athletics. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 35*(8), 740-755. doi:10.1108/lodj-10-2012-0128

Ryan, T. D., & Clopton, A. W. (2009). Improving response rates in web surveys: A 2x2 experiment. *Applied Research in Coaching and Athletics Annual, 24,* 147-174.

Walumbwa, F. O., Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., Wernsing, T. S., & Peterson, S. J. (2007). Authentic Leadership: Development and Validation of a Theory-Based Measure.*Journal of Management, 34*(1), 89-126. doi:10.1177/0149206307308913

Wexley, K. N., &Pulakos, E. D. (1983). The Effects of Perceptual Congruence and Sex on Subordinates Performance Appraisals of Their Managers. *Academy of Management Journal,26*(4), 666-676. doi:10.2307/255914