IDENTIFYING INTERNAL PUBLICS:

A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF EMPLOYEE SEGMENTATION AND EMPLOYEE-ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract

This study explored Canadian employee preferences for leadership communication variables against employee demographic data across three sectors: health care, technology and finance. This research was undertaken to better understand the application of employee segmentation within organizations beyond function and hierarchy, and theorized as a needed and foundational competency of internal communication practitioners. The research, based on responses from 600 Canadian employees, further sought to explore the use of such segmentation in managing and strengthening employee-organization relationships as a basis of value delivered to the organization by the internal communication function. The data showed strong preference by respondents across all leadership communication variables, and statistically significant findings by demographics. There was no effect of sector in the data, an important finding with implication for both theory and practice. Based on existing theoretical findings, a new matrix model of measuring employee-organization relationships is proposed to assist practitioners in applying research insights to improve efficacy and quantifiable results of internal communication strategies.

Keywords: internal communication, segmentation, leadership, employee-organization relationship

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Organizations are struggling to effectively communicate and engage with their employees. What is meant by employee engagement is often ill defined and nebulous, and definition lacks agreement among either scholars or practitioners. For the purposes of this study, employee engagement is defined as the “active, fulfilling and work-related state of mind that includes a strong identification with the organization and self-expression (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2017 p. 526). Recent studies from the Conference Board of Canada (2016) have indicated that employee engagement in the Canada is as low as 27%, with senior leadership being the most influential factor. Further, according to the 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer, the credibility of the CEO has slipped 12 points from 37% to 25% in Canada between 2015 and 2016, while employees were shown to be the most trusted spokespeople and credible source of information for organizations (Edelman, 2017). The profound shift in employee-organizational relations cannot be understated as organizations from all sectors fight for top talent in a shifting and multi-generational workforce (Men, 2014). Also of importance is the growing trend of employee advocacy and activism with external stakeholders, which can benefit organizations when relationships with employees are strong, and hurt organization when relationships are poor (Ingram & Palli, 2017; Oreskovic, 2017; Green, 2017).

In addition to these factors, the confluence of new technology and upending of traditional authority have made it more important than ever for senior leaders to effectively communicate with employees (Edelman, 2017). Employees are increasingly empowered as a strategic public, and able to access and communicate directly with organizational stakeholders through both mediated and unmediated channels (Men & Stacks, 2012; Verčič & Verčič, 2013). In this context, employees become not only key brand ambassadors, but also an organization's unofficial spokespeople. For organizations that understand this dynamic, there lies the possibility of strategically informing employees, both for their own benefit, and so that they are informed to accurately speak on the organization's business. When organizations do not understand this changing dynamic, and fail to adequately engage their employees in symmetrical communication, the employee communication behaviours can cost the organization dearly (Kim & Rhee, 2011).

Numerous studies have highlighted the integral role that strategic leadership plays in influencing excellent internal public relations (Welsh & Jackson, 2007; Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam & Dick, 2009; Men, 2012, 2015). The impact of the quality of organization-employee relationships plays out every day in offices across the world, and its quality is largely dependent on the managerial style, authenticity, and organizational identification of the organization's top leaders. The standard hierarchical structure gives insight into the layers of organizational influence and social power, which is amplified the further down the hierarchy it goes. This is to say that positive or negative organizational identification of senior leaders, including the CEO, has been shown to have a corresponding positive or negative affect on their subordinates (Wieseke et. al, 2009). This then carries through the next level of the hierarchy, and so on down to front-line employees. The results of these finding make it evident that the broad and direct impact that leadership has on organizational communication and employee relations is of the utmost importance to organizational success and reputation.

This study examined 12 leadership communication variables outlined by Men and Stacks (2014) from the perspective of 600 Canadian employees across three sectors: health care, technology, and finance. The employee preference for the communication variables was then compared to their demographic data to determine any statistical significance by communication variable or sector. Through seeking a clearer understanding of use of segmentation practices within an employee population, this research sought to provide perspectives and tools for practitioners to be able to better develop and maintain strong employee-organization relationships.

Research Problem

Critical theorists, such as L'Etang (2005) have critiqued internal communication literature for its treatment of employees as a monolithic whole. Many scholars have identified internal communications as an important and developing area of public relations research (Berger, 2008; Verčič, Verčič & Sriramesh 2012). Stakeholder theory, which requires the consideration of the unique stake different groups or individuals hold within an organization, is an increasingly important approach to internal communication research (Verčič, Verčič & Sriramesh 2012).

Men and Stacks (2014) established the linkage between authentic leadership, symmetrical and transparent communication and employee-organizational relationships. In their work they identified 12 variables of leadership communication as antecedent factors that nurtures both symmetrical and transparent communication as well as organization-employee relations. These 12 attributes are: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, symmetrical communication, substantial information, participation, accountability, trust, control mutuality, commitment, and satisfaction.

The purpose of this study was to examine the 12 leadership communication variables outlined by Men and Stacks (2014) to determine how employee preference aligned to the variables, to what extent employee demographics were aligned with their leadership communication variable preferences, and finally to examine to what extent there were differences between the three sectors being examined: health care, technology, and finance.

Research Questions

In order to examine the 12 leadership communication variables against employee preference, demographics, and sector, this research study focused on the following three research questions:

RQ1: How and to what extent do employee preferences align to the 12 leadership communication variables outlined by Men and Stacks (2014)?

This question is foundational and aims to establish participant's preferences for the leadership communication variables so that they can be understood in the context of the studied population. As such, there is no hypothesis statement associated with it.

RQ2: How and to what extent do employee demographics align with their leadership communication variable preferences?

The purpose of this question is to examine the relationship of the results from RQ1 with the demographic and employment information to determine if there are patterns in the data. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Employee communication preferences will indicate unique groupings of demographics among employee populations.

RQ3: How and to what extent are there differences between the three sectors being examined: health care, technology and finance?

This final question builds on the data from previous two research questions to determine if there are any differences in employee preference or demographics across the three sectors being examined. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: There will be differences in employee preferences for the 12 leadership communication variables as well as employee demographics between the three sectors.

Literature Review

Strategic Internal Communications

Internal communications delivers strategic value to, and facilitates excellence in, organizations through developing, maintaining, monitoring and measuring employee-organization relationships. While the role of the internal communications function is focused on the creation and maintenance of relationships between an organization and its internal publics, the function has also been highlighted as having an activist role for internal publics that brings their voice to the attention of the organization (Ströh, 2008). Referred to as the "foundation of modern organizations" (Men, 2014b, p.256), many scholars have identified internal communications as an important and developing area of public relations research (Berger, 2008; Verčič, Verčič, & Sriramesh, 2012; Welch, 2012; Bowen & Men, 2016; Verčič & Vokič, 2017). Grunig (1992) noted that internal communications is a necessary condition for public relations excellence as outline in the *Excellence* study, writing, "[internal communications] is one of the most important contributors to organizational effectiveness – it helps organizations define their goals, values, and strategic constituencies" (p. 532). Grunig and Grunig (2011), further extrapolated that symmetrical internal communication must be built on the principles of employee empowerment and participation in decision-making, particularly in a participative organizational culture and an organic structure.

In various ways scholars have defined internal communications by its relationship to other organization functions, such as human resources, marketing, and strategic management (Verčič, et al., 2012). This is reinforced by the variety of terms used to refer to the internal communications function, including internal relations, employee communications, employee relations, internal public relations, and internal marketing (Kalla, 2005; Bowen & Men, 2016). Verčič, et al. (2012) highlighted that internal communication has been looked at through the lens of human resource literature as a management function (Jackson, Schuler, &

Jiang, 2014), while marketing scholars have highlighted employees as an internal customer to be reached through internal marketing (Vel, Shah, & Mathur, 2016). Many scholars have noted a stark lack of scholarly research on internal communications as a public relations function that facilitates relations with internal stakeholders (Welch, 2011; Ruck & Welch, 2012; Verčič, et al., 2012; Men, 2014b). Recently, an approach to merging internal communication into the broader communication function was highlighted by Neill (2015) and Neill and Jiang (2017), in which employees are held as a distinct stakeholder group served by one communication function.

Another approach to defining internal communications comes from Welch (2011), who highlighted the function's ability to effectively transfer organizational values to employees. This is in keeping with other scholarly work that highlighted the internal communication's role of mediating employee engagement, organizational culture, and organizational strategy (Welch & Jackson, 2007). One criticism of internal communications literature has been a focus on channel proliferation, use, information generation, and the acceptance of both by internal stakeholders. This is in contrast to focusing on quality content of relevance to internal stakeholders and their understanding of the communication of that content (Ruck & Welch, 2012; Jiang, Hu, Liu, & Lepak, 2017). An estimation from Ruck and Welch (2012) put employee understanding of organizational strategy around 60 per cent, which has important implications for both the success of an organization, as well as its effective management.

Segmenting Internal Stakeholders

Traditional marketing approaches to segmentation have been well documented, including geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioural segmentation (Kotler, Keller, Sivaramakrishnan & Cunningham, 2013). Such marketing practices are geared toward increasing the efficiency and efficacy of reaching consumers to increase profitability for an organization (Grewal, Levy, Persaud & Lichti, 2012). This is a significantly different approach than that of public relations, which seeks to identify unique groups in order to build strategic relationships between them and the organization (Grunig & Grunig, 2013)

The approach of differentiating organizational shareholders from stakeholders as any individual or group that is affected by, or affects, an organization as having a "stake" in the organization, is highlighted in many studies (Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, 1984; Kim, Ni, & Sha, 2008; Smith, 2012). James E. Gruing (1997) developed the first "deep" public relations theory surrounding the understanding of stakeholders' communication behaviours in the situational theory of publics. In the situational theory of publics, Grunig (2006) theorized a method for segmenting stakeholders of strategic value to an organization by three independent variables: *problem recognition, constraint recognition, and level of involvement*; and two dependent variables: *information seeking* and *processing* (Kim, Ni, & Sha, 2008; Sung, 2013). Through these variables, an organization is able to categorize stakeholders through their activity or passivity based on their information needs, in which active stakeholders are referred to as *publics* or *strategic publics* (Bowen & Men, 2016). This theory provided organizations a means of understanding why strategic publics communicate, and when they are most likely to do so (Aldoory & Sha, 2013; Sung, 2013).

This approach was later integrated into the IABC's *Excellence* study, in which researchers sought to provide a general normative theory of public relations that positioned the practice of public relations as a strategic management function (de Bussy, 2013, Dozier & Williams, 2013). The *Excellence* study further outlined the value of public relations routed in its ability to help an organization achieve its goals, scan the environment for strategic stakeholders, and communicate symmetrically with these stakeholders through long-term relationship building (Grunig, 2006). The development of the situational theory of publics and the *Excellence* study provided a rich strategic understanding of stakeholder segmentation grounded in organizational effectiveness. By seeking stakeholder support and resources through a mixed-motive model of communication, organizations are better able to achieve its goals (Kim, Ni, & Sha, 2008; Spicer, 2008).

Among organizational stakeholders, employees have been cited as the most important stakeholder due to their proximity to the most intimate operations of an organization, as well as employees' direct and indirect impact on other organizational stakeholders (Grunig, 1992; Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002; Kim & Rhee, 2011; Men, 2011). This is especially poignant when an organization finds itself in a time of crisis, and internal stakeholders have the ability to either help or hurt the organization, its reputation, or ability to recover from a crisis (Barnett & Pollock, 2014). In these situations, employees can embrace activist actions, such a whistleblowing, word of mouth, or engaging other stakeholders (Hagan, 2008). With the noted importance of internal stakeholders, the segmentation of internal publics has moved beyond traditional asymmetrical segmentation, which is to say vertical approaches that use organizational role and position as the key determinant of and internal public's communication needs (FitzPatrick & Valskov, 2014).

The application of the situational theory of publics to internal stakeholders is expounded by Bowen and Men (2016) to not only consider the unique communication needs as dictated by an employee's position within the organization, but also by an employee's demographic, psychographic, personality, and behavioural characteristics. Such segmentations may be further expressed through the categorization of internal stakeholders in relation to the three variables of the situational theory of publics framework as non-publics, latent publics, active publics, and finally activist publics (Bowen & Men, 2016). An alternative perspective on the application of the situational theory of publics to internal stakeholders comes from Ni (2007), who cites Grunig and Hunt (1984) that "internal publics can be created," particularly by management (p. 255). Of note, Ni (2007) highlights the relationship between the three variables of the situational theory of publics and the variety of employee experience: the range of tasks employees undertake highlights the diversity of *problems* experienced; employee levels of autonomy produce a range of *constraints*; while variance in employee positional authority produce variance in the level of *involvement*.

While the *Excellence* study originally posited two-way symmetrical communication as the ideal interaction between an organization and its stakeholders, additional refinements to the theory resulted in a mix-motive model (Grunig & White, 1992). This approach is particularly relevant when considering the communication and information needs of internal stakeholders, and the segmentation of those stakeholders to facilitate strong organizational relations (Men, 2014b). Ruck and Welch (2012) noted that research has primarily considered the communication between organizations and internal stakeholders from the perspective of management, rather than the needs of employees. Welch and Jackson (2007) built upon stakeholder theory research from Freeman (1984) to articulate a stakeholder approach to internal publics that emphasized the importance of considering communication from the employee perspective.

Organizational Leadership

The current reality for senior organizational leaders, and in particular the role of the CEO, is a constantly changing environment with largely empowered and informed stakeholder groups (Arthur Page Society, 2013). Referencing Mintzberg (1990) and Pettigrew (1985), Steyn (2008) highlights the evolution of leadership and approaches to strategy formation, and in particular emergent strategy's focus on the importance of people, politics, and the culture of organizations to strategy formation. Ströh (2008) takes this further stating that "strategic management should be more about facilitation than management, which means that corporate communication managers should be more concerned with the building of relationship with stakeholders through the facilitation of participation than with strategic planning and strategic management" (p. 251). Men and Stacks (2012) identify two distinct approaches to organizational leadership as transactional and transformational. Transactional leadership is authoritative, and is predicated on an exchange process that generally uses "organizational bureaucracy, policy, power, and authority to maintain control" (Men & Stacks, 2012, p. 174). Transformational leadership on the other hand motivates subordinates through providing a compelling and inspiring vision for the future that appeals to both ideals and morals, and has a focus on control mutuality, trust, compassion, and shared power (Men & Stacks, 2012; Men, 2014a; Men 2014b; Jiang & Men, 2015). Men (2014b) also notes the parallel between the transformational leadership model and Gruing's (2006) conceptualization of symmetrical communication in seeking to use communication to adjust thinking and behaviour, rather than as a tool to control or manipulate another individual or party.

The importance and impact of the CEO's leadership style on both employee satisfaction and communication behaviour cannot be understated, and is a compelling axis upon which both the effective and ethical use of internal communication within the organization hangs (Men, 2012; Men, 2014c; Schein & Schein, 2017). In particular, one of the antecedents of ethical internal communication is a dominant coalition that "lead by example in matters of open, honest communication, and should reinforce an organizational culture that values and rewards ethical behavior" (Bowen, 2008, p. 289). Further, the positive or negative identification with an organization by management of all levels has been shown to have a corresponding positive or negative affect on the identification of employees (Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam, & Dick, 2009). Perhaps more concerning for senior organizational leaders is the correlation between positive organizational identification, and the strength of financial performance by both business units and customer-facing employees (Wieseke, et al., 2009).

A recent study by Men (2015) showed that a responsive communication style by the CEO, which is to say a “warm, friendly, sincere, understanding, compassionate, listening, and interested communication style,” resulted in a positive perception of CEO communication quality among employees (p. 468). The study further highlighted that perceptions of quality CEO communications among employees were more likely to result in a higher level of employee trust, commitment, and satisfaction for the company, in addition to feelings of empowerment (Men, 2015). "In particular, organizations that share substantial information with employees, encourage employee participation, convey balanced information that hold them accountable, and open to employee scrutiny are more likely to gain employee trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality" (Men & Stacks, 2014, p. 316).

Employee Engagement

The prominence of employee engagement among practitioners has been growing exponentially in recent years, as senior leaders look for ways to address issues surrounding employee dissatisfaction and disenfranchisement from organizations (Ruck, Welsh, & Menara, in press). Despite the attention on employee engagement, the concept has been a topic of debate among scholars, including the definition of employee engagement, the drivers and antecedents of employee engagement, and outcomes of employee engagement (Shuck, 2011; Welch, 2011; Bailey, Madden, Alfes, & Fletcher, 2017; Ruck, et al., in press; Verčič & Vokić, in press).

There has been a lack of consensus on what is being described or discussed among scholars when it comes to employee engagement. Welch (2011) aptly notes in discussing the fundamental nature of engagement that many scholars have described engagement in terms of an attitude, psychological state, or personality trait, and that these have real consequences when considering communications. “Traits are relatively fixed, steady-state predisposed aspects of personality, while attitudes and psychological states are more fluid learned dispositions” (Welch, 2011, p. 335). Adding further complexity to the subject, many scholars have questioned the nature of the relationship between engagement and other important concepts, such as job satisfaction, psychological empowerment, and psychological contract (Wallard & Shuck, 2011; Menguc, Auh, Fisher, & Haddad, 2013, 2013; Baily, et al., 2017). Eldor and Vigoda-Gadot (2017) demonstrated employee engagement as a distinct paradigm from psychological empowerment and psychological contract, while concepts such as job satisfaction have been shown by Verčič and Vokirč (in press) to have cyclical relations with employee engagement.

The theoretical models upon which employee engagement is predicated are also coming under question, particularly surrounding their limitations in supporting or explaining the concept (Baily, et al., 2017). There have been two primary theoretical models used in discussing employee engagement. The first is job demands-resources (JD-R), which states that the stress levels and other work outcomes experienced by employees are affected by both the demands of their job and the physical and emotional resources available to them (Menguc, et al., 2013). In understanding it’s relationship to engagement, JD-R posits that the more personal and job-related resources a individual has, the more likely they are to be engaged (Baily, et al., 2017). Bargaglitti (2012) notes that the limitations of this model become clear when examining it in the light of behaviour and motivation of employees, such as nurses, who often face a deficit of job-related resources, high levels of stress, and yet are often very engaged in their work.

The second theoretical model used in research on employee engagement is social exchange theory, which highlights the role of reciprocity and compensation between mutually dependent parties, such as organizations and its employees (Blau, 1964; Kang & Sung, 2016). While this theoretical model can be useful, Batson (1990) highlights its limitations in understanding actions by either employees or organizations that are not oriented within self-interest. Kang and Sung (2016) also note that social exchange theory lacks clear conceptualization or path to operationalization from a human resource management perspective.

Baily, et al. (2017) undertook an extensive review of the literature on employee engagement, in which they identified six definitional grouping for the concept of engagement. Of the six, three were noted as having frequency in research and practice: personal role engagement, work task engagement, and multidimensional engagement. The concept of employee engagement first came to prominence in management literature through Kahn (1990) who published a theoretical model in which engagement is defined as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances (p. 694). In defining the other side of engagement, Kahn (1990) expressed disengagement as the physical, cognitive, or emotional withdrawal and/or defense by organization members during role performance. Baily et al. 2017) identified literature building from Kahn’s (1990) work as the first definitional grouping of personal role engagement. In his model, Kahn (1990) saw engagement as qualitative and fluctuating between states of engagement and disengagement. Baily, et al. (2017) note that the dominant definition of employee engagement has now moved away from Kahn’s (1990) social-psychological construct of personal role engagement, and toward work task engagement and multidimensional engagement.

The work task engagement definitional group outlined by Baily et al. (2017) highlighted the work of Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzáles-Romá, and Bakker (2002) in examining the relationship between burnout and engagement. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined engagement as a "positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). In contrast to Kahn (1990). Sachaufeli, et al. (2002) conceptualized employee engagement as a persistent and pervasive cognitive state that could be measured through quantitative means, including the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, which Baily et al. (2017) found to be the most common measure of employee engagement.

The third definitional grouping outlined by Baily et al. (2017) is the multidimensional engagement, which views engagement as a "distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioural components that are associated with individual role performance" (Saks, 2006, p. 602). This approach to engagement is developed through the social exchange theory model, and is inclusive of previous literature on engagement (Shuck, 2011). Where Saks (2006) distinguishes the multidimensional definition of engagement is with the assertion that there are states of engagement, including distinction between engagement with one's job, team, and/or organization.

Despite the lack of clarity around definition, there have been a number of studies conducted on the antecedents of employee engagement. Baily, et al. (2017) examined one hundred and fifty-five empirical studies that looked at antecedents of employee engagement. Among these studies, Baily, et al. (2017) found five groupings: personal psychological states, experience job-design-related factors, perceived leadership and management, individual perceptions of organization and team factors, and Organizational interventions or activities. Bowen and Men (2016) highlight both hard and soft organizational factors that drive employee engagement. Work conditions, job characteristics, pay and compensation are classified as "hard," while leadership, communication, and organizational culture are "soft". These are further integrated as antecedents of employee engagement within four categories:

work environment (job resource and characteristics), organizational leadership (CEO leadership, supervisory leadership), strategic internal communication (symmetrical communication system), transparent communication practice, communication channels), and organizational culture (Bowen & Men, 2016). Men (2017) further extrapolated the importance of emotional culture on employee-organization relationships, categorized as cultures of joy, love, fear, and sadness. Ruck and Welch (2012) shared that internal communication directly influences employee engagement, and Ruck and Trainor (2012) highlighted that organizations with effective employee communications were four times more likely to have high levels of employee engagement. Wollard and Shuck (2011) reviewed literature to arrive at a list of 21 *individual antecedents* to employee engagement (e.g., absorption, dedication, higher levels of corporate citizenship, etc.), and another 21 *organizational antecedents* to employee engagement (e.g., authentic corporate culture, clear expectations, job characteristics, etc.).

The outcomes of employee engagement are often framed as organizational outcomes and/or value added to the organization. In particular, studies show the affect of employee engagement on customer satisfaction, employee productivity, and organizational profitability (Welch, 2011; Wollard & Shuck, 2011; Menguc et al., 2013; Kang & Sung, 2016; Baily, et al., 2017). Additional organizational outcomes include employee behaviours, such as citizenship behaviour (Feather & Rauter, 2004), employee advocacy (Men, 2014b), task and job performance (Saks, 2006), and employee retention (Bowen & Men, 2016). Despite the importance of these organizational outcomes, there are equally important employee-centric outcomes that result from employee engagement. This includes employee attitudes, particularly as they relate to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived empowerment (Saks, 2006; Bowen & Men, 2016), and employee voice (Maymand, Abdollahi, & Elhami, 2017; Ruck, et al., in press; Verčič & Vokirč, in press).

Employee-Organization Relationships and Advocacy

The subject of employee-organization relationships have been identified as an important driver of organizational outcomes and success, and in particular as a core competency of the internal communication function as employee relations (Kang & Sung, 2016; Lee & Kim, 2017; Verčič & Vokirč, in press). Employee-organization relationships have been defined as "an overarching term to describe the relationship between the employee and the organization," that typically includes micro and macro levels of the relationship (Shore, Tetrick, Taylor, Coyle-Shapiro, Linden, McLean Park, & Van Dyne, 2004, p. 292; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Operationally, the employee-organization relationship has been defined by Men and Stacks (2014) using the relational outcomes outlines by Hon and Grunig (1999) as "the degree to which an organization and its employees trust one another, agree to who has the rightful power to influence, experience satisfaction with each other, and commit oneself to the other" (p. 307). While a prominent topic in human resource management literature, the theoretical constructs of employee-organization relationships have only recently begun to emerge in internal communication and public relations literature (Men & Stacks, 2013; 2014). Of particular note, is the positive effects that quality employee-organization relationships have on public advocacy, including employees communication behaviour (Rhee, 2008; Men & Tsai, 2014; Lee & Kim, 2017).

Expanding on Grunig's Situational Theory of Publics, Kim and Grunig's (2011) Situation Theory of Problem Solving (STOPS) highlights a new dependent variable: *communicative action in problem solving*; and four subvariables: *information forwarding*, *sharing*, *forefending*, and *permitting*. In the STOPS model, Kim and Grunig (2011) define problem recognition as "a perceptual state one experiences after the failure of preconscious problem solving" (p. 12).

Of particular relevance to employee-organization relationships and employee advocacy is the theoretical concepts developed from STOPS: *megaphoning*, *scouting*, and *micro-boundary spanning* (Kim & Rhee, 2011). Megaphoning occurs when employee-organization relationships are poor and employees actively seek out, share and/or forward negative information about the organization (Kim & Ni, 2013). On the other hand, scouting occurs when employee-organization relationships are good, and employees may volunteer to identify and share strategic opportunities and threats with the organization to assist it (Kim & Ni, 2013). Micro-boundary spanning behaviour by employees is defined by Kim and Ni (2013) as the "communicative bahaviors… between the organization and its various social, institutional constituencies as they seek, attend, forward, share forefend, and permit information related to their daily interests and operational routines in both task and societal environments" (p. 133).

Employee participation in positive micro-boundary spanning behaviour increases organizational effectiveness, particularly in uncertain operating environments (Kim & Ni, 2013). Kim and Rhee (2011) further articulate the strategic value of micro-boundary spanning through employee communication behaviour that "gain[s] supplementary or serendipitous information that is often more valuable than that brought by a formal procedure or function, and generate[s] healthy circulation of strategic information in their managerial process" (p. 262).

The strategic value of employee-organization relations is noted by many scholars (Kim & Grunig, 2011; Kim & Rhee, 2011; Kim & Ni, 2013; Men, 2014b). While the rapid advancement of technology is providing many new opportunities for organizations to facilitate employee micro-boundary spanning behaviour, it is predicated on strong employee-organization relations. Men (2014b) argued that symmetrical internal communication plays a vital role in developing quality employee-organization relationships that are necessary for employee advocacy, and further defined employee advocacy as “the voluntary promotion or defense of a company, its products, or its brands by an employee externally” (p. 262).

The empowerment of employees through transformational leadership style and responsive communication style positively impact employee-organizational relationships, and in turn has been shown to influence an employee’s advocacy behaviour on behalf of the organization (Men, 2014b). In particular, social-exchange theorists highlight the need for two-way feelings of trust between employees and organizations as an antecedent of commitment (Tonga, 2014). Citing Allen and Meyer (1990), Tonga (2014) outlines three forms of trust: *affective commitment* (emotional attachment to organization), *continuance commitment* (cost of leaving organization), and *normative commitment* (obligation to organization). Of the antecedents highlighted by Tonga (2014), nearly all of them are affected by both leadership and communication styles of organizational leaders. Stated another way, “employees who feel more connected to top management, empowered, and engaged by the organization… develop better relationship with the organization" (Men, 2015, p. 468).

A critical component of employee willingness to advocate on behalf of an organization is access to sufficient levels of information, particularly from the CEO or senior management, which employees interpret as a sign of respect (White, Vanc, & Stafford, 2010). The effect of information access was shown to trickle down from the CEO, and if effectively managed, could create a prominent competitive advantage for an organization in leveraging the goodwill of employees with external stakeholders (White, et al., 2010). This is particularly important during times of change or crisis, and management’s level of willingness to communicate with employees (Lies, 2012).

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership communication variables identified by Men and Stacks (2014) against participant preferences and demographics in a Canadian context, and across three sectors: health care, technology and finance. A quantitative research design was utilized to provide a cost-effective and efficient way of obtaining data from a large sample that allows for generalisations to be made to the larger Canadian population (Stacks, 2011). A survey of Canadian employees from three sectors was commissioned by the Ontario Medical Association in both English and French through a Canadian marketing research firm's current research panel of 400,000 participants to elicit equal response rates from each of the three sectors (Legerweb, 2017). Participation was controlled to ensure a representative sample against the Canadian population, for Canadian employees who were 18 years of age or old and employed full-time in one of the three sectors.

The data for this study was acquired from the Ontario Medical Association as secondary data, and therefore did not require approval through the McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB). Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2009) note that testing a web-based survey is one of the most important steps for a successful study, and so an initial pre-test of 25 panel members was completed between September 26 and September 28, 2017 to ensure the effectiveness of the survey tool. Once verified, the full sample (n=600) was collected between October 2, and October 17, 2017.

Measures

The survey comprised three sections: the first section collected basic demographic information (age, sex, sector, role, length of employment, etc.), while the second asked participants to rank three sets of 12 representative statements of the leadership communication variables identified by Men and Stacks (2014) from *very important* to *very unimportant*. Each of the three sets had one representative statement from each of the 12 leadership communication variables, which were randomized to minimize response bias from participants. The representative statements for *self-awareness*, *relational transparency*, *internalized moral perspective*, and *balanced processing* come from the Authentic Leadership Inventory (ALI) of Neider and Schriesheim (2011) — an equivalent measure to Walumbuwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wensing, & Paterson's (2008) Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (Men & Stacks, 2014). The representative statements for *symmetrical communication* were adapted by Men and Stacks (2014) from Dozier, Grunig & Grunig (1995), while the statements for *substantial information*, *participation*, and *accountability* were adapted by Men and Stacks (2014) from Rawlins' (2008, 2009) operationalization of organization transparency. Finally, the representative statements for *trust*, *control mutuality*, *commitment*, and *satisfaction*, were adapted by Men and Stacks (2014) from Hon and Grunig (1999). While some of the leadership communication variables had up to seven representative statements, the minimum was three, and so a decision was made to select three representative statements from each of the 12 leadership communication variable for a total of 36 representative statements (see *Appendix A* for a complete list of representative statements published by Men and Stacks, 2014). Each of the 36 representative statements was measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 very important to 2 very unimportant, with an option of 0 unsure.

The third section of the questionnaire collected a second set of demographic information, including level of education, number of children in the household, pre-tax household income, marital status, etc. The full questionnaire is provided in *Appendix B*.

Data reduction and analysis

A data scientist from the Ontario Medical Association conducted initial statistical analysis of the data. This included frequencies by demographic, sector, Likert scale, and Likert scale by sector as well as descriptive statistics, including mean, median and standard deviation. Additional tests, including non-parametric (NPAR) test, Dwass, Steel, Critchlow-Fligner (DSCF) test, Chi-Square test, and Chi-Square test by sector were conducted to highlight significant relationships and patterns between leadership communication variables, demographics, and sectors (O. Vasilyeva, personal communication, October 23, 2017). In addition, each of the three representative statements of the 12 leadership communication variables was grouped using mean, standard deviation and number to build an aggregate index of each of the 12 leadership communication variables to assist with analysis of agreement and consistency within the variable (Shoemaker, Tankard, & Lasorsa, 2004). Finally, chi-square tests were then conducted by sector to determine if there were any statistically significant relationships by demographic variable between sectors.

Results

The results of this study are based on secondary data obtained by the Ontario Medical Association from the completion of an online questionnaire in October 2017. The questionnaire was facilitated by a Canadian marketing research firm using its panel of 400,000 Canadian participants (Legerweb, 2017), and elicited 600 responses from three sectors: health care (n=201), technology (n=200), and finance (n=199). The questionnaire had a margin of error of +/- 4%, 19 times out of 20, and had 30% (n=178) of respondents completed it on a mobile device, compared to the 70% (n=422) who complete it on a personal computer.

Respondent Demographics:

Of the participants who completed the survey, 81% (n=483) accessed the English version, while 20% (n=117) accessed the French version. The percentage of male respondents was 53% (n=316) while female respondents was 47% (n=284) respondents. Age distribution was grouped into ranges, which can be seen in Table 1, the most prevalent being 25 to 34 years of age (32%; n=190). Geographically, respondent locations can be seen in Table 2, with the two largest samples coming from Ontario (41%; n=247) and Quebec (24%; n=144). Provincial responses were broken down into the following four groupings: Prairies (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba), Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland & Labrador). There were no responses from the three territories (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon). To further understand the areas in which respondents lived, they were asked whether they lived in an urban, suburban, or rural area. Among respondents, the majority (48%; n=288) live in urban, while 40% (n=241) live in suburban, and 12% (n=69) live in rural locations.

Table 1: Respondent Age Distribution

Respondent Age		
Categories	%	N
Full Sample		
Between 18 and 24	4	24
Between 25 and 34	32	190
Between 35 and 39	24	143
Between 40 and 44	25	147
Between 45 and 54	14	88
Between 55 and 64	1	8
Total	100%	592
Health Care	%	N
Between 18 and 24	5.0	10
Between 25 and 34	36.3	73
Between 35 and 39	21.4	43
Between 40 and 44	22.4	45
Between 45 and 54	13.9	28
Between 55 and 64	1.0	2
Total	100%	201
Technology	%	N
Between 18 and 24	4.0	8
Between 25 and 34	32.0	64
Between 35 and 39	29.5	59
Between 40 and 44	21.5	43
Between 45 and 54	12.5	25
Between 55 and 64	0.5	1
Total	100%	200
Finance	%	N
Between 18 and 24	3.0	6
Between 25 and 34	26.6	53
Between 35 and 39	20.6	41
Between 40 and 44	29.7	59
Between 45 and 54	17.6	35
Between 55 and 64	2.5	5
Total	100%	199

Table 2: Respondent Geographic Distribution

Geographic Regions		
Groupings	%	N
Prairies (AB, BC, MB, SK)	27	160
Ontario	41	247
Quebec	24	144
Atlantic (NB, NF, NS, PE)	8	49
Total	100%	600

The marital status of respondents skewed heavily to married (47.7%; n=286) (see Table 3), while the majority of respondents (60%; n=360) did not have children in the house, and of those that did, 22% (n=131) had children under the age of 12 (see Table 4). The distribution of pre-tax household income as of 2015 showed the majority (35%; n=210) of respondents in the $100,000 and more range, while the second largest group (19%; n=112) was in the $80,000 to $99,999 range (see Table 5).

Table 3: Respondent Relationship Status

Relationship Status		
Status	%	N
Single	22.0	132
Married	47.7	286
Common Law	19.8	119
Divorced	7.0	42
Widowed	0.7	4
Separated	2.3	14
I prefer not to say	0.5	3
Total	100%	600

Table 4: Respondent Children in Household

Children in the household		
Groupings	%	N
Yes: 12 years of age and older only	11	67
Yes: 12 years of age and older, and younger than 12 years old	6	35
Yes: Younger than 12 years old	22	131
No children in household	60	360
I prefer not to answer	1	7
Total	100%	600

Table 5: Respondent Income Distribution

Household Income as of 2015		
Ranges	%	N
Full Sample		
$19,999 or less	0.7	4
Between $20,000 and $39,999	7.0	42
Between $40,000 and $59,999	13.5	81
Between $60,000 and 79,999	16.8	101
Between $80,000 and $99,999	18.7	112
$100,000 or more	35.0	210
I prefer not to say	8.3	50
Total	100%	600
Health Care	%	N
$19,999 or less	1.5	3
Between $20,000 and $39,999	7.5	15
Between $40,000 and $59,999	16.9	34
Between $60,000 and 79,999	17.9	36
Between $80,000 and $99,999	18.4	37

$100,000 or more	30.3	61
I prefer not to say	7.5	15
Total	100%	201
Technology	%	N
$19,999 or less	0	0
Between $20,000 and $39,999	6.5	13
Between $40,000 and $59,999	11.5	23
Between $60,000 and 79,999	15.5	31
Between $80,000 and $99,999	21.0	42
$100,000 or more	37.5	75
I prefer not to say	8.0	16
Total	100%	200
Finance	%	N
$19,999 or less	0.5	1
Between $20,000 and $39,999	7.0	14
Between $40,000 and $59,999	12.1	24
Between $60,000 and 89,999	17.1	34
Between $80,000 and $99,999	16.6	33
$100,000 or more	37.2	74
I prefer not to say	9.5	19
Total	100%	199

Respondent Employment Characteristics:

Respondents to the questionnaire were evenly distributed between the three sectors being looked at: health care, technology and finance. The breakdown of job role within those three sectors is shown in Table 6. To better understand the nature of employment, respondents were asked whether their work environment was unionized (33%; n=197) or not (67%; n=403), as well as how long they have worked at their current place of employment, which is shown in Table 7. Respondents were also asked what the highest level of education they had completed was, with the majority (39%; n=236) having completed a university bachelors degree, and the next largest group (31%; n=183) having completed a college diploma (see Table 8).

Table 6: Employee Role by Sector

Variables	%	N
Health Care		
Administration	17.4	35
Communication	2.0	4
Consultant	1.0	2
Finance	0.5	1

	%	N
Health-Care Professional	62.7	126
Health policy	0.5	1
Human Resources	-	0
Legal	-	0
Technology	4.5	9
Other	11.4	23
Total	100%	201
Technology	%	N
Administration	7.0	14
Administrator	5.0	10
Analyst	13.0	26
Consultant	8.5	17
Customer Service	5.0	10
Designer	3.0	6
Developer	13.5	27
Engineer	10.0	20
Finance	2.5	5
Human Resources	1.0	2
Programmer	8.5	17
Specialist	7.5	15
Support	8.5	17
Other	7.0	14
Total	100%	200
Finance	%	N
Accountant	14.1	28
Administration	19.1	38
Advisor	6.0	12
Banker	17.6	35
Consultant	5.5	11
Customer Service	6.0	12
Economist	1.0	2
Human Resources	1.5	3
Insurance	9.6	19
Professional	9.1	18
Technology	4.0	8
Other	6.5	13
Total	100%	199

Table 7: Length of Service with Current Employer

Variables	%	N
Full Sample		
Less than a year	11	66
One to two years	10	61
Three to five years	22	133
Six to 10 years	21	128
11 to 15 years	14	86
16 to 20 years	7	43
21 to 25 years	6	33
26 to 30 years	4	22
More than 30 years	5	28

Total	100%	600
Health Care	%	N
Less than a year	10.0	20
One to two years	8.0	16
Three to five years	28.4	57
Six to 10 years	21.4	43
11 to 15 years	11.9	24
16 to 20 years	6.5	13
21 to 25 years	4.0	8
26 to 30 years	5.5	11
More than 30 years	4.5	9
Total	100%	201
Technology	%	N
Less than a year	11.0	22
One to two years	10.0	20
Three to five years	20.5	41
Six to 10 years	19.5	39
11 to 15 years	18.0	36
16 to 20 years	8.0	16
21 to 25 years	6.5	13
26 to 30 years	2.0	4
More than 30 years	4.5	9
Total	100%	200
Finance	%	N
Less than a year	12.1	24
One to two years	12.6	25
Three to five years	17.6	35
Six to 10 years	23.1	46
11 to 15 years	13.1	26
16 to 20 years	7.0	14
21 to 25 years	6.0	12
26 to 30 years	3.5	7
More than 30 years	5.0	10
Total	100%	199

Table 8: Respondent Level of Education

Variables	%	N
Full Sample		
High school, general or vocational	8	45
College	31	183
University certificates & diplomas	8	45
University bachelor	39	236
University Master's Degree	12	71
University Doctorate (PhD)	3	17
I prefer not to answer	1	3
Total	100%	600
Health Care	%	N
High school, general or vocational	8.5	17
College	32.8	66
University certificates & diplomas	9.9	20

University bachelor	29.9	60
University Master's Degree	12.9	26
University Doctorate (PhD)	5.5	11
I prefer not to answer	0.5	1
Total	100%	201
Technology	%	N
High school, general or vocational	5.0	10
College	31.0	62
University certificates & diplomas	4.5	9
University bachelor	42.0	84
University Master's Degree	14.0	28
University Doctorate (PhD)	2.5	5
I prefer not to answer	1.0	2
Total	100%	200
Finance	%	N
High school, general or vocational	9.1	18
College	27.6	55
University certificates & diplomas	8.0	16
University bachelor	46.2	92
University Master's Degree	8.5	17
University Doctorate (PhD)	0.6	1
I prefer not to answer	0	0
Total	100%	199

Finally, respondents were asked to rank their level of engagement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 very engaged to 1 very unengaged based on the provided definition of engagement as *an active feeling of fulfillment with work, including strong identification with an employer* (Baily et al., 2017; Saks, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2002). The majority of respondents (43%; n =257) reported being engaged, while 22% (n=134) reported being very engaged, and 17% (n=102) reported being either unengaged or very unengaged. A full breakdown by sector is available in Table 9.

Table 9: Respondent Level of Engagement

Variables	%	N
Full Sample		
Very Unengaged	7	41
Unengaged	10	61
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	17	101
Engaged	43	257
Very Engaged	22	134
Unsure	1	67
Total	100%	600
Health Care	%	N

Very Unengaged	6.5	13
Unengaged	9.4	19
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	16.9	34
Engaged	45.8	92
Very Engaged	20.9	42
Unsure	0.5	1
Total	100%	201
Technology	%	N
Very Unengaged	7.5	15
Unengaged	11.5	23
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	22.0	44
Engaged	35.5	71
Very Engaged	22.5	45
Unsure	1	2
Total	100%	200
Full Sample	%	N
Very Unengaged	6.5	13
Unengaged	9.6	19
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	11.6	23
Engaged	47.2	94
Very Engaged	23.6	47
Unsure	1.5	3
Total	100%	199

Leadership Communication Index:

Three representative statements were used to measure each of the 12 leadership communication variables, as tested by Men and Stacks (2014). For each of the 12 leadership communication variables, the three statements were collapsed into a single index for that variable. This index is show in Table 10.

Table 10: Leadership Communication Index

Accountability

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Presents more than one side of controversial issues.	4.08	0.91	590
Open to criticism by people like me.	4.04	0.93	589
Freely admits when it has made mistakes.	4.15	0.92	593
Accountability Index	4.13	0.86	594

Balanced Processing

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N

Carefully listens to alternative perspectives before reaching a conclusion.	4.28	0.93	594
Objectively analyzes relevant data before making a decision.	4.28	0.87	596
Encourages others to voice opposing points of view.	4.06	0.93	590
Balanced Processing Index	4.26	0.84	598

Commitment

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Tries to maintain a long-term commitment to me.	4.17	0.93	589
Wants to maintain a relationship with me.	4.01	0.97	594
Makes me value my relationship with my employer.	4.07	0.94	591
Commitment Index	4.31	0.85	597

Control Mutuality

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Believes my opinions are legitimate.	4.33	0.89	593
Really listens to what I have to say.	4.36	0.90	595
Gives me enough say in the decision-making process.	4.04	0.93	597
Control Mutuality Index	4.31	0.85	597

Internalized Moral Perspective

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Shows consistency between his/her words and actions.	4.43	0.93	594
Uses his/her core beliefs to make decisions.	3.87	0.98	589
Is guided in his/her actions by internal moral standards	4.02	0.95	588
Internalized Moral Perspective Index	4.10	0.89	596

Participative

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Asks for feedback from people like me about the quality of information.	4.13	0.95	590

Involves people like me to help identify the information I need.	4.15	0.89	595
Takes time with people like me to understand who I am and what I need.	4.05	0.94	595
Participative Index	4.17	0.85	598

Relational Transparency

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Clearly states what s/he means.	4.38	0.90	594
Openly shares information with others.	4.12	0.94	594
Expresses his/her ideas and thoughts clearly to others.	4.19	0.97	594
Relational Transparency Index	4.27	0.85	597

Satisfaction

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Makes me happy with this company.	4.11	0.97	594
Fosters a mutual benefit between me and my employer.	4.15	0.88	592
Creates an environment in which I am please with the relationship between my employer and myself.	4.17	0.88	594
Satisfaction Index	4.20	0.86	596

Self-Awareness

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Is able to accurately describe his/her own abilities.	3.98	0.94	590
Understands his/her own strengths and weaknesses.	4.12	0.89	590
Clearly aware of the impact s/he has on others.	4.12	0.91	594
Self-Awareness Index	4.20	0.86	596

Substantial

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Provides information in a timely fashion to people like me.	4.32	0.90	594

Provides information that is relevant to people like me.	4.25	0.85	596
Provides information that is complete.	4.27	0.86	597
Substantial Index	4.23	0.88	597

Symmetrical Communication

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Communicates to be responsive to problems of other employees.	4.16	0.92	587
Makes me comfortable to talk to him/her when things are going wrong.	4.30	0.87	595
Keeps me informed about major changes in policy that affect my job before they take place.	4.32	0.89	595
Symmetrical Communication Index	4.30	0.84	598

Trust

Representative Statements	M	Std.	N
Will be concerned about me when making important decisions.	4.07	0.997	593
Can be relied on to keep his/her promises.	4.44	0.88	595
Takes my opinions into account when making decisions.	4.12	0.88	596
Trust Index	4.23	0.88	596

Note: Responses were coded: 5 = very important, 4 = important, 3 = neither unimportant nor important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

Leadership Communication Variables by Demographics:

A number of statistical models were used to evaluate the 12 leadership communication variables along with demographic variables. Non-parametric (NPAR) tests were used to determine whether the median/mean of responses to the communication variables are equal or not equal for each level of demographic variable. Similarly, pair-wise non-parametric (DSCF) tests were conducted to determine if the leadership communication variables are equal or not equal for every two levels of each demographic variable. Finally, Chi square tests were conducted to determine the relationships between demographic variables and each of the 12 leadership communication variables (O. Vasilyeva, personal communication, October 23, 2017).

Of the variables looked at in this study, participant demographics had the most statistical significance to the 12 leadership communication variables. In looking at the data, the leadership communication variables have been grouped within the original categories proposed by Men and Stacks (2014) of *authentic leadership* (self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing), *transparent communication* (participative, substantial information, accountable), *symmetrical communication*, and *employee-organization relationship* (trust, control mutuality, commitment, and satisfaction).

Authentic leadership

The variable of *self-awareness* shows significance among female respondents, and less prominence among respondents with children under 18 year, and less prominence among respondents from Quebec, P.E.I. and New Brunswick (see Table 11). *Relational transparency* was also stronger among female respondents, but was strongest among those with children under 18 years, very engaged respondents, urban respondents, and was less strong among respondents with a doctoral level of education (see Table 12). The variable of *internalized moral perspective* was strongest among three demographic lines: sex (female), engagement (very engaged), and respondents with an income of $100,000 or more (see Table 13). The final variable of *balanced processing* was strong along similar lines, with high levels of engagement, female respondents, and a low significance for respondents making $19,999 or less in pre-tax annual income (see Table 14).

Table 11: Self-Awareness Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Sex				0.001
Male	3.99	4	0.81	
Female	4.20	4	0.86	
Children				0.044
Yes: 12 yr. and older	4.01	4	0.75	
Yes: 12 yr. and younger	4.11	4	0.74	
Yes: both older and younger than 12 yr.	3.71	4	1.07	
No children under 18 yr.	4.13	4	0.87	
Province				0.022
British Columbia	4.14	4	0.75	
Alberta	4.19	4	0.84	
Saskatchewan	4.17	4	0.94	
Manitoba	4.39	5	0.70	
Ontario	4.16	4	0.79	
Quebec	3.89	4	0.90	
Newfoundland & Labrador	4.10	4	0.57	
New Brunswick	3.85	4	1.07	
Nova Scotia	4.33	5	0.97	
P.E.I.	3.63	4	1.30	

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P****
Language				0.014
English	4.14	4	0.83	
French	3.89	4	0.86	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats ***P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 12: Relational Transparency Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.014
Very Unengaged	3.98	4	1.11	
Unengaged	4.07	4	0.96	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	3.96	4	0.92	
Engaged	4.07	4	0.78	
Very Engaged	4.31	5	0.91	
Sex				0.000
Male	4.15	4	0.89	
Female	4.41	5	0.77	
Children				0.010
Yes: 12 yr. and older	4.25	4	0.72	
Yes: 12 yr. and younger	4.22	4	0.77	
Yes: both older and younger than 12 yr.	4.91	4	1.07	
No children under 18 yr.	4.33	5	0.85	

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P****
Environment				0.040

Urban	4.29	4	0.89	
Suburban	4.25	4	0.79	
Rural	4.23	4	0.89	
Education				0.015
High School	4.18	4	0.98	
College	4.35	4	0.73	
University Bachelor	4.28	4	0.79	
Master's Degree	4.28	4	0.94	
Doctorate (PhD)	3.94	4	1.20	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats ***P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 13: Internalized Moral Perspective Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.005
Very Unengaged	3.98	4	1.11	
Unengaged	4.07	4	0.96	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	3.96	4	0.92	
Engaged	4.07	4	0.78	
Very Engaged	4.31	5	0.91	
Sex				0.004
Male	4.01	4	0.91	
Female	4.21	4	0.84	
Language				0.030
English	4.13	4	0.89	
French	3.97	4	0.87	

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P***
Income				0.050
$40,000 - $59,999	3.80	4	1.09	
$100,000 or more	4.20	4	0.82	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats **P-value for DSCF Stats

Table 14: Balanced Processing Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.012
Very Unengaged	4.10	4	1.09	
Unengaged	4.20	4	0.93	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	4.11	4	0.95	
Engaged	4.29	4	0.72	
Very Engaged	4.39	5	0.85	
Sex				0.007
Male	4.18	4	0.86	
Female	4.34	4	0.81	
Income				0.035
$19,999 or less	3.75	4	0.50	
$20,000 - $39,999	4.38	5	0.79	
$40,000 - $59,999	3.95	4	1.12	

$60,000 - $79,999	4.24	4	0.79	
$80,000 - $99,999	4.35	4	0.67	
$100,000 or more	4.20	4	0.78	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats

Transparent communication

The first variable of transparent communication, *participative*, was high among both female and very engaged respondents similar to other variables, but had a substantial drop among respondents with an income of $40,000 to $59,000 in annual pre-tax income (see Table 15). Similarly, the variable *substantial information* was strong among female respondents, but also had significance among respondents making $20,000 to $39,000 in annual pre-tax income, those who work in health care, and variation among the Atlantic provinces, with Nova Scotia being the strongest, and P.E.I. as significantly weaker significance (see Table 16). Like other variables, *accountability* was strong among very engaged and female respondents, but also showed significance for those working in the health care sector (see Table 17).

Table 15: Participative Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.001
Very Unengaged	3.98	4	1.04	
Unengaged	4.20	4	1.06	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	4.00	4	0.91	
Engaged	4.15	4	0.74	
Very Engaged	4.37	5	0.84	
Sex				0.003
Male	4.07	4	0.89	
Female	4.27	4	0.80	
Income				0.006
$19,999 or less	4.25	5	0.96	
$20,000 - $39,999	4.29	4	0.86	
$40,000 - $59,999	3.75	4	1.12	
$60,000 - $79,999	4.20	4	0.69	
$80,000 - $99,999	4.28	4	0.69	
$100,000 or more	4.24	4	0.82	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats

Table 16: Substantial Information Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Sex				0.000
Male	4.21	4	0.83	
Female	4.44	5	0.79	
Province				0.041
British Columbia	4.27	4	0.78	
Alberta	4.42	5	0.86	
Saskatchewan	4.17	4	0.94	
Manitoba	4.33	5	0.91	
Ontario	4.35	4	0.78	
Quebec	4.21	4	0.84	
Newfoundland & Labrador	4.50	5	0.53	
New Brunswick	4.17	5	1.19	
Nova Scotia	4.83	5	0.38	
P.E.I.	3.88	4	1.36	
Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P****
Sector				0.046
Health Care	4.38	5	0.81	
Technology	4.28	4	0.71	
Finance	4.21	4	0.92	
Income				0.011
$19,999 or less	4.00	4	0.82	
$20,000 - $39,999	4.36	5	0.85	
$40,000 - $59,999	4.01	4	1.11	
$60,000 - $79,999	4.39	5	0.71	
$80,000 - $99,999	4.32	4	0.74	
$100,000 or more	4.42	5	0.70	
Language				0.010
English	4.35	4	0.83	
French	4.19	4	0.76	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats ***P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 17: Accountability Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.040
Very Unengaged	4.07	4	1.01	
Unengaged	4.03	4	0.94	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	4.00	4	0.89	
Engaged	4.12	4	0.78	
Very Engaged	4.27	4	0.91	
Sex				0.001
Male	4.04	4	0.87	
Female	4.23	4	0.84	
Sector				0.0032
Health Care	4.22	4	0.88	
Technology	4.05	4	0.94	
Finance	4.10	4	0.75	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats

Symmetrical communication

Symmetrical communication had a number of significant demographics associated with it in the data. As with the other variables, there was significance among female respondents to *Symmetrical communication*, as well as among those who work in the health care sector. The variable was stronger among respondents who completed the questionnaire in English, respondents who made between $20,000 and $39,999 in annual pre-tax income, and who had a college education. Finally, there was statistical significance shown between health care professional (high) and engineer (low), as well as between the category "other" (high) and engineer (low). The mean, median, standard deviation, and *P* values for *Symmetrical communication* are available in Table 18.

Table 18: Symmetrical Communication Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Sex				0.000
Male	4.16	4	0.85	
Female	4.46	5	0.81	
Sector				0.009
Health Care	4.43	5	0.79	
Technology	4.23	4	0.76	
Finance	4.25	4	0.95	
Language				0.016
English	4.33	5	0.85	
French	4.19	4	0.79	

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P***
Job Title				0.041
Health Care Professional	4.42	5	0.84	
Engineer	3.80	4	0.70	
				0.021
Other	4.50	5	0.61	
Engineer	3.80	4	0.70	

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P****
Income				0.042
$19,999 or less	4.25	5	0.96	
$20,000 - $39,999	4.80	5	0.80	

$40,000 - $59,999	4.06	4	1.10	
$60,000 - $79,999	4.33	4	0.75	
$80,000 - $99,999	4.38	4	0.71	
$100,000 or more	4.35	4	0.78	
Education				0.002
High School	4.27	5	1.03	
College	4.39	5	0.75	
University Bachelor	4.34	4	0.72	
Master's Degree	4.15	4	1.05	
Doctorate (PhD)	4.18	4	0.81	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats **P-value for DSCF Stats. ***P-value for Chi-Sq.

Employee-organization relationship

The variable of *trust* was statistically significant among female respondents and those who were very engaged. It also had significance among lower income earners ($19,999 or less in annual pre-tax income), but showed weakness among respondents who made $40,000 to $59,999 in annual pre-tax income (see Table 19). Like other variable, *control mutuality* was statistically significant among female and very engaged respondents, but showed significant among two job titles within the financial sector — specifically between insurance, which was strong, and technology, which was weak (see Table 20). The variable of *commitment* showed statistical significance between the very engaged and unengaged respondents, and was also strongest among female respondents (see Table 21). Finally, the variable of *satisfaction* was strongest among female respondents, and also had a statistical significance between very engaged and very unengaged responses (see Table 22).

Table 19: Trust Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.028
Very Unengaged	4.03	4	1.05	
Unengaged	4.20	4	0.95	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	4.08	4	0.92	
Engaged	4.26	4	0.78	
Very Engaged	4.39	5	0.87	
Sex				0.026
Male	4.18	4	0.86	
Female	4.29	4	0.89	
Income				0.031

$19,999 or less	4.75	4	0.50	
$20,000 - $39,999	4.29	5	0.97	
$40,000 - $59,999	3.94	4	1.10	
$60,000 - $79,999	4.26	4	0.87	
$80,000 - $99,999	4.33	4	0.76	
$100,000 or more	4.33	4	0.77	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats

Table 20: Control Mutuality Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.004
Very Unengaged	4.29	5	1.05	
Unengaged	4.34	4	0.83	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	4.13	4	0.90	
Engaged	4.30	4	0.77	
Very Engaged	4.47	5	0.86	
Sex				0.001
Male	4.21	4	0.88	
Female	4.42	5	0.81	

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P***
Job Title (Finance Sector)				0.043
Technology	3.88	4	0.86	
Insurance	4.68	5	0.75	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats **P-value for DSCF Stats

Table 21: Commitment Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Engagement				0.012
Very Unengaged	4.10	4	1.02	
Unengaged	3.93	4	1.13	
Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	4.00	4	0.96	
Engaged	4.13	4	0.75	
Very Engaged	4.33	5	0.87	
Sex				0.047
Male	4.07	4	0.89	
Female	4.20	4	0.87	

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats

Table 22: Satisfaction Demographics

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P**
Sex				0.013
Male	4.12	4	0.88	
Female	4.28	4	0.83	

Demographics	M	Med.	Std.	*P***
Engagement				0.015
Very Unengaged	3.98	4	1.11	
Unengaged	4.11	4	1.00	

Neither Engaged nor Unengaged	4.14	4	0.86
Engaged	4.19	4	0.76
Very Engaged	4.36	5	0.86

*P-value for Kruskal-Wallis Stats **P-value for DSCF stats

Sector Leadership Communication Variable Characteristics:

The final grouping of results were arrived at by using a chi-squared test by sector, which examined the relationships between demographic variables and the 12 leadership communication variables by sector. The results show a number of statistically significant relationships between variables, which should be considered alongside non-parametric tests due to the small number of responses to some variables. The statistical significance by sector is weak, which can be seen in the tables included in this section. The feature Cramer's V, which shows independence between two variables at "0" and perfect association at "1" (O. Vasilyeva, personal communication, October 23, 2017). The results for this section are grouped as they were previously: authentic leadership, transparent communication, symmetrical communication and employee-organization relationship.

Authentic leadership

Examining the first variable of *self-awareness*s, there is statistical significance within all three sectors for demographics related to education and children as can be seen in Table 23. The financial sector also has income as a significant demographic. The variable of *relational transparency* has a number of significant demographics within health care, the strongest of which is length of employee service. Technology and finance each have one significant demographic, education and unionized environment respectively (see Table 24). All demographic significance within *internalize moral perspective* were weak. Health care had significance with provincial demographics, while finance had education and income, and technology with marriage (see Table 25). The final variable in this section, *balanced processing*, had weak significance for health care (children and income) and technology (education and province) as seen in Table 26.

Table 23: Self-Awareness Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Education	34.31	0.21	0.0241
Children	24.44	0.20	0.0177
Technology			
Children	30.12	0.23	0.0027
Language	11.78	0.24	0.0191
Finance			
Children	29.30	0.22	0.0036
Income	37.59	0.23	0.0099
Education	34.94	0.21	0.0204

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 24: Relational Transparency Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Province	54.94	0.26	0.0225
Length of Service	55.07	0.26	0.0068
Marriage	45.06	0.24	0.0011
Sex	15.42	0.28	0.0039
Education	33.44	0.20	0.0302
Technology			
Education	34.42	0.21	0.0234
Finance			
Unionized	15.51	0.28	0.038

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 25: Internalized Moral Perspective Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Province	60.26	0.28	0.0068
Technology			
Marriage	27.01	0.19	0.0414
Finance			
Education	39.39	0.22	0.0060
Income	34.24	0.22	0.0246

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 26: Balanced Processing Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Children	22.65	0.19	0.0309
Income	40.01	0.23	0.0050
Technology			
Education	42.80	0.23	0.0022
Province	61.49	0.28	0.0051

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Transparent communication

The *participative* variable had weak statistical significance for health care (sex and income) and finance (education), which can both be seen in Table 27. In looking at *substantial information*, there were equally weak significances among the three sectors: health care (province, marriage, sex, income, and language), technology (province and sex), and finance (income and education) as shown in Table 28. The final variable in this section, *accountability*, had weak significance in health care's association with province, and the financial sector's association with education (Table 29).

Table 27: Participative Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Sex	9.83	0.22	0.0435
Income	32.87	0.21	0.0349
Finance			
Education	56.72	0.27	0.0000

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 28: Substantial Information Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Province	52.50	0.26	0.0372
Marriage	36.00	0.21	0.0154
Sex	17.19	0.29	0.0018
Income	33.18	0.21	0.0323
Language	9.73	0.22	0.0452
Technology			
Province	59.68	0.27	0.0078
Sex	10.52	0.23	0.0325
Finance			
Income	35.38	0.22	0.0182
Education	50.24	0.25	0.0002

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 29: Accountability Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Province	51.99	0.26	0.0412
Finance			
Education	63.42	0.28	0.0000

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Symmetrical communication

There was no strong statistical weakness across sectors by demographic. As can be seen in Table 30, health care has weak significance with education and sex, technology with children, sex, and province, and finance with education and income.

Table 30: Symmetrical Communication Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Education	37.42	0.22	0.0104
Sex	16.78	0.29	0.0021
Technology			
Children	27.23	0.22	0.0072
Sex	15.36	0.28	0.0040
Province	51.39	0.25	0.0464
Finance			
Education	53.24	0.26	0.0001
Income	39.25	0.23	0.0062

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Employee-organization relationship

The variable of *trust* showed little strength in the significance across sectors, with health care showing weak significance with environment and marriage, and finance with education and children (see Table 31). *Control mutuality* showed similar weakness across the same sectors, with health care having significance with children, marriage and sex, and finance with education (see Table 32). *Commitment* had weak significance across the three sectors, with health care correlated to province, technology to engagement, education, and province, and finance to education (see Table 33). The final variable, *satisfaction*, showed weak significance across all three sectors, with health care correlated to province, technology to engagement, and finance to education (See Table 34).

Table 31: Trust Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Environment	17.72	0.21	0.0234
Married	53.86	0.26	0.0001
Finance			
Education	78.01	0.31	0.0000

Children	22.31	0.19	0.0341

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 32: Control Mutuality Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Children	21.28	0.19	0.0464
Marriage	35.92	0.21	0.0157
Sex	14.71	0.27	0.0053
Finance			
Education	52.13	0.26	0.0001

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 33: Commitment Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Province	68.09	0.29	0.0010
Technology			
Engagement	42.91	0.23	0.0021
Education	34.24	0.22	0.0014
Province	56.71	0.27	0.0153
Finance			
Education	63.33	0.28	0.0000

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Table 34: Satisfaction Demographic Significance by Sector

Sector and Demographic	Chi Sq.	Cramer's V	*P**
Health Care			
Province	55.03	0.26	0.0220
Technology			
Engagement	32.65	0.20	0.0368
Finance			
Education	37.59	0.22	0.0099

*P-value for Chi-Sq.

Discussion

The three research questions posited in this study were answered through the results of its inquiry. The results indicated that there was a uniformly strong preference among respondents to the 12 leadership communication variables asked by first research question (RQ1). This sets a strong foundation upon which to answer the remaining two questions. The second research question (RQ2) asked about the alignment of communication variable preferences to demographic information, which was answered by the results that showed several areas of statistical significance within the data between these variable sets. These results support the acceptance of the first hypothesis statement (H1) that there are unique groupings of demographics by communication preference. Finally, the third research question (RQ3) examined differences between sectors, and proposed a hypothesis statement (H2) that there would be differences within the variables by sectors. The results support the rejection of H2, and RQ3 was answered in the negatives as showing no statistical significance between sectors by the communication variables.

A foundational assumption in the practice of public relations is the importance of having a thorough knowledge and understanding of the organization's strategic publics (Grunig & Grunig, 2013). This has formed the basis of arguments for an integrated approach to corporate communications in which employees are treated like other organizational stakeholders (Neill & Jiang, 2017; Neill, 2015). Yet, while many organizations have databases of information on employees, many are failing to gain substantive levels of knowledge and understanding of what de Bussy and Suprawan (2012) called an organization's most important stakeholder. This study examined 12 evidence-based and theoretically modeled leadership communication variables outlined by Men and Stacks (2014) within a sample of 600 Canadian employees evenly divided between three sectors: health care, technology, and finance. By examining what relationships exist between employees' demographic variables, the 12 leadership communication variables, and three sectors, this study sought to add to the developing body of qualitative research in internal communication.

Alignment of employee preferences to leadership communication variables

In examining *how and to what extent do employee preferences align to the 12 leadership communication variables outlined by Men and Stacks (2014)* (RQ1), the results of the study showed a consistently strong response across all variables, with a median response of *important* (4) on the five-point Likert scale. This result is consistent with the findings of the relationships between authentic leadership (*self-awareness*, *relational transparency*, *internalized moral perspective*, and *balanced processing*), transparent communication (*substantial information*, *participation*, and *accountability*), and employee-organization relationships (*trust*, *control mutuality*, *commitment*, and *satisfaction*) investigated by Men and Stacks (2014). Further, it reinforces the growing body of public relations research on the topic of internal communications and the vital importance of employee voice in the employee-organization relationship (Jiang & Men, 2015). The strength of the overall response to these leadership communication variables highlights the integral and foundational role of organizational leader's communication style.

The strength of the participant's response in rating the 12 leadership communication variables further emphasizes the need for internal communication managers to be appropriately positioned with close proximity to the dominant coalition within an organization, and have the competency to be effective at that level (Grunig, 1992). It is no longer enough for practitioners to simply be tactical and process advisors, but to be able to fulfil both a strategic advisory role for transformational organizational leadership, while also facilitating strong, participative relationships with internal stakeholders (Ströh, 2008; Men &

Stacks, 2012; Men, 2014a; Men 2014b; Jiang & Men, 2015). The Edelman (2016) Trust Barometer stated: “Employees who trust their leaders will be more likely to say good things about their employer. And consumers will believe them” (p. 3). In this way, internal communication practitioners have an opportunity to facilitate boundary spanning behaviour within an organization in advising leaders of how best to form strong employee-organization relationships built on trust, transparency, and symmetrical communication (Grunig, 1992).

The consistency of responses to the communication variables across the sample also indicates the leadership communication variables could provide a useful framework for internal communication practitioners; one that aligns with transaction and transformational leadership as outlined by Men and Stacks (2012). The strength of the response to the leadership variables indicates a preference among employees for a transformational approach to leadership — one where leaders work through facilitation and a compelling vision over control and management. The 12 variables can then be used by practitioners as guideposts for developing effective leadership communication strategies, as well as actionable coaching points for leaders to develop their communication and relational capabilities. Even from a perceptive stand point, the communicative style of a CEO who is aligned to the 12 leadership communication variables is also likely to align with Men’s (2015) responsive communication style of bing “warm [*satisfaction*], friendly, sincere [*internalized moral perspective*], understanding [*relational transparency*], compassionate [*balanced processing*], listening [*control mutuality*], and interested [*commitment*]” (p. 468).

The most compelling component of the strength of responses to the leadership communication variables is the very tangible consequences they can hold for an organization’s bottom line. Wieseke, et al. (2009) demonstrated the cascading effect of organizational identification, including trust, and that there is a correlation between positive organizational identification and strong financial performance at multiple levels within the organization. The leadership communication preferences examined in this study provide an opportunity for leaders and practitioners alike to align and reinforce positive organizational identification through treating employees with the respect and consideration that is commonly afforded to external stakeholders, while acknowledging their unique perspective from within an organization.

Alignment of employee demographics to leadership communication variables

In discussing non-verbal communication, Anthony Robbins (1986) wrote " to effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others" (p. 237). More than 30 years later, this statement may seem obvious, particularly within a public relations context, and yet organizations communicate to their employees every day with little to no real understanding of its audience beyond functional capacity.

Marketing literature and practice has long identified the segmentation and the understanding of strategic consumer groups as a fundamental component of marketing, in much the same way public relations literature and practice has approached the segmentation and understanding of strategic organizational publics of fundamental importance. The consideration of employees as a strategic organization stakeholder group — both in their ability to impact and be impacted by an organization — has long been recognized. Yet, despite the theoretic and practical understanding, employees are often approached as a monolithic whole (L'Etang, 2005). In answering the second research question (RQ2) of *how and to what extent do employee demographics align with their leadership communication variable preferences*, we can begin to see a number of statistically significant variations within the sample population that provide ample opportunity for segmentation along a number of demographic variables. In fact, demographic variables in this study showed more statistical significance than any other variable. Consideration of this is further strengthened in relation to Bowen & Men's (2016) conceptualization of the situational theory of publics for internal stakeholders along demographic, psychographic, personality, and behavioural characteristics.

For instance, *symmetrical communication*, a variable widely validated in public relations literature (Grunig, 1992; Men & Stacks, 2014), showed statistical significance for sex, income, and education in more than one sector (see Table 30). It had further statistical significance between the health care sector and the technology and finance sectors. While not the expressed focus of this study, the self-report measure of engagement by respondents — a nebulous concept that straddles both psychographic and behavioural qualities — showed statistical significance for eight of the 12 leadership communication variables, including *relational transparency*, *internalized moral perspective*, *balanced processing*, *participative*, accountability, trust, *control mutuality*, *commitment*, and *satisfaction*.

Based on this, the first hypothesis that employee communication preferences will indicate unique groupings of demographics among employee populations can be accepted as demonstrated in tables 11 through 22. This makes sense when employee populations are considered as smaller samples of the larger population within organizational environments. Segmentation would naturally extend through similar pathways with unique variables to capture the behavioural and other characteristics of existence in such environments.

More importantly are the practical implications for internal communication practitioners and the need for practitioners to think beyond functional role segmentation strategies employed within many organizations. Alternative approaches offer a much broader and deeper understanding of the employee populations being communicated to, particularly for organizations whose employees span large geographic, cultural, and professional boundaries. In this way, applying the principles form the situational theory of problem solving to internal publics may offer even clearer understanding of sub-stakeholder groups within internal publics, and their likelihood of engaging in communication behaviours within the boundaries of the organization through scouting behaviours, with external stakeholders through megaphoning behaviours (Kim & Ni, 2013). This becomes even more important as the traditional lines between internal and external communication continue to be challenged by widely empowered publics, and has important implications for both leadership and strategic communication as they contend with a constantly changing environment, demands for radical transparency, and ongoing technological advancements. In writing about the conflict between external and internal communications gaps created by BP during the Deepwater Horizon drilling disaster — in which the CEO engaged in a perception battle with external media about the safety of the work environment — Goffee and Jones (2015) state that “building authentic organizations requires nothing less than sophisticated, honest internal communication processes” (p. 52).

In many ways, segmentation of internal audiences appears to be decades behind the segmentation of consumes. In a study of five companies, Moroko and Uncles (2009) noted that companies would engage in employee segmentation practices, such as age and career stage, but would not go further to investigate the segmentation from the employee’s perspective. This raises a critical point of what the intention of the segmentation organizations engage in is. Traditional marketing segmentation practices are naturally focused on efficiency and profitability of the company, within the context of value driven to consumers to motivate and sustain purchase behaviours. In a similar fashion, the segmentation of strategic publics within public relations requires a solid understanding of the social license to operate as outlined in the *Excellence* study (Grunig & Grunig, 2013). Further, the Canadian Public Relations Society’s definition of public relations as “the strategic management of relationships between an organization and its diverse publics, through the use of communication, to achieve mutual understanding, realize organizational goals and serve the public interest" (Flynn, Gregory & Valin, 2008 para. 5) highlights the common mistake made by many organizations when segmenting employees: that it is done through the narrow lens of the organization's interests and not those of the employees. This provides rich and promising value for internal communication practitioners as boundary spanners to function as the voice and conscience of the organization in broadening the lens through which the organization operates and understands this critical stakeholder group.

Differences between sectors

In answering the final research question (RQ3) — *how and to what extent there are differences between the three sectors being examined: health care, technology and finance* — the results of this study show that there is little statistical significance for either demographics or leadership communication variables between the three sectors. This is an important finding, which can provide focus to research and practice efforts alike.

For example, according to Bersin & Associates, $720 million is being spent on improving employee engagement each year in the US, and was expected to grow as high as $1.5 billion by 2015 (Hollon, 2012; Fletcher, 2014). Contrast this with the abysmal engagement numbers being reported year after year, the inability to find an agreed-upon definition of engagement by either academics or practitioners, and the challenges with improving employee engagement become evident. One of the assumptions in approaching this study was that the second hypothesis (H2) that there would be differences in employee preferences for the 12 leadership communication variables as well as employee demographics between the three sectors. As can be seen in tables 23 to 34, there is no effect of sector and there is only weak statistical significance among either the demographic or communication variables by sector.

One of the primary reasons for the proposition of this hypothesis (H2) was the widely covered strategies of technology companies, such as Google, Facebook and Apple, to engage and retain top talent (Travlos, 2012); particularly when such strategies are compared to the fiscal constraints of the health-care sector. That the efforts of any one of the three sectors in Canada has not produced a statistically significant difference with a sector reinforces Saks (2006) multidimensional model of engagement as having states of engagement that exist between an employee and their job, team, and organization, but not necessarily engagement within the sector. Further, the statistical significance of demographic variables highlighted previously lends credence to Baily, et al.'s (2017) antecedents of employee engagement, including personal psychological states, perceived leadership and management, and individual perceptions of the organization and team factors. Others have proposed that "engagement" efforts focus too heavily on short-term pulses, and not creating long-term strategy to create a workplace in which people want to work (Morgan, 2017). This approach focuses on the employee experience through cultural, physical, and technological lenses and an organization's corresponding focus and resource allocation within each (Morgan, 2017).

The lack of effect of sector within the data combined with the generally strong response to all 12 of the communication variables also highlights that the effect of communication variables may be within the dynamic of the employee-organization relationship. The 12 leadership communication variables operationalized through the representative statements outlined by Men and Stacks (2014) effectively function as a quantitative tool to measure the employee-organization relationship from the employee perspective in much the same way (and acknowledging the pedagogical relationship of the concepts) that the relational elements of control mutuality, trust, commitment, satisfaction, exchange relationships, and communal relationships outlined by Hon and Grunig (1999) can be used to measure relationships in public relations. This then provides an important tool for practitioners to quantify impact across the organization in facilitating strong employee relations while also demonstrating quantifiable return on investment for the organization.

By operationalizing the 12 leadership communication variables used in this study, there is an opportunity for internal communication practitioners to more accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in the relationship their organization has with its employees, and more effectively and efficiently implement communication strategies to address them. In particular, aligning the situation theory of problem solving's megaphoning and scouting behaviours as explored by Kim and Rhee (2011) with the leadership communication variables outlined by Men and Stacks (2014) provides a solid matrix (see Table 35) for practitioners to effectively evaluate the employee-organization relationship in relation to employee communication behaviour.

Table 35: Conceptual Framework for Matrix

	Communication Variables*	Scouting Behaviour**	Megaphoning Behaviour**
Authentic Leadership*	1. Self-Awareness 2. Relational Transparency 3. Internalized Moral Perspective 4. Balanced Processing		
Transparent Communication*	5. Participative 6. Substantial Information 7. Accountable		
Symmetrical Communication*	8. Symmetrical Communication		
Employee-Organization Relationship*	9. Trust 10. Control Mutuality 11. Commitment 12. Satisfaction		

*Note: *Men and Stacks (2014)*; ***Kim and Rhee (2013)*

This matrix can then be expanded using the representative statements for each of the communication variables outlined by Men and Stacks (2014) in relation to the corresponding strong or poor status of the employee-organization relationship that the variable measures through *scouting* or *megaphoning* employee communication behaviours as outlined by Kim and Rhee (2013). The expanded version of the matrix, Employee-Organization Communication Model is outline in Table 35, and highlights both measures and anticipated employee behaviours to either strong or weak employee-organization relationships.

This matrix has important implications for leaders and practitioners alike in considering the employee-organization relationship and the role of employee boundary-spanning and communication behaviours either on behalf of, or against, the organization. This is theoretically significant in that most literature from other disciplines (e.g., human resource management), approach employee-organizational relationships almost exclusively from the organization's side. It is an area of significant value and perspective that internal communications as a public relations discipline, particularly when approached with a quantifiable measurement construct, such as the employee-organization relationship matrix. With employees' growing ability to engage in micro-boundary spanning behaviour, the quality of the employee-organization relationship has never been so important for organizations as they struggle to conceptualize the new dynamics of power and influence with strategic publics (Kim & Ni, 2013).

Implications for Practice

There are a number of important theoretical and practical implications in this study for both public relations scholars and professionals. Theoretically, the strength of employee preference for the leadership communication variables reinforces their validity as a measurement instrument for the quality of employee-organization relationships. The lack of distinction of preference between sectors may also indicate the universality of the variables within broader employee populations. The results that showed groupings of demographic data by leadership communication variable provide an important basis to further explore marketing segmentation literature for the development of employee personas that could be used in practice for identifying unique audiences within broader employee populations. This is particularly fascinating within the context of global employee populations that cross one or more demographic and/or cultural variables.

In terms of the practical applications of this study, there are three primary implications the results provide to practitioners. First, the results indicate practical approaches toward segmenting internal stakeholders by communication professionals in order to better understand and build relationships with these stakeholders. This can allow practitioners to move beyond initial segmentation efforts along functional role or hierarchical lines. Many organizations currently utilize some form of human resources information system (i.e., HRIS) that contains a variety of employee data that can be utilized (while respecting privacy legislation) in the segmentation of internal audiences.

The second practical implication for practitioners is the use of the 12 leadership communication variables as a measurement tool for the quality of employee-organization relationships that can help practitioners more efficiently focus internal communication strategies to deliver value to the organization. Communication professionals can utilize the representative statements included in Appendix A in employee surveys to provide ongoing measurement and monitoring of the state of employee-organization relations.

Finally, the third implication indicated by the results of this study surround the Employee-Organization Communication Behaviour Matrix (EOCBM), which combines the ability for measurement through the leadership communication variables in conjunction with the positive or negative relational identification of employees toward the organization and the expected employee communication behaviour. More importantly, this tool provides communication managers and executives the ability to accurately identify issues within employee-organization relationships, in addition to how best to strategically advise organizational leadership on how to effectively and proactively address issues as they arise.

Table 36: Employee-Organization Communication Behaviour Matrix

Communication variable*	Strong Relations Measure*	Strong Relations Scouting Behaviour**	Poor Relations Measure (R)**	Poor Relations Megaphoning Behaviour**
Authentic Leadership				
Self-Awareness	Management is aware of abilities, strengths, weaknesses, and its impact on employees.	Employee shares positive experience with management with others.	Management is not self aware or conscious of its impact.	Employee shares negative experiences about management, and increased employee turnover.
Relational Transparency	Management is clear in in its meaning, openly shares info, and clearly expresses thoughts to others.	Employee understands shared info, and is able to competently share it with others as well as share info back to management.	Management is unclear and guards information from employees.	Employee efficiency and effectiveness affected. Silos and internal politics strengthened.
Internalized Moral Perspective	Management has core values that inform behaviour, and there is consistency between values and action.	Employee observes consistency and value-based behaviour, developing trust and report.	Management lacks value-orientation, and often behaves contrary to its word.	Lack of trust in management leads top higher turnover and negatively impacts reputation of organization.
Balanced Processing	Management openly encourages and listens to opposing opinions, and takes all info into account when making decisions.	Employee is able to respect management decisions as balanced and well considered, and relate those decisions to others.	Management makes decisions in isolation and does not encourage staff to present alternative perspectives.	Lack of trust in decision-making process and management's leadership create negative reputation for organization.
Transparent Communication				
Participative	The company involves and takes time with employees in identifying info they need, and asks for feedback on the quality of info.	Employee is engaged and informed in info process, and able to share accurate information and experience of process.	The company decides what is important or not and communicates in a one-way fashion with employees.	Employee need and frustrations lead to info seeking and sharing from potentially unreliable sources.

Substantial Information	The company shares timely, relevant, and complete info to employees.	Employee is informed and empowered to advocate on behalf of the company within formal and informal networks.	Info given to employees, if delivered, is frequently late, not relevant or inconsistent, and incomplete.	Employee received info from unofficial sources (e.g., media, etc.), damaging relationship & encouraging activist behaviour.
Accountable	The company presents different sides of controversial issues, is open to criticism on those issues from employees, and freely admits when mistakes are made.	Employee has broad and accurate understanding with which to speak about the organization, and confidence being able to do so.	The company presents employees with a corporate-washed version of issues that favour the organization, and no admission of mistakes.	Employee shares experience and lack of trust with employer, actively seeking and sharing alternative perspectives that are contrary to that shared by the company.
<u>Symmetrical Communication</u>				
Symmetrical Communication	Communicates to be responsive to employees, providing an environment in which employees are comfortable bringing issues forward, and keeps employees informed about major changes that affect them.	Employees actively identify issues and bring them forward internally rather than externally.	Company communicates with employees because of organizational need, discouraging the sharing of concerns or issues, and little to no info on major changes that affect employees.	Employees use formal and informal networks, as well as dark social, to seek and share organizational info. Lack of need fulfillment impacts efficiency and effectiveness of employee job performance.
<u>Employee-Organization Relationship</u>				
Trust	The company keeps its promises to employees, not only considering them when making decisions, but actively seeking their opinion.	Employee trusts that the organization has his or her best interests at heart, and reciprocates trust-motivated communication behaviours.	The company frequently breaks promises, and does not consider employees as a central part of decision-making.	Employee distrusts organization and engages and negative advocacy affecting organizational reputation.

Control Mutuality	The company views employee opinion as legitimate, actively listening to what they have to say, and gives employees a say in decision-making.	Employee is engaged in decision-making, and feels ownership of process and results, opening the possibility of advocacy on behalf of the organization.	The company views employees as a means to an end, and does not actively consider them in decision-making.	Employee is disengaged from organizational decisions and direction, and takes little to no ownership/ accountability for outcomes.
Commitment	The company seeks to build and maintain long-term relationships with employees that both parties value.	The employee seeks to reciprocate commitment to organization, even if employment ends, maintaining favourable opinion and info.	The company views employees as replaceable, and does not foster long-term relationship building.	Employee turnover is high, with no meaningful investment by employees into their relationship with the organization or the work performed.
Satisfaction	Actively seeks to have employees who are satisfied with the company, with mutual beneficial relationships and outcomes.	Employee satisfaction translates into increased productivity, profitability, and efficiency, which could be interpreted as a component of engagement.	The company is not concerned with employee satisfaction or experience in working for the organization.	Dissatisfied employees are not motivated or concerned with the organization's ability to achieve its goals, which may translate into lost productivity, lowered profitability, and inefficiency.

*Note: * Measures variables are summarizations of the representative statements outlined by Men and Stacks (2014), and included in Appendix A. Representative statements should be used for quantitative evaluation of the employee-organization relationship*; ***Kim and Rhee, 2013.*

Conversely, the findings of this research study provide a set of best practices and behaviours for senior leaders that communication professionals can proactively advise development of to enhance and/or strengthen employee-organization relations.

Limitations and Future Research

Limitations

The results of any empirical research should be considered against the limitations under which the research was conducted. In this study the following are limiting factors that require consideration.

A primary limitation is that the researcher received the data as secondary data, and the bias of the organization that collected it cannot be ruled out. It is also important to disclose that the researcher is employed as a manager of internal communications by the organization that collected the data. In addition to this, there is a limitation within the market research panel used to acquire the data, as the research panel is opt-in, which may have inherent biases of respondent engagement and personality type.

A quantitative research methodology was used, which has a number of inherent limitations, including contextual understanding of responses in the data, and the ability of data to sufficiently explain complex issues in the absence of qualitative methodologies. While a substantial number of variables were measured in order to minimize the effect of these limitations, there were small response rates for some of the demographic variables that limit the determination of statistical significance. The use of a survey instrument to collect the data also has a number of inherent limitations, including the risk of response bias. While every effort was made to minimize such bias, it cannot be ruled out and may have affected the data. A secondary limitation within the survey instrument's anonymity is the risk of self-reporting responses and the inability of the researcher to verify the accuracy of responses.

Additional longitudinal effect limitations exist, as this study was completed as part of the researcher's Master's Degree capstone thesis, which includes formal and practical time constraints for completion.

Future Research

In reflecting back on this research, there are a number of research areas that would benefit from additional investigation. The demographic information and communication variables lay a strong foundation to explore marketing literature for empirically validated approaches to persona formation. These approaches could then be applied within an internal environment to determine employee persona profiles that could be utilized for communication and employee-organization relationship building efforts.

This study combined a number of theoretical models to create the employee-organization relationship matrix as a measurement tool that can be used by practitioners. A combined research approach that implemented the matrix within an organizational environment would be a logical next step to validate the tool. This could then be replicated in a longitudinal study over several years to gauge the effectiveness of the measures in helping the organization to improve its relationship with employees.

The final area of future research that I would like to posit is the exploration of Kim and Grunig's (2011) Situational Theory of Problem Solving (STOPS) within an internal context, and as a pedagogically logical step in the theoretical progression of predicting stakeholder communication behaviour in public relations. In examining the additional dependent variable of communicative action in problem solving expressed in STOPS, it would be interesting to examine whether an additional variable that captures the environmental authority and/or power that employers hold in the employee-organization relationship, and its affect on employee communication behaviours in problem solving. I see this variable as unique from *constraint recognition* used in both the situational theory of publics and STOPS and described by Grunig and Hung (1984) as the "extent to which people perceive there are constraints — or obstacles — in a situation that limits their freedom to plan their own behaviour" (p. 151). For employees, it isn't their freedom or ability to plan their own behaviour that may affect their communication behaviour, but the relationship held with their employer (at the various stages of engagement identified by Saks (2006)) that may indicate communication behaviour.

Conclusions

In writing about the *Excellence* study, Grunig (2006) wrote:

> For an organization to be effective… it must behave in ways that solve the problems and satisfy the goals of stakeholders as well as management. If it does not, stakeholders will either pressure the organization to change or oppose it in ways that add cost and risk to the organizational policies and decisions. (p. 159)

This can be a hard adjustment for organizations that seek to minimize exposure and vulnerability through control and risk aversion. And yet, the very consequences of not behaving appropriately with stakeholders are frequently a theme in the news media. In August 2017, a Google employee wrote an internal memo expressing personal opinions about the gender gap in the technology sector. After being fired by Google, the employee took the issue public, being interviewed on numerous national shows, garnering international coverage, and even launching charges against Google with the National Labor Relations Board in the United States (Ingram & Palli, 2017). In November 2017, a departing Twitter customer service employee shut down the President of the United States Twitter account on the employee's last day, causing international media attention for the company, and raising pointed questions about account security and the company's impact on international security (Oreskovic, 2017). Also in November 2017, Walmart had its perfect score from the Human Rights Campaign for LGBT corporate equality suspended, with coverage in the media following two federal complaints by employees alleging that the company had not protected transgender employees from discrimination (Green, 2017).

In order for an organization to proactively manage its relationship with employees, it needs to first learn more about the people who make up the employee body, what unique segments exist, and the diversity of thought and perspective that make up this critical stakeholder group.

This study sought to provide additional evidence and theoretical conceptualization around the application of employee segmentation within organizations. Further, moving segmentation beyond function and hierarchy, this research sought to explore the relationship between employee segmentation and employee-organization relationships, the ability of practitioners to use segmentation to strengthen employee-organization relationships, and the necessity of these skills sets to be fundamental competencies for internal communication practitioners. While the data from this study showed all leadership communication variables are strongly preferred by employees, the lack of effect between communication variables and sectors, highlighted both the universality of the leadership communication variables, as well as the micro-application of these variables across demographic variables that could be extrapolated through a robust segmentation exercise within an organization.

The short-term solutions envisioned in popular employee engagement efforts need to be reframed and conceptualized within the larger perspective of the employee-organization relationship, making the time for organizations to passively let relationships with employees organically occur is long past. The implications to organization reputation, profit, and longevity are recorded on a daily basis in both traditional and digital media. Based on existing theoretical findings from Men and Stacks (2014) and Kim and Rhee (2011), this study sought to provide greater understanding for practitioners through the employee-organization relationship matrix on the necessity of improving efficacy and quantifiable results of internal communication strategies, developing appropriate competencies around identifying and measuring these relationships, as well as providing strategic advice to organizational leadership on building, maintaining, and strengthening employee-organization relationships.

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Appendix A: Representative Statements of Leadership Communication Variables

Men and Stacks (2014) originally published the following representative statements of leadership communication variables as measures of key constructs.

Self-Awareness:
1. My manager describes accurately the way others view his/her abilities.
2. My manager shows that he= she understands his/her strengths and weaknesses.
3. My manager is clearly aware of the impact he/she has on others.

Relational Transparency:
1. My manager clearly states what he/she means.
2. My manager openly shares information with others.
3. My manager expresses his/her ideas and thoughts clearly to others.

Internalized Moral Perspective:
1. My manager shows consistency between his/her beliefs and actions.
2. My manager uses his/her core beliefs to make decisions.
3. My manager resists pressures on him/her to do things contrary to his/her beliefs.
4. My manager is guided in his/her actions by internal moral standards.

Balanced Processing:
1. My manager asks for ideas that challenge his= her core beliefs.
2. My manager carefully listens to alternative perspectives before reaching a conclusion.
3. My manager objectively analyzes relevant data before making a decision.
4. My manager encourages others to voice opposing points of view.

Symmetrical Communication:
1. I am comfortable talking to my manager about my performance.
2. Most communication between management and other employees in this organization can be said to be two-way communication.
3. This company encourages difference of opinions.
4. The purpose of communication in this organization is to help management be responsive to problems of other employees.
5. I am usually informed about major changes in policy that affect my job before they take place.
6. I am comfortable talking to my manager when things are going wrong.

Participative:
1. The company asks for feedback from people like me about the quality of its information.
2. The company involves people like me to help identify the information I need.
3. The company provides detailed information to people like me.
4. The company makes it easy to find the information people like me need.
5. The company asks the opinions of people like me before making decisions.
6. The company takes the time with people like me to understand who we are and what we need.

Substantial:

1. The company provides information in a timely fashion to people like me.
2. The company provides information that is relevant to people like me.
3. The company provides information that can be compared to previous performance.
4. The company provides information that is complete.
5. The company provides information that is easy for people like me to understand.
6. The company provides accurate information to people like me.
7. The company provides information that is reliable.

Accountable:
1. The company presents more than one side of controversial issues.
2. The company is forthcoming with information that might be damaging to the organization.
3. The company is open to criticism by people like me.
4. The company freely admits when it has made mistakes.
5. The company provides information that can be compared to industry standards.

Trust:
1. Whenever this company makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned about me.
2. This company can be relied on to keep its promises.
3. I believe that this company takes my opinions into account when making decisions.
4. I feel very confident about this company's skills.
5. This company does not have the ability to accomplish what it says it will do (R).

Control Mutuality:
1. This company and I are attentive to what each other say.
2. This company believes my opinions are legitimate.
3. In dealing with me, this company has a tendency to throw its weight around (R).
4. This company really listens to what I have to say.
5. The management of this company gives me enough say in the decision-making process.

Commitment:
1. I feel that this company is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to me.
2. I can see that this company wants to maintain a relationship with me.
3. There is no long-lasting bond between this company and me (R).
4. Compared to other organizations, I value my relationship with this company more.
5. I would rather work together with this company than not.

Satisfaction:
1. I am happy with this company.
2. Both the organization and I benefit from the relationship.
3. I am not happy in my interactions with this company (R).
4. Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship this company has established with me.
5. I enjoy dealing with this company.

Appendix B: Questionnaire

i. Would you prefer to complete the survey in English or French?
- o English
- o French

Introduction:
The purpose of this survey is to examine employee leadership communication preferences in the hopes of developing employee communication personas for improving organisational communication. What is learned from this survey will help leaders and communication professionals to better understand and communicate with employees.

Section I: Demographics

Q1: Age
- o Under 18 (terminate)
- o Between 18-24
- o Between 25-34
- o Between 35-39
- o Between 40-44
- o Between 45-54
- o Between 55-64
- o Between 65-69
- o Between 70-74
- o 75 and older
- o I prefer not to answer

Q2: Sex
Please indicate your sex:
Note: as indicated by Statistics Canada, transgender, transsexual, and intersex Canadians should indicate the sex (male or female) with which they most associate themselves.
- o Male
- o Female

Q3: Province
In which province or territory do you live?
- o British Columbia
- o Alberta
- o Saskatchewan
- o Manitoba
- o Ontario
- o Quebec
- o New Brunswick
- o Nova Scotia
- o Prince Edward Island
- o Newfoundland and Labrador
- o Northwest Territories
- o Yukon
- o Nunavut

Q4: How would you describe the area in which you live?
- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- Not Applicable

Q5: Are you currently employed full time?
- Yes
- No (terminate)

Q6: In which sector are you currently employed full time?
- Health Care
- Technology
- Finance
- Other (terminate)

Q7: Which of the following best describes your current role at your place of employment?

Health Care
- Administration
- Communication
- Consultant
- Finance
- Health-Care Professional
- Health Policy
- Human Resources
- Legal
- Technology
- Other

Technology
- Administration
- Administrator
- Analyst
- Consultant
- Customer Service
- Designer
- Engineer
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Programmer
- Specialist
- Support
- Other

Finance
- Accountant
- Administration
- Advisor
- Banker
- Consultant
- Customer Service
- Economist
- Human Resources
- Insurance
- Professional
- Technology
- Other

Q8: Do you work in a unionized environment?
- Yes
- No

Q9: How long have you worked at your current place of employment?
- Less than a year
- One to two years
- Three to five years
- Six to 10 years
- 11-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26-30 years
- More than 30 years

Q10: Employee engagement is defined as an active feeling of fulfillment with work, including strong identification with an employer. Which of the following best describes your level of engagement with your place of employment.

- Very Unengaged
- Unengaged
- Neither Engaged nor Unengaged
- Engaged
- Very Engaged
- Unsure

Section II: Leadership Communication Variables

Q11: In thinking about how your direct manager or supervisor communicates with you, please rank the following statements from very important to very unimportant to you:

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither Unimportant Nor Important	Important	Very Important	Unsure
Understands his/her own strengths and weaknesses.						
Openly shares information with others.						
Uses his/her core beliefs to make decisions.						
Objectively analyzes relevant data before making a decision.						
Makes me comfortable to talk to him/her when things are going wrong.						
Involves people like me to help identify the information I need.						
Provides information that is relevant to people like me.						
Open to criticism by people like me.						
Can be relied on to keep his/her promises.						
Really listens to what I have to say.						
Wants to maintain a relationship with me.						
Fosters a mutual benefit between me and my employer.						

Q12: In thinking about how your direct manager or supervisor communicates with you, please rank the following statements from very important to very unimportant to you:

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither Unimportant Nor Important	Important	Very Important	Unsure

Is able to accurately describe his/her own abilities.						
Clearly states what s/he means.						
Shows consistency between his/her beliefs and actions.						
Carefully listens to alternative perspectives before reaching a conclusion.						
Communicates to be responsive to problems of other employees.						
Asks for feedback from people like me about the quality of information.						
Provides information in a timely fashion to people like me.						
Presents more than one side of controversial issues.						
Will be concerned about me when making an important decision.						
Believes my opinions are legitimate.						
Tries to maintain a long-term commitment to me.						
Makes me happy with this company.						

Q13: In thinking about how your direct manager or supervisor communicates with you, please rank the following statements from very important to very unimportant to you:

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither Unimportant Nor Important	Important	Very Important	Unsure
Clearly aware of the impact s/he has on others.						
Expresses his/her ideas and thoughts clearly to others.						
Is guided in his/her actions by internal moral standards.						
Encourages others to voice opposing points of view.						
Keeps me informed about major changes in policy that affect my job before they take place.						
Takes time with people like me to understand who I am and what I need.						
Provides information that is complete.						
Freely admits when s/he has made mistakes.						
Takes my opinions into						

account when making decisions.						
Gives me enough say in the decision-making process.						
Makes me value my relationship with my employer.						
Creates an environment in which I am pleased with the relationship between my employer and myself.						

Section III: Additional Demographics

Q14: What is the last year of education you have completed?

- Elementary (7 years or less)
- High school, general or vocational (8-12 years)
- College (pre-university, technical training, certificate, accreditation or advanced diploma — 13-15 years)
- University certificates and diplomas
- University Bachelor (including classical studies)
- University Master's Degree
- University Doctorate (PhD)
- I prefer not to answer

Q15: Are there any children who are under 18 years of age living in your household?

- Yes
- No

(If Yes): Are any of them 12 years old and older or less than 12 years old?

- Yes: 12 years of age and older only
- Yes: 12 years of age and older and younger than 12 years old
- Yes: Younger than 12 years old only
- No children under 18 years old at all in the household
- I prefer not to answer

Q16: Among the following categories, which one best reflects the total income, before taxes, of all the members of your household in 2015?

- $19,999 or less
- Between $20,000 and $39,999
- Between $40,000 and $59,999
- Between $60,000 and $79,999
- Between $80,000 and $99,999
- $100,000 or more
- I prefer not to answer

Q17: Are you…

- Single
- Married
- Common Law
- Divorced
- Widowed

- Separated
- I prefer not to answer

Outro:
Thank you for taking this survey.