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The effects of authentic leadership and organizational commitment on turnover intention

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore whether authentic leadership in hospitality is composed of four distinctive but related substantive components (i.e. self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral); the impact of authentic leadership on employees' organizational commitment (OC); the impact of employees' OC on their turnover intention (TI); and the indirect effect of authentic leadership on employees' TI via OC.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors tested a sample of 236 students working as employees in hospitality in the USA, on the idea that authentic leadership increases OC which in turn decreases TI. The participants were asked to rate the manager's leadership style and the frequency of their leadership behavior.

Findings – Results of structural equation modeling provide support for the positive effect of authentic leadership on OC in the hospitality industry, and suggest that OC mediates reduced TI.

Practical implications – The findings in the present study are extremely useful to managers, human resource managers, and organizations as a whole. Practitioners looking to increase employee OC and decrease TI can do so by augmenting the authentic leadership qualities of managers.

Originality/value – The results of this study suggests a variety of significant theoretical contributions as well as critical leadership and organizational implications. The effects of authentic leadership were empirically tested on employees' OC and the effects of that OC on TI.

Keywords Turnover intention, Organizational commitment, Authentic leadership, Authentic leadership development

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Authentic leadership is defined as behavior that displays and encourages positive mental dimensions and a principled climate that cultivates self-awareness (SA), an internalized moral perspective (IMP), balanced processing of information (BPI), and relational transparency (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008). Authentic leadership research has conceptually and empirically evolved as a focus of interest that enriches studies on organizational commitment (OC) (Avolio *et al.*, 2004; Jensen and Luthans, 2006). Previous research also indicates authentic leadership is related to critical organizational outcomes, such as empowerment, job satisfaction, job performance, and overall profitability (Avolio, 2010; Clapp-Smith *et al.*, 2009; Giallonardo *et al.*, 2010; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008, 2010).

At the intersection of management and organizational theory, there is a plethora of research seeking to clarify the causal antecedents of OC (DeConinck and Bachmann, 1994; DeCotiis and Summers, 1987; Lok and Crawford 2001; Meyer *et al.*, 1998) underscoring the fact that favorable work experiences are powerful determinants of

commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Among those, some studies have tested the role of OC as a mediating variable on relationships between leadership behavior and job satisfaction/performance (Yousef, 2000), perceived organizational support and employee turnover (Rhoades *et al.*, 2001), and work motivation and job performance (Trivellas, 2011). However, there is a lack of studies that specifically examined the role of OC as a variable mediating the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention (TI) in a hospitality context.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore whether authentic leadership in hospitality is composed of four distinctive but related substantive components (i.e. SA, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral); the impact of authentic leadership on employees' OC; the impact of employees' OC on their TI; and the indirect effect of authentic leadership on employees' TI via OC. This research may prove beneficial to managers and industry leaders by providing insights regarding the impact that authentic leadership has on OC, and examining how these factors potentially reduce the costs of turnover. Although the recession of 2007 caused a slowdown in the rate of hospitality industry turnover, with less hiring and fewer promotions, the turnover rate is expected to increase rapidly as the economy begins to strengthen. Deloitte (2010) reports that the average hotelier spends 45 percent of operating expense and 33 percent of revenue on labor costs, coupled with an employee turnover rate of 31 percent. To compound the problem, employees with elevated levels of TI are apt to have low morale and low OC, deliver poor customer service, and undermine service recovery efforts (Alexandrov *et al.*, 2007). Because of the nature of guest contact hospitality work, employees are required to be upbeat, positive, and enthusiastic and are expected to maintain such social and interpersonal skills. Employees must be courteous and responsive in good and bad interactions with guests. The emotional labor and extra effort require of hospitality workers is unique and requires an effective leadership approach. To this point, Peus *et al.* (2012) found in employees working for a large government-funded research organization that authentic leaders inspired employee willingness to make an extra effort as well as higher levels of commitment while reducing TIs. Interestingly, only one study has conducted empirical research on authentic leadership in the hospitality context: with a sample of employees working in four and five star hotels in Istanbul, Yesiltas *et al.* (2013) found that authentic leadership had a significant effect on prosocial service behavior, customer-oriented prosocial service behavior, and coworker-oriented prosocial service behavior. The findings of this study contribute to this emerging leadership literature by providing a comprehensive theoretical framework, which can explain the relationships among the four components of AL, OC, and TI in a hospitality setting (see Figure 1).

Literature review
Theoretical foundations
The body of knowledge related to authentic leadership comes primarily from applied research (Gardner and Schermerhorn, 2004; George, 2007; George *et al.*, 2007) and academic management domains (Avolio *et al.*, 2004; Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Avolio and Luthans, 2006). An examination of literature over the past 30 years discloses the transformational leadership style to be most relevant to hospitality leaders (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Bass, 2000; Bennis, 2000; Tichy and Ulrich, 1984; Yammarino *et al.*, 1993). Although authentic leadership proposes to be an over-arching concept that includes transformational leadership, ethical leadership, and all positive forms of leadership (May *et al.*, 2003), very few hospitality studies have focussed on AL.
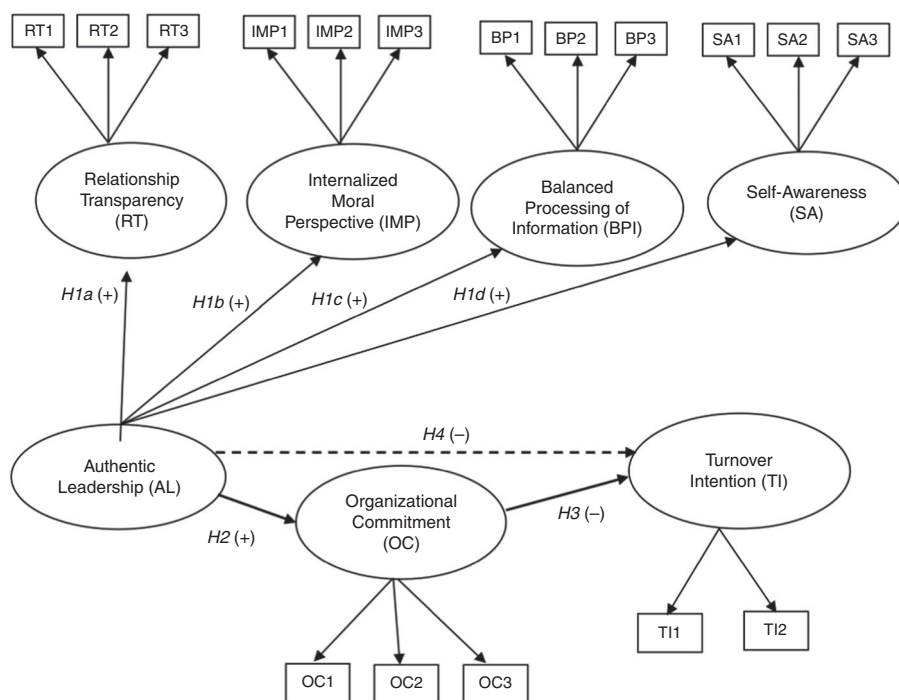
Note: The dotted line indicates the indirect effect of AL on TI via OC

Figure 1.
Hypothesized model

Walumbwa *et al.* (2008) described the conceptual overlap between the constructs of authentic leadership and transformational leadership by stating that both theories describe leaders as moral persons who exhibit honesty, integrity, and openness, and that authentic leadership and ethical leadership both describe leaders having idealized influence placing followers' needs over their own needs. Integrity continually tops the list of key characteristics of inquiry in hospitality studies that focussed on ethical behavior (Brownell and Stevens, 2008; Calvert *et al.*, 2008; Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003). Authentic leadership is at the heart of personal integrity and character, which not only influence leaders' decisions and actions but also have implications for their own well-being and the well-being of followers (Gavin *et al.*, 2003). Previous research has confirmed that authentic leadership and behavioral integrity predict similar measures of follower performance through similar theoretical mechanisms (Leroy *et al.*, 2012).

The authentic leadership construct developed by Walumbwa *et al.* (2007) was operationalized resulting in the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) measure. A review of the recent literature regarding authentic leadership has merged definitions and evolved the higher order factor of authentic leadership to consist of four second-order factors. These factors are SA, rational transparency, balanced processing, and IMP:

(1) SA represents knowledge of how one develops and makes sense of the world, and the way one assesses the self over time. SA also indicates having knowledge of strengths and limitations while developing consciousness of the impact that one has on other people (Kernis, 2003a).

(2) Relational transparency is displayed when exhibiting the true authentic self while avoiding fabricated or misleading displays of the self. Transparency in relationships facilitates trust and honesty in communication as true feelings and perspectives are shared openly and demonstrations of inappropriate emotions are minimized (Kernis, 2003b).

(3) Balanced processing is demonstrated when leaders accurately examine significant facts prior to arriving at a conclusion or decision, while simultaneously seeking opinions that defy the leader's profoundly assumptions (Gardner *et al.*, 2005).

(4) IMP refers to an internalized and integrated form of self- regulation (Ryan and Deci, 2003). Internal individualized ethical beliefs and principles, not organizational, team, and collective forces, directs this kind of self-regulation resulting in conduct that is consistent with internal morals (Gardner *et al.*, 2005).

The four authentic leadership dimensions described above have not received much attention in the hospitality literature. However, using authentic leadership as a second-order factor and these four dimensions as first-order factors has been employed in the psychological literature (Clapp-Smith *et al.*, 2009; Giallonardo *et al.*, 2010; Jensen and Luthans; 2006; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2010; Wong *et al.*, 2010) and has been hypothesized to be outcomes of authentic leadership in quantitative studies. Based on the previous findings, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1. The proposed view of authentic leadership in the hospitality industry is composed of four distinct but related substantive components: (a) relationship transparency (RT), (b) IMP, (c) BPI, and (d) SA.

The direct effect of authentic leadership on OC
For decades, OC has been a focus of both academia and practitioners as a way to increase employee retention and performance. Mowday *et al.* (1979) defined OC as the comparative strength of an individual's identification with and participation in a particular organization and characterized them by three factors. These three factors are: acceptance of the organization (affective); willingness to put extra effort for the organization (continuance); and desire to remain in the organization (normative) (Mowday *et al.*, 1982; Porter *et al.*, 1974; Steers, 1997). The distinction between affective and continuance commitment is that affective commitment denotes having an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization while continuance commitment signifies the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization. Normative commitment reflects a perceived obligation to remain in the organization. Affective commitment was selected for the present study because it has the most positive consequences on job performance and job satisfaction, in addition to being negatively correlated to turnover (Allen and Meyer, 2000).

In the present study, authentic leadership is expected to be an important driver of employee affective OC for two reasons. First, through SA managers can demonstrate an understanding of strengths and weaknesses gaining insights into the self through exposure to others and being cognizant of one's impact on other people (Kernis, 2003a). With clarity and understanding of one's capabilities, and with the willingness to self-declare capabilities, the manager will be less likely to engage in defensive behaviors and more likely to correct personal biases (Mazutis and Slawinski, 2008). Moreover, employees are more likely to increase their own SA when they see this characteristic in

their manager. Self-aware leaders encourage followers to identify with the core values of the collective organization that they represent and less with the leader themselves (Howell and Shamir, 2005). Second, transparency is a critical facet of authentic leadership stressing the importance of attending to the shared interests of the group, occasionally in direct conflict with individual self-interests (Avolio *et al.*, 2003a, b, 2004).

Although very little research has been done linking authentic leadership to OC, Avolio *et al.* (2004) did find direct effects of authentic leadership on follower work attitudes, including OC, job satisfaction, work meaningfulness, and engagement. In arguing for these direct effects, Avolio *et al.* (2004) postulate that: the BPI; transparency in relationships; and consistency between principles, words, and actions (i.e. IMP) displayed by authentic leaders contributes to higher levels of commitment, willingness to perform, and satisfaction with the supervisor among followers. Thus, authentic leaders will be somewhat transparent in expressing their true emotions and feelings to followers, while controlling such emotions to reduce displays of inappropriate or potentially destructive emotions that could reflect negatively on the organization. Based on prior research, this study proposes to test the following hypotheses:

H2. Authentic leadership has a significant positive effect on employees' OC (see Figure 1).

The direct effect of OC on TI
Scholars have determined that TI is a key element in the modeling of employee turnover behavior and that behavioral intentions are the single best predictor of turnover (Abrams *et al.*, 1998; Lee and Mowday, 1987; Michaels and Spector, 1982). Mobley *et al.* (1978) define TI as the integrated performance of not being satisfied with the work, the idea of leaving, the intention of looking for other work, and the possibility of finding other work. Researchers in the field of human resource development have explored turnover and TI in association with job satisfaction, OC, personality, aptitude, intelligence, governmental policies, and rates of unemployment (Sturman *et al.*, 2003). Empirical research on TI in the hospitality context has focussed on the relationship between TI and emotional exhaustion (Lv *et al.*, 2012), a chain of relationships between work-family balance, job anxiety, TIs, and voluntary turnover (Vanderpool and Way, 2013), and the relationship between organizational support and the TIs (Blomme *et al.*, 2010).

OC is one of the most critical issues in an organization because of its positive impact on employees' dedication, loyalty (Rhoades *et al.*, 2001), and negative effect on TI (Arnold and Feldman, 1982; Çakmak-Otluoğlu, 2012; Solinger *et al.*, 2008). In addition, commitment is a strong indicator of organizational effectiveness (Steers, 1977) and a better indicator of turnover than job satisfaction (Koch and Steers, 1978; Porter *et al.*, 1974), employee's performance (Mowday *et al.*, 1979), absenteeism (Steers, 1977), and citizenship (Somers, 1995). Since previous research has supported the negative relationship between OC and TI (DeConinck and Bachmann, 1994; DeCotiis and Summers, 1987; Joo and Park, 2010), this study expected a similar relationship between employees' OC and their TI in the hospitality context, which leads to the following hypothesis:

H3. Employees' OC has a negative effect on employees' TI (see Figure 1).

The indirect effect of authentic leadership on TI through OC
While the aforementioned studies have confirmed the significant relationship between TI and OC, previous studies have not yet investigated the role of OC in mediating the

relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intent. Simo *et al.* (2010) found a negative relationship between affective commitment and the intention to leave the organization, and most importantly, Wells and Peachey (2011) used job satisfaction as a mediating variable between leadership behavior and TI, recommending using OC as a mediator for the future research. Thus, we consider it necessary to test the indirect effect of authentic leadership on TI through OC. As a mediator, OC is expected to strengthen the ability of authentic leadership to reduce TI in the hospitality industry.

A mediator is often a cognitive, affective, physiological, motivational state which functions as an individual's psychological process (Hoyle and Robinson, 2003), which also indicates that affective OC is an appropriate construct to be included as a mediator in the hypothesized model. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

> *H4.* Authentic leadership has a negative indirect effect on employees' TI via employees' OC (see Figure 1).

Methods
Sample and data collection
Considering the target population of this study (hospitality employees), we collected data from 373 university students studying hospitality in the southwest region of the USA via an online survey design. Students were invited to participate by faculty members and by flyers posted in high-traffic student areas. There were neither paper surveys nor incentives offered for participation, and the participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of the study results. After cleaning 120 unusable responses, we concluded with a sample of 236 for data analysis. In particular, 69 participants were not employed in a hospitality company at the time of the survey, and 51 did not complete the entire questionnaire. Four items were included at the beginning of the survey to collect demographic information (i.e. gender, age, ethnicity, and working industry). Demographic variables were used in this study only to describe the sample. Participants were working in various areas in the hospitality context including hotel (25.4 percent), gaming (5.9 percent), restaurants (29.7 percent), and events (13.1 percent percent). Among participants, 39 percent were Asian, 39 percent were white, and 22 percent were others including black and multiple races. The gender ratio was 59 percent female to 41 percent male. The majority of the employees were between the ages of 19 and 29 years (89 percent) and worked in guest contact areas (89 percent). However, the respondents' tenure varied from less than one year (49 percent), one to two years (26 percent), two to five years (19 percent), and more than five years (6 percent).

Measurements of the study constructs
This study used the survey instruments validated in the aforementioned studies in the literature review section. A five-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all, 2 = once in a while, 3 = sometimes, 4 = fairly often, and 5 = frequently) was used to measure authentic leadership and a five-point Likert-type scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was used for measuring OC, and TI.

Authentic leadership. The 16-item ALQ, developed by Walumbwa *et al.* (2008), was used to measure authentic leadership behavior. The ALQ is a theory-driven leadership survey instrument designed to measure the factors conceptualized as encompassing authentic leadership. The participants were asked to rate the manager's leadership style and the frequency of their leadership behavior.

OC. OC was measured using six items developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) such as "I feel like part of the family at my organization," "I feel emotionally attached to this organization," and "I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization."

TI. Two items from DeConinck and Stilwell (2004) were adapted to measure employee's intent to leave their employer (e.g. "Within the next six months, I intend to search for another job").

Results

Structure equation modeling in EQS statistical Software was used to test the hypotheses of this study. As recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), the measurement model was assessed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) first. After examining the reliability, discriminant validity, and convergent validity of the model constructs, a second-order factor structure that contains two layers of latent constructs was conducted (Hair *et al.*, 2006) in which the higher order latent variable, AL, cause lower order latent variables RT, IMP, BPI, and SA. The hypothesized structural model was then tested and parameters were estimated. To test the model fit, several fit indexes were used. Hu and Bentler (1999) suggest a comparative fit index (CFI) value of 0.95 or higher and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.06 or less as indicators of adequate model fit. Generally, χ^2-to-df ratio less than 2, CFI value of 0.90 or higher, and RMSEA value at or below 0.08 demonstrate good model fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1989).

CFA

According to Hair *et al.* (2006), both overall model fit and criteria for construct validity must be tested. The initial measurement model provided a moderate fit to the data: χ^2 (183) = 474.44, χ^2/df = 2.59 $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.89, RMSEA = 0.082. The result showed that not all factor loadings were significantly high. For convergent validity, "all loadings should be at least 0.5" (Hair *et al.*, 2006, p. 808). Therefore, seven items which fell below the standard were removed from the model: two items linked to RT, one to IMP, one item to SA, and three items to OC. After this respecification, the result of the measurement model test showed a good fit to the data: χ^2 (101) = 158.602, χ^2/df = 1.57, $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.974, RMSEA = 0.049. All constructs showed satisfactory scale reliability since composite reliability of each construct exceeded the 0.7 thresholds recommended by Hair *et al.* (2006). The standardized factor loadings of the measurement model were all statistically significant and higher than 0.5, which indicates the validity of the constructs (see Table I). Convergent validity was also established (i.e. the latent factor is well explained by its observed variables) since all the indicators loaded on the proposed constructs significantly, and the average variance extracted (AVE) in Table II were above the recommended value of 0.5 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

	Direct effect (β)	Indirect effect (β)	Total effect (β)	Hypotheses
Effect of AL on organizational commitment	0.26*			*H2*: Supported
Effect of AL on turnover intention	−0.11	−0.09* (via OC)	−0.20*	*H4*: Supported
Effect of OC on TI	−0.35*			*H3*: Supported

Note: *$p < 0.05$

Table I.
Relationships among
AL, organizational
commitment, and
turnover intention

Factor	Indicator	Description	Standardized factor loading	Composite reliability
F1: Relationship transparency	RT1	My leader says exactly what he or she means	0.74*	0.81
	RT2	My leader admits mistakes when they are made	0.78*	
	RT3	My leader encourages everyone to speak their mind	0.77*	
F2: Internalized moral perspective	IMP1	My leader demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with actions	0.72*	0.78
	IMP2	My leader asks you to take positions that support your core values	0.81*	
	IMP3	My leader makes difficult decisions based on high standards of ethical conduct	0.66*	
F3: Balanced processing of information	BP1	My leader solicits views that challenge his or her deeply held positions	0.56*	0.77
	BP2	My leader analyzes relevant data before coming to a decision	0.76*	
	BP3	My leader listens carefully to different points of view before coming to conclusions	0.84*	
F4: Self-awareness	SA1	My Leader seeks feedback to improve interactions with others	0.80*	0.85
	SA2	My Leader knows when it is time to reevaluate his or her positions on important issues	0.77*	
	SA3	My Leader shows he or she understands how specific actions impact others	0.86*	
F5: Organizational commitment	OC1	I feel like part of the family at my organization	0.87*	0.86
	OC2	I feel emotionally attached to this organization	0.85*	
	OC3	I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	0.72*	
F6: Turnover intention	TI1	Within the next year, I intend to leave this profession	0.94*	0.85
	TI2	Within the next year, I rate the likelihood of searching for a job in a different profession as high	0.77*	

Note: $*p < 0.05$

Table II.
Measurement model

Strong discriminant validity was demonstrated (i.e. the latent factor is better explained by its own observed variables than other variables) for OC and TI as the squared correlations (0.14) between this pair of latent constructs were found to be less than the AVE (0.67) of each construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The same pattern was found between OC and each first-order factor and TI and each first-order factor. However, the discriminant validity among the four proposed first-order factors was deemed poor due to high correlations among them. As shown in Table III, the pattern and direction of the correlations among constructs of this study were as expected. For example, the four dimensions of the authentic leadership (i.e. RT, IMP, BPI, and SA) are highly correlated each other, and positively correlated with (OC) and negatively correlated with (TI).

Therefore, the results demonstrate that these four first-order factors are not independent. In the following section, we tested whether a single second-order factor (i.e. AL) accounts for this dependence.

Second-order factor analysis
The second-order factor model showed an excellent fit: χ^2 (109) = 164.864, χ^2/df = 1.55, $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.975, RMSEA = 0.047. Furthermore, significant positive relationships between first-and second-order factors exist, as evidenced by statistically significant standardized factor loadings: the loading of RT = 0.92, IMP = 0.92, BPI = 0.96, and SA = 0.95 ($p < 0.05$). Consequently, the four proposed first-order factors (RT, IMP, BPI, and SA) accurately represent the underlying concept of AL, supporting the first hypothesis that employees perceive authentic leadership as a combination of four components: RT, IMP, BPI, and SA.

Structural equation modeling
After identifying both a well-fitting measurement model and a second-order factor model, the relationships between all variables in the proposed model were tested using structural equation modeling. The result of maximum likelihood estimation shows an excellent model fit to the data: χ^2 (108) = 164.864, χ^2/df = 1.53, $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.974, RMSEA = 0.047. As shown in Table I and Figure 1, an examination of path estimates reveals that authentic leadership had a significant positive direct effect on employees' organization commitment ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.05$), supporting *H2*; employees' OC had a significant negative effect on their TI ($\beta = -0.35$, $p < 0.05$), supporting *H3*; and employees' authentic leadership had a significant negative indirect effect on their TI via OC ($\beta = -0.09$, $p < 0.05$), supporting *H4*. Since the indirect path from authentic leadership to TI was significant, and the direct effect of authentic leadership on TI was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.11$, $p > 0.05$), this demonstrates full mediation of the relationship between authentic leadership and TI by OC.

Discussion
The results of this study suggest a variety of significant theoretical contributions as well as critical leadership and organizational implications. This study was an attempt to understand and empirically test hypothesized effects of authentic leadership on employees' OC and the effects of that OC on TI. Our model proposes that the effect of authentic leadership on TI is mediated by OC.

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
F1: RT	*0.58*					
F2: IMP	0.89*	*0.54*				
F3: BPI	0.91*	0.90*	*0.53*			
F4: SA	0.91*	0.86*	0.92*	*0.66*		
F5: OC	0.27*	0.22*	0.23*	0.26*	*0.67*	
F6: TI	−0.19*	−0.22*	−0.13*	−0.19*	−0.37*	*0.85*

Note: The values in italics are the average variance extracted (AVE). *$p < 0.05$

Table III.
Correlation matrix
with AVE

H1

The proposed view of authentic leadership in the hospitality industry is composed of four distinct but related substantive components. *H1* is supported. The results provide evidence that the four factors (SA, balanced processing, relational transparency, and IMP) accurately represent the underlying concept of authentic leadership in the hospitality context. One explanation may involve the positive nature of authentic leadership aligning with the positive characteristics that leaders and organization attempt to create, such as high levels of employee engagement and exceptional customer satisfaction. It is plausible that the nature of the hospitality sector being relationship oriented may accurately make authentic leadership style an ideal style for this environment. That is, this type of leadership may inherently have a great deal to do with creating a good worker and customer relationship environment, which explains the accuracy of authentic leadership in hospitality contexts. While *H1* is supported in the present study, the proposed view of authentic leadership is based on a 16-items scale with four items removed due to low factor loading scores (i.e. insufficient convergent validity). Avolio *et al.* (2003a, b) also indicated measurement limitation related to contextual influences inherent in leadership research.

H2

Findings of this study indicate that a positive and significant relationship exists between authentic leadership and affective OC, supporting *H2*. Although there is very little empirical research linking authentic leadership and OC, consistent with Avolio *et al.* (2004), we found a positive association between authentic leadership and OC. An authentic leader's behavior is likely to increase the level of employees' commitment with positive residual effects. This study offers empirical evidence of a positive relationship between authentic leadership and OC in hospitality environments. First, authentic leaders seek out the perspectives of followers when considering issues related to work. They share information openly and honestly and are balanced in how they process information. Not only does this approach demonstrate transparency, but it also enable clarity regarding processes and objectives of the organization. Moreover, role modeling authentic leadership behavior works to encourage and inspire followers through principle-based behaviors that stimulate stronger commitment to organizational goals (Luthans and Avolio, 2003). Walumbwa *et al.* (2011) supported the notion that authentic leadership inspires commitment beyond expected levels of discretionary effort when they found a significant positive relation between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, authentic leadership is likely to increase employees' commitment to excellence and overall performance due to the collective mental models that are shared with the group (Yammarino *et al.*, 2008). Under an authentic leader, employees are more likely to cultivate a culture of collectivism resulting in an emphasis on excellence and the achievement of results.

H3

The third hypothesis was supported. As expected, this study confirmed that TI negatively correlates to OC. Lee *et al.* (2001) stated that the importance of OC is contingent on its relation to negative influences like TI. A lack of commitment has been shown to result in employee job search behavior, intention to leave, and turnover, all of which has been well documented in the literature. Although the model only included one of the three commitment scales, affective commitment, Stallworth (2003) supported the idea that affective commitment is the most important predictor of intention to leave.

Consistent with the aforementioned rational, organizational tactics intending to strengthen employees' attachment (e.g. shared cultures, clear career paths, long-term employee incentives) are apt to have positive effects on employees' psychological identification with the organization than on their more deeply rooted beliefs regarding the importance of the specific job (Sjöberg and Sverke, 2000).

H4
Authentic leadership had a significant negative indirect effect on employees' TI via OC, supporting *H4*. The indirect effect of authentic leadership on TI through OC supports Avolio *et al.*'s (2004) theoretical model. It furthers our understanding of different ways through which TI is influenced. These relationships were explained by the degree to which employees' had emotional attachment to the organization and the extent to which employees were not satisfied with the work. Given the direct and indirect influences of authentic leadership on OC, strategies aimed at increasing the authentic leadership of managers can be an effective approach to reducing the TI of employees.

Implications
Research implications
Previous research called for empirical studies of authentic leadership across various contexts (Yammarino *et al.*, 2008) and studies that measure the impact of authentic leadership on work attitudes (Leroy *et al.*, 2012). Additionally, Avolio (2007) contends that leadership research should seek to empirically test constructs in different contexts to measure the influence of leadership on followers. Thus, this study was set out to address their suggestions in two distinct ways. First, this is the first study which proposed and tested whether the four underlying factors of authentic leadership are valid in a hospitality context. Second, this study is the first study which empirically tested and validated the mediating effects of OC on the relationship between authentic leadership and TI. Recent studies involving mediating variables between authentic leadership and outcome variables only included trust, identification with supervisor, and empowerment. In particular, Clapp-Smith *et al.* (2009) found that trust partially mediated the relationship between authentic leadership and performance of employees working in retail clothing stores, and Walumbwa *et al.* (2010) found identification with supervisor and empowerment fully mediated the relationship between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior of employees. In sum, the theoretical contribution of this study is that it extends the leadership literature by empirically testing and validating the four underlying factors of authentic leadership in a new context (i.e. hospitality) as well as the relationships among authentic leadership, OC, and TI since such relationships have not been tested together in previous studies.

Practitioner implication
The findings in the present study are extremely useful to managers, human resource managers, and organizations as a whole. Practitioners looking to increase employee OC and decrease TI can do so by augmenting the authentic leadership qualities of managers. As the results from the current study suggest, OC is positively affected and TI negatively affected by AL.

SA. Research suggests that the best method for managers to improve their SA skill is by way of a 360-feedback process that provides them with anonymous feedback from their boss, peers, and subordinates (Rosti and Shipper, 1998). Thus, organizations

may want to have third party help with both obtaining and disseminating feedback in order to improve their authentic leadership through awareness of how others perceive them. Managers should possess a high degree of self-knowledge. They should: understand their own psychological strengths and emotional triggers; understand how their personality characteristics (such as gregariousness, need for approval, tendency to be judgmental, need for perfection, and control) affect their relationships with employees; know how family-of-origin, race, class, religion, and gender issues shape their attitudes; recognize their own feelings (frustration, vulnerability, elation, etc.) in "relaxed" and "stressful" employee interactions (Novack *et al.*, 1999).

Balanced processing. Managers should consider that reliance on hard data can subordinate soft, intangible data, such as social and emotional data, which should be considered in decision-making processes. Managers should be taught to look for opposing views when considering critical issues. By seeking out diverse opinions from people with different experiences and thought processes, managers will be better informed in their decision making. Constructive deliberation involving conflicting points of view will often result in highly creative third alternatives. Moreover, authentic managers will understand that they are biased in their processing of information.

Relational transparency. Relational transparency can be difficult to develop because ones motives are not always apparent. Because most managers desire to know, liked, and trusted, there is a chance that the fear of rejection could provoke managers into displaying inauthentic behavior. Managers should not withhold information, display behavior that is inconsistent with their words, and should not be averse to openly accepting and providing feedback. These behaviors tend to corrode transparency and reduce trust. Increased levels of trust have been found to result to higher levels of growth and sustainable performance (Gardner *et al.*, 2005; Nugent and Abolafia, 2006).

Internal moralized perspective. Internal moralized perspective lies at the intersection of self-regulation and moral perspective. Self-regulation is defined as behaviors that align with an individuals internal principles, values, and ethics, withstanding the external pressures from various organizational levels (Heatherton and Baumeister, 1991). Managers should seek to become more aware of their own moral shortcomings when pressured by these external forces then learn how to act consistent with their values and principles.

Limitations and future studies
There are some limitations of the present study. The first limitation of this research is convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a sampling method used to select a naturally occurring group within a population. It is possible that this convenience sampling influenced the sample profile as 75 percent of the respondents with less than two years or less of tenure. We expected such a relatively low tenure rate based on the US Bureau of Labor (2014) that reported the median years of employee tenure in the accommodation and food services industry was 2.1 years, the lowest of all industry categories in 2014. To more accurately represent the profile of target population, future studies should consider restating this proposed model by random sampling employees with large organizations or industry associations. Second, same-source participants from our study rated the antecedent, mediating, and outcome variables in our study. Same-source data can be a possible limitation since they present the chance that these results can be attributed to common-method variance (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Common-method bias can be abridged by implementing several preemptive strategies

(such as collecting data from different sources) (Lindell and Whitney 2001; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, future research should recruit subjects from different sources or at different periods of time to reexamine the relationships presented in the current study.

A third limitation concerns the generalizability of our findings. Participants were limited to hospitality employees working in the Southwest, USA. Future studies could assess the generalizability of our findings by drawing samples from individuals in other settings or cultures. The theoretical framework developed in this study should be tested in other cultures where being genuine to the self is of less significance or where word-deed misalignments are seen differently (Yougbaré, 2011). For example, the US culture is based on individualism, whereas China, Japan, and Korea are based on collectivism. In addition, the current study only measured one outcome variable. We encourage researchers to further investigate the validity of authentic leadership in hospitality contexts by adding other organizational outcome variables, such as customer satisfaction and employee engagement. Likewise, given the expected importance and notoriety of authentic leadership in organizations, future research is needed that identifies potential antecedents of AL, such as demographic variables, to aid in developing strategies to select and develop authentic leaders.

Lastly, seven items which fell below the standard were removed from the model for convergent validity: three items linked to authentic leadership dimensions and three items to OC. Since this is the first study which empirically tested four authentic leadership constructs and items to measure these constructs in a hospitality setting, this finding indicates that some authentic leadership items verified in other settings may not be suitable for a hospitality setting. Thus, we recommend future studies test all authentic leadership measurement items in different hospitality settings with more diverse samples to develop more generalizable and appropriate scales for this industry. Interestingly, all three OC items removed were negatively worded items. Wang *et al.* (2014) argued that "reverse recoding of negatively worded items might not be enough for them to function as positively worded items do (p. 1)" based on previous studies' findings such as respondents were more likely to agree with positively worded items but less likely to disagree with negatively worded items (Weems *et al.*, 2003); responding to negatively worded items usually required more processing time (Clark, 1976; Chessa and Holleman, 2007); and respondents reread the questions and response options of negatively worded items more frequently than positively worded ones (Kamoen *et al.*, 2011). Thus, we suggest future studies either exclude negatively worded OC measurement items or change these items into positively worded statements.

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