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## “Let’s be clear”: Exploring the Role of Transparency Within the Organization

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“Let’s be clear”: Exploring the role of transparency within the organization

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of Master of Arts in  
Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Mankato, Minnesota

April 2017

This thesis has been examined and approved by the following members of the student's committee on April 27<sup>th</sup> 2017

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## Introduction

In the wake of corporate scandals such as Enron and WorldCom, organizational transparency has received increasing attention in the media and socio-political discourse. Widespread commercial fraud has shaken the trust of employees and consumers alike. Transparency, or the lack thereof, is often cited as the underlying cause of this debacle (Edelman, 2007). The term transparency has now become commonplace across a broad range of disciplines (e.g. public relations, accounting, leadership, political science, and economics). While this cross-discipline interest serves to highlight the relevance of the construct, it hinders a consensual definition.

Despite the growing academic interest in transparency, the concept has largely evaded rigorous theoretical development. Most of the extant literature on transparency is little more than pop-psychology and derives its legitimacy from rudimentary assumptions about the human psyche (Llopis 2012; Smith & Tabibnia, 2012; Berggren & Bernshteyn, 2007). Take for example an excerpt from a 2012 Forbes article titled, *5 Powerful Things Happen When A Leader Is Transparent*. “Being transparent is a powerful thing, if you can trust yourself and be trusted by others. The reason most leaders are not transparent is because they believe they will be viewed as less authoritative; that the credentials they worked so hard to attain will lose their power, leverage and gravitas.” (Llopis, 2012, para. 3). Pop-management authors have appropriated the term and use it ad libitum in a variety of contexts (e.g. leadership, performance management, and financial reporting). The management and public relations literature abounds with articles on transparency. These authors extoll the virtues of the transparent organization and detail the many

benefits that accompany transparent business practice (O'Toole & Bennis, 2009; Boss, 2014; Hayward, 2015). Yet, these articles often lack both empirical support and conceptual clarity.

In an article prepared for the first Global Conference on Transparency, Michener and Bersch (2011) address the flippancy with which the term “transparency” is used. According to Michener and Bersch (2011), “Most scholars have chosen the path of least resistance, adopting stylized definitions of ‘transparency’ or assuming a ‘we know it when we see it’ attitude. People speak about things being ‘semi-transparent’ or ‘fully transparent,’ but it is not exactly clear what they mean.” (p. 1) These slipshod definitions of transparency serve to undermine any critical analysis of the construct. To rectify this conceptual ambiguity, Michener and Bersch offer a vocabulary that enables meaningful discussion of the construct. The authors propose that transparency be centered on two encompassing dimensions: “1) *visibility*, as in ‘light rendering an object entirely visible’ (e.g. transparent glass); and 2) *inferability*, as in something that is inferred with some degree of accuracy: ‘her anger was transparent.’” The authors opine that these two conditions must be met in order for something (e.g. business practices, financial reporting, consumer information) to be accurately labeled as “transparent.” (Michener & Bersch, 2011) For example, an organization may release pertinent information that is accurate; however, if it is not readily inferable it does not serve to enhance transparency.

Despite the efforts of many organizational scholars, there is still a lack of consensus regarding how transparency should be operationalized. In their 2014 study, Schnackenberg & Tomlinson (2016) listed 18 separate articles containing unique definitions of transparency. Some researchers assert that transparency is characterized by the participation in information exchange (Balkin, 1999) while others contend that transparency involves disclosure of objectives (Vorauer & Claude, 1998).

Borrowing from a broad range of academic and sociopolitical literature, Rawlins (2008a) provided an operational definition for the construct: “Transparency is the deliberate attempt to make available all legally releasable information—whether positive or negative in nature—in a manner that is accurate, timely, balanced, and unequivocal, for the purpose of enhancing the reasoning ability of publics and holding organizations accountable for their actions, policies and practices.” Using this definition of transparency, Rawlins (2008b) examined the relationship between organizational transparency and employee trust. The results of the Rawlins (2008b) study indicated that organizational transparency was significantly predictive of employee trust.

Pirson & Malhotra (2011) examined the relationship between transparency and organizational trust within stakeholders. This study was unique in that it provided a nuanced approach to analyzing the stakeholder-organization relationship. Stakeholders were classified along dimensions: *depth* of relationship (shallow or deep) and *locus* (internal or external). Results indicated that external stakeholders with shallow relationships to the organization (e.g. investors and customers) receive the least amount of first-hand information; consequently, they should have the highest need for transparency. While this hypothesis is consistent with stakeholder-trust theory, it was not supported empirically. Contrary to their hypothesis, transparency did not predict external stakeholder trust; however, transparency was shown to be predictive of trust for internal stakeholders with deep relationships (i.e. employees).

Berrgren & Bernshteyn (2007) examined how transparency drives company performance. The authors examined the role of transparency in contemporary organizations undergoing strategic change. Their observations are based on their collective experiences at SuccessFactors, a Silicon Valley human capital management software firm serving more than

1,000 organizations in 139 countries. Berrgren & Bernshteyn illustrate the changing needs of both employees and organizations. The concerns of employees today are much different than those of previous generations. In years past, there was a psychological contract between the employer and employee that tacitly guaranteed stable employment in return for loyalty to the organization. Moreover, there was a relative sense of predictability in the workplace and employees could expect the nature of their job and their organization to remain stable (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000). In sharp contrast, the workplace of today is dynamic and of employees are faced with frequent changes in job demands. Many companies undergo dramatic changes in strategy and structure in effort to stay competitive in the global market. These changes, in effect, serve to invalidate the psychological contract; yet, organizations require employees to play an active role in promoting strategic change. Employees are expected to be strategically aligned with their organizations; their behaviors must be in alignment with the organization's strategy (Gagnon, Jansen, & Michael, 2008). In order for this alignment to take place, organizations must disclose relevant information about company strategy. Berrgren & Bernshteyn (2007) maintain that transparency is critical for employees to be actively engaged in change behaviors.

### **Transparency and Organizational Outcomes**

While employees seek transparent leadership, organizations seek committed employees. Organizational commitment (OC) is a construct that has been studied since the 1960's (e.g. Becker, 1960; Brown, 1969). As summarized by Modway (1979), OC can be defined by an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. It is characterized by three factors: (1) a strong belief in and an acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. OC represents a valuable component of



organizational health (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Many organizations must contend with continuous changes such as corporate mergers, job redesign, and advances in technology. Organizational Commitment has been linked with change readiness and acceptance of change, factors that are vital to the success of any major organizational change (Iverson, 1996; Madsen, Miller, & John, 2005).

Because transparency and commitment are growing concerns at all levels of the organization, this study tests the relationship between transparency and OC. The analysis of how transparency affects individuals *within* the organization is a defining feature of this research. It is well established that individuals outside of the organization (e.g. consumers, investors, and government agencies) value transparent business practices (Edelman, 2007). However, the degree to which transparency influences individuals within the organization remains unclear. I propose that internal stakeholders' perceptions of transparency will influence their commitment to the organization. Companies who disclose valuable information to their employees will, in turn, have employees who are more committed to the organization.

*H1: Transparency will be positively related to OC*

### **Organizational Commitment and Supervisory Support**

“People leave managers, not companies” is an adage you will hear bandied about by many leadership coaches (Lipman, 2015). That is to say, an employee's relationship with his/her immediate supervisor has more influence on his/her work attitudes than his/her relationship with the organization as a whole. Indeed, there is credible research to support the claim that people join organizations but leave managers (Gallup, 2017). The supervisor-employee relationship has been shown to be predictive of a variety of employee outcomes such as engagement, turnover, and job satisfaction (Gallup, 2017). Accordingly, this study includes a measure of perceived

supervisory support (PSS). Perceived supervisory support is a form of workplace social support that can be found in General Social Support Theory (House, 1981; Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011). PSS (avoid starting sentences with acronyms) involves “tangible assistance (e.g., instrumental support) or general expressions of concern by the supervisor (e.g., emotional support) that is intended to enhance the well-being of the subordinate” (Kossek et al., 2011; p. 292). It is possible that employees who view their organizations as more transparent will view their supervisors as more supportive. This in turn might lead to an increased commitment to the organization.

*H2a: Transparency will be positively related to PSS*

*H2b: PSS will be positively related to OC*

### **Organizational Commitment, Role Stress, and Organizational Justice**

This study also explores the relationship between OC and two other well-established constructs: role stress and organizational justice. Role stress is comprised of *role ambiguity* and *role conflict* (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Role ambiguity occurs when an individual is uncertain of his/her work expectations or is unclear about how his/her performance will be evaluated (De Ruyter, Wetzels, & Feinberg, 2001). Role conflict occurs when an individual receives competing work demands. Role conflict and role ambiguity are likely to be exacerbated for employees who view their organizations as non-transparent. If an employee does not receive pertinent information from the organization, his/her work expectations might be ambiguous or even conflicting. As a result, employees experiencing higher levels of role stress are likely to be less committed to their organizations.

*H3a: Transparency will be negatively related to role stress*

*H3b: Role stress will be negatively related to employee OC*

Organizational justice is a construct comprised of several components: (a) distributive justice, (b) procedural justice and, (c) interactional justice (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Among organizational scholars, the concept of justice refers to an employee's perception of fairness or equity of organizational practices. Previous research indicates organizational justice is predictive of OC (Bakhshi, Kumar, & Rani, 2009). Employees who view their organizations as transparent are likely to perceive the organization as being more equitable. Consequently, higher levels of perceived justice should lead to higher levels of OC.

*H4a: Transparency will be positively related to organizational justice*

*H4b: Organizational justice will be positively related to OC*

### **Transparency and Strategic Change**

Kraut and Korman (1999) have summarized the many changes of the workplace within a helpful acronym aptly termed the "DELTA forces." These forces include: demographics, economics, legal & regulatory issues, technology, attitudes, and values. All of these change factors are operating on the world of work and organizations that fail to adapt are at risk of losing their competitive edge. In light of these DELTA forces, it is critical that organizations undergoing change have employees that are strategically aligned with their change initiatives. Many of the employees that drive these strategic changes have concerns that previous generations did not have, namely, organizational transparency.

Employees who feel that their organization is withholding information may be less accepting or understanding of change initiatives. In contrast, employees who view their organization as being transparent are likely to be more receptive of these changes. To test this

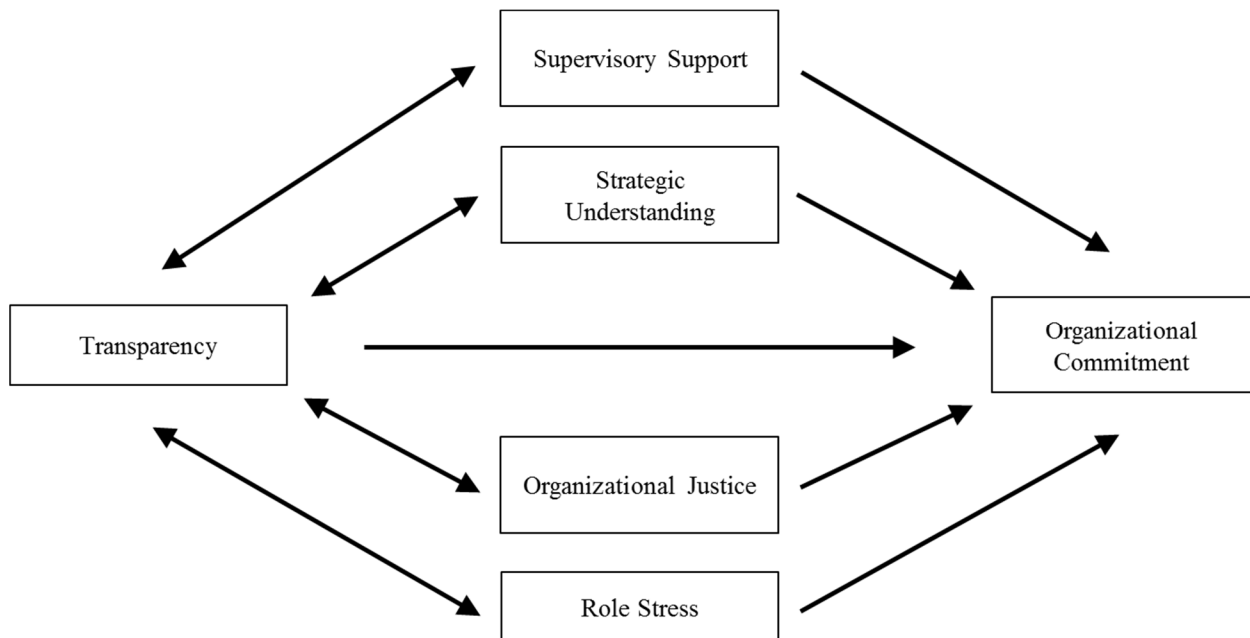
hypothesis, the study includes a measure of strategic understanding that assesses an employee’s knowledge and acceptance of a current change initiative. This change initiative, referred to as “The Strategic Plan,” involves several key changes in the host organization’s vision, mission, and goals. Accordingly, this measure was designed to capture employees’ attitudes towards these changes. Employees who report high levels of strategic understanding will likely report corresponding levels of OC. Additionally, a single item measure is included to assess employees’ perception of the primary goal of the change initiative.

*H5a: Transparency will be positively related to strategic understanding*

*H5b: Strategic understanding will be positively related to OC*

Given these research hypotheses, this study is an attempt to demonstrate the importance of transparency for individuals within the organization. Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesized relationships among the variables in the study.

Figure 1. *Model Summary*



## Method

### Data Collection

Archival data was collected from an organizational survey of a large public utility company. The dataset was comprised of survey results from 87 employees. Participant tenure was measured in years (0-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-15 years, and over 15 years) with the average participant in the 5-10-year range. Survey administration was conducted via in-person distribution and through online survey technology (Qualtrics). Participants were told they were completing a survey assessing their attitudes during strategic change. No identifying information was collected and participants were debriefed upon completion of the survey.

Due to concerns from the participating organization, the survey was kept under 50 items in the interest of time. Accordingly, certain scales were reduced to accommodate the time constraints placed on the survey. Despite scale reduction, each measure demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency ( $\alpha = .78$  to  $.9$ ). Furthermore, it has been shown that scale reduction can still yield psychometrically valid measures (Adams & Umbach, 2012; Betz, Hammond, & Multon, 2005; Stanton, Sinar, Balzer, & Smith, 2002).

### Measures

***Organizational Transparency.*** Transparency was measured using Rawlins' (2008b) subscale for Overall Transparency. This 4-item measure used a 5 point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). An example item from this scale is, "The organization provides information that is useful to people like me for making informed decisions."

***Organizational Commitment.*** A shortened version of Mowday's (1979) original scale was used to assess OC. The original measure contained 15 items; however, 5 items were omitted due to time constraints placed on the survey. The attenuated 10-item measure maintained its

psychometric properties and had an acceptable level of reliability. An example item from this scale is, “I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.” All items were scored on 7 point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Negatively phrased questions were reverse scored.

***Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS).*** PSS was measured using Swanberg, McKechnie, Ojha, & James (2011) scale. This 7-item measure used a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). An example item from this scale is, “My supervisor is supportive when I have a work problem.”

***Strategic Understanding.*** This 4-item measure was created to assess employee understanding of strategic change. Rather than measuring a single dimension of strategic change knowledge, this measure was designed to capture a wide range of attitudes towards current change initiatives. Items were scored on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = disagree, 4 = agree). An example item from this scale is, “It is unclear how the Strategic Plan will help this company become a better organization.” Negatively phrased questions, like this one, were reverse scored.

***Perception of Primary Strategic Goal.*** This single item measure was designed to assess employees’ perception of a current change initiative. The question, “What do you believe to be the primary goal of the strategic plan?” had 4 options. Three of these options were created based on employee interview data, the remaining option was based on information contained within a widely-disseminated company pamphlet. Answers were coded dichotomously (1 or 0), such that employees selected the answer derived from the pamphlet (1) or from the remaining three derived from synthesized employee opinion (0).

**Organizational Justice.** Organizational justice was measured using two subscales (procedural justice and interactional justice) from Cheng (2014). The procedural justice subscale contained 5 items. An example item from this scale is, “Employees are allowed to challenge or appeal job decisions made by the supervisor.” The interactional justice measure was reduced from 5 items to 3 items. An example item from this scale is, “My general manager very clearly explains any decision made about my job.” Both subscales were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

**Role Strain.** Role strain was measured using two subscales (role conflict and role ambiguity) derived from House, Schuler, & Levanoni (1983). Each subscale contained 3-items. An example item from the role ambiguity subscale is, “My work responsibilities are clearly defined.” An example item from the role conflict scale is, “I often have to deal with conflicting demands at work.” Both subscales were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree). Some items were reversed scored.

### Results

A preliminary correlation analysis was used to determine the relationships among the variables in the study. As Table 1 indicates, all relationships were significant and in the expected direction. Correlation coefficients ranged from  $r=.23$  to  $r=.67$ .

Table 1  
Correlation Matrix of Variables in Study

Measure	$\alpha$	1	2	3	4	5
1. Organizational Transparency	.86					
2. Supervisory Support	.87	.44**				
3. Strategic Understanding	.78	.63**	.42**			
4. Perception of Strategic Goal	-	.59**	.30*	.40**		
5. Role Stress	.85	-.41**	-.57**	-.36*	-.33*	
6. Organizational Justice	.9	.53**	.67**	.23*	.30*	-.51**
7. Organizational Commitment	.89	.60**	.47**	.49**	.49**	-.47**

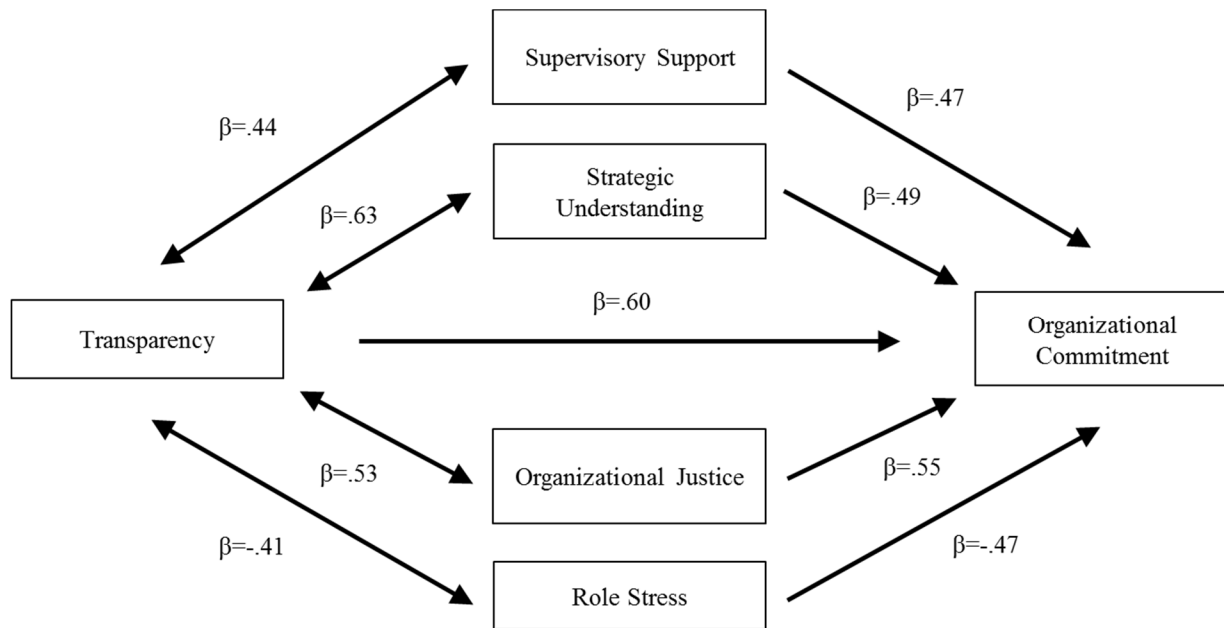
\* $p < .05$

\*\* $p < .001$

After the initial correlation analysis, linear regression was used to determine the predictive strength among variables. As Figure 2 illustrates, all relationships were significant and in the expected direction. Standardized beta coefficients ranged from  $\beta = -.47$  to  $\beta = .63$ .



Figure 2. Regression Model Summary



**Hypothesis 1.** To test the first hypothesis, an initial correlation analysis was used. Results indicated that transparency was significantly and positively related to OC ( $r = .55, p < .001$ ). To further explore this relationship, regression analysis was used to examine the predictive strength of transparency on OC. Results indicated that perceived transparency was a significant predictor of OC ( $R^2 = .36, F(1, 84) = 47.1, p < .001$ ). Accordingly, the data supports hypothesis 1, transparency is significantly and positively related to OC.

**Hypothesis 2.** To test the second hypothesis, correlation analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between transparency, PSS, and OC. Results indicated that transparency was positively correlated with PSS ( $r = .44, p < .001$ ) and role stress is positively correlated with OC ( $r = .47, p < .001$ ). To further explore these relationships, regression analysis was used to examine the predictive strength among variables. Results indicated that transparency predicted 19% of the variance in PSS scores ( $R^2 = .19, F(1, 84) = 19.9, p < .001$ ) and PSS predicts 22% of the variance in OC scores ( $R^2 = .22, F(1, 84) = 24.5, p <$

.001). Accordingly, the data supports hypothesis 2a and 2b; transparency is significantly and positively related to PSS, and PSS significantly and positively related to OC.

**Hypothesis 3.** To test the third hypothesis, correlation analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between transparency, role stress, and OC. Results indicated that transparency was negatively correlated with role stress ( $r = -.41, p < .001$ ) and role stress is negatively correlated with OC ( $r = -.47, p < .001$ ). To further explore these relationships, regression analysis was used to examine the predictive strength among variables. Results indicated that transparency predicts 17% of the variance in role stress scores ( $R^2 = .17, F(1, 84) = 17.6, p < .001$ ) and role stress predicts 22% of the variance in OC scores ( $R^2 = .22, F(1, 84) = 23.5, p < .001$ ). Accordingly, the data supports hypothesis 3a and 3b; transparency is significantly and negatively related to role stress, and role stress is significantly and negatively related to OC.

**Hypothesis 4.** To test the fourth hypothesis, correlation analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between transparency, organizational justice, and OC. Results indicate that transparency is positively correlated with organizational justice ( $r = .53, p < .001$ ) and organizational justice is positively correlated with OC ( $r = .55, p < .001$ ). To further explore these relationships, regression analysis was used to examine the predictive strength among variables. Results indicated that transparency predicts 28% of the variance in organizational justice scores ( $R^2 = .28, F(1, 84) = 32.9, p < .001$ ) and organizational justice predicts 31% of the variance in OC scores ( $R^2 = .31, F(1, 84) = 37.7, p < .001$ ). Accordingly, the data supports hypothesis 4a and 4b; transparency is significantly and positively related to organizational justice and organizational justice is significantly and positively related to OC.

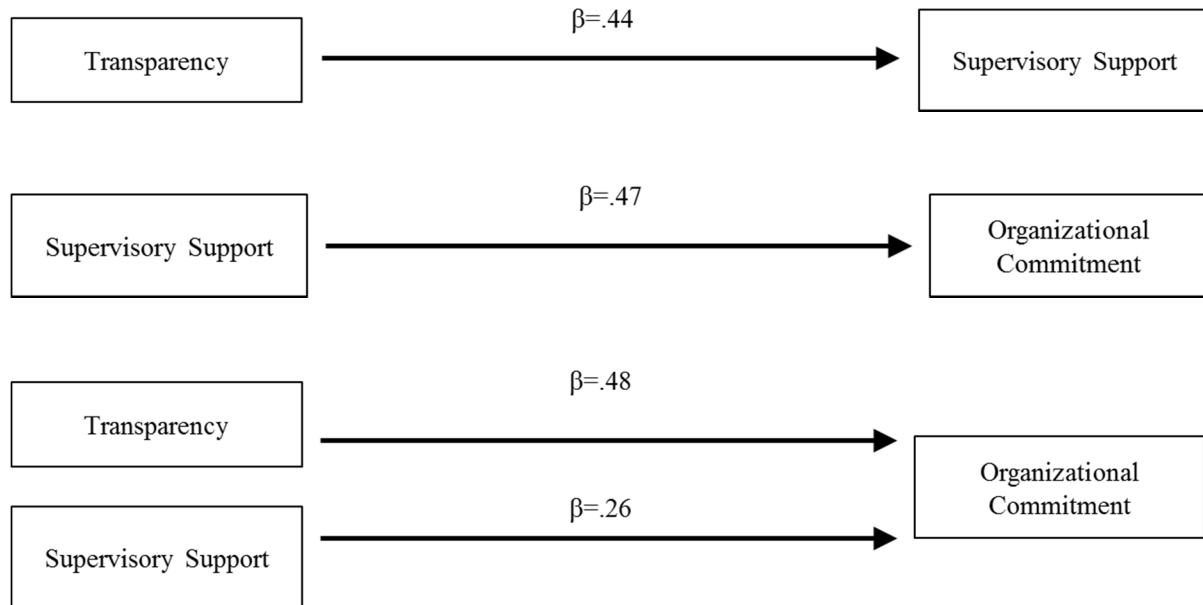
**Hypothesis 5.** To test the fifth hypothesis, correlation analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between transparency, strategic understanding, and OC. Results indicate that transparency is positively correlated with strategic understanding ( $r = .63, p < .001$ ) and strategic understanding is positively correlated with OC ( $r = .49, p < .001$ ). To further explore these relationships, regression analysis was used to examine the predictive strength among variables. Results indicated that transparency predicts 39% of the variance in strategic understanding scores ( $R^2 = .39, F(1, 84) = 55.3, p < .001$ ) and strategic understanding predicts 24% of the variance in OC ( $R^2 = .24, F(1, 84) = 26.2, p < .001$ ). Accordingly, the data supports hypothesis 5a and 5b; transparency is significantly and positively related to organizational justice and organizational justice is significantly and positively related to OC.

### **Mediation Analysis**

Mediation was tested using the method proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). Four separate mediation analyses were used to determine the relationship between organizational transparency and OC. As suggested by Baron & Kenny (1986), mediation can be tested by first testing the relationship between the independent variable and the mediator, then the mediator and the dependent variable, and finally, the independent variable and the dependent variable.

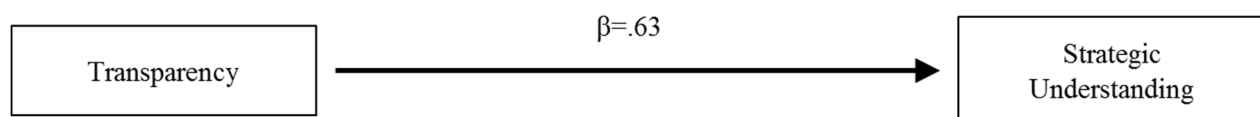
**Perceived Supervisory Support.** First, PSS was regressed on transparency and a significant relationship was found ( $\beta = .44, p < .001$ ). Next, OC was regressed on PSS, and again found a significant relationship ( $\beta = .47, p < .001$ ). Finally, OC was regressed on transparency which resulted in a significant relationship ( $\beta = .60, p < .001$ ); however, when PSS was added to the model, transparency remained significant ( $\beta = .48, p < .001$ ). Figure 3 illustrates the mediation analysis as described above.

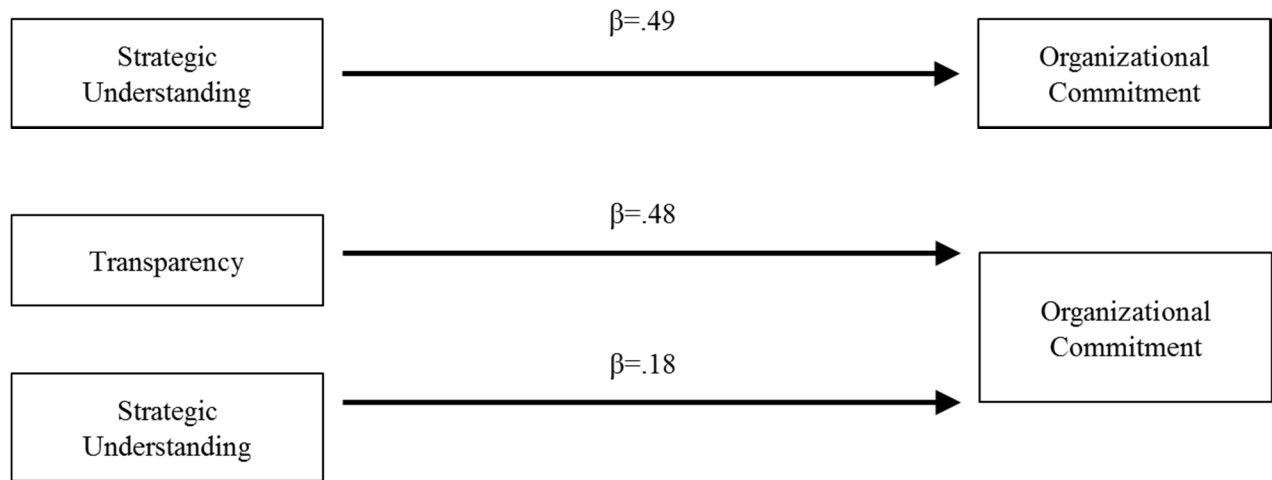
Figure 3. *Transparency, Supervisory Support, and Organizational Commitment Mediation analysis.*



**Strategic Understanding.** First, strategic understanding was regressed on transparency and a significant relationship was found ( $\beta = .63, p < .001$ ). Next, OC was regressed on strategic understanding and again found a significant relationship ( $\beta = .49, p < .001$ ). Finally, OC was regressed on transparency which resulted in a significant relationship ( $\beta = .60, p < .001$ ); however, when strategic understanding was added to the model it was no longer significant ( $\beta = .18, p < .104$ ); yet, transparency remained significant ( $\beta = .48, p < .001$ ). Figure 4 illustrates the mediation analysis as described above.

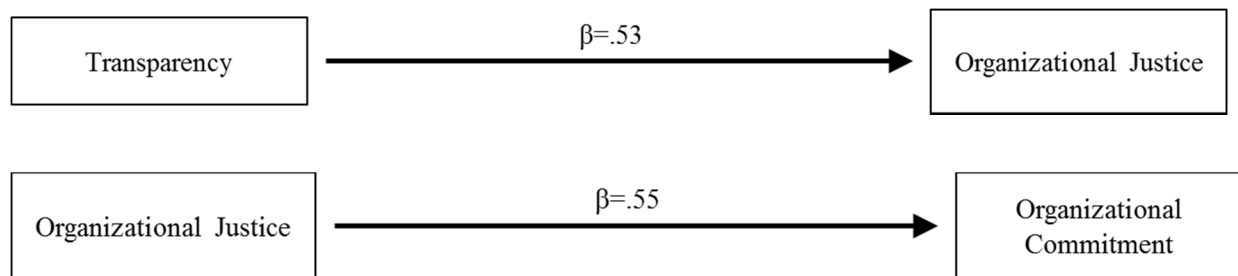
Figure 4. *Transparency, Strategic Understanding, and Organizational Commitment Mediation analysis.*

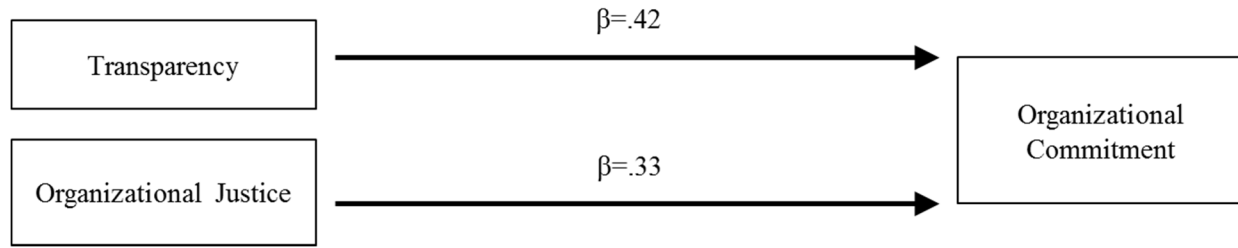




**Organizational Justice.** First, organizational justice was regressed on transparency and a significant relationship was found ( $\beta = .44, p < .001$ ). Next, OC was regressed on organizational justice and again found a significant relationship ( $\beta = .47, p < .001$ ). Finally, OC was regressed on transparency which resulted in a significant relationship ( $\beta = .60, p < .001$ ); however, when organizational justice was added to the model, transparency remained significant ( $\beta = .42, p < .001$ ). Figure 5 illustrates the mediation analysis as described above.

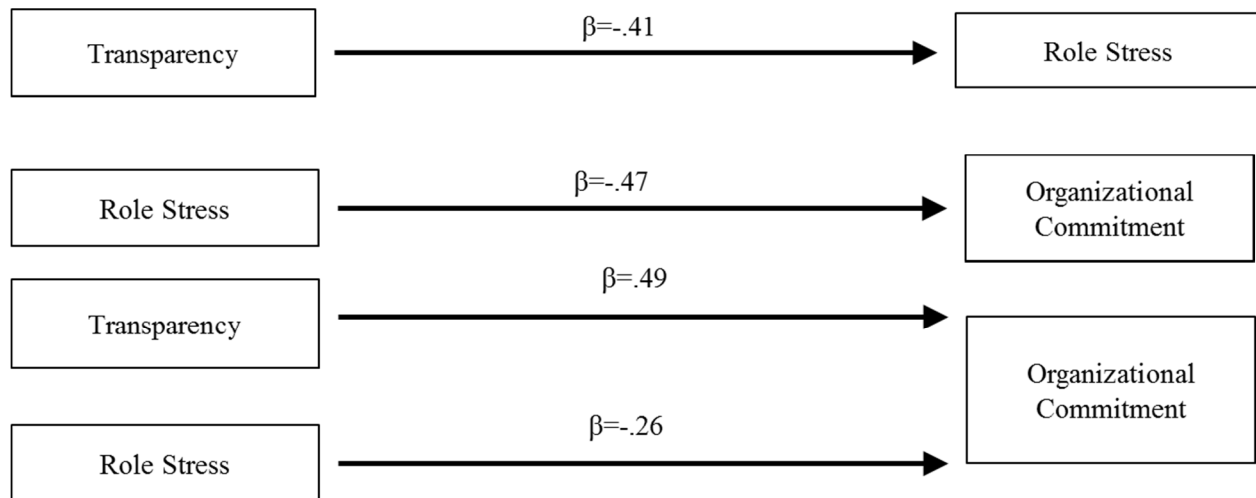
Figure 5. *Transparency, Organizational Justice, and Organizational Commitment Mediation analysis.*





**Role Stress.** First, role stress was regressed on transparency and a significant relationship was found ( $\beta = .44, p < .001$ ). Next, OC was regressed on role stress and again found a significant relationship ( $\beta = .47, p < .001$ ). Finally, OC was regressed on transparency which resulted in a significant relationship ( $\beta = .60, p < .001$ ); however, when role stress was added to the model, transparency remained significant ( $\beta = .49, p < .001$ ). Figure 6 illustrates the mediation analysis as described above.

Figure 6. *Transparency, Role Stress, and Organizational Commitment Mediation analysis.*



### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which the relationship between transparency and OC is mediated by several key variables (i.e. supervisory support, organizational justice, strategic understanding, and role stress). It is difficult to conceive of transparency as being directly linked to OC; therefore, it was hypothesized that the relationship between OC and transparency would be mediated by several additional variables. Overall, transparency was shown to be strongly related to all variables in the study. Consistent with the original hypotheses, there is evidence to support at least partial mediation of the study variables and transparency. However, the direct relationship between transparency and OC was shown to be stronger than that of the mediating variables. These findings serve to highlight the emerging importance of transparency for stakeholders within the organization.

It comes as a surprise that transparency was shown to be more predictive of OC than supervisory support. Given the amount of research linking the employee-supervisor relationship to outcomes such as commitment, it is unexpected that transparency would yield more predictive strength of commitment. Contrary to the initial hypotheses, strategic understanding did not mediate the relationship between transparency and OC. In fact, strategic understanding became non-significant once it was combined with transparency to predict OC. This may be due to the high degree of conceptual overlap and shared variance between the two constructs.

Despite evidence of mediation, the results of this study suggest that transparency is the single most important construct in predicting OC. Practitioners seeking to enhance commitment within their organizations might best direct their efforts towards enhancing transparency. Furthermore, higher levels of transparency appear to correspond to higher levels of perceived

supervisory support, organizational justice, strategic understanding, and lower levels of role stress.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The results of this study should be interpreted through the organizational context in which the data was gathered. During the time of data collection, the host organization was undergoing rapid and unprecedented change. It is possible that the relationship between transparency and OC is moderated during times of organizational change. The results of this study come from a comparatively limited sample size within a public utility. The direct effects of transparency may be stronger when analyzed from a larger sample. Additionally, some might assert that these results are unique to a blue collar-public sector context, and that the relationship between transparency and commitment may be less pronounced in a white collar- private sector environment. This may be due to the fact that tenure is typically higher in the public sector and employees may require more transparency in return for outcomes such job embeddedness and commitment. In contrast, private sector employees may not feel the need for high levels of transparency, particularly if they do not plan to stay with the organization.

Perhaps the largest limitation of this study is how transparency was operationalized. The measure contained within this study is an attenuated subscale of overall transparency. Future research on transparency and its effect on stakeholder relationships should incorporate a more comprehensive measure of transparency. However, this is no easy task given the multitude of definitions, dimensions, and operationalizations of the construct. Consequently, it is imperative that researchers work towards developing a cogent definition of transparency. Only then can organizational scholars begin to develop a meaningful framework for transparency, its antecedents, and organizational outcomes.



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## Appendix

Q1 My supervisor is supportive when I have a work problem.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q2 My supervisor really cares about the effect that work demands have on my personal and family life.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q3 I am recognized when I do good work.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q4 I am encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q5 I am allowed to make the decisions necessary to do my job well.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q6 I understand how my performance is evaluated.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q7 I feel valued as an employee of Organization X.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q8 I often receive conflicting requests from two or more people at work.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q9 I often have to meet the conflicting demands from various people at work.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q10 I often have to deal with conflicting demands at work.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q11 Job decisions are made by the supervisor in an unbiased manner.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q12 My supervisor makes sure that all employee concerns are heard before job decisions are made.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q13 My supervisor clarifies decisions and provides additional information when requested by employees.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q14 All job decisions are applied consistently across all affected employees.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q15 Employees are allowed to challenge or appeal job decisions made by the supervisor

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)



Q16 My work responsibilities are clearly defined.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q17 I know what my work responsibilities are.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q18 I know exactly what is expected of me at work

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q19 It is clear how the Strategic Plan affects my job.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q20 I do not understand the need for many of the changes happening at Organization X.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q21 It is unclear how the Strategic Plan will help Organization X become a better organization.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q22 I know how I can personally contribute to the Strategic Plan.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q23 When decisions are made about my job, the supervisor is sensitive to my personal needs.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q24 The supervisor discusses the implications of any decisions related to my job with me.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q25 My supervisor very clearly explains any decision made about my job.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Strongly disagree (4)

Q26 Organization X wants people like me to know what it is doing and why it is doing it.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat disagree (4)
- Strongly disagree (5)

Q27 Organization X wants to be accountable to people like me for its actions.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat disagree (4)
- Strongly disagree (5)

Q28 Organization X provides information that is useful to people like me for making informed decisions.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat disagree (4)
- Strongly disagree (5)

Q29 Organization X wants to understand how its decisions affect people like me.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Somewhat agree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat disagree (4)
- Strongly disagree (5)

Q30 I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q31 I feel very little loyalty to this organization.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q32 I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q33 I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q34 I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q35 I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q36 It wouldn't take much for me to leave this organization.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q37 There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q38 Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q39 Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Somewhat agree (3)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (5)
- Disagree (6)
- Strongly disagree (7)

Q40 What do you believe to be the primary goal of the Strategic Plan?

- To change the company's image (1)
- To increase the profits of executive leadership (2)
- To become an adaptable, sustainable, and accountable organization (3)
- The Strategic Plan has no clear goals (4)

Q41 How long have you worked for Organization X?

- 0-5 years (1)
- 5-10 years (2)
- 10-15 years (3)
- over 15 years (4)