

The Psychology of Communication: Does the Ethical Perception of Downward Openness Affect
Employee Morale? A Case Study of Monroe County, Georgia
School System's Transportation Department

A Dissertation submitted
to the Graduate School
Valdosta State University

in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

in Public Administration

in the Department of Political Science
of the College of Arts and Sciences

July 2016

Thomas D. Courson

M.B.A., Georgia College and State University, 2010
B.S., Macon State College, 2008
A.S., Macon State College, 2006

© Copyright 2016 Thomas D. Courson

All Rights Reserved

This dissertation, "The Psychology of Communication: Does the Ethical Perception of Downward Openness Affect Employee Morale? A Case Study of Monroe County, Georgia School System's Transportation Department," by Thomas D. Courson, is approved by:

**Dissertation
Committee
Chair**




Christine A. James, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy

**Committee
Members**

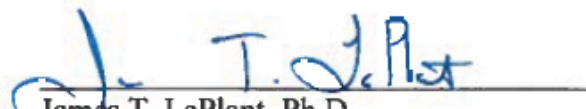


Luke Fowler, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Political Science



Jeremy Bauer, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology and Counseling

**Dean of the
Graduate School**



James T. LaPlant, Ph.D.
Professor of Political Science

FAIR USE

This dissertation is protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States (Public Law 94-533, revised in 1976). Consistent with fair use as defined in the Copyright Law, brief quotations from this material are allowed with proper acknowledgement. Use of the material for financial gain without the author's expressed written permission is not allowed.

DUPLICATION

I authorize the Head of Interlibrary Loan or the Head of Archives at the Odum Library at Valdosta State University to arrange for duplication of this dissertation for educational or scholarly purposes when so requested by a library user. The duplication shall be at the user's expense.

Signature: Thomas D. Cameron

I refuse permission for this dissertation to be duplicated in whole or in part.

Signature: _____

ABSTRACT

This study explores the emotional implications of superior to subordinate communication on public sector employees by researching whether an employee's ethical perception of downward openness affects his or her morale. The topic of ideology as an instrument of change provides a historical context of how behavior can be conformed to the philosophy of a strong leader. This is truly important in public sector organizations, where the accomplishment of good governance is often dependent upon the efficiencies gained through effective management of employee behavior.

In attainment of this goal, successful public sector management necessitates a fundamental understanding of what drives employee behavior. In this vein, Constructivism seeks to understand why humans are irrational beings, with Behavioralism advancing this theory by establishing a practical solution for evaluating the irrational tendencies of human behavior. Furthermore, Motivation theory seeks to provide additional applicability by theoretically linking intrinsic stimuli with human behavior. Where Motivation theory aids the understanding of the force that guide and maintain goal-oriented behaviors, Ethical theory offers a basis for the moral solutions individuals apply to the difficult situations they encounter in life.

Considering these schools of thought and prior research linking low morale within organizational settings to low employee performance, this study examines whether or not public sector organizations concerned with good governance should equally be concerned with effectively managing employee morale. Data collected and analyses conducted for this study explores this relationship. Subsequent findings and conclusions reached emphasize employee perception as an operational mechanism of organizational success.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter I: INTRODUCTION</u>	6
<u>Chapter II: LITERATURE REVIEW</u>	6
<u>Ideology as an Instrument of Change</u>	6
<u>Motivation Theory</u>	6
<u>Ethical Theory</u>	6
<u>Defining and Measuring Morale</u>	6
<u>Factors that Influence Morale</u>	6
<u>Communication</u>	6
<u>Chapter III: METHODOLOGY</u>	6
<u>Description of the Sample</u>	6
<u>Data Collection</u>	6
<u>Statistical Methodology</u>	6
<u>Chapter IV: RESULTS</u>	6
<u>Analyses Leading to Prediction</u>	6
<u>Additional Analyses to Evaluate the Strength of Prediction</u>	6
<u>Analyses of Internal Consistency of Response Data</u>	6
<u>Analyses of Inquiries</u>	6
<u>Summary</u>	6
<u>Chapter V: DISCUSSION</u>	6
<u>Overview</u>	6
<u>Limitations</u>	6
<u>Framing the Data</u>	6

<u>The Relationship between the Ethical Perception of Downward Openness and Morale</u>	7
<u>Communication Content and Style as Sub-variables of Downward Openness</u>	7
<u>The Relationship between Communication Content and Style and the Sub-variables of Morale</u>	7
<u>Quality of Relationship and the Inquiries into Content and Style</u>	7
<u>Quality of Communication and the Inquiries into Content and Style</u>	7
<u>Job Satisfaction and the Inquiries into Content and Style</u>	7
<u>Willingness to Move and the Inquiries into Content and Style</u>	7
<u>Identification with the Group and the Inquiries into Content and Style</u>	7
<u>Broader Implications</u>	7
<u>Conclusion</u>	7
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	7
<u>APPENDIX A: Survey</u>	7
<u>APPENDIX B: Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Exemption Report</u>	7

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure 1. Perception of Downward Openness and Morale</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Figure 2. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Morale.....</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Figure 3. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Quality of Relationship as Sub-variable of Morale.....</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Figure 4. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Quality of Communication as Sub-variable of Morale</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Figure 5. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Job Satisfaction as Sub- variable of Morale</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Figure 6. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Willingness to Move as Sub- variable of Morale</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Figure 7. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Identification with Group as Sub-variable of Morale.....</u>	<u>8</u>

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table 1. Race Demographic Data, 2014</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 2. Educational Demographic Data, 25 Years and Older, 2014.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 3. Baird and Bradley’s Intercorrelations Among the Investigated Variables</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 4. Responses Spreadsheet</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 5. Descriptive Statistics: Perception of Downward Openness and Morale</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 6. Correlation Analysis: Perception of Downward Openness and Morale</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 7. Hypothesis Based Test.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 8. Descriptive Statistics: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 9. Correlation Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Morale</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 10. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Morale as DV</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 11. VIF: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 12. Descriptive Statistics: Sub-variables of Morale.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 13. Std. Correlation Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Sub-variables of Morale</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 14. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Quality of Relationship as DV</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 15. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Quality of Communication as DV.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Table 16. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Job Satisfaction as DV</u>	<u>9</u>

<u>Table 17. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Willingness to Move as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 18. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Identification with Group as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 19. VIF: Sub-variables of Morale</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 20. Cronbach's α Evaluation Criteria</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 21. Cronbach's α Results</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 22. Regression Analysis: Content Questions with Quality of Relationship as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 23. Regression Analysis: Style Questions with Quality of Relationship as DV.....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 24. Regression Analysis: Content Questions with Quality of Communication as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 25. Regression Analysis: Style Questions with Quality of Communication as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 26. Regression Analysis: Content Questions with Job Satisfaction as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 27. Regression Analysis: Style Questions with Job Satisfaction as DV.....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 28. Regression Analysis: Content Inquiries with Willingness to Move as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 29. Regression Analysis: Style Inquiries with Willingness to Move as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 30. Regression Analysis: Content Inquiries with Identification with the Group as DV</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Table 31. Regression Analysis: Style Inquiries with Identification with the Group as DV</u>	<u>10</u>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following dissertation would not be possible without the leadership, knowledge, dedication, generosity, encouragement, friendship, and support from the following individuals:

My committee members: Dr. Christine A. James (Chair), Dr. Luke Fowler, and Dr. Jeremy Bauer, who graciously guided me through this process, I truly appreciate your leadership, expertise, and dedication to the success of this project.

The DPA faculty and staff, who through their instruction meticulously prepared me for success in this program, I am forever thankful for your devotion to higher learning.

My fellow Cohorts, thank you for sharing your experiences, wisdom, and time. I am grateful to have had you alongside of me during this journey.

The Monroe County Transportation Department, thank you for welcoming me into your organization by supporting this dissertation as its case for study.

Dad, who so often offered words of wisdom and encouragement, you truly were inspirational.

Marcia Justice, who devoted so many hours kindly editing my drafts, I cannot put into words just how much your help has meant to me and to the success of this project.

James Tyson, who has been my sounding board throughout my entire academic journey, your support, encouragement, and friendship were invaluable.

My family and friends, who cheered me on throughout this process, thank you for all of your support.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the following:

My wife, Cindy. You are my hero, my moral compass, the foundation of my strength, and truly my better half.

My children, Kaleigh, Josh, and Morgan, who gave up so much in support of their daddy, you are my motivation. I love you more than words can express.

To God, who again proved in Him anything is possible.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Today, the American economy operates as a hybrid of free-market and social economic systems. Certainly, there is value to this approach. In the same way that the American economic system bedrocks on capitalist principles to drive private industry, it also relies on public administration as a foundation of knowledge that addresses shared issues between both the private and public sector, which the free-market economy often overlooks. The private sector refers to all American organizations and/or goods and services that exist outside of direct ownership of the United States government ownership. Private industries by definition are profit driven with the primary determinant of success being the ability to maximize revenue while minimizing organizational cost. Revenue in this context refers to the amount of income a firm generates while cost denotes the expenditures an organization incurs during its operations. In general, businesses that effectively manage this balance to keep revenue high and cost low are successful, while those that cannot sustain this balance are destined to fail. Within this setting, efficiencies leading to a competitive advantage (i.e., the attribute one company has over its competitors) serve as a mechanism for success.

In contrast to the private sector, public sector organizations are not profit driven. They exist for the common good of American society, providing Americans with safeguards such as national defense, homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting. Furthermore, these civil establishments are necessary for collecting taxes and managing social programs. Indeed, public sector organizations are essential for maintaining America's industry, infrastructure, and security. Yet unlike the private sector of American industry, determining the drivers of success in public settings is not a simple task. It is a highly

complex endeavor primarily because there is not an easy way or clear-cut way to measure how much of a public service benefit a single individual receives. For example, the individual whose home is saved from destruction by a local fire department has benefitted from that public service. However, it is difficult to determine if this benefit is greater than the one enjoyed by the neighbor who works for the fire department, or the individual down the street who receives an insurance break due to the close proximity of the fire station. Therein lies the problem. There is no truly objective way to delineate how much of a public service any single individual receives in relation to the other members of his or her community as a whole. Because of the reality of this restriction, success in public sector organizations must focus on good governance as its primary driver.

In order to deliver good governance in the public sector, both governing bodies and individuals working for entities must act in the public interest at all times, consistent with the requirements of legislation and government policies, avoiding self-interest and, if necessary, act against a perceived organizational interest. Acting in the public interest implies a wider benefit to society, which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders. (ifac.org 2013, 13)

From this perspective, good governance requires good management. In essence, by directing human resources toward the attainment of public sector goals and objectives, public sector managers play a direct role in shaping organizational success. Along these lines, effective management places emphasis on the importance of creating and maintaining an environment that facilitates a productive workforce.

Traditionally, organizational scholars accomplished this feat by focusing on efficiency. The idea was to accomplish efficiency through group task specialization and establishment of a hierarchy of authority with a limited span of control. However, in his *Proverbs of Administration*, Herbert A. Simon (1946) suggests an alternate approach. Simon believes that attaining efficiency is possible by optimizing coordination among interdependent activities. According to Simon, organizations should establish functional areas that are independent enough to ensure specialization. In so doing, Simon believes the institution could create a real comparative advantage, thereby, collectively enabling synergistic operations. Simon also proposes that effective organizations involve “diffused power” and an organizational culture where the employee identifies with and is motivated toward achieving the organization’s goals.

Building upon Simon’s theory, James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock (1962) offer an economic and mathematical perspective to public administration. Their Public Choice theory seeks to provide a more efficient way to manage the organization. It views the individual as rational and assumes that when people do not behave rationally it is because they lack sufficient information. Thus, if the organization provides the worker with accurate information it can create a measurable environment. In effect, Public Choice theory champions the notion that organizational openness facilitates predictable and quantifiable patterns of conduct. These behaviors are useful to forecast future behavior among the different functional areas. Definitely, this theory offers an enormous advantage for the organization. Not only can it generate data to measure operational efficiency, but it can also create processes that enable cost optimization by facilitating effective, efficient, and/or achievable performance within a resource-constrained environment.

Although thought provoking, the Public Choice theory's emphasis on the individual as a rational being limits its usefulness. It is a proven fact that human biases can and do affect otherwise objective research. Individuals see the world through their own individual "lens of truth." This subjective view of reality, coupled with the fact that people are by nature emotional beings, establishes that the individual is an irrational being. Based on this fact, any theory established on the belief that a person's behavior will universally follow a predictable pattern is flawed. Yet, by discussing the importance of employee behavior and the significance of ensuring openness, the Public Choice theory does offer some excellent insight into the factors that influence organizational efficiency.

Within the framework of this understanding, this project strives to gain a better understanding of ethical communication within the public sector. By examining the perception of openness in communication and the varying factors that influence employee morale this research will seek to expand on the idea of behavioral economics. Behavioral economics within this setting is the "conviction that increasing the realism of the psychological underpinnings of economic analysis will improve the field of economics on its own terms – generating theoretical insights, making better predictions of field phenomena and suggesting better policy" (Camerer and Loewenstein 2004, 3). In this way, behavioral economics seeks to join and "adapt the basic principles of neoclassical economics with the realities imposed by ... complex human nature" (Diacon 2013, 29). Certainly, neoclassical economics contrasts with the inherent value and distribution theories of classical economics advanced by Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Thomas Robert Malthus, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx; instead, its focus on human behavior as an economic driver bridges the gap between classical and contemporary economic theories. Taking this concept a step further, behavioral economics accentuates the criticality of managing the

human psychological, social, cognitive, and emotional factors, which lead to irrational behaviors that can be costly to organizations. It is within this framework that behavioral economics, as an evolution of the Public Choice theory, serves as a mechanism of good governance.

This study is important because of its emphasis on good governance though optimal superior to subordinate communication. This is especially relevant today where a fragile economy has forced many public organizations to direct some tough adjustments in the name of good governance. The Monroe County, Georgia, School System Transportation Department, hereafter referred to as Monroe County Transportation Department, is one of those organizations. The Monroe County Transportation Department has reduced staff, endorsed competitive bidding for its acquisitions, initiated lean operations, and levied hiring restrictions on redundant positions. Surely, these actions represent a legitimate response to an uncertain fiscal climate. Still, the Monroe County Transportation Department must be cognizant of how it discloses these changes to its workforce.

Research has shown that openness in communication affects “an employee’s relationship with management ... [specifically] the image of management and the company in the employee's mind” (Baehr and Renck 1958, 169). More specifically, studies have shown that “overly disclosive communication may be harmful to organizations ...” (Eisenberg and Witten 1987, 421). In similar fashion, poor superior to subordinate communication has been found to affect negatively employee morale and thus workplace satisfaction. Certainly, this focus on research emphasizes the importance of maintaining effective communication. Moreover, it highlights the power human perception has on production. Since studies have shown that unhappiness leads to low performance, it is clear that the any public organization interested in enhancing good governance should be concerned with how it communicates with its employees.

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the psychology of communication within the public sector and its effect on employee morale. Within this context, it is important to recognize that psychology refers only to the manner an individual ethically encodes a message. By linking ethical perception with the psychology of communication, this study offers a very limited view of a broadly defined term. In so doing, this essay will highlight the evolution of administration, up to the onset of the behavioral science movement in order to provide a framework for analysis. Next, this study will examine relevant philosophical approaches such as motivation theory, ethical theory, defining and measuring morale, and the factors influencing employee morale. The emphasis on these models is to assess the innate aspects of human motivation, how they drive irrational behavior, and in what way that behavior shapes organizations. Next, this essay will shift to the topics of communication and superior to subordinate openness to emphasize how messages from managers to employees can influence employee perception. In short, the review of literature establishes cognition as an irrational human trait that influences behavior. Furthermore, it seeks to characterize openness in communication as a legitimate driver of ethical perception. Within this background, the relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale will be quantified.

Providing good governance is the primary business of government organizations. Thus when choosing an organization for this study, emphases will be placed on several criteria aimed at creating good governance. First, key demographics will be evaluated to determine if the target fits the geographical makeup of the broader public sector. Second, the organization will be assessed to ensure it meets the definition of a public sector business; meaning it must be owned, operated, and funded by a government at the Federal, State, and/or the Local level. Third, the organization will be required to be guided by specific rules and regulations aimed at

achieving/maintaining good governance. Next, the functional areas within the organization will be evaluated to verify they fit a cross section of the public sector; therefore, when data is collected it can be reasonably associated with the types of work that takes place in the public sector. Lastly, all employees will be accountable to the requirements listed in the first three criteria and must also as a part of their normal job duties be required to communicate regularly with their direct report supervisor.

This project will be accomplished as a case study focusing on employees within the Monroe County Transportation Department. This organization was selected for this study because it was determined to meet all of the stated requirements of a public sector organization. Research data will be collected via a 25-question survey (see Appendix A). The survey will focus on downward openness in communication and employee morale. For this study, downward openness is defined as the information provided to employees by their direct-report supervisor. The survey will be administered at the Monroe County Transportation Department via printed survey (on standard 8 1/2 x 11 white copy paper). The survey will be provided to each potential respondent privately, in an office setting where he or she will be able to complete the survey without interference or coercion. Completed surveys will be placed in a locked container. Respondents will be able to either participate or not participate without any consequences for non-participation.

Survey questions will be quantified using a 5-point Likert scale, with most questions being asked in a positive connotation. For these questions with a positive undertone, an answer corresponding to 1 point will be extrapolated as a completely negative response, while a response resulting in 5 points will be reasoned as a completely positive response. In this manner, lower scores will equate to a lower perception of downward openness in communication and a

lower employee morale, while higher scores will equate to a higher perception of downward openness in communication and a higher employee morale. Inevitably, some questions will have a negative inference. Within this scenario, the Likert scale will be inversely adjusted to match the survey's positive undertone. In so doing, the survey will offer a useful mechanism for providing legitimate data to evaluate whether the targeted civil servants' ethical perception of downward openness in communication affects their morale. Demographic information will not be collected for this study; however, census data current at the time of this project will be discussed to provide some demographical context for analyses. This project will use descriptive statistics, line charts, and correlation analyses to frame the data leading to a test of the hypothesis. In addition to these initial tests, regression analyses, variance inflation factor testing (VIF) for multicollinearity, and Cronbach's alpha (α) will be conducted to evaluate the strength of the prediction and the internal consistency of the response data.

Descriptive statistics will be used to evaluate whether the dataset is representative of the surveyed population. Line charts will be used to identify whether morale appears to increase or decrease linearly with a higher or lower ethical view of downward openness. Correlation analyses will be used to evaluate the strength of the relationship between the variables. A hypothesis-based test will be performed to confirm or reject the inferred relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale. Regression analysis will be performed for the purposes of modeling, exploring relationships, and predicting. Because of the varying inter-associations among the variables that can weaken the conclusions, a VIF analysis will be performed to test for multicollinearity. Cronbach's α will also be conducted as an additional measure of reliability.

Considering the studies that link low morale to decreased performance and higher organizational costs, it is reasonable to conclude that public sector leaders concerned with good governance through cost optimization would want to know the relationship between their employees' ethical perception of downward openness in communication and morale. The next sections of this study include a review of relevant literature, a description of methodology, an analysis of data, a discussion of the findings, and recommendations on how these findings can be used in future research.

The literature review section (Chapter 2) concentrates on four areas: ideology as an instrument of change, the evolution of behavioral theories, the relationship between perception and communication, and an overview of why perception matters in superior to subordinate openness. Ideology as an instrument of change highlights the evolution of administration. In so doing, it shows how prominent figures throughout history shaped society, in what way the onset of new thought changed organizations, and in what manner that transformation forced the necessity to understand human behavior. Next, prominent theories in motivation, ethics, and morale are examined. These principles provide a conduit of understanding, from which managers can better match organizational strategies with cognitive elements to facilitate conforming behaviors in the workplace. Finally, the focus is narrowed to the topics of communication and superior to subordinate openness. Here, the complexities of communication are outlined and related to perception. Within this setting, the importance of superior to subordinate openness is established.

The methodology section (Chapter 3) offers a tool for both the analysis and the data. In essence, it discusses the hypothesis, the method of data collection, how that data is framed and controlled, and the quantitative models to be used. By framing the data in this way, the

methodology facilitates further analysis to determine whether a relationship exists between the targeted public sector employees' ethical perception of downward openness and their morale.

The results section (Chapter 4) examines how well the data confirms the hypothesis. Specifically, the Results section will frame the data obtained from the 25-question survey and delineate the findings. In so doing, it will quantify the linkage between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale.

The discussion section (Chapter 5) interprets the results. It provides a context for future strategies and analysis by comparing and contrasting the findings back to the key pieces of literature outlined in Chapter 2. In this way, the last chapter of this study flows from its predecessors for the purposes of understanding and expanding the psychology of communication. Within this framework of understanding, some suggestions for future research will be offered.

It is expected that inducements could serve as legitimate counterarguments to the topic of ideology as an instrument of shaping behavior. Surely, public policies aimed at incentivizing conduct as a means of conformity offer a prime example of this claim. According to author and political scholar Mark E. Rushefsky, "inducements encourage the targets of a public policy to do something or not do something without issuing rules requiring that behavior" (Rushefsky 2013, 145). Within this framework, inducement strategies can serve as a means for both positive and negative reinforcement. Rushefsky uses the earned income tax credit as an example of inducements used to encourage behavior and policies capping the number of dependents used for welfare as a negative inducement. Indeed, from this vantage point, inducement appears to be a legitimate alternative to ideology as a mechanism for shaping change.

Demotivation offers another interesting alternative to ideology. As with motivation, many elements of demotivation can be credited with influencing human activity. Among these are fear, loneliness, burn out, too much oversight, and unchallenging goals. Certainly, these demotivation elements can be linked with decreased worker productivity and higher organizational costs. In this manner, demotivation could similarly serve as appropriate substitute to ideology.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of the available literature regarding this study centers around four areas of interest. First, ideology as an instrument of change provides a historical outline from which the behavioral science movement evolved. Second, prominent behavioral theories further the emphasis by focusing on managing human cognition in the workplace. Third, the validation that perception influences worker behavior is tied to communication. Finally, the topic of superior to subordinate openness is tapered to frame the question, “does the ethical perception of downward openness affect employee morale?”

Ideology as an Instrument of Change

Throughout recorded history, human beings have shaped their organizational environments. Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* not only played an influential role in the development of Asian culture, but it also provided a transformational roadmap from which contemporary leadership has evolved¹. Ancient Greek scholars like Socrates and Plato paved the way for Aristotle to question the universe and man’s place within it. From Ancient Greece to the fall of the Roman Empire, medieval scholars focused on the absolutist component of natural law (i.e., the assertion universal or natural law

determined a person's morality). In this vein, God was deemed the ultimate authority on this goodness. Thusly, for a person to attain virtue he or she must only live in accordance with God's willⁱⁱⁱ. Consequently, individualism and philosophical thought were replaced by religious conformity. With few exceptions, this organizational paradigm was prevalent until around the 17th century.

Around that timeframe, "rationalism developed and science seemed to contradict the basic tenants of the church" (Baradat 2012, 5). Subsequently, revolution fueled by scholars like Marquis de Condorcetⁱⁱⁱ who advanced the idea that there is no limit to the potential of humanity, helped usher in the Age of Enlightenment. Immanuel Kant, an 18th century German philosopher and author, described this awakening as,

Man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. (Kant 1995, 1)

With the emergence of science and empirical thought as a means of understanding the universe and man's place within it, came the concept of western individualism and the need for self-government. This shift enabled Age of Enlightenment scholars like Thomas Hobbes^{iv} and John Locke^v to establish some of the first contemporary views of politics and government structure. American founding fathers like Jefferson^{vi} and Madison^{vii} used many of Hobbes and Locke's social contract principles as the basis for their development of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, respectively. Through these types of ideological contributions, this movement led to a rapid transformation of the human condition, which helped fuel the industrial revolution.

Industrial development expedited the arrival of mechanization, leading to workers transitioning from rural farming communities to urban industrial societies. Around this time, Adam Smith developed his capitalist doctrines.

These economic principles^{viii} provided a roadmap for creating significant wealth. Following Smith's path, business owners pushed to increase profits. Certainly, this led to varying strategies, one of which focused on scholarly direction as a mechanism for management. This route empowered Henri Fayol^{ix} to develop his principles of management. Later, Woodrow Wilson followed with his essay *The Science of Administration*. His promotion of a government organization that existed separate from the elected branches of government, with a later contribution from Frank J. Goodnow^x, did much to establish the contemporary field of public administration. Although, there was (and still is) an ongoing debate over the evolution of the field, its chief importance to this study rests with the rationale for its conception.

Wilson's politics/administration dichotomy was initially delineated as a means to improve the functionality of government. Nearly half a century later organizational scholars began to advance Wilson's concept by researching mechanisms for success. Frederick Taylor's, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911), for example, focused on increasing production. Unquestionably, his emphasis on time and motion studies was successful in this arena. However, due to the impassive nature of early business methodologies, moral functions such as worker safety were not a primary area of concern. This lack of emphasis led to inhumane working conditions and ultimately recurring industrial injuries and fatalities. In spite of sacrificing people for processes in the name of profit, many early businesses still failed. With only a handful of companies (people) controlling the financial resources, the division between the lower and upper classes grew significantly. This

biased distribution of wealth further stifled any willingness to view people as more than expendable assets. Eventually, this way of thinking would change. Yet, in America's highly competitive profit-driven capitalist society of the early 1900s, this change would not come easily. In fact, real progress focusing on workers as pliable and important human resources needed a great depression and the ideological footings of two world wars as catalysts for change.

The social stress created by rapid economic growth, "together with the economic and political turmoil at the end of World War I, caused the collapse of capitalism and the rejection of democracy" (Baradat 2012, 237). Although this Great Depression is credited as one of the worst crises to occur in the western industrialized world, one need not look beyond the sociopolitical origins of the Second World War to see the impact individual ideologies have had on organizations. To provide some context for this analysis, the implications of ideology will first be examined.

The view of ideology and the way it is defined depends upon the scholar and, depending on whom you believe, the period from which it came. For example, French intellectual Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy defined ideology as a study of experiential wisdom gained from experience. This notion is important as it suggests thought creation is a physical formation rather than a spiritual one. Moreover, Destutt de Tracy felt the word "ideology" had a positive connotation, in that it could help improve social and political conditions. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels had a vastly different concept of the term. To them the concept was more subjective. They felt ideology was a means in which a ruling group could advance their own selfish ideas, essentially justifying their leadership through biased endorsing of their political beliefs. Karl Mannheim agreed with Marx's subjective view. Yet, he took the concept a step further by suggesting that ideology was not valid by itself. Instead, he suggested current

ideologies must be correlated with their historical counterparts before they can be understood. Some scholars such as Frederick Watkins and David Ingersoll view ideology as a broad, yet occasionally sadistic, idea fueled by the hope of achieving an optimistic future. The common theme among these descriptions is the notion that ideology is a powerful resource. One need not look beyond Mussolini's Fascist and Hitler's Nazi ideologies to see the power powerful ideology can have on shaping organizations.

Weakened both politically and militarily, Italy was in desperate need of a unifying voice, one that Benito Mussolini was more than eager to provide. Although Mussolini was a socialist, his philosophy offered a contrasting outlook on social equality. Indeed, he “rejected egalitarianism as far as leadership was concerned ... [believing instead] that great historical events were set in motion by the initiative and leadership of a small number of people” (Baradat 2012, 241). Having suffered defeat in the elections of 1914 and 1919, Mussolini “focused his appeal on the right-wing ... wealthy classes, hoping that he could increase his strength through ample funding rather than by appealing to the unresponsive lower classes” (Baradat 2012, 241). This new approach enabled Mussolini to “persuade” his rival politicians. Yet in 1921, Mussolini once again fell short. However, this time he openly protested the electoral. Furthermore, he claimed, “Only force could put a true leader into power” (Baradat 2012, 242). Inspired by this ideology, many fascist supporters followed Mussolini toward implementation of his radical government.

Similar to Italy, Germany also faced economic and political hardships because of World War I. The Treaty of Versailles created a win-lose relationship, with Germany on the latter end of this arrangement. Not only was the war-torn country forced to surrender large amounts of its territories to the Allied Forces, but it was also left to pay them unrealistic reparations. As a result,

Germany's unemployment rates and consequently its inflation rates skyrocketed. These conditions made it very difficult for the Weimar Republic (the existing government) to manage the country's social, economic, and political problems. As these conditions progressed, the German people lost faith in their government, leaving them exposed to radical ideology. Absolutely, this left the door open for Adolf Hitler's tyranny.

Adolf Hitler, having had a tumultuous youth, unfairly focused his anger on the Jews who he saw as arrogant and exclusive. After joining the German army in 1914, and being seriously wounded, Hitler's popularity among his peers grew. This led to him becoming the leader of the seven-member National Socialist German Workers Party, more commonly known as the Nazi Party. In 1923, with increased power and influence and having seen Mussolini's success, Hitler attempted to seize the Munich government. Although he was unsuccessful, Hitler turned this defeat into his advantage. While in prison, "he wrote *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), setting forth the basic principles of the Nazi ... ideology" (Baradat 2012, 244). After being released, less than a year later, Hitler started a strategy to gain power. Instead of using force, which had proved unsuccessful, he instead began to play on the German public's discontent for its post war conditions. Hitler blamed the Jewish and communist community for the country's dire situation. Backed by this belief, he created a gang of thugs, called the Storm Troopers, whose purpose was to create a more "agreeable" climate for the Nazi ideology. As Hitler's popularity grew, so too did his party's financial resources. Postured by wealthy industrialists, the Nazi party increased its role in Parliament; however, it failed to gain a majority of the 608 seats. In 1933 with the Nazi Party's Parliamentary gains and the violence created by Hitler's militia, the conservative majority convinced President Paul von Hindenburg to appoint Hitler the head of the German government. As chancellor, Hitler used his power to advance his hatred of the Jews and

communists. With the majority of the German public embracing his Nazi ideology, Hitler won a significant majority of the Parliament. After which, he quickly consolidated power and outlawed opposing political affiliations. When President Paul von Hindenburg died later that year, Hitler became Fuhrer (Germany's totalitarian leader of the Third Reich).

Undoubtedly, the examples of Mussolini and Hitler's rise to prominence followed very similar approaches. Each path was made possible by the deplorable state of affairs each country was left to endure. The conditions were so harsh that citizens were quick to accept any ideology that promised to lessen the burden, even those of these brutal oppressors. The point here is that ideologies can be a powerful instrument for the way people rationalize their actions. Moreover, the examples provided show that under the right conditions people can be motivated to behave in a particular way. This type of realization is essential for the advancement of behavioral science. By focusing on understanding how people learn and what motivates their behavior, behavioral scientists have been able to establish workers as legitimate competitive resources.

In this vein, behavioral scientists have stated that constructivism as a model for learning, "suggests that the individual mind is active exclusively in the meaning-making activity" (Lee 2012, 405). Therefore, constructivists see the world through their own individual "lens of truth." Similarly, for these people "truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of [their] engagement with the realities in [their] world" (Lee 2012, 408). This subjective view of reality coupled with the fact that people are by nature emotional beings, lends itself to the belief that an individual's behavior does not universally follow a predictable pattern. For this reason, it is vitally important that organizational leaders create an environment that balances their workers' emotions with the organization's goals. It is within this arena, Behavioralism offers a practical solution.

Behavioralism is a vaguely defined methodology; yet, the theory offers a practical solution for evaluating irrational human behavior. Behavioralism is distinct with Behaviorism, which offers an objective and quantifiable approach for predicting group behavior. Moreover, its focus on the cognitive influences that affect a person's actions make it a plausible theory for measuring behavior. Although, the theory claims that the person is irrational, it explains away their irrationality as an unconscious tool to achieve productivity. Essentially, the theory contends that organizations can facilitate a more productive worker. However, its failure to consider rational cognition as a variable limits its viability in this research. As behavioral scholars sought to understand what factors enhanced performance, they inadvertently validated Behavioralism as a legitimate theory. One of the more well known of these studies is the Hawthorne Works experiment.

The Hawthorne study “derives from a series of experiments carried out in the Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company, Chicago, between 1927 and 1933” (Chiesa and Hobbes 2008, 68). The purpose of the experiment was to evaluate how different levels of factory lighting affected employee performance. The initial results were as expected, when the lighting intensified so too did the employees output. However, the researchers noticed that employee outputs were similarly increasing as the lighting was reduced. This finding led the research team to determine that lighting was not the factor influencing employee performance. Instead, they revealed that the increased output was directly related to the employees knowing they were being watched. This discovery was revolutionary in that it furthered the concept of workers as real organizational resources by certifying cognition played a role in performance. Shortly thereafter, contemporary social ideologies began to develop in workplace. As the emphasis on finding the drivers of human performance intensified, businesses began to view workers as more than

mechanical resources. This revelation spilled over into President Woodrow Wilson's political administration and fueled the expansion of the behavioral science movement in the public sector. Along these lines, this development facilitated the necessity to understand organizational behavior, both as "the actual behavior of individuals and groups in and around purposeful organizations ... [and as] one of several frameworks or perspectives on what makes an organization work" (Ott, Parkes, et al. 2008, 1-2). B. F. Skinner, Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, likened the usefulness of understanding human behavior to the more established physical technology. According to Skinner, "if governments, religions, and similar institutions are likely to use behavioral techniques based on laboratory research, then what has happened in physical technology may show us what is going to happen in behavior" (Murray et al. 1961, 570). Indeed, Skinner believed behavioral science, as a mechanism for understanding what shapes cognition, can be used to predict and perhaps even control behavior.

Ideology is a powerful instrument for change. It is historic fact that an ideology adapts society to the will of its strongest leaders and impacts organizational and group behaviors. Furthermore, as a mechanism of shaping culture, it is at the heart of any research seeking to understand how people and behaviors influence public administration. Along these same lines, it is also critical to gain an importance to gain an understanding of the motivators of cognition, and how these motivators have led to the emergence of behavioral science, which has significantly impacted the governance of public organizations. Motivation theory seeks to understand what guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. Scholars like Maslow, Hertzberg, McGregor, Locke, Carver and Scheier have been instrumental in the development of various aspects of motivation theory, ultimately proving the link between intrinsic motivation and behavior.

Motivation Theory

Within the area of motivation theory Abraham Maslow broke new ground when he proposed an alternate and more inclusive approach to B. F. Skinner's theory. Maslow reasoned that the debate over what drives human behavior comes down to differing views of science, of its process and its method, in the light of which the Skinner conception [as discussed above] is seen as true enough, but too narrow, not inclusive enough. That is [according to Maslow], he speaks consistently of control as if it were only an active and interfering force. (Murray et al. 1961, 572)

By observing behavior through a more cognitive lens, Maslow offers a very interesting, yet, different behavioral science interpretation; one that he initially called, "Taoistic science," or "understanding science." His theory replaces prediction and control with understanding as the primary driver of behavioral science. Maslow's proposed "Hierarchy of Needs" followed the idea that there are stages of growth in humans. The first is physiological. These needs are the basic animalistic necessities for human survival. Once these fundamental needs are satisfied, Maslow reasons that safety needs take precedence. After that, the next step in Maslow's hierarchy is interpersonal needs. Here, the individual's motivation will come from the need to be loved, or belong. The fourth step toward the top of Maslow's pyramid is esteem. During this phase, human behavior will be motivated by the need to be accepted and valued. The final phase is self-actualization. During this stage, individual needs are based on reaching one's full potential. Although Maslow's distinction between the predictive science and "understanding science" did much to stimulate thought, its failure to consider cultural factors limited its empirical usefulness in determining organizational behavior.

In the 1960s, Douglas McGregor, using Maslow's idea that motivation comes from a hierarchy of higher needs, offered his own model. His "Theory X and Theory Y" sought to

explain how to manage individuals within this intrinsic constraint. McGregor's Theory X maintained that individuals are by nature lazy and thusly they do not enjoy their jobs. Therefore, any useful management approach must be authoritarian by nature. Authoritarian managers provide close oversight, usually within a controlled setting in order to ensure performance. Theory Y, in contrast, suggests that the problem does not lie with the employee, but with the manner in which they are utilized. Here McGregor debates that employees can be enthusiastic, determined, and organized. Thus, when employees lack the motivation to perform, it is as much the fault of the organization as it is the individual. In this way, McGregor's "Theory X and Theory Y" seeks to understand how motivation affects behavior and its relationship to organizational performance. In essence, Theory Y compares to Maslow's notion that human behavior will be motivated by the need to be accepted and valued (Esteem). Similarly, it relates to the idea that individual needs are based on reaching one's full potential (Self-Actualization). In this way, McGregor, like Maslow, is relevant to this study in that their motivation theories link motivation with behavior.

Approaching motivation from a different angle, Frederick Herzberg presented empirical evidence to establish his "Motivation-Hygiene Theory." As such, Herzberg's theory proved especially beneficial as a mechanism for improved operations. His concept reasoned that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are developed mostly from motivation or hygiene factors. According to Herzberg,

Motivation factors or satisfiers ... [include] work itself, responsibility, recognition achievement, [and] growth. [While] hygiene factors ... intrinsic to work itself, include policy and practices of the organization toward its employees, supervision or supervisory practices, interpersonal relations with boss, work conditions, pay

and interpersonal relations with colleagues. [If withheld] these factors lead to dissatisfaction. (Islam and Nazim 2013, 88, 91)

In essence, Herzberg delineates intrinsic motivators from the extrinsic conditions that can lead to dissatisfaction. Indeed, the motivation derived from work that is viewed as challenging, the satisfaction stemming from being recognized for a job well done, and the innate fulfillment that comes from having the opportunity to do something thought to be meaningful are all dependent upon the subjective preferences of the individual.

Furthering the importance of Herzberg's research is the idea that an employee's level of satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction leads to "a kind of 'circular region' which tends to keep good morale good and bad morale bad" (Worthy 1950, 65). Since "research shows that low morale translates to low productivity" (Mtanga et al. 2010, 1), it is important that organizational leaders develop a comprehensive understanding of what factors influence morale. Absolutely, Herzberg's emphasis on motivation as an intrinsic characteristic is useful in assessing employee job satisfaction; however, for the purposes of probing the factors of morale the following models are more prominent.

Also among the researchers of motivation theory, Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham's "Job Characteristics Theory" proposes five dimensions of job design: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. According to these scholars, job characteristics have a direct influence on an employee's motivation, satisfaction, performance, absenteeism and turnover rates. Hackman and Oldham's focus on managing task conditions as a mechanism for performance makes it a more practical alternative than Herzberg's model. In similar fashion, Victor Vroom's "Expectancy Theory" (1964) advanced motivation theory by proposing that a person's level of effort will increase with their belief that their labors will result in higher

performance and ultimately better rewards. Further, Edwin Locke's "Goal Setting Theory" is based on the idea that task goals, if properly established and well managed can serve as motivation. In effect, Locke's idea links conscious goals and intentions to task performance. More contemporary views, such as Carver and Scheier's "Cybernetic Theory," contends that feedback for initial outcomes has a direct influence on expectations for the second task; however, Carver and Scheier maintain that the overall determination given to that task comes not only from that feedback but also from an individual's self-awareness. Indeed, the distinctions outlined in these theories highlight the evolution of behavioral science; however, their true value to this project rests in the linkage of motivation to perception.

Although brief, the backgrounds touched on here provide a synopsis of how motivational theories evolved during the behavioral science movement. By placing intrinsic motivators, as determinants of human behavior at the forefront of discussion, this important research emphasized the importance of managing people as more than moving parts. In so doing, these behavioral scientists essentially examined ideology from a personal perspective, relating it to productivity in the workplace. The following sections will seek to further this analysis by examining ethics and morale.

Ethical Theory

While motivation theory contributes to the understanding of the force that guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviors, ethical theory offers a basis for the ethical solutions individuals apply to the difficult situations they encounter in life. In this manner, ethics refers the values and norms that form the basis of a person's standards of right and wrong. In this way, ethics influence a person's perception of what is "virtuous." To be sure, ethics vary between individuals. As a result, the way ethics is viewed in terms of civil liberties and responsibilities,

benefits to society, and fairness/justice will inevitably differ. For that reason, no single ethical theory can offer a perfect methodology. Fortunately, individuals do have enough common values and norms to form like philosophies. Within this framework of understanding, ethical theory is a useful tool for assessing workforce behavior, for which the following five ethical schools of thought have proven useful.

The philosophy of “Virtue Ethics” comes from the ethical theories of Aristotle and Confucius and centers on character. According to these historic philosophers, a virtuous existence is based on one’s ability to adhere to behaviors that are courageous, compassionate, wise, and controlled. Keeping with this theme, virtue ethics demands the avoidance of behaviors rooted in greed, jealousy, and/or selfishness. The second ethical school of thought, “Utilitarianism” maintains that a person’s happiness and suffering are all that matters. Backed by Jeremy Bentham and John S. Mill, this view of ethics maintains that good behavior requires actions that maximize happiness and minimize pain and suffering. The third school of ethical thought, as championed by philosophers Immanuel Kant, and W.D. Ross, is “Kantianism.” This theory emphasizes the principles that determine a person’s actions. Consequently, ethical goodness under Kantianism is determined by how well an individual adheres to universal principles that holds everyone in high esteem. In fact, the success of Kantian ethics is judged by how well an individual overcomes their animalistic tendencies. Next, Immanuel Kant and John Rawls’ stress a “Deontological” or “Contractual Theory” view ethics by how well a person follows established agreements. According to these models, worthy actions are established by following rules and abiding by established agreements. Lastly, the fifth school of ethical thought, “Care Ethics” was advanced by researchers Carol Gilligan, Virginia Held, and Michael Slote and focuses on building, strengthening, and maintaining relationships.

Each of these theories emphasizes different paths to a “virtuous” existence. These theories further illustrate the varied nature of human reasoning and although none of these ethical theories alone offers a perfect methodology for evaluating behavior, they can be useful in research settings. Organizations that successfully understand the ethical foundations that motivate employee behavior are better equipped to nurture a productive worker. Yet any legitimate attempt to cultivate emotion for the purposes of creating a productive culture must also understand the determinants of morale.

Defining and Measuring Morale

For the purposes of this study, morale is defined as the mental state of interest and trustworthiness that public sector employees have about their organization, job, and supervisor.

Good morale is evidenced by employee enthusiasm, voluntarily conformance with regulations and orders, and a willingness to cooperate with others in the accomplishment of the organizations objectives. Conversely, poor morale is evidenced by surliness, cases of insubordination, discouragement and dislike of job, company and associates. (Sison 1991, 389)

By linking good morale with enthusiasm, conformance, and a willingness to cooperate in attainment of goals and bad morale with insubordination, discouragement and dislike of job, it is easy infer the impact employee morale has on performance. “Workers and groups with high morale are more productive than workers and groups with low morale” (Jose et al. 2013, 1). This suggestion of higher productivity within identical cost constraints makes morale important from a cost-efficiency perspective. Therefore, it is not too much of a jump to suggest that low morale within organizational settings that equate to low performance can ultimately lead to higher

organizational costs. As a result, any organization concerned with cost savings should be equally concerned with effectively managing the factors that govern employee morale.

Factors that Influence Morale

Research has shown that a variety of factors influence employee morale and thus organizational success. According to Shawn Achor, the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Good Think, Inc., employee happiness is one key element of organizational success. Achor maintains that happiness extends beyond employees to the company, allowing it to create a sustainable competitive advantage. Another important determinant of morale is tardiness. Indeed, high tardiness should be a warning sign as it “costs U.S. businesses more than \$3 billion each year in lost productivity” (DeLonzor 2005, 1). Attendance, like happiness and tardiness is a contributing factor to organizational success. A company's time loss through absenteeism can be attributed to the absences of about 60% of its employees (MacRury 1949, 239). The point here is clear, “in the absence of morale the profitable movement is impossible” (Jose et al. 2013, 1). With this in mind, managers have begun to embrace programs that are much more conducive to high employee morale.

One effective system utilized is quality of work life programs. The goal of quality of work life programs is to enhance an employee’s well-being and satisfaction, essentially allowing an organization to meet the full range of employee needs. In general, quality of work life programs promotes adequate and fair compensation and a safe and healthy workplace environment. They entail developing human capacities, providing opportunities for personal growth and security, providing a social environment that fosters personal identity, freedom from prejudice, a sense of community and upward mobility, one that embraces the rights and privacy

of employees in the office as well as endorses socially responsible actions. Although often quite extensive, these types of programs have shown improvement in workforce morale.

Connecting increased morale with the creation of an organizational culture conducive to performance and thus conducive to cost savings, stresses the importance of effectively managing cognition. However, the broad range of topics that could have an emotional impact on a person's morale makes any research into understanding morale difficult at best. As mitigation, this essay will focus on the following five proven determinants of morale: quality of relationship, quality of communication, job satisfaction, willingness to move, and identification with group. These five elements are pulled from the project entitled, *Communication Correlates of Employee Morale* published in 1978 by John E. Baird and Patricia H. Bradley. In their research, Baird and Bradley authenticated each of these factors of morale. As a result, their research has been cited in 22 peer-reviewed papers.

Quality of relationship is influenced by managerial communication behaviors. In essence, employee morale here is based on “the quality of the subordinate's relationship with his [or her] supervisor” (Baird and Bradley 1978, 50). Quality of communication describes the relationship and communication quality that exists in superior to subordinate communication. As such, it consists of “concern, comfort, attentiveness, activity, listening, and friendliness” (Baird and Bradley 1978, 51). Job satisfaction is determined by how much a supervisor allows employees to work unsupervised. However, when oversight is necessary,

It should take the form of encouraging participation, providing information, stressing happy interpersonal relationships, emphasizing organizational goals, stressing conflict avoidance, encouraging teamwork, motivating the employees to

give their best effort, and providing them with reinforcement when they perform well. (Baird and Bradley 1978, 53)

Willingness to move, as the name suggests, is the employees' inclination to move to another organization. This factor of morale stems as an antithesis of group cohesiveness. Thus, perceived low group cohesiveness will equate to a higher willingness to move. Identification with group similarly, "serves ... to measure work group cohesiveness by assessing the extent to which each employee identifies with his or her work group" (Baird and Bradley 1978, 54). By narrowing this study to these elements of morale, this inquiry will provide relevant and legitimate context for a subsequent examination into the psychology of communication.

Communication

Communication is the art of conveying meaning. As such, it is at the heart of human interaction and it is a difficult skill to master. According to American scientists, Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, communication involves a cyclical process of encoding and decoding messages by individuals of different perception. Because of this, there is constant distortion and error in message transmission. In 1948, following Shannon's electrical engineering background, Shannon and Weaver developed a theory that mimicked a digital circuit design. Using this pattern, they depicted a communication process where information flows from a sender who encodes the message to a receiver who decodes it. Along the path of transmission, the "Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication" highlights some specific vulnerable areas. These areas are responsible for "noise." The term noise represents any distortion in the message that limits the receiver's ability to decode the sender's message as intended. Certainly, noise in this context can be problematic for managers who are responsible for communicating an organization's vision and goals to the workforce. Further complicating the issue, noise is caused by a variety of

elements, such as language barriers, inflection, body language, and emotions. Understanding how to overcome these obstacles is critical for establishing and maintaining operative communication. Shannon and Weaver identified seven barriers to communication: physical, cultural, language, gender, interpersonal, perceptual and emotional. Each of these dynamics will be touched on to provide some more understanding on the topic.

The physical barriers of communication consist of any physical boundary that creates an obstacle between individuals, thus, limiting effective communication. Cultural barriers are generated by differences in beliefs among varying nationalities, races, and social factors. Although cultural diversity can offer a significant competitive advantage, cultural communication issues, if not managed effectively, can be disastrous for organizations. Communication barriers related to gender usually involve misconstrued meanings. Gender communication issues are a hotbed of scholarly discourse, with varying pieces of legislation dedicated to establishing norms for effective communication between the sexes. Interpersonal communication barriers relate to interaction between individuals that is limited due to varying personalities and prejudices. Perceptual barriers are internal and are often based on preconceived notions, most of the time leading to a self-fulfilling prophecy. These types of communication issues often begin with an individual thinking that the message will be misunderstood, leading to the use of detrimental language, which ultimately facilitates the misunderstanding. The last barrier to communication is emotion and is especially relevant to this study. “Emotional barriers can be tough to overcome” (Smith 2013, 1). However, organizations with emotionally healthy employees are much more capable of overcoming the issues associated with communication. Certainly, these interpersonal dynamics make the successful transmission of information a very challenging undertaking.

Craig E. Johnson, author of *Ethics in the Workplace: Tools and Tactics for Organizational Transformation*, adds another element to the argument. He proposes, “the exercise of influence is not an option in the workplace. [Managers] must influence others if [they] are to fulfill [their] roles” (Johnson 2007, 115). If true, then “leaders deserve a good deal of the credit for transforming ethics and a good deal of the blame when groups fall short” (Johnson 2007, 171). Truly, the inference suggesting the interworking of supervisor to subordinate communication are innately influential in establishing organizational culture is significant. With this interpretation, not only does Johnson highlight communication from supervisors as a legitimate driver of ethical perception, but he also characterizes cognition as an irrational human trait influenced by downward communication. Ultimately, this effect solidifies communication as an indispensable conduit for goal attainment. Within this context, downward openness in communication becomes paramount.

Downward openness in communication is defined as the free flow of information from a direct report supervisor their subordinate. In their article, *The Impact of Relative Leader-Member Exchange on Employees' Work Behaviors as Mediated by Psychological Contract Fulfillment*, Hu Li, Zhiyu Feng, Chunlin Liu, and Dejun Cheng describe downward openness as a descendant of the “Leader-Member Exchange Theory.” In so doing, these scholars link the importance of downward openness to the pioneering research of Graen, Dansereau, and Minami (1972) (Hu et al. 2014, 79). Additionally, recent theory focusing on psychological contracts suggests it is reasonable for workers to expect untethered communication from management. “Psychological contracts consist of the obligations that employees believe their organization has [to them], and the obligations that the employees believe they have to their organization in return (Turnley, Bolino, Lester, and Bloodgood, 2003) as cited in Hu et al. 2014, 81). Many social theorists view

this “contract” as an obligation of loyalty and effort in return for organizational inducements (Rhoades and Eisenburger, 2002; Hu et al. 2014, 81). In essence, when an employee perceives that the organization is fulfilling or exceeding its part of the psychological contract he or she will feel obligated to behave in a reciprocal manner.

Ultimately, by relating the psychological contract fulfillment theory to downward openness in the communication, the argument is made for a mechanism of downward communication that is credible enough to warrant ethical acceptance during the decoding phase of communication. Yet, as our exploration of behavioral philosophy has revealed throughout this essay, maintaining a free flow of information when dealing with irrational humans is insufficient for adherence to any psychological contract. Certainly, this insight shifts focus beyond communicating effectively to maintaining the perception of good openness in communication. It is within this framework of understanding that this study will quantify the psychology of communication. Specifically, the following case study will test whether the ethical perception of downward openness in communication affects the morale of the public sector employees within the Monroe County Transportation Department.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Research in the field of public administration has been historically qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is effective for gathering non-numeric information, and is useful in the arena of the social sciences. Yet, the field has seen a recent shift from qualitative examinations to more systematic and empirical approaches. With this in mind, the methods used for this study will center on a positive manner of social research. Positive research is based on the positivist tradition that suggests theory building comes from both creating testable laws and observing relationships among variables. Positive research places its emphasis on explanation and prediction, assessing results through deductive modeling. This is the research method that this dissertation will use in seeking to quantify the traditionally qualitative question of whether the ethical perception of downward openness affects employee morale.

Description of the Sample

When selecting a sample for this study, importance was placed on choosing a geographical area demographically symbolic of the United States (U.S.) and the State of Georgia. Additionally, emphasis was placed on selecting an industry representative of the broader public sector within that area and the organization within that industry had to be reasonably generalized to the public sector. This study will use demographic data to frame this sample and industry. Criteria for the selection of the organization to be analyzed included that it be owned, operated, and funded at the federal, state, or local level. The organization had to be guided by specific rules and regulations aimed at achieving and/or maintaining good governance. Additionally, the functional areas within the organization had to fit a reasonable cross section of the public sector. This solidly defined base will thus allow

collected data to be realistically associated with the types of functions that exist in the public sector. Lastly, the organization's employees, as a part of their normal job duties, had to be accustomed to communicating daily with their direct report supervisor. The following discussion substantiates how the Monroe County Transportation Department proved a good fit for these requirements.

As the following table of 2014 Race Demographic Data, obtained from census.gov in reference to Monroe County, Georgia's community profile shows, Monroe County, Georgia, had an estimated 71.20% population of All Whites, including White Hispanics. This number compares to 77.40% for the greater U.S. The State of Georgia had a lower percentage of All Whites at 62.10%. However, this discrepancy may be attributed to Georgia's higher percentage of Black American population. In 2014, approximately 22.40% of Monroe County's population consisted of Black Americans. This calculation is nearly 10% higher than the percentage of Black Americans for the United States; yet, it is more closely in line with the State of Georgia's 31.50% Black American population. The percentage of American Indians in Monroe County was approximately 0.30%, only slightly lower than the U.S. (1.20%) and the State of Georgia (0.50%). Asian Americans made up 1.20% of Monroe County citizens, while the U.S. and State of Georgia Asian populations equated to 5.40% and 3.80%, respectively. Pacific Islanders were similar among all three geographical categories at less than 0.25%. Citizens reporting more than one race represented 1.20% of Monroe County, 2.50% of the U.S. and 2.00% of the State of Georgia populations. Although some variability exists, the data shows some commonality across race demographics.

Table 1. Race Demographic Data, 2014

Race	Approximate Population (Monroe County)	Approximate Population (United States)	Approximate Population (State of Georgia)
All Whites	73.80%	77.40%	62.10%
Black	22.40%	13.20%	31.50%
American Indian	0.30%	1.20%	0.50%
Asian	1.20%	5.40%	3.80%
Pacific Islanders	0.00%	0.20%	0.10%
Mixed	1.20%	2.50%	2.00%
Other	1.10%	0.00%	0.00%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Further, the educational level of Monroe County citizens, 25 years or older, as shown in Table 2, when compared against statistics of the U.S. and the State Georgia, show Monroe County citizens had a higher dropout rate than did the broader regions. Monroe County also fell short in similar comparison of percentage of citizens with Associates, Bachelors and Graduate or Higher degrees; however, Monroe County did show a nearly 10% advantage across the board in citizens with a high school degree versus the National and State averages. These educational findings are not entirely surprising, considering Monroe County is mostly a farming community with little industry and even less educational institutions (three elementary schools, one high school, and zero colleges or universities). Thus, with a limited number of jobs requiring higher education, having a population statistically lower in the attainment of higher education is to be expected.

Table 2. Educational Demographic Data, 25 Years and Older, 2014

Highest Education Level Attained	Approximate Education Level (Monroe County)	Approximate Education Level (United States)	Approximate Education Level (State of Georgia)
Less than High School	20.00%	11.69%	13.00%
High School Diploma	57.50%	46.42%	49.00%
Associate Degree	3.50%	9.93%	8.00%
Bachelor Degree	11.70%	20.19%	19.00%
Graduate Degree or Higher	7.30%	11.77%	11.00%

According to census.gov statistics for “Categories of Employees at the Federal, State, and Local Levels: March 2013,” education employment functions account for 49.9% of all government employees with 74.8% of those employees working at local levels. The Monroe County Transportation Department as part of the Monroe County School System is an education employment function, which operates at the local level. The Monroe County Transportation Department is funded with local property taxes and through State and Federal funding. As such, the department is required by law to meet certain regulatory requirements for the purposes of providing good governance. Likewise, under the conditions of their employment, transportation employees are mandated to meet and maintain job specific regulatory qualifications. The department is made up of general administration employees, quality assurance coordinators, trainers, maintenance workers, and operators (i.e., drivers). This coverage includes employees from both operational and tactical levels. This functional representation is important as it links the Monroe County Transportation Department to the vast majority of public sector organizations that operate within a vertical hierarchy consisting of a few senior managers at the top (i.e., strategic level) and the majority of employees coming from operational and tactical levels. Finally, these employees’ hierarchical proximity within the organization requires them to have frequent interaction with their supervisor. Certainly, the demographic and industrial

similarities of the Monroe County Transportation Department discussed for this study endorse the selection, yet, it is the organization's strength in meeting the stated organizational requirements that made it an ideal case for this project.

Data Collection

In addition to selecting an organization representative of the public sector, data collection criteria for this study had to ensure that the number of personnel responding to the survey was sufficient to ensure reliability. With this in mind, the entire population of the Monroe County Transportation Department's employees was targeted. As further mitigation, the Monroe County Transportation Department Director agreed to administer the survey and endorse participation.

Employee responses were gathered via a survey, printed on standard 8 1/2 x 11, white copy paper. A copy of the survey was made available to each potential respondent in a private office setting where the individual was able to decline or complete the survey without interference or coercion. Completed surveys were placed in a locked container. The survey did not collect any demographic or other identifiable information. As such, no one including the researcher could associate any of the answers with a respondent's identity. Participation was voluntary and the respondents could choose not to take the survey. In addition, the respondents were able to quit the survey at any time or skip any of the survey questions that they did not wish to answer. That said, only data from fully completed surveys were used in this study. Also, respondents were required to be at least 18 years of age to participate in the study. The survey was made available for 14 days. After that time, all surveys were collected.

Survey data consisted of 25 questions centered on perceived openness in superior to subordinate communication and employee morale. Survey questions were pulled from the research titled *Communication Correlates of Employee Morale* by J. E. Baird and P. H. Bradley.

The first 20 survey questions related to perceived openness in communication and the remaining five questions explored employee morale. More specifically, questions 1 through 10 directly related to communication content. Within this context, perceived openness in communication represented the range of functions associated with managerial communication. The next 10 questions (11-20) focused on communication style, with emphasis placed on how superior to subordinate messages are conveyed. The final five questions (21-25) assessed morale in terms of quality of relationship, quality of communication, job satisfaction, willingness to move, and identification with the group. The relatedness of these factors to perceived openness in communication is validated by Baird and Bradley "Intercorrelations Among the Investigated Variables" (Table 3). Their analyses shows that,

Of the 100 correlations calculated, 67 were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Ratings of quality of relationship with supervisor were positively correlated with all 10 content variables and 6 style variables, and negatively correlated with 2 stylistic variables. Similarly, ratings of quality of communication with supervisor were positively correlated with 9 content and 6 stylistic variables. Employee satisfaction was positively correlated with 9 content and 5 stylistic variables, and negatively related to 2 stylistic factors. The respondents' willingness to move, essentially a measure of low group cohesiveness, was negatively correlated with 8 content and 3 stylistic measures; that is, the greater the frequency with which a supervisor displayed these behaviors, the less willing to move to another department the employees became. Finally, identification with work group, a positive measure of cohesiveness, was correlated with 6 content variables and 1 stylistic factor. (Baird and Bradley 1978, 50-51)

Baird and Bradley show “the content and style of a manager's communication with his employees are closely related to the ways in which those employees respond to him specifically, to their jobs generally, and to their work group” (Baird and Bradley 1978, 50). In effect, their survey develops “a more specific, comprehensive picture of the sorts of managerial communication, which increase worker morale by determining the relationships among dimensions of managerial communication and employee satisfaction” (Baird and Bradley 1978, 48). Due to their surveys relatedness and proven validity, its questions will be tailored for this study.

Table 3. Baird and Bradley's Intercorrelations Among the Investigated Variables

	Quality of Relationship	Quality of Communication	Job Satisfaction	Willingness to Move	Identification with the Group
Communication Content					
-Tells workers what to do	.230*	.198*	.027	-.143	.010
-Solicits input from employees	.260*	.218*	.159*	-.309*	.187*
-Gives information	.337*	.356*	.182*	-.174*	.006
-Stresses happy relationships	.533*	.562*	.421*	-.334*	.237*
-Stresses company goals	.315*	.353*	.352*	-.279*	.246*
-Stresses conflict avoidance	.362*	.382*	.340*	-.232*	.288*
-Allows unsupervised work	.163*	.055	.169*	-.106	.094
-Emphasizes teamwork	.489*	.457*	.458*	-.469*	.301*
-Encourages effort	.431*	.447*	.327*	-.388*	.157
-Reinforces good performance	.487*	.551*	.396*	-.268*	.240*
Communication Style					
-Comes on strong	-.220*	-.122	-.307*	.063	-.069
-Shows concern	.409*	.426*	.323*	-.140	.154
-Communicates comfortably	.304*	.236*	.215*	-.082	.105
-Quick to Disagree	-.194*	-.139	-.199*	.056	-.103
-Attentive to others	.372*	.415*	.329*	-.176*	.157
-Communicates actively	.167*	.211*	.037	-.107	.097
-Is open with others	.074	.078	-.134	.000	-.086
-Listens carefully to others	.468*	.527*	.433*	-.242*	.176*
-Friendly with others	.449*	.362*	.327*	-.205*	.134
-Communicates dramatically	.055	.033	-.087	.020	.110

* $p < .05$

The survey questions for this study rate on a 5 point Likert-style scale. This scale ranges from 1 point to 5 points. In accordance with Baird and Bradley's "Intercorrelations Among the Investigated Variables" (Table 3), most of the questions used in this survey have a positive connotation. For these questions, a response corresponding to 1 point will be reasoned as a completely negative, while a response relating to 5 points will be extrapolated as a completely

positive response. In this manner, lower scores will be equated to a lower ethical perception of downward openness and morale and higher scores will be associated with a higher ethical perception of downward openness and morale. Conversely, questions shown to have a negative inference will be inversely adjusted to match this survey's positive undertone.

Statistical Methodology

The approach outlined above will provide a reasonable mechanism for extrapolating the data necessary to evaluate the ethical perception of downward openness and morale. In so doing, a responses spreadsheet (Table 4) will be completed for each completed survey. The purpose of the spreadsheet is to calculate the appropriate means from the answers provided on each paper survey. As such, the spreadsheet is arranged to correspond the question number to its represented category. Next it displays the Likert Scale with an "x" representing the respondent's choice for each question. Based on the respondent's choice, the subsequent columns quantify a score for each question. The final sections show the calculated mean for the delineated and aggregate variables. These means will be used to conduct the analyses leading to a reliable assessment of the hypothesis, labeled Ho1.

Table 4. Responses Spreadsheet

Survey Question Number	Rating Category	Likert Scale					Score	Section Mean	Overall Mean	Category	
		1	2	3	4	5					
1	Communication Content			x			3	2.00 (Average of "Score" for Questions 1-10)	Communication Content	2.35 (Average of "Score" for Questions 11-20)	DOWNWARD OPENNESS
2	Communication Content		x				2				
3	Communication Content	x					1				
4	Communication Content		x				2				
5	Communication Content		x				2				
6	Communication Content	x					1				
7	Communication Content			x			3				
8	Communication Content		x				2				
9	Communication Content		x				2				
10	Communication Content		x				2				
11	Communication Style	x					1	2.70 (Average of "Score" for Questions 11-20)	Communication Style	DOWNWARD OPENNESS	
12	Communication Style	x					1				
13	Communication Style			x			3				
14	Communication Style			x			3				
15	Communication Style				x		4				
16	Communication Style			x			3				
17	Communication Style			x			3				
18	Communication Style			x			3				
19	Communication Style			x			3				
20	Communication Style			x			3				
21	Quality of Relationship			x			3			MORALE	
22	Quality of Communication		x	x			2				
23	Job Satisfaction			x			3				
24	Willingness to Move		x				2				
25	Identification with Group		x				2				

Hypothesis

Ho1 (null): There is not a relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale.

Ha1: There is a relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale.

At this point in the study, it may be useful to provide a more complete understanding of some of the terms referenced in this methodology. The following expressions are defined below: score, section mean, overall mean, communication content, communication style, ethical perception of downward openness, and morale, along with descriptions of independent (X) and dependent (Y) variables.

- “Score” as depicted in the “Sample Respondent Spreadsheet” shows the number of points that correspond to the respondent’s answer for a given question.
- “Section Mean” as tabulated in the “Sample Respondent Spreadsheet” delineates, as separate constructs, the “Content” and “Style” elements of communication and the factors of morale.
- “Overall Mean” as calculated in the “Sample Respondent Spreadsheet” represents the aggregate mean for the ethical perception of downward openness and morale.
- Communication content represents to the range of functions associated with managerial communication.
- Communication style places emphasis on how superior to subordinate messages are conveyed.
- Ethical perception of downward openness is a form of communication associated with the level of an employee’s acceptance of information that is free-flowing from his or her direct report supervisor.
- Morale is characterized by the subordinate’s perceived quality of relationship with his or her supervisor, quality of communication coming from their supervisor, job satisfaction, willingness to move to a new work group, and how well the subordinate believes he or she identifies with their work group.
- For the purpose of this study, the independent variable (X) is the ethical perception of downward openness, which is further delineated into content and style.

- The dependent variable (Y) is morale, which is further delineated into quality of relationship, quality of communication, job satisfaction, willingness to move, and identification with the group.

The methodologies used in this study focus on three levels of inquiry. The first involves an aggregate assessment of the variables, with subsequent analyses examining sub-variable elements to assess the strength of that prediction. Final testing will evaluate the internal consistency of the response data. Because this study will use aggregated data that is generally available to the public and does not identify any personally identifiable information, it was granted an Institutional Review Board waiver (see Appendix B).

The following Chapter 4 (Results) section will present the findings of this study's quantitative analysis. Where necessary and relevant, tables and charts will be added to supplement individual hypotheses and statistical testing. In this manner, Chapter 4 will answer the hypothesis, determine the validity of those findings, and confirm the internal consistency of the data. In so doing, the Results section will provide a comprehensive evaluation of the relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

Analyses Leading to Prediction

In order to frame the data to evaluate the hypothesis, initial statistical techniques will focus on assessing descriptive statistics, line charts, correlation analysis, and hypothesis-based testing. Descriptive statistics will be used to gauge whether the dataset is representative of the surveyed population. In effect, this verification will be used to estimate how generalized the variables are to the public sector.

Table 5, Descriptive Statistics: Perception of Downward Openness and Morale, outlines the key descriptive statistics for each of the aggregate variables. Of these statistics, the calculated standard error proves important to this study as it shows how representative the variables are to the surveyed population. In general, smaller standard errors equate to a more representative sample of the overall population. Therefore, considering the standard error of the ethical perception of downward openness was 0.068481359 and the standard error of morale was 0.069563658, the aggregate data for both variables was determined generalizable to the public sector.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics: Perception of Downward Openness and Morale

	Perception of Communication Content	Perception of Communication Style
Mean	3.834951456	3.7
Standard Error	0.083021982	0.071706511
Median	4	3.8
Mode	3.7	4.2
Standard Deviation	0.842581088	0.727741605
Sample Variance	0.70994289	0.529607843
Kurtosis	-0.008187718	0.649809907
Skewness	-0.752252965	-0.825541353
Range	3.7	3.8
Minimum	1.3	1.1
Maximum	5	4.9
Sum	395	381.1
Count	103	103
Largest(1)	5	4.9
Smallest(1)	1.3	1.1
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.164673707	0.142229525

Another tool that helped frame the case data was line charts. Analysis depicted in Figure 1.

Perception of Downward Openness and Morale, for example, provided a visual representation of the data used to infer patterns of consistency.

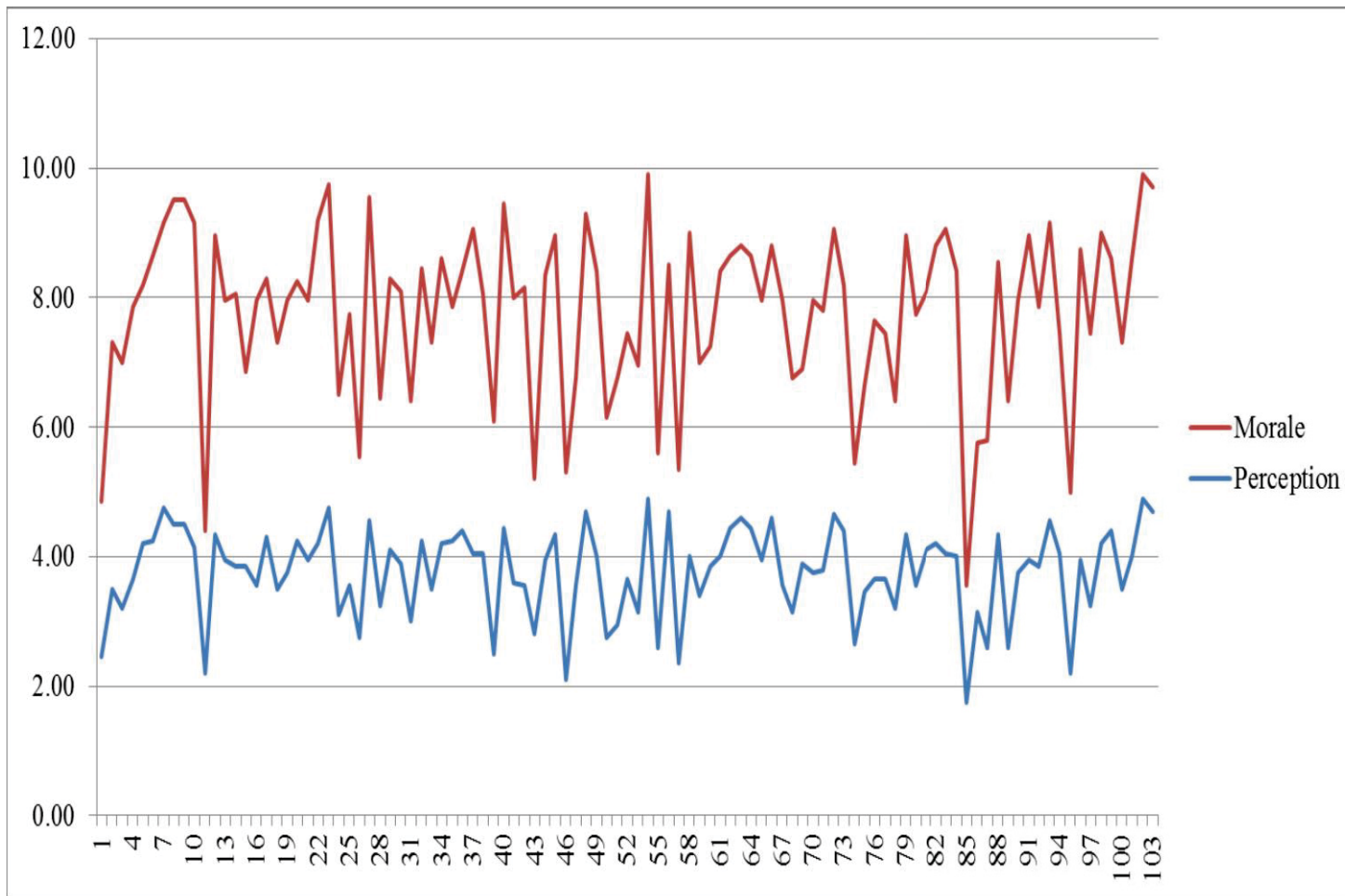


Figure 1. Perception of Downward Openness and Morale

The trend shown in this chart inferred the existence of a relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale. Yet, it is important to note that the information derived from Figure 1 was not used to make any statistically significant prediction.

Correlation analysis advanced the inference through a more reliable calculation. The analysis in the Table 6 correlation analysis showed a high correlation of 0.769178137 between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale. Interpreted, this statistic supports a good linear relationship, where approximately 76.92% of morale explains the perception of downward openness.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis: Perception of Downward Openness and Morale

	Perception of Downward Openness	Morale
Perception of Downward Openness	1	
Morale	0.769178137	1

$p < 0.05$, $n = 103$

To confirm the inferred relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale, a hypothesis-based test showed a rejection of the null hypothesis at the 0.05 α level (Table 7). Rejecting the null hypothesis meant that there was enough evidence to conclude that $\beta_1 \neq 0$. As a result, the alternate hypothesis (H_a1) was accepted. Results of the hypothesis-based test confirmed a significant relationship between the aggregate variables.

Table 7. Hypothesis Based Test

Research Hypothesis:
There is a significant linear relationship between Monroe County Transportation Employees' Ethical Perception of Downward Openness and their Morale.
<p>Dependent Variable (Y) = Morale Independent Variable (X) = Perception of Downward Openness</p> <p>H₀1 (null): There is not a relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale</p> <p>H_a1: There is a relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale</p> <p>Two Tailed Test</p> <p>H₀1: B₁ = 0 (NULL) H_a1: B₁ ≠ 0</p> <p>alpha = .05 p-value = 0.000000000000000232218 < 0.05</p>

Certainly, these first techniques highlighted a pattern of consistency, leading to the inference and subsequent verification that the ethical perception of downward openness affects employee morale. Yet, as is the case with any quantitative study, conclusions reached may be misleading if there are inconsistencies in the dataset. As mitigation, the next section of this study will utilize supplementary methods to test for discrepancies within the variables.

Additional Analyses to Evaluate the Strength of Prediction

The strength of prediction was assessed by delineating the elements of openness and then the elements of morale and reevaluating their relationship using descriptive statistics, line charts and correlation analysis. In addition, multiple regression analysis modeled the relationship between the delineated variables. In this way, regression sought to identify validity within the aggregate variables by identifying any potential weaknesses and/or redundancies existing in the sub-variables.

This first delineation focused on communication content and communication style as the elements that made up the perception of downward openness. Descriptive statistics were run on each of these factors to determine if they were similarly consistent with the perception of downward openness. The sub-variable data presented in the Table 8 Descriptive Statistics: Sub-variables of Downward Openness shows that the standard errors for communication content (0.083021982) and communication style (0.071706511) were generalizable to the public sector.

Table 8. Descriptive Statistics: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness

	Perception of Communication Content	Perception of Communication Style
Mean	3.834951456	3.7
Standard Error	0.083021982	0.071706511
Median	4	3.8
Mode	3.7	4.2
Standard Deviation	0.842581088	0.727741605
Sample Variance	0.70994289	0.529607843
Kurtosis	-0.008187718	0.649809907
Skewness	-0.752252965	-0.825541353
Range	3.7	3.8
Minimum	1.3	1.1
Maximum	5	4.9
Sum	395	381.1
Count	103	103
Largest(1)	5	4.9
Smallest(1)	1.3	1.1
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.164673707	0.142229525

The following analysis compared each of the delineated sub-variables to morale. From the depiction shown in the Figure 2. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Morale, communication content and communication style appeared to follow the same linear trend as morale. Again, this pattern of consistency was useful only in its ability to infer a relationship and not for making any statistically significant predictions.

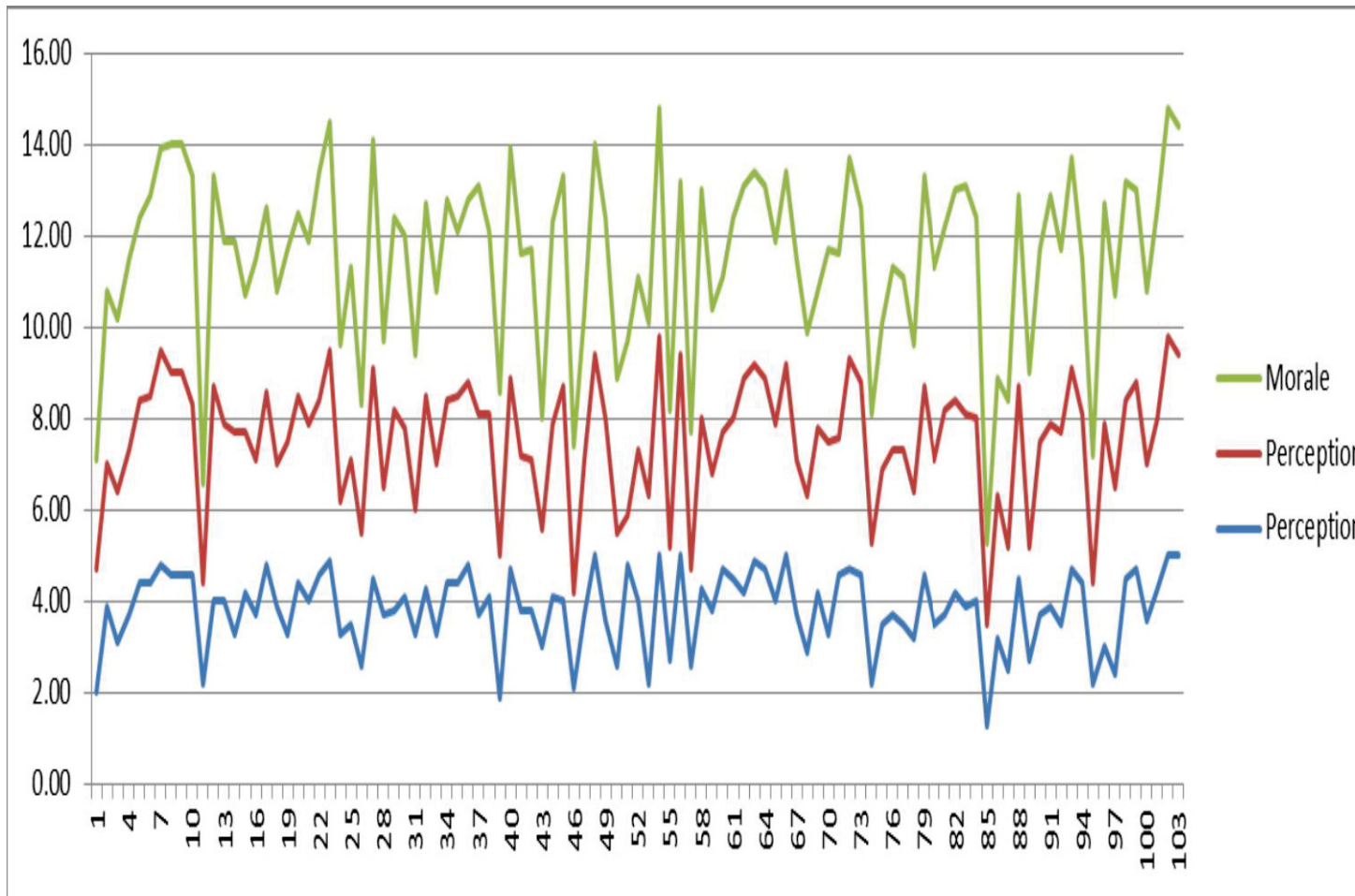


Figure 2. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Morale

The correlation analysis shown in Table 9 compared communication content, communication style and morale. The analysis showed communication content correlated with morale at 0.650889592, while communication style correlated with morale slightly higher at 0.721677429. While this difference was not overly significant, the moderate correlation between communication content and communication style at 0.573511715 did suggest the potential for multicollinearity.

Table 9. Correlation Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Morale

	Perception of Communication Content	Perception of Communication Style	Morale
Perception of Communication Content	1		
Perception of Communication Style	0.573511715	1	
Morale	0.650889592	0.721677429	1

$p < 0.05$, $n = 103$

The existence of multicollinearity indicates that a near perfect linear combination exists between the elements of the sub-variables. Multicollinearity causes redundancy in the regression equation and ultimately weakens any predictions made. However, before testing for multicollinearity, standardized regression will be conducted. Observations from these analyses will evaluate the relationships among the sub-variables and will determine if it is necessary to test for multicollinearity.

The regression data displayed in Table 10 shows that communication content and communication style explains approximately 59.97% of employee morale. Considering all of the factors that influence employee morale, such as those listed in Chapter 2 of this study, this percentage indicated a good fit for the model. Yet, coefficient observations showed a discrepancy in the predictive power of the sub-variables. According to this data, for every one-unit increase in the perception of communication content, morale increased by 0.353158504, with the perception of communication style being slightly higher at 0.519136889. Like the prior correlation analysis in Table 9, this data showed communication style as more significant than content. The p-values similarly suggested a stronger relationship between communication style and morale at 9.24765E-10 than between communication content and morale at 1.23858E-05. Therefore, in spite of the perception of communication content and style showing significance, the findings were worrisome in that the additional discrepancies similarly indicated the potential for multicollinearity.

Table 10. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Morale as DV

SUMMARY OUTPUT - Morale as DV

<i>Standardized Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.777506636
R Square	0.60451657
Adjusted R Square	0.596606901
Standard Error	0.635132348
Observations	103

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	61.66069011	30.83034505	76.42754707	7.1848E-21
Residual	100	40.33930989	0.403393099		
Total	102	102			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower</i>
Intercept	-2.28016E-15	0.06258145	-3.6435E-14	1	-0.124159814	0.124159814	-0
Perception of Communication Content	0.353158504	0.076767183	4.6003838	1.23858E-05	0.2008546	0.505462408	
Perception of Communication Style	0.519136889	0.076767183	6.762484574	9.24765E-10	0.366832985	0.671440793	0

To test for multicollinearity a VIF was calculated for the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness using the following formula: $1 / (1 - R^2)$, where R^2 represents the coefficient of determination of the variables. Generally, VIF values exceeding 10 are a good indication of multicollinearity. However, in weaker models, VIF values above 2.5 may also suggest multicollinearity. The calculated VIF for these variables was 1.490125729 (Table 11). This calculation eased apprehension about multicollinearity by confirming these sub-variables as useful predictors of morale.

Table 11. VIF: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness

	Perception of Communication Content	Perception of Communication Style
Perception of Communication Content	1	
Perception of Communication Style	1.490125729	1

$p < 0.05$, $n = 103$

With the perception of communication content and style proven as legitimate elements of the perception of downward openness, the next section of this study will seek to assess the sub-variables of morale. As discussed in Chapter 2, the factors of morale used in this study are quality of relationship, quality of communication, job satisfaction, willingness to move, and identification with the Group. Once again, initial analyses will focus on descriptive statistics, line charts, correlation, and regression. Additionally, if the data suggests multicollinearity, a VIF will be calculated

Descriptive statistics shown in Table 12 provided some interesting observations. Specifically, the standard errors for quality of relationship (0.076470851), quality of communication (0.085453765), and job satisfaction (0.08129736) all suggested a precise estimate of the population mean. However, the willingness to move (0.137167611) and identification with the group (0.104167856) indicated less predictability.

Table 12. Descriptive Statistics: Sub-variables of Morale

	Quality of Relationship	Quality of Communication	Job Satisfaction	Willingness to Move	Identification with Group
Mean	4.252427184	4.203883495	4.252427184	3.300970874	4
Standard Error	0.076470851	0.085453765	0.08129736	0.137167611	0.104167856
Median	4	4	4	3	4
Mode	5	5	4	3	5
Standard Deviation	0.776094377	0.867260995	0.82507809	1.392099215	1.05718828
Sample Variance	0.602322482	0.752141633	0.680753855	1.937940225	1.117647059
Kurtosis	-1.184614042	0.308223213	3.373264114	-1.094184683	-0.143549546
Skewness	-0.474424962	-0.962522203	-1.463907168	-0.290130448	-0.812325138
Range	2	3	4	4	4
Minimum	3	2	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	438	433	438	340	412
Count	103	103	103	103	103
Largest(1)	5	5	5	5	5
Smallest(1)	3	2	1	1	1
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.151679571	0.169497138	0.161252928	0.272071307	0.206616449

Line charts were used to illustrate the perception of communication content and style against each sub-variable of morale. Charts depicted in Figures 3 through 7 showed a general pattern of consistency. However, closer observations revealed some slight discrepancies in the trends. Although these small inconsistencies may appear insignificant, the depiction of these patterns in the line charts highlights the inability to draw any real conclusions from this information.

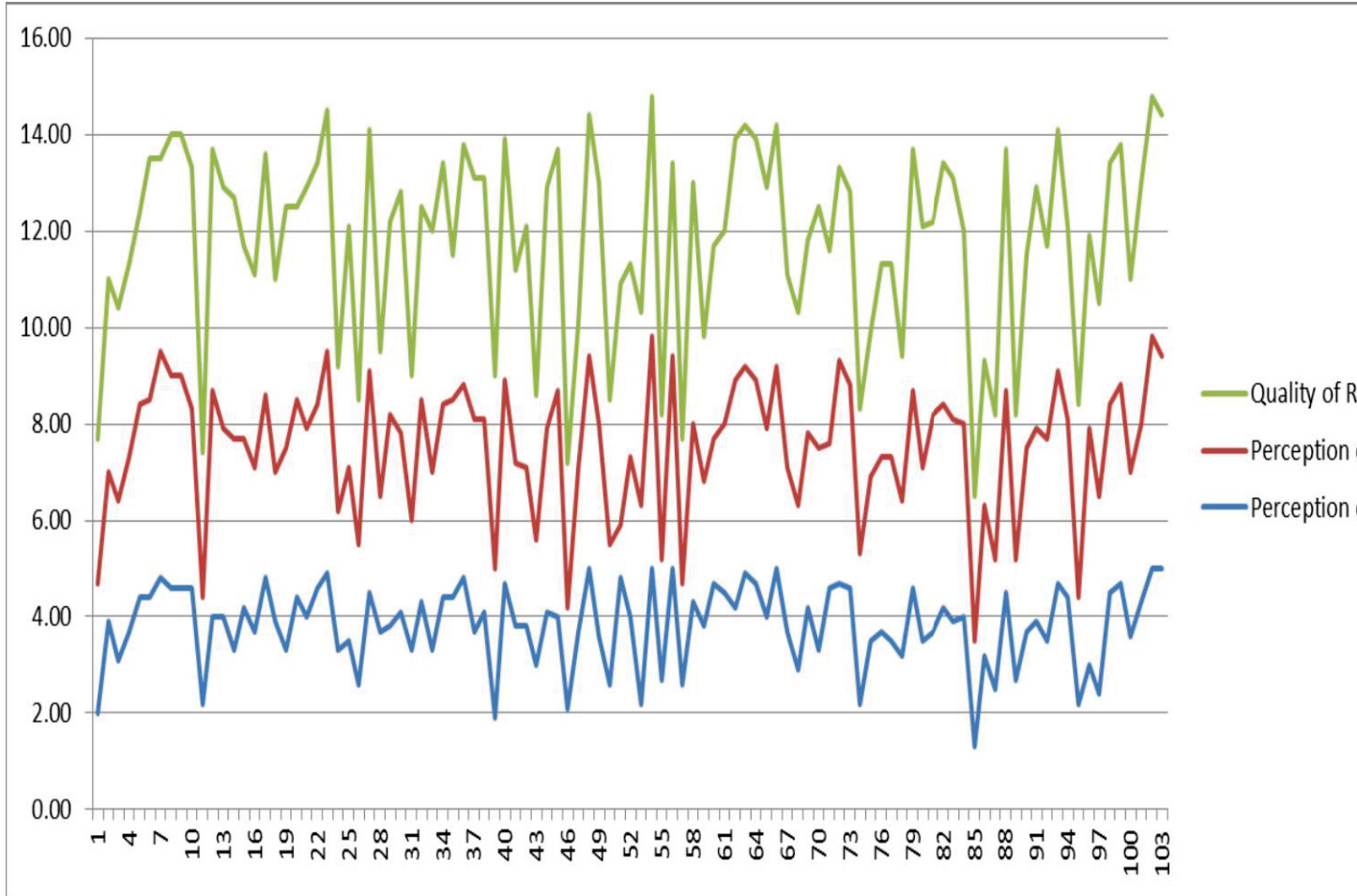


Figure 3. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Quality of Relationship as Sub-variable of Morale

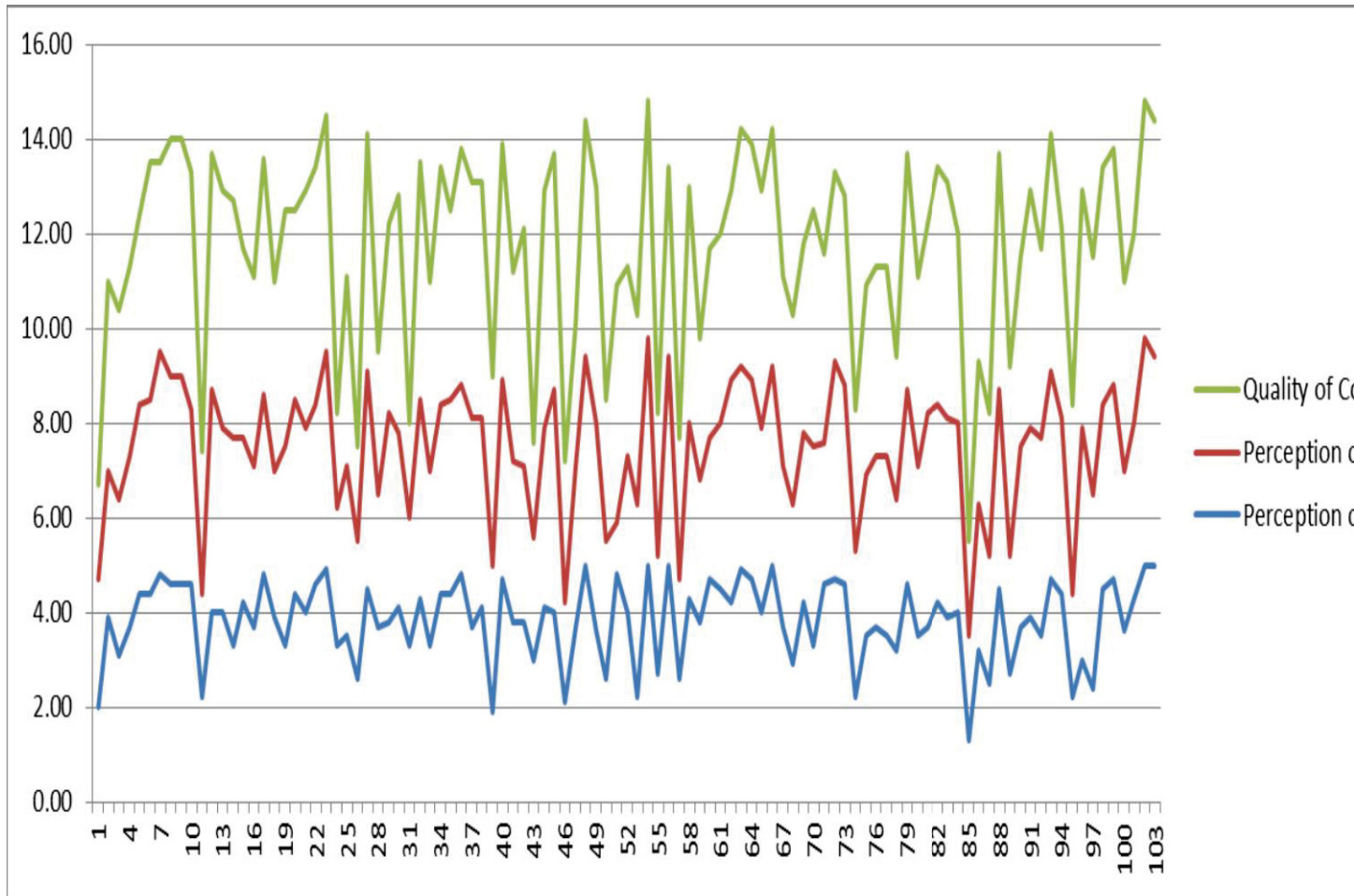


Figure 4. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Quality of Communication as Sub-variable of Morale

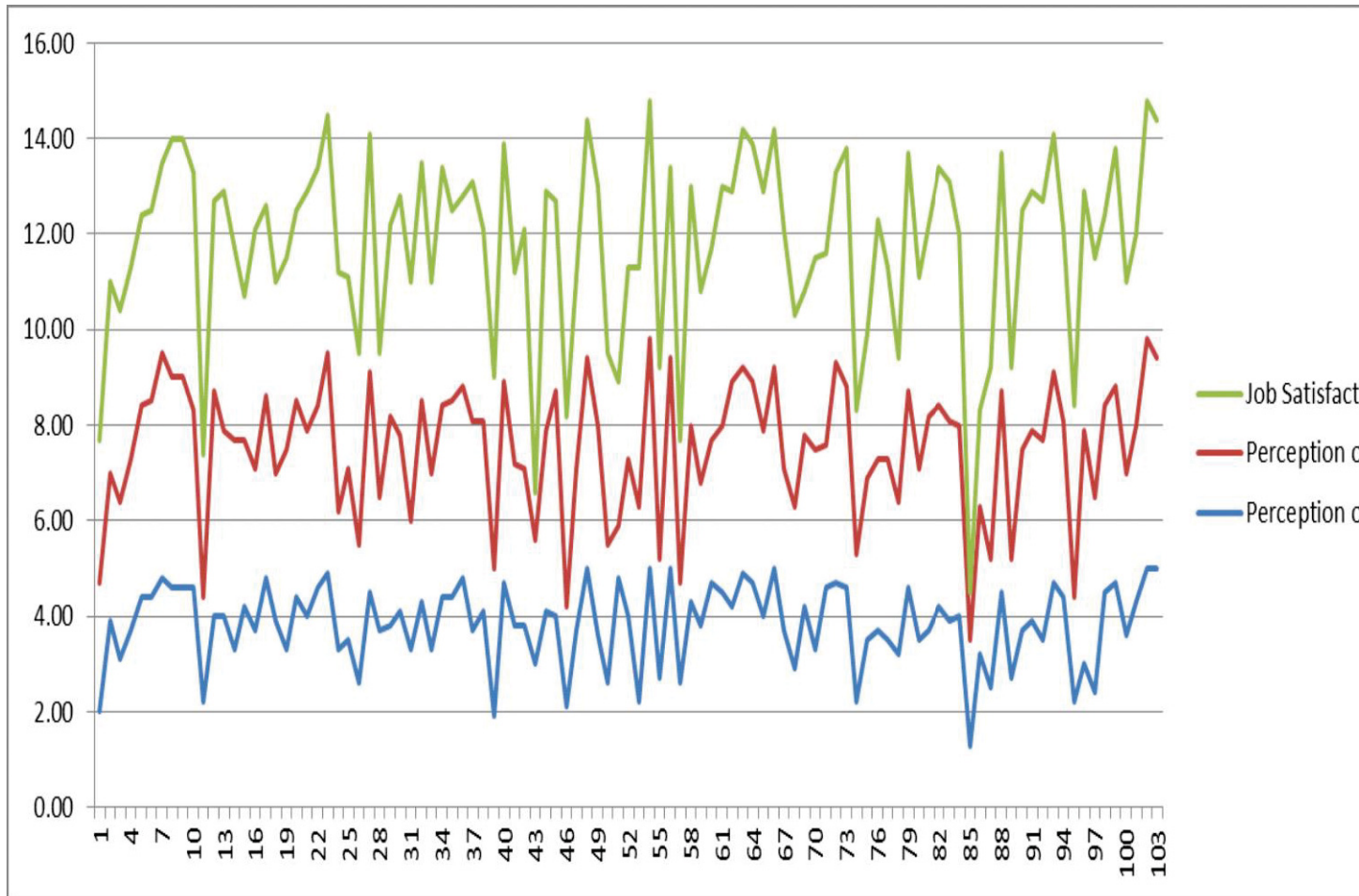


Figure 5. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Job Satisfaction as Sub-variable of Morale

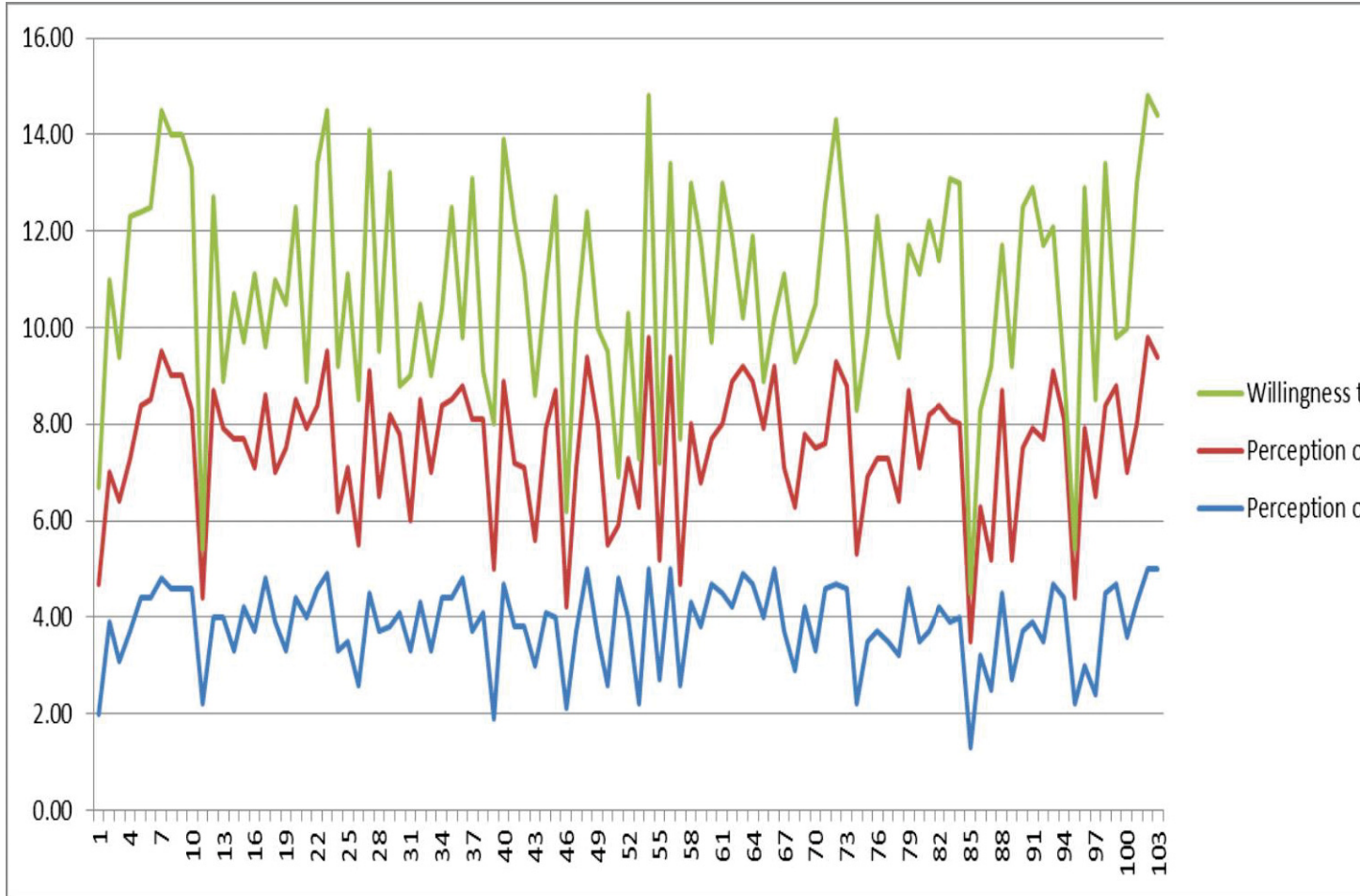


Figure 6. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Willingness to Move as Sub-variable of Morale

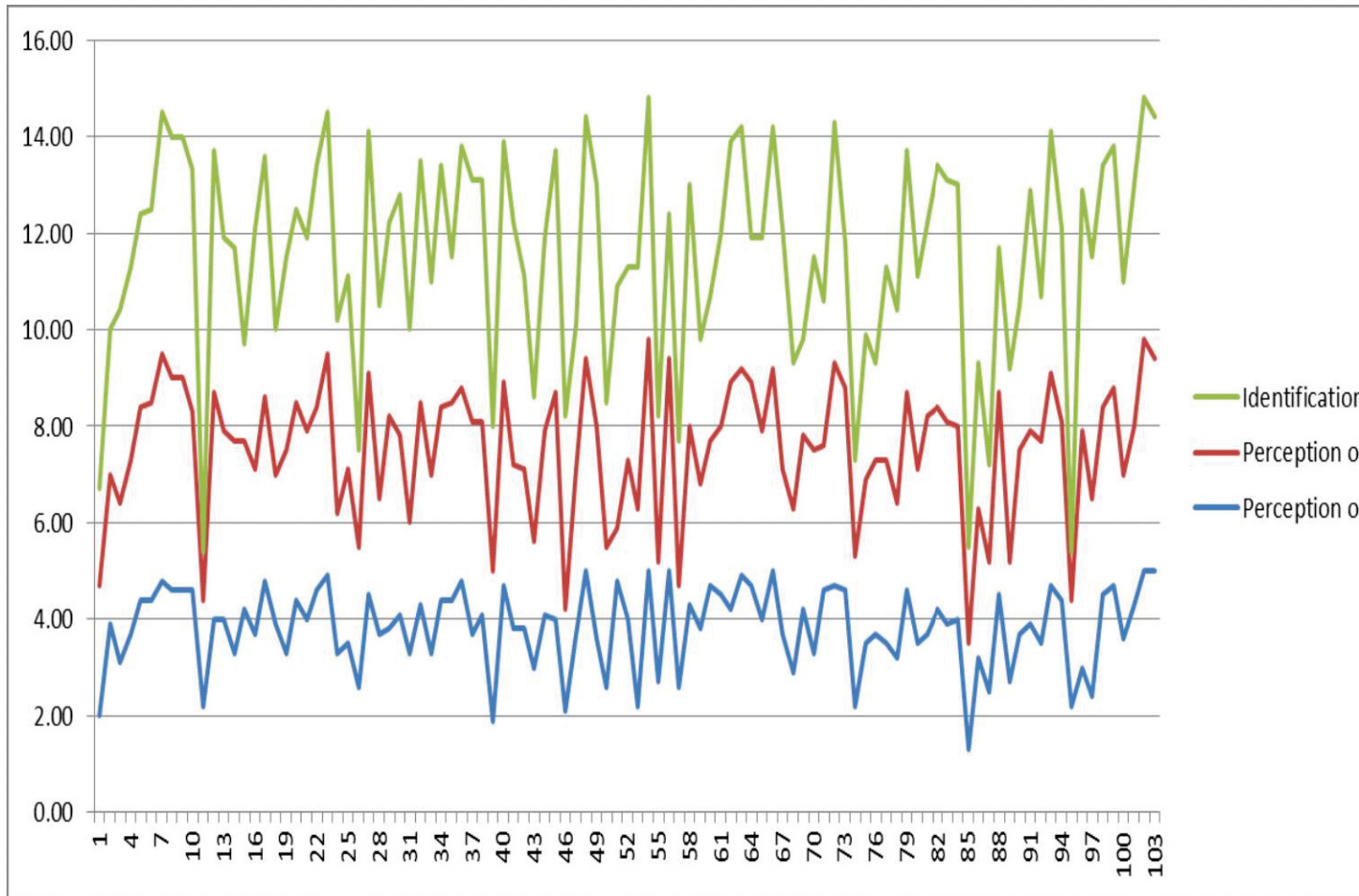


Figure 7. Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Identification with Group as Sub-variable of Morale

Subsequent correlation analysis (Table 13) showed a good correlation between perception of communication content and the quality of relationship at 0.620557821. Likewise, it showed linear correlation with the quality of communication at 0.624751664. Job satisfaction and Identification with the Group correlated slightly lower at 0.449743374 and 0.534899326, respectively. Finally, the perception of communication content correlated with identification with the group at 0.534899326. Communication style followed a similar pattern, correlating with the quality of relationship at 0.626635925, the quality of communication at 0.660179052, job satisfaction at 0.546981171, willingness to move at 0.313543243 and identification with the group correlating at 0.56833597.

Table 13. Std. Correlation Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness and Sub-variables of Morale

	Perception of Communication Content	Perception of Communication Style	Quality of Relationship	Quality of Communication	Job Satisfaction	Willingness to Move	Identification with Group
Perception of Communication Content	1						
Perception of Communication Style	0.573511715	1					
Quality of Relationship	0.620557821	0.626635925	1				
Quality of Communication	0.624751664	0.660179052	0.884132228	1			
Job Satisfaction	0.449743374	0.546981171	0.557868162	0.612425195	1		
Willingness to Move	0.242528640	0.313543243	0.065106195	0.086723198	0.231953141	1	
Identification with Group	0.534899326	0.568335970	0.633299027	0.630884250	0.517023479	0.206509005	1

The use of standardized multiple regression is important to this section of the study for comparing each dependent sub-variable of morale against the independent sub-variables of the perception of downward openness. In so doing, the effectivity of the perception of communication content and style can be weighed against each sub-variable of morale. The findings from this analysis should identify any weakness that may exist between any of the sub-variables.

The standardized regression analysis illustrated in Table 14 assessed the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness with quality of relationship as the dependent variable. The adjusted R square of 0.48203781 indicated a moderate relationship between the perception of communication content and style and the quality of relationship. Moreover, the regression equation showed that the perception of communication content had a fair degree of influence on quality of relationship with a coefficient of 0.389183255. The perception of communication style showed a slightly higher influence on quality of relationship with a coefficient of 0.403434768. Although the p-value for both sub-variables of openness confirmed a significant relationship

with quality of relationship, the perception of communication content was less significant with a p-value of 1.96189E-05, than was style with a p-value of 1.02707E-05.

Table 14. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Quality of Relationship as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT - Quality of Relationship as DV

<i>Standardized Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.703077117
R Square	0.494317432
Adjusted R Square	0.484203781
Standard Error	0.718189543
Observations	103

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	50.42037807	25.21018903	48.87625789	1.56278E-15
Residual	100	51.57962193	0.515796219		
Total	102	102			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower</i>
Intercept	-8.11927E-16	0.070765318	-1.14735E-14	1	-0.140396376	0.140396376	-
Perception of Communication Content	0.389183255	0.086806141	4.483360883	1.96189E-05	0.216962345	0.561404166	0
Perception of Communication Style	0.403434768	0.086806141	4.647537206	1.02707E-05	0.231213858	0.575655679	0

Table 15 assessed the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness with quality of communication as the dependent variable. The adjusted R square of 0.516631257 indicates a good relationship between the perception of communication content and style and the quality of communication. Moreover, the regression equation shows that the perception of communication content had a fair degree of influence on quality of communication with a coefficient of 0.366766499. The perception of communication style shows a higher influence with a coefficient of 0.449834168. Although the p-value for both sub-variables of openness confirmed a

statistically significant relationship with quality of communication, the perception of communication content was less significant with a p-value of 3.10732E-05, than was style with a p-value of 5.51843E-07.

Table 15. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Quality of Communication as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT Quality of Communication as DV

<i>Standardized Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.725333768
R Square	0.526109075
Adjusted R Square	0.516631257
Standard Error	0.695247253
Observations	103

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	53.66312569	26.83156284	55.50951158	6.08022E-17
Residual	100	48.33687431	0.483368743		
Total	102	102			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>
Intercept	-1.32664E-15	0.068504747	-1.93657E-14	1	-0.135911468	0.135911468	
Perception of Communication Content	0.366766499	0.084033152	4.364545314	3.10732E-05	0.200047119	0.533485878	
Perception of Communication Style	0.449834168	0.084033152	5.353056012	5.51843E-07	0.283114789	0.616553548	

Table 16 assessed the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness with job satisfaction as the dependent variable. The adjusted R square of 0.313302651 indicated a fair relationship between the perception of communication content and style and job satisfaction. Similarly, the regression equation showed that the perception of communication content had a fair degree of influence on job satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.202721569. The perception of communication style showed a higher influence on job satisfaction with a coefficient of

0.430717976. Although the p-value for both sub-variables of openness confirmed a statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction, the perception of communication content was less significant with a p-value of 0.0456395, than was style with a p-value of 3.97225E-05.

Table 16. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Job Satisfaction as DV

SUMMARY OUTPUT Job Satisfaction as DV

<i>Standardized Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.57163564
R Square	0.326767305
Adjusted R Square	0.313302651
Standard Error	0.828672039
Observations	103

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	33.33026515	16.66513257	24.26852617	2.56012E-09
Residual	100	68.66973485	0.686697349		
Total	102	102			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>
Intercept	-4.62404E-16	0.081651482	-5.66315E-15	1	-0.161994215	0.161994215	-
Perception of Communication Content	0.202721569	0.10015994	2.023978536	0.045639519	0.0040071	0.401436037	
Perception of Communication Style	0.430717976	0.10015994	4.300301855	3.97225E-05	0.232003508	0.629432445	

Table 17 assessed the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness with willingness to move as the dependent variable. The adjusted R square indicated a poor degree of relationship between the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness and willingness to move at 0.08625234. The coefficients of the regression equation showed that for every one-unit increase in the perception of communication content and style, willingness to move increased at 0.09344268 and 0.259952771, respectively. The p-value for the perception of

communication content identified as not significant at the α -level of 0.05. However, the perception of content was significant with a p-value of 0.026644262.

Table 17. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Willingness to Move as DV

SUMMARY OUTPUT - Willingness to Move as DV

<i>Standardized Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.322752167
R Square	0.104168961
Adjusted R Square	0.08625234
Standard Error	0.955901491
Observations	103

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	10.62523402	5.312617011	5.814096435	0.004086065
Residual	100	91.37476598	0.91374766		
Total	102	102			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>
Intercept	-2.02872E-16	0.094187773	-2.15391E-15	1	-0.186865858	0.186865858	-
Perception of Communication Content	0.09344268	0.115537911	0.808762076	0.42057201	-0.135781244	0.322666605	-
Perception of Communication Style	0.259952771	0.115537911	2.249934843	0.026644262	0.030728847	0.489176695	0

Table 18 assessed the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness with identification with the group as the dependent variable. The Adjusted R square indicated a fair degree of relationship between the sub-variables of the perception of downward openness and identification with the group at 0.375827376. Moreover, the coefficients of the regression equation showed that both the perception of communication content and style had a moderate influence on identification with the group at 0.311364735 and 0.389764646, respectively. The data verified a significant relationship between the perception of communication content and

willingness to move with a p-value of 0.00152025. Likewise, the perception of communication style was shown to have a significant relationship with willingness to move with a p-value of 9.01011E-05.

Table 18. Std. Regression Analysis: Sub-variables of Perception of Downward Openness with Identification with Group as DV

SUMMARY OUTPUT - Identification with the Group as DV

<i>Standardized Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.62294948
R Square	0.388066055
Adjusted R Square	0.375827376
Standard Error	0.790045963
Observations	103

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	39.58273762	19.79136881	31.70816543	2.16385E-11
Residual	100	62.41726238	0.624172624		
Total	102	102			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>
Intercept	-8.09456E-16	0.077845542	-1.03982E-14	1	-0.154443338	0.154443338	-
Perception of Communication Content	0.311364735	0.095491283	3.26066134	0.00152028	0.121912749	0.500816721	0
Perception of Communication Style	0.389764646	0.095491283	4.081677755	9.01011E-05	0.20031266	0.579216632	0

Because of the varying levels of consistency among the sub-variables, a multicollinearity analysis was performed on the sub-variables of morale. The results of the VIF test (Table 19) showed the existence of multicollinearity between quality of relationship and quality of communication. However, the remaining sub-variables were shown to be independently valid.

Table 19. VIF: Sub-variables of Morale

	Quality of Relationship	Quality of Communication	Job Satisfaction	Willingness to Move	Identification with the Group
Quality of Relationship	-	-	-	-	-
Quality of Communication	4.580637927	-	-	-	-
Job Satisfaction	1.451835824	1.600165444	-	-	-
Willingness to Move	1.004256861	1.007577906	1.056861539	-	-
Identification with the Group	1.669637670	1.661170787	1.364839800	1.044545662	-

$p < 0.05$, $n = 103$

Analyses of Internal Consistency of Response Data

The analyses so far has focused on the relationship between variables, first for the purposes of prediction and then to evaluate the strength of the prediction by assessing the relationship among sub-variables. Now, this study will examine the internal consistency of the response data. Internal consistency denotes a general agreement between multiple response variables, especially those quantified through a Likert scale survey such as the one used in this study. Consequently, Cronbach's α will be used to test for irregularities in the response data. Cronbach's α is typically measured on a 0 to 1 scale in accordance with Table 20.

Table 20. Cronbach's α Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Rating
Greater than 0.9	Excellent
Between 0.9 and 0.8	Good
Between 0.7 and 0.6	Acceptable
Between 0.6 and 0.5	Poor
Less than 0.5	Unacceptable

Cronbach's α was calculated for the ethical perception of downward openness and morale by including the response data for all 25 survey questions in the calculation. From there, the responses were delineated to the response data pertaining to the perception of downward openness (Questions 1-20), morale (Questions 21-25), content (Questions 1-10) and then style (11-20). The results listed in Table 21 showed each area of analysis above 99%, meaning that the reliability of these items is excellent.

Table 21. Cronbach's α Results

Variable(s)	Cronbach's α
Perception of Downward Openness and Morale	0.996873838
Perception of Downward Openness	0.997467563
Morale	0.999298380
Content Only	0.996873838
Style Only	0.998741701

What each of these tests establishes for the process of interpreting whether the conclusions reached aggregate evaluation of Hypothesis H₀₁ is that there appears to be enough evidence to suggest that the ethical perception of downward openness does affect employee morale. In all but one of the subsequent methods used to evaluate the strength of the prediction, the sub-variables were confirmed to be consistent and reliable, with only communication content found to be statistically insignificant with willingness to move as the sub-variable of morale. Additionally, results showed evidence that the perception of communication content is a weaker predictor of morale than is the perception of communication style. The examination of internal

consistency showed excellent reliability in the response data. From these findings, the tests generally appear to confirm the existence of a significant relationship. However, the identification of communication content as a weaker sub-variable of the perception of downward openness is a noteworthy development. With this in mind, and considering these results still only scratch the broader surface of the relationship between perceived downward openness and employee morale, additional testing will arrange the data by question and reassess communication content and communication style against each factor of employee morale.

Analyses of Inquiries

Regression analysis (Table 22) compared each of the inquiries of communication content against quality of relationship as a sub-variable of morale. This initial reassessment identified only reinforcement of good performance and stressing of happy interpersonal relationships as significant at 0.000108912 and 0.0124854078, respectively. Furthermore, testing showed that for every one-unit increase in the stressing of good performance and happy interpersonal relationships, the quality of relationship increased by approximately 0.367769411 and 0.189710713, respectively.

Table 22. Regression Analysis: Content Questions with Quality of Relationship as DV

Quality of Relationship as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.723329834
R Square	0.523206049
Adjusted R Square	0.47138062
Standard Error	0.564268852
Observations	103

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	10	32.14415418	3.214415418	10.09554683	2.98183E-11
Residual	92	29.29273902	0.318399337		
Total	102	61.4368932			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	2.325584815	0.333153124	6.980528311	0.000000000	1.663913969	2.987255662
Tell you what to do	0.051399540	0.062653361	0.820379620	0.414120264	-0.073035440	0.175834520
Solicited your input in decision-making	0.060056317	0.067109574	0.894899387	0.373176213	-0.073229087	0.193341721
Give you information concerning other organizational departments	-0.013107306	0.055573183	-0.235856668	0.814068157	-0.123480441	0.097265830
Stresses happy interpersonal relationships	0.189710714	0.074448926	2.548199458	0.012485408	0.041848723	0.337572704
Stresses company goals	-0.028328435	0.087144592	-0.325073925	0.745863207	-0.201405113	0.144748244
Stressed avoidance of conflict	0.005578825	0.081980217	0.068050869	0.945892822	-0.157240959	0.168398609
Allows you to work unsupervised	-0.026236620	0.056020923	-0.468336092	0.640651977	-0.137499005	0.085025765
Emphasizes teamwork	-0.007954122	0.094757207	-0.083942130	0.933284828	-0.196150110	0.180241866
Encourages effort	-0.099441970	0.095826016	-1.037734574	0.302113443	-0.289760704	0.090876765
Reinforces good performance	0.367769411	0.090930444	4.044513516	0.000108912	0.187173704	0.548365119

Questions relating to communication style, when tested against quality of relationship as a sub-variable of morale, offered some interesting results as noted in Table 23. Management who are perceived to be open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves were shown to significantly influence quality of relationship at 0.001384976. Additionally, for every one unit increase in this element of communication style, quality of relationship was shown to increase by approximately 0.165147061. On the other hand, managers who appear to come on strong when communicating showed significance at 0.025566334. However, this inquiry into communication style was found to have a negative relationship in that for every one unit it increased the quality of relationship decreased by approximately -0.136361321.

Table 23. Regression Analysis: Style Questions with Quality of Relationship as DV

Quality of Relationship as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>						
Multiple R			0.739851557			
R Square			0.547380326			
Adjusted R Square			0.498182535			
Standard Error			0.549778083			
Observations			103			

ANOVA						
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>	
Regression	10	33.62934664	3.362934664	11.12611601	3.23778E-12	
Residual	92	27.80754657	0.302255941			
Total	102	61.4368932				

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	2.350503747	0.321789745	7.304470639	0.000000000	1.711401552	2.989605943
Comes on strong when communicating with you	-0.136361321	0.060080989	-2.269625080	0.025566334	-0.255687349	-0.017035292
Shows concern for you	0.068965428	0.066746766	1.033239987	0.304200081	-0.063599408	0.201530265
Is comfortable with you	0.039053653	0.097534316	0.400409358	0.689783320	-0.154657913	0.232765218
Is quick to express disagreement	0.077079092	0.135190532	0.570151555	0.569964690	-0.191420968	0.345579152
Are attentive	0.235896141	0.148614553	1.587301760	0.115875457	-0.059265182	0.531057464
Communicates actively	0.146759443	0.116449231	1.260286915	0.210753133	-0.084518777	0.378037662
Is open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves	0.165147062	0.050073668	3.298081979	0.001384976	0.065696437	0.264597686
Listens carefully	-0.061978698	0.122675133	-0.505226251	0.614608141	-0.305622095	0.181664700
Is friendly	0.026055097	0.120563932	0.216110215	0.829380282	-0.213395274	0.265505468
Communicates dramatically	-0.091634436	0.053378827	-1.716681335	0.089402519	-0.197649392	0.014380520

When assessing communication content against quality of communication (Table 24), only managers who were perceived to reinforce good performance showed significance. In addition to its high significance of 0.000000948, this inquiry also had a large influence on quality of communication as a sub-variable of employee morale. Essentially, for every one unit increase in a manager’s perceived reinforcement of good performance the quality of communication increased by approximately 0.504832480.

Table 24. Regression Analysis: Content Questions with Quality of Communication as DV

Quality of Communication as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.757653817
R Square	0.574039307
Adjusted R Square	0.527739231
Standard Error	0.595992438
Observations	103

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	10	44.03940391	4.403940391	12.39823699	2.38169E-13
Residual	92	32.67904269	0.355206986		
Total	102	76.7184466			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	1.984877807	0.351883224	5.640728724	0.000000185	1.286007367	2.683748247
Tell you what to do	0.065151805	0.066175776	0.984526495	0.327438847	-0.066278996	0.196582606
Solicited your input in decision-making	0.007584312	0.070882521	0.106998342	0.915023278	-0.133194490	0.148363114
Give you information concerning other organizational departments	0.081026695	0.058697546	1.380410273	0.170805203	-0.035551695	0.197605084
Stresses happy interpersonal relationships	0.070187963	0.078634497	0.892584890	0.374408286	-0.085986931	0.226362858
Stresses company goals	0.051722650	0.092043922	0.561934450	0.575527175	-0.131084519	0.234529820
Stressed avoidance of conflict	-0.029720209	0.086589202	-0.343232279	0.732206811	-0.201693834	0.142253416
Allows you to work unsupervised	-0.048860235	0.059170458	-0.825753884	0.411079935	-0.166377869	0.068657398
Emphasizes teamwork	-0.069950435	0.100084523	-0.698913610	0.486369163	-0.268726932	0.128826062
Encourages effort	-0.060147385	0.101213421	-0.594262940	0.553794821	-0.261165971	0.140871201
Reinforces good performance	0.504832480	0.096042617	5.256338238	0.000000948	0.314083557	0.695581403

In Table 25, quality of communication was found to have a noteworthy relationship to managers who are perceived to communicate actively, are open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves, and who come on strong when communicating with employees. In that order, these questions into communication style have p-values of 0.005886761, 0.004523148, and 0.019377464, respectively. Superiors who were viewed as communicating actively and who were thought to be open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves also had a positive influence on quality of communication at 0.349494472 and 0.155134725, respectively. In contrast, managers who were viewed as coming on strong when communicating with employees had a negative impact on quality of communication at -0.152199320.

Table 25. Regression Analysis: Style Questions with Quality of Communication as DV

Quality of Communication as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>						
Multiple R	0.767693687					
R Square	0.589353597					
Adjusted R Square	0.544718118					
Standard Error	0.585180706					
Observations	103					

ANOVA						
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>	
Regression	10	45.21429243	4.521429243	13.20370286	4.89141E-14	
Residual	92	31.50415417	0.342436458			
Total	102	76.7184466				

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	1.952198587	0.342511199	5.699663529	0.000000144	1.271941798	2.632455377
Comes on strong when communicating with you	-0.152199320	0.063949868	-2.379978648	0.019377464	-0.279209275	-0.025189365
Shows concern for you	0.128899348	0.071044883	1.814336821	0.072885245	-0.012201920	0.270000616
Is comfortable with you	0.078105586	0.103814978	0.752353727	0.453759032	-0.128079917	0.284291088
Is quick to express disagreement	0.042078954	0.143896043	0.292426066	0.770619352	-0.243711002	0.327868910
Are attentive	0.146452330	0.158184496	0.925832391	0.356955367	-0.167715725	0.460620385
Communicates actively	0.349494472	0.123947908	2.819688341	0.005886761	0.103323233	0.595665711
Is open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves	0.155134725	0.053298131	2.910697277	0.004523148	0.049280039	0.260989411
Listens carefully	-0.008782584	0.130574723	-0.067260985	0.946519896	-0.268115249	0.250550080
Is friendly	-0.054992609	0.128327573	-0.428533074	0.669264729	-0.309862240	0.199877022
Communicates dramatically	-0.111733066	0.056816124	-1.966573189	0.052246133	-0.224574790	0.001108658

In Table 26, job satisfaction showed significance with reinforces good performance and stresses avoidance of conflict as indicators of communication content. Reinforces good performance had a p-value of 0.015097595, while stresses avoidance of conflict had a p-value of 0.048466090. Furthermore, for every one-unit increase in the perception that management reinforces good performance, employee job satisfaction increased by 0.285400894. Similarly, perceived stressing avoidance of conflict increased job satisfaction by 0.207788738. However, regression analyses as shown in Table 27 found every inquiry into communication style insignificant when tested against job satisfaction as a sub-variable of morale.

Table 26. Regression Analysis: Content Questions with Job Satisfaction as DV

Job Satisfaction as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.567762635
R Square	0.32235441
Adjusted R Square	0.24869728
Standard Error	0.715158879
Observations	103

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	10	22.38328872	2.238328872	4.37641831	5.04152E-05
Residual	92	47.05360448	0.511452223		
Total	102	69.4368932			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	2.793707144	0.422240948	6.616381374	0.000000002	1.955100194	3.632314094
Tell you what to do	-0.106525331	0.079407373	-1.341504273	0.183058867	-0.264235225	0.051184563
Solicited your input in decision-making	-0.010230608	0.085055214	-0.120281960	0.904522086	-0.179157601	0.158696385
Give you information concerning other organizational departments	-0.015868204	0.070433899	-0.225292145	0.822251697	-0.155756003	0.124019595
Stresses happy interpersonal relationships	-0.048794058	0.094357168	-0.517120847	0.606312842	-0.236195534	0.138607417
Stresses company goals	-0.001267930	0.110447757	-0.011479910	0.990865416	-0.220626704	0.218090843
Stressed avoidance of conflict	0.207788738	0.103902386	1.999845674	0.048466090	0.001429635	0.414147841
Allows you to work unsupervised	-0.067555248	0.071001368	-0.951464042	0.343861856	-0.208570090	0.073459593
Emphasizes teamwork	0.053436261	0.120096046	0.444946049	0.657403834	-0.185084847	0.291957370
Encourages effort	0.048764131	0.121450663	0.401513911	0.688972942	-0.192447363	0.289975625
Reinforces good performance	0.285400894	0.115245976	2.476449966	0.015097595	0.056512443	0.514289345

Table 27. Regression Analysis: Style Questions with Job Satisfaction as DV

Job Satisfaction as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>						
Multiple R			0.619648868			
R Square			0.38396472			
Adjusted R Square			0.317004363			
Standard Error			0.681873825			
Observations			103			

ANOVA						
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>	
Regression	10	26.66131723	2.666131723	5.734209604	1.20907E-06	
Residual	92	42.77557597	0.464951913			
Total	102	69.4368932				

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	2.421120042	0.399106496	6.066350875	0.000000029	1.628460109	3.213779974
Comes on strong when communicating with you	0.012398201	0.074516710	0.166381490	0.868221859	-0.135598414	0.160394816
Shows concern for you	-0.017156950	0.082784080	-0.207249387	0.836273142	-0.181573275	0.147259375
Is comfortable with you	0.174652745	0.120968985	1.443781184	0.152197291	-0.065602096	0.414907586
Is quick to express disagreement	-0.048339656	0.167672899	-0.288297372	0.773767637	-0.381352499	0.284673187
Are attentive	0.257135786	0.184322323	1.395033343	0.166364578	-0.108944249	0.623215821
Communicates actively	0.125476613	0.144428607	0.868779500	0.387228535	-0.161371061	0.412324287
Is open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves	0.082139376	0.062104919	1.322590491	0.189249976	-0.041206352	0.205485103
Listens carefully	-0.120217532	0.152150413	-0.790122947	0.431487856	-0.422401378	0.181966313
Is friendly	0.058512413	0.149531952	0.391303745	0.696477536	-0.238470944	0.355495769
Communicates dramatically	-0.066607077	0.066204212	-1.006085183	0.317013436	-0.198094354	0.064880200

When comparing communication content against willingness to move as a sub-variable of morale (Table 28), none of the inquiries were found to be significant. Managers who were seen as coming on strong when communicating as listed in Table 29, however, were shown to be significant with a p-value of 0.004090079. The coefficient of this element of communication style showed that for every one unit increase, the willingness to move as a sub-variable of morale increased by approximately 0.402754497.

Table 28. Regression Analysis: Content Inquiries with Willingness to Move as DV

Willingness to Move as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.369072385
R Square	0.136214425
Adjusted R Square	0.042324689
Standard Error	1.362320633
Observations	103

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	10	26.92549219	2.692549219	1.450791432	0.170989591
Residual	92	170.7444107	1.855917508		
Total	102	197.6699029			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	2.638033153	0.804335333	3.279767832	0.001467904	1.040553789	4.235512517
Tell you what to do	-0.206487035	0.151264714	-1.365070744	0.175559776	-0.506911807	0.093937736
Solicited your input in decision-making	0.239821115	0.162023400	1.480163455	0.142246063	-0.081971335	0.561613565
Give you information concerning other organizational departments	-0.070580895	0.134170960	-0.526051950	0.600117938	-0.337055996	0.195894206
Stresses happy interpersonal relationships	0.259844180	0.179742880	1.445643803	0.151675077	-0.097140686	0.616829047
Stresses company goals	0.052196992	0.210394169	0.248091438	0.804616569	-0.365663978	0.470057962
Stressed avoidance of conflict	-0.006143760	0.197925760	-0.031040728	0.975304300	-0.399241395	0.386953875
Allows you to work unsupervised	-0.076962021	0.135251943	-0.569027102	0.570724336	-0.345584049	0.191660006
Emphasizes teamwork	0.021980092	0.228773391	0.096078009	0.923667594	-0.432383598	0.476343782
Encourages effort	0.229587757	0.231353827	0.992366366	0.323621734	-0.229900903	0.689076417
Reinforces good performance	-0.244047145	0.219534394	-1.111657906	0.269181895	-0.680061392	0.191967102

Table 29. Regression Analysis: Style Inquiries with Willingness to Move as DV

Willingness to Move as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>						
Multiple R			0.520666356			
R Square			0.271093454			
Adjusted R Square			0.191864482			
Standard Error			1.251446494			
Observations			103			

ANOVA						
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>	
Regression	10	53.58701677	5.358701677	3.421645467	0.000762204	
Residual	92	144.0828861	1.566118328			
Total	102	197.6699029				

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	0.969799233	0.732482180	1.323990207	0.188786494	-0.484973568	2.424572034
Comes on strong when communicating with you	0.402754497	0.136760897	2.944953618	0.004090079	0.131135558	0.674373437
Shows concern for you	0.036386478	0.151934043	0.239488648	0.811259444	-0.265367638	0.338140595
Is comfortable with you	0.185321666	0.222014993	0.834725902	0.406034397	-0.255619265	0.626262596
Is quick to express disagreement	-0.004977343	0.307730923	-0.016174335	0.987130335	-0.616157505	0.606202819
Are attentive	0.189281126	0.338287695	0.559527079	0.577161744	-0.482587422	0.861149674
Communicates actively	0.130434910	0.265070556	0.492076192	0.623837631	-0.396018083	0.656887903
Is open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves	0.195451893	0.113981474	1.714768960	0.089754313	-0.030925147	0.421828934
Listens carefully	-0.514431953	0.279242425	-1.842241388	0.068661018	-1.069031500	0.040167594
Is friendly	0.053791353	0.274436750	0.196006376	0.845037468	-0.491263710	0.598846415
Communicates dramatically	0.075844995	0.121504927	0.624213328	0.534032346	-0.165474273	0.317164263

As noted in Table 30, with a p-value of 0.005217917, stressing happy interpersonal relationship was shown to meaningfully relate with employees' identification with the work group. This relationship was further defined by the regression analysis. In effect, analyses of the coefficient of the independent variable showed that for every one unit increase in the view that the manager stresses happy interpersonal relationships, employee identification with the work group increased by 0.329718308.

Table 30. Regression Analysis: Content Inquiries with Identification with the Group as DV

Identification with the Group as DV
SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.620101039
R Square	0.384525298
Adjusted R Square	0.317625874
Standard Error	0.873300312
Observations	103

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	10	43.83588402	4.383588402	5.747811788	1.16587E-06
Residual	92	70.16411598	0.762653435		
Total	102	114			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	1.921880178	0.515610114	3.727390376	0.000333890	0.897834009	2.945926348
Tell you what to do	-0.124609320	0.096966543	-1.285075415	0.201991791	-0.317193239	0.067974599
Solicited your input in decision-making	0.077942425	0.103863277	0.750432947	0.454908995	-0.128339004	0.284223854
Give you information concerning other organizational departments	0.028152280	0.086008784	0.327318663	0.744170497	-0.142668585	0.198973145
Stresses happy interpersonal relationships	0.329718308	0.115222151	2.861587868	0.005217917	0.100877177	0.558559439
Stresses company goals	-0.209681536	0.134870814	-1.554684287	0.123454750	-0.477546609	0.058183537
Stressed avoidance of conflict	0.100509453	0.126878081	0.792173491	0.430297433	-0.151481363	0.352500268
Allows you to work unsupervised	0.101354115	0.086701736	1.168997529	0.245424636	-0.070843013	0.273551243
Emphasizes teamwork	0.052980170	0.146652608	0.361263064	0.718731102	-0.238284560	0.344244901
Encourages effort	-0.003672454	0.148306768	-0.024762555	0.980297990	-0.298222490	0.290877581
Reinforces good performance	0.208020641	0.140730053	1.478153649	0.142782197	-0.071481385	0.487522668

Communication style identified three areas of significance when compared to identification with the work group (Table 31). The perception that the manager is comfortable with employees was found to be significant at 0.016271730. Similarly, management's openness and willingness to reveal relatively personal things about themselves and their showing concern for the employee was validated as significant at 0.001567956 and 0.020050689, correspondingly. The query related to how the manager is comfortable with employees had a coefficient of 0.356627676. Similarly, the perception of management openness and willingness to reveal relatively personal things about themselves had a positive coefficient of 0.243764062 and 0.235958781, respectively.

Table 31. Regression Analysis: Style Inquiries with Identification with the Group as DV

Identification with the Group as DV

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>						
Multiple R			0.675062483			
R Square			0.455709356			
Adjusted R Square			0.396547329			
Standard Error			0.821247285			
Observations			103			

ANOVA						
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>	
Regression	10	51.95086659	5.195086659	7.702734048	7.77031E-09	
Residual	92	62.04913341	0.674447102			
Total	102	114				

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	1.414676643	0.480682957	2.943055549	0.004113036	0.459998822	2.369354464
Comes on strong when communicating with you	-0.058742502	0.089747756	-0.654528922	0.514404103	-0.236989289	0.119504285
Shows concern for you	0.235958781	0.099704958	2.366570186	0.020050689	0.037936133	0.433981429
Is comfortable with you	0.356627676	0.145694771	2.447772651	0.016271730	0.067265291	0.645990060
Is quick to express disagreement	0.210069544	0.201944858	1.040232199	0.300958099	-0.191010367	0.611149455
Are attentive	0.182796577	0.221997387	0.823417697	0.412399905	-0.258109385	0.623702539
Communicates actively	0.073527039	0.173949486	0.422691902	0.673506387	-0.271951647	0.419005725
Is open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves	0.243764062	0.074799024	3.258920374	0.001567956	0.095206748	0.392321376
Listens carefully	-0.342465923	0.183249611	-1.868849388	0.064825482	-0.706415460	0.021483613
Is friendly	-0.052127917	0.180095943	-0.289445260	0.772891947	-0.409813996	0.305558162
Communicates dramatically	-0.138105401	0.079736203	-1.732028818	0.086619946	-0.296468379	0.020257577

Summary

The analyses performed in this chapter (Results) identified the results of the statistical examinations performed. The final chapter of this study will frame the data and discuss the relationship between the variables tested above. Finally, some broader implications will be discussed in an attempt to highlight potential areas of future research. In this way, Chapter 5: Discussion seeks to use the results detailed in this chapter to provide a comprehensive dialogue into the relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and employee morale.

Chapter V

DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore a seemingly unconsidered element of operations in order to aid public sector organizations in their ongoing attempts to attain cost optimization leading to good governance. This element was identified specifically as the ethical perception of downward openness in employer to employee communications and its relationship to employee morale. Ethical perception was equated broadly to the manner in which an employee ethically encodes a message, while downward openness was defined as information communicated to employees by their direct-report supervisors. In addition, morale was used to symbolize an innate characteristic of human cognition that influences motivation and ultimately drives organizational behavior.

Within this framework of understanding, factors that influence morale and motivation as well as different aspects of the communication process had to be identified and statistically defined in order to produce conclusive results that would be beneficial to public sector administrators. Methodologies to gather and analyze data had to be carefully selected to produce quantifiable results. Chapter 3, the methodology portion of this case study, provided the exploration and detail of how these procedures were chosen and utilized, while Chapter 4: Results explored the findings, with highlights detailing the intricacies involved in the testing and analyses. Specific emphasis was placed on the aggregate analyses, which showed representative and conclusive findings that a

significant relationship exists between the perception of downward openness and employee morale. Special notation was also included regarding subsequent statistical observations, which highlighted some divergences in the sub-variable data.

In discussion of these findings, the following sections explain the mechanism of data collection and provide analysis of the statistical results that clearly show the relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and morale as posed in the initial hypothesis of this study (Ha1). Furthermore, assessments of the reliability and internal consistency of the sub-variable data used, the answering of the hypothesis, and the validation of the integrity of the survey data collected in this study are explored. Both the significant findings and the noted divergences play an important part in the results of this study as these pieces combine to produce conclusive insights into the relationship between the perception of downward openness and morale. Subsequently, this project identified a potential area of importance in terms of how public sector managers optimize communication with their employees to maximize efficiency. This examination of the broader implications of this research provide useful and actionable information, which could well benefit both current public sector managers as well as future scholars exploring similar fields of research.

Limitations

It should be noted that this research offers only a circumscribed extension of previous work, not the final word on this topic. Moreover, the data collected for this study comes from a sample size of 103 respondents. These margins are compounded further by the fact that only one public sector organization was surveyed. Due to these limitations, several criteria were established to ensure the organization fit the public nature of the study. For example, the location of the organization chosen for this study was required to fit a geographical area demographically

symbolic of the United States and the State of Georgia. Additionally, the organization had to be representative of the broader public sector and structured similarly to most public sector organizations. Even so, the criteria established for this purpose was restricted to its ability to provide useful inference linking the case used for this study to the public sector.

Framing the Data

As discussed in earlier chapters of this study, the data collected for this dissertation came from a survey that was originally developed and statistically verified by John E. Baird and Patricia H. Bradley in the research article *Communication Correlates of Employee Morale*. Although the survey remained mostly unchanged, the intent and method of analysis used in this study was distinct. Where Baird and Bradley sought to assess the relationships among the individual dimensions of managerial communication and employee satisfaction, this study pursued a broader question into the relationship between the variables. In effect, the survey used in *Communication Correlates of Employee Morale* statistically evaluated the positive or negative correlation between each communication question against each inquiry into morale, while this study expanded those validated relationships to a broader investigation into the human psychological elements of public sector operations. Despite the variance in research focus, its applicability into the relationship between perceived downward openness and morale made the survey similarly ideal for this project.

More specifically, survey questions 1 through 10 explored perceived openness in communication as the range of functions associated with managerial communication. In so doing, these questions identified the level to which employees believed their supervisor does the following: tells them what to do; includes them in the decision-making process; gives them information concerning other organizational departments; stresses happy interpersonal

relationships; stresses company goals and avoidance of conflict; allows them to work unsupervised; emphasizes teamwork; and encourages effort and reinforces good performance. The next ten questions gave emphasis to communication style, with importance placed on how superior to subordinate messages are conveyed. These questions identify how employees perceive messages coming from their manager by assessing how strong the message is communicated; how much concern the manager shows for the employee; the comfortability of the supervisor with the subordinate; how quickly the manager is to express disagreement; the boss' attentiveness; how actively the message is communicated; how open and willing the supervisor is to reveal relatively personal things about him or herself; how carefully the leader listens; the supervisor's friendliness and the level to which he or she communicates dramatically with the employee. By comparing these range of functions with quality of relationship, quality of communication, job satisfaction, willingness to move, and identification with the group as the five sub-variables of employee morale, this survey proved ideal for assessing this project's inquiry into the relationship between the perception of downward openness and morale.

The Relationship between the Ethical Perception of Downward Openness and Morale

The initial techniques used in the primary analysis of this study focused on the ethical perception of downward openness and employee morale as aggregate variables. The evaluation framed the data to the study by examining key demographic statistics, which confirmed the representativeness of the data to the surveyed population and ultimately to the public sector. Further analyses led to a solid statistical confirmation of a significant linear relationship between the ethical perception of downward openness and employee morale. In accordance with earlier examinations within this study that linked behavior to the attainment of cost optimization leading to good governance, this finding further emphasized cognition as an operational mechanism of

organizational success. However, the stated limitations raised some concerns about the dependability of the analyses. As a result, the perception of downward openness and morale were broken into sub-variables, as delineated in the survey, and retested. The following sections provide a detailed and substantive valuation of the conclusions reached in the sub-variable assessment.

Communication Content and Style as Sub-variables of Downward Openness

The survey used for this study identified communication content and communication style as the two sub-variables of the ethical perception of downward openness. Therefore, to assess the reliability of the aggregate findings, both of these sub-variables were tested for generalizability to the public sector. The assessment determined similarity and consistency with the aggregate findings. Additional analysis showed that each sub-variable maintained a statistically significant linear relationship with employee morale. However, when compared against one another, communication content was consistently shown to have less influence on morale than communication style. In effect, this finding suggests that the manner in which a message is conveyed is more important than the message itself. Yet before making any additional assumptions, a more detailed analysis comparing the sub-variables of perceived downward openness against the sub-variables of morale is necessary.

The Relationship between Communication Content and Style and the Sub-variables of Morale

Statistics showed that each of the five sub-variables of morale were generalizable to its surveyed population. Ensuing analysis evaluated communication content and communication style against quality of relationship, quality of communication, job satisfaction, willingness to move, and identification with the group as the five sub-variables of morale. Similar to its comparison with morale as an aggregate variable, communication content was found to be

statistically less significant than communication style when compared against every sub-variable of morale. These results seem to endorse further the preference of manner over message in downward communication. Another pattern of potential importance was identified with willingness to move. Analyses identified this sub-variable of morale as having the weakest correlation, influence, and significance when compared against communication content and style. Given the stated weakness of willingness to move, it is not surprising that it was found to be insignificant when compared against communication content.

Quality of Relationship and the Inquiries into Content and Style

As defined earlier in this project, the quality of a subordinate's relationship with his or her supervisor is influenced by managerial communication behaviors. Therefore it is not surprising that the content and style sub-variables of downward communication, when related to the quality of relationship, were found to be more personal in nature. Of the inquiries into downward openness, only managers who reinforce good performance, stress happy interpersonal relationships, and are open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves showed a significantly higher quality relationship with subordinates. In contrast, managers who come on strong when communicating seem to harm significantly the quality of that relationship. These results appear to place emphasis on the emotional aspects of superior to subordinate communication. In so doing, these findings highlight the important aspects of relationship building in organizational settings, with additional emphasis placed on how the subordinate emotionally identifies with the manager.

Quality of Communication and the Inquiries into Content and Style

Quality of communication in superior to subordinate communication describes the value that exists in a message. Managers who reinforce good performance were shown to have a

positive effect on quality of communication. In addition, managers who demonstrate an active communication style and who are open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves were shown to have value in their message. On the other hand, managers who come on strong had a negative influence on communication quality. On the surface, these results show some similarity with the findings outlined in the previous section. Certainly, this is to be expected when assessing the quality aspects of a thing. However, quality of communication within the context of this comparison appears to shift slightly away from the personal sentiment associated with the communicator to the quality of the rhetoric associated with the message itself.

Job Satisfaction and the Inquiries into Content and Style

An employee's job satisfaction is often determined by an employee's perceived level of oversight coming from his or her manager. Yet, analysis for this study did not find a significant relationship between job satisfaction and management allowing employees to work unsupervised. Moreover, this sub-variable of morale was found to be insignificant when compared against every question related to communication style. Instead, job satisfaction related positively to stresses avoidance of conflict and reinforces good performance. Certainly, these queries make sense as they allow managers to side step the traditional more directive type of oversight techniques yet, still somewhat control employee emotions and behaviors they see as conducive to success. However, given the traditional view that job satisfaction is determined by level of oversight, as discussed in the first sentence of this paragraph and in earlier sections of this project, the failure to link job satisfaction with employees who believe they are allowed to work unsupervised is nonetheless surprising. Although the reason for this potential inconsistency is not made clear in this study, one plausible explanation could equate it to the limitations of this study discussed above.

Willingness to Move and the Inquiries into Content and Style

Willingness to move is described as the level of cohesiveness that exists in a workgroup. Within this context, a high willingness to move is linked to low cohesiveness and a low willingness to move is related to high group cohesiveness. Management coming on strong when communicating, as an inquiry into communication style, was shown to be the only indicator of willingness to move. In this way, this finding discards any potential significance in the questions that make up communication content and instead links group cohesiveness solely with the level of perceived pleasantness in the style of manager's communication.

Identification with the Group and the Inquiries into Content and Style

Identification with the work group measures the extent to which each employee identifies with his or her work group. In this manner, this sub-variable of employee morale is similarly associated with group cohesiveness. Yet with identification with the work group, managers who stress happy interpersonal relationships appear to facilitate an environment where workers identify with their coworkers. Moreover, managers who appear comfortable with their subordinates, who are open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves, and who show concern seem to have an influence on group identity. Again, the nature of these findings seem to focus on the emotional aspects of how downward openness is perceived.

Broader Implications

Results identified and validated a significant relationship between the perception of downward openness and employee morale. In addition, this research implicated several broader areas of focus that current and future researchers may want to explore. Managerial communication, for example, which involves traditional methods of encoding a message might be improved upon by shifting emphasis away from a one-size fits all approach to one that

considers how each individual employee decodes the message. Although this broader implication is inferring change, it is not suggesting a complete transformation from traditional communication methodologies. Instead, it is suggesting the potential need for a tailored approach to communication in organizational areas where morale is a driver of efficiency. This theory can seemingly be compared to the paradigm shift that took place during the early twentieth century when organizational scholarship helped evolve time and motion type processes to those that considered cognition as an operational mechanism of efficiency. Consequently, successful organizations that required more superior to subordinate communication aligned its strategy with the behavioral science methodology, while organizations involving processes that required very little downward communication remained relatively unchanged. In similar fashion, this paradigm shift is no more universally applicable today than it was then.

Conclusion

At the heart of this study was the inquiry into the relationship between the perception of downward openness and employee morale. Within this context, perception was reasoned to be both a malleable and powerful indicator of human and organizational behavior. Just as strong leaders have historically demonstrated the ability to conform society to their ideologies, ethical and motivation theorists have placed emphasis on the importance of managing human cognition in the workplace. From this reasoning, the concept of morale emerged as a potentially powerful indicator of organizational behavior. Within this context of understanding, communication was explored as a potential determinant of employee morale. Data collected and used in this study was predicated on exploring this relationship with findings emphasizing the importance of employee perception as an operational mechanism of organizational success. In that way, this

dissertation provides some interesting observations for public sector leaders seeking to obtain good governance through effective management of employee morale.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2010. "10 Warning Signs of Low Morale ... and 7 Ways to Boost It." *HR Specialist*, 8, no. 6: 6.

2011. "Bad Morale Rears its Head." *Managing People at Work*, no. 354: 3.

2012. "Taking Further Action to Better Determine Causes of Morale Problems Would Assist in Targeting Action Plans." *GAO Reports*, 1-75.

2013. "Employee Morale." *Supervision*, 74, no. 6: 26.

Achor, Shawn. 2010. *The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles of Positive Psychology That Fuel Success and Performance at Work*. N.Y.: Crown Business.

Allen, P. T. 1982. "Size of Workforce, Morale and Absenteeism: A Re-Examination." *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 20, no. 1: 83-100.

Baehr, Melany E., and Richard Renck. 1958. "The Definition and Measurement of Employee Morale." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 3 no. 2: 157-184.

Baird, John E., and Patricia H. Bradley. 1978. "Communication Correlates of Employee Morale." *Journal of Business Communication*, 15 no. 3: 47-56.

Banerjee, Arindam. 2011. "Stress and Morale of Management Students during the Recession Period." *IUP Journal of Management Research*, 10, no. 4: 58-67.

Baradat, Leon P. 2012. *Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact*, 11th ed. Boston: Longman.

Bowles, David and Cooper, Cary. 2010. *Morale, Engagement and the Future of Capitalism*. Palgrave Macmillan: Macmillan Publishers Limited.

<http://davidbowles.wordpress.com/tag/happiness-and-morale> (March 1, 2015).

- Buchanan, James. M., and Tullock, Gordon. 1962. *The Calculus of Consent*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Cameuer, Colin F. and George Loewenstein. 2004. *Behavioral Economics: Past, Present, Future*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Chiesa, M, and S Hobbs. 2008. "Making Sense of Social Research: How Useful is the Hawthorne Effect?" *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 38, no. 1: 67-74.
- Chow Hou, Wee. 1994. "Managing Change: Perspectives from Sun Tzu's Art of War." *Journal of Strategic Change*, 3, no. 4: 189-199.
- Davies, John B., and Frederick Rotgers. 2009. "Disclosure in the Best Interests of Science? Or Moral Crusade?" *Addiction*, 104, no. 11: 1787-1788.
- DeLonzor, Diana. 2005. "Running Late." *HR Magazine*, 50, no. 11: 109-112.
- Diacon, Paula-Elena, Gabriel-Andrei DONICI, and Liviu-George MAHA. "Perspectives of Economics – Behavioural Economics." *Theoretical & Applied Economics*, 20, no. 7 (July 2013): 27-32.
- Eisenberg, Eric M., and Marsha G. Witten. 1987. "Reconsidering Openness in Organizational Communication." *Academy Of Management Review*, 12, no. 3: 418-426.
- Fehr, Ernst, and Klaus M. Schmidt. 1999. "A Theory of Fairness, Competition, and Cooperation." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 817-868.
- Harriman, Edward A. 1916. *The Development of Administrative Law in the United States*. *Yale Law Journal*, 25(8): 658–65.
- Hayyat Malik, Sikandar. 2012. "A Study of Relationship between Leader Behaviors and Subordinate Job Expectancies: A Path-Goal Approach." *Pakistan Journal of Commerce & Social Sciences*, 6, no. 2: 357-371.

- Hausman, Daniel M. 2008. "Fairness and Social Norms." *Philosophy of Science*, 75, no. 5: 850-860.
- Hu, Li, Feng Zhiyu, Liu Chunlin, and Cheng Dejun. 2014. "The Impact of Relative Leader-Member Exchange on Employees' Work Behaviors as Mediated by Psychological Contract Fulfillment." *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 42, no. 1: 79-88.
- International Reference Group. 2013. "Good Governance in the Public Sector: Consultation Draft for an International Framework."
<http://www.ifac.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/Good-Governance-in-the-Public-Sector.pdf> (February 29, 2015).
- Islam, Saif ul, and Nazim Ali. 2013. "Motivation-Hygiene Theory: Applicability on Teachers." *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, 7, no. 1: 87-104.
- Johnson, Craig E. 2007. *Ethics in the Workplace: Tools and Tactics for Organizational Transformation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. 335 pages.
- Jose, Joby, N. Panchanatham, and R. Manigandan. 2013. "Influencers' of Employee Morale." *Golden Research Thoughts*, 3, no. 1: 1-3.
- Kae H., Chung. 1969. "Toward a General Theory of Motivation and Performance." *California Management Review*, 11, no. 3: 81-88.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1995. "What Is Enlightenment?" *In the Portable Enlightenment Reader*, ed. Isaac Kramnick. New York: Penguin.
- Keller, Heather R. "Communication." *Leadership Excellence*, 26, no. 3 (March 2009). 13.
- Lee, Cheu-Jey George. 2012. "Reconsidering Constructivism in Qualitative Research." *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44, no. 4: 403-412.

- Locke, E. A. 1968. "Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives:" *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 3(2), 157-189.
- MacRury, King. 1949. "Discussions and Communications - Employee Morale: Analyses of Absence Records and Opinion Polls." *Industrial & Labor Relations Review*, 2, no. 2: 237-247.
- Miles, Caroline. 2005. "Faulkner and the Great Depression: Aesthetics, Ideology, and Cultural Politics." *Mississippi Quarterly*, 59, no. 1/2: 376-379.
- Mtanga, Noor, Fullerton Nancy, Nophaket Chalumporn, and Irene MacCallum. 2010. "How Does Low Employee Morale Affect an Organization, and what can a Communicator do to Overcome It?" *Communication World*, 27, no. 2: 13.
- Murray, Henry A. et al. 1961. "Cultural Evolution as Viewed by Psychologists." *Daedalus*, 90(3), 570-586.
- Musser, George. 2012. "A New Enlightenment." *Scientific American*, 307, no. 5: 76-81.
- Nielsen, Arne P. 2009. "Ethics in the Workplace: Tools and Tactics for Organizational Transformation." *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, 3, no. 2: 78-83.
- Nolan, Joseph. 1995. "Adam Smith's Free Market Capitalism." *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 61, no. 6: 183-187.
- Ott, J. Steven, Sandra J. Parkes, & Richard B. Simpson. Eds. 2008. *Classic Readings in Organizational Behavior*, 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth.
- PR, Newswire. 2011. "Staff Retention, Employee Morale, Workloads, and Health Care Costs are Top Workforce Issues for State and Local Governments." *PR Newswire US*, May 17.

- Rothbard, Nancy P., and Steffanie L. Wilk. 2011. "Waking Up on the Right or Wrong Side of the Bed: Start-of-Workday Mood, Work Events, Employee Affect, and Performance." *Academy of Management Journal*, 54, no. 5: 959-980.
- Rushefsky, Mark E. 2013. *Public Policy in the United States*. 5th edition. ME Sharpe, Inc.
- Shrivastava, Sanjay. 2012. "Comprehensive Modeling of Communication Barriers: A Conceptual Framework." *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, 6, no. 3: 7-19.
- Sison, Perfecto S. 1991. *Personnel and Human Resources Management*. Personnel Personnel Management Association of the Philippines. 5th Edition. Rex Printing Company, Inc.
- Smith, Chris. 2013. *The Seven Barriers of Communication*. OPIN: Enterprise Drupal. 2013. <http://opin.ca/article/seven-barriers-communication> (March 1, 2015).
- Stead, Betty Anne. 1972. "Berlo's Communication Process Model as Applied to the Behavioral Theories of Maslow, Herzberg, and McGregor." *Academy of Management Journal*, 15, no. 3: 389-394.
- Sullivan, Jeremiah J. 1988. "Three Roles of Language in Motivation Theory." *Academy of Management Review*, 13, no. 1: 104-115.
- Thomas, Kenneth Wayne. 2009. *Intrinsic Motivation at Work: What Really Drives Employee Engagement*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2009.
- Vroom, Victor H. 1964. *Work and Motivation*, [by] Victor H. Vroom. n.p.: New York. Wiley [1964].
- Wilson, Woodrow. 1887. "The Study of Administration." *Political Science Quarterly*, 2, no. 2: 197-222.
- Worthy, James C. 1950. "Factors Influencing Employee Morale." *Harvard Business Review*, 28, no. 1: 61-73.

Zuckert, M. (2010). "The Locke Essay: Achievement and Promise." *Perspectives on Political Science*, 39(2), 92-96.

APPENDIX A

Survey

APPENDIX A: SURVEY

The following ten questions are related to “Communication Content, or the sorts of functions played by managerial communication.” Please Rate the Extent to which Your Immediate Supervisor does the following:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Tells you what to do	?	?	?	?	?
2. Solicits your input in decision-making	?	?	?	?	?
3. Gives you information concerning other organizational departments	?	?	?	?	?
4. Stresses happy interpersonal relationships	?	?	?	?	?
5. Stresses company goals	?	?	?	?	?
6. Stresses avoidance of conflict	?	?	?	?	?
7. Allows you to work unsupervised	?	?	?	?	?
8. Emphasizes teamwork	?	?	?	?	?
9. Encourages effort	?	?	?	?	?
10. Reinforces good performance	?	?	?	?	?

The following ten questions are related to “Communication Style, or the manner in which the content was conveyed.” Please Rate the Extent to which Your Immediate Supervisor does the following:

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
11. Comes on strong when communicating with you	?	?	?	?	?
12. Is quick to express disagreement	?	?	?	?	?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
13. Shows concern for you	?	?	?	?	?
14. Is comfortable with you	?	?	?	?	?
15. Is attentive	?	?	?	?	?
16. Communicates actively	?	?	?	?	?
17. Is open and willing to reveal relatively personal things about themselves	?	?	?	?	?
18. Listens carefully	?	?	?	?	?
19. Is friendly	?	?	?	?	?
20. Communicates dramatically	?	?	?	?	?

The following five questions are related to Employee Morale. Based on your perception, rate the following:

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
21. The Quality of your relationship with your immediate supervisor	?	?	?	?	?
22. The quality of your communication with your immediate supervisor	?	?	?	?	?
23. Your overall job satisfaction	?	?	?	?	?

	Very Willing	Somewhat Willing	Neutral	Somewhat Unwilling	Very Unwilling
24. Your willingness to transfer to a similar position in another transportation department	?	?	?	?	?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
25. The extent to which you feel like a part of your present work group	?	?	?	?	?

APPENDIX B

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Exemption Report



Institutional Review Board (IRB)

for the Protection of Human Research Participants

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

**PROTOCOL
NUMBER:**

IRB-03242-2015

**INVESTIGATOR:
OR:** Thomas Courson

PROJECT TITLE:

The Psychology of Communication: Does the Ethical Perception of Downward Openness Affect

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is **exempt** from Institutional Review Board oversight under Exemption Category(ies) 2. You may begin your study immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:

Although not a requirement for exemption, the following suggestions are offered by the IRB Administrator to enhance the protection of participants and/or strengthen the research proposal:

NONE

If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.

Elizabeth W. Olphie

Elizabeth W. Olphie, IRB Administrator

8/21/15

Date

***Thank you for submitting an IRB application.
Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-259-5045.***

Revised: 12.13.12

ⁱ “Sun Tzu's *Art of War* transcends its military context and offers valuable insights, such as managing change, adaptability in operations, flexibility, innovativeness, and the importance of initiative. Certainly, these are fundamental qualities of effective leadership in modern businesses.

ⁱⁱ The Church, as the sole authority on matters related to God, and its divinely appointed authority were beyond reproach.

ⁱⁱⁱ “Emboldened by the success of Newtonian physics, a few simple rules that explained the fall of apples and the orbits of planets, [Condorcet] sought to create a science of society to match. Reason, he thought, could make the world a better place” (Musser 2012, 1).

^{iv} Hobbes rejected the claim that government was a divinely appointed institution. Furthermore, by correlating his view of natural law with the premise “that Government was ... a deliberately and rationally conceived human invention” (Baradat 2008, 72), Hobbes showed that religion and politics were mutually exclusive.

^v John Locke believed that an individual's “rights were unalienable and that preserving them was necessary for a free existence” (Baradat 2008, 80). Moreover, he argued that “government ought to be strictly limited ... to serve the people” (Baradat 2008, 80). In this way, Locke “transforms what in Hobbes is a right (a liberty) into a duty (an obligation)” (Zuckert 2010, 93).

^{vi} Thomas Jefferson is widely regarded as the father of the Declaration of Independence. Yet, he recognizes John Locke as helping lay the philosophical foundations from which it was written. In a letter to John Trumbull, a Revolutionary American artist, Jefferson praised Locke by referring to him, Isaac Newton, and Francis Bacon as the greatest men who had ever lived.

^{vii} Madison knew that the weak central government provided in the Articles of Confederation was creating significant issues for the country. Not only did it make collecting the taxes necessary to keep the new country out of bankruptcy impossible, but also it did very little to unite the war torn Colonies. Therefore, Madison, in true Hobbesian fashion, pressed for a strong central government.

^{viii} Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* was published in 1776, the same year as the Declaration of Independence, and economists insist that it was fully as important to their field as its companion was to government and political science. ... Smith believed that the efficient working of the market was the key to a comfortable standard of living. He showed that the price system was a self-adjusting mechanism

which led to resources being used in a way that maximized the value of their contribution to production” (Nolan 1995, 184).

^{ix} Henri Fayol argued that “Administration” or “Management” is a body of knowledge that comes from observation and experience. In this way, Fayol opens the topic of management up to scholarly instruction, supported by practical experience.

^x Goodnow further defined administration as “that part of the public law which fixes the organization and determines the competence of the administrative authorities, and indicates to the individual remedies for the violation of his rights” (Harriman 1916, 658).