

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP'S ETHICAL INFLUENCE ON RETAIL TELECOM
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

by

Arin S. Crandall

Doctorate Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Liberty University, School of Business

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Abstract

This qualitative study of retail telecommunication salespeople and their employers supported the existing literature about authentic leadership's positive influence on organizational citizenship behavior, affective commitment, ethical climate, and employee motivation in balancing performance management systems. Through salesperson self-regulation, this study also supported goal setting and other task-based motivation theories. The study added to the paucity of research on the relationship of pressure to unethical behavior and found the time dimension of goals was less important than threatening pressure. Both ethical codes and personal values were found to motivate ethical behavior more than either one by itself. Also, the study found the store manager relationship was critical to salesperson motivation and performance which should be studied further, especially when dysfunctional, adding to leader membership exchange (LMX) constructs. Finally, more telecom salespeople were motivated relationally than financially, and their emotional depletion was more related to negative interpersonal interactions than task-based effort as reflected in expectancy-value theory. This requires further study. The study incorporated a philosophical assumption of a Biblical worldview.

Keywords: authentic leadership, performance management systems, ethical selling, salesperson motivation

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who loved me, gave Himself for me and truly does make all things possible as my living King when trusting Him with everything. A relationship with Jesus is a priceless and eternal blessing the researcher encourages everyone reading this to consider seriously.

Acknowledgments

God's gift to me, my wife of nearly 30 years, who endured her husband being physically present, yet mentally and emotionally disengaged, far too long during this study must be acknowledged. Sacrifices are involved when taking on a project like this, and those are made not only by the researcher, but perhaps more so, by their loved ones. Thank you honey as you are an undeserved blessing to me.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Historical examples of publicized unethical sales practices and their consequences have prompted this study aiming to help organizations better understand balanced values-centered leadership in their performance management systems (PMS) for sustainable performance over time. The study explored the importance of authentic leadership, specifically, when balancing PMS with values-centeredness and performance drive to create not only a balanced PMS but also an ethical climate where employees are committed to long lasting customer relationships. To drive results, stretch goals and managerial time pressure has created unsustainable sales-oriented PMS in retail banking and telecommunications, and other retail organizations should be able to learn from these public examples. Unethical sales practices not only cause organizations to lose stakeholder trust but also can harm stakeholders by focusing on outcomes over relationships. Leadership is a critical factor in organizations, and this study proposes authentic leadership can positively motivate affective commitment intrinsically to reduce unethical behavior. It is also postulated that the external control of an ethical code will be less effective than authentic leadership at reducing unethical behavior. Values-based leadership will make the difference, and the intrinsic self-transcendent values of universalism and benevolence in customer orientation will positively affect ethical decision-making in retail organizations in greater North Atlanta, GA.

Background of the Problem

Leadership consequence. In January 2016, John Stumpf, CEO of Wells Fargo & Co., was voted Morningstar's CEO of the year for doubling the return of the S &P Financials Index over the previous 10-year period, an impressive "relative industry performance" (Wieczner, 2016, para. 6). Further, the stock price had doubled between 2012 and 2015 based on a cross-

sell culture pleasing to the stock analysts (Verschoor, 2016). The company was considered the world's most valuable bank by market capitalization then ("Stumpfed," 2016). But, in September, 2016, just eight months later, Wells Fargo was charged with unethical sales practices in its retail branches and fined \$185 million by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB; McCoy, 2016; Verschoor, 2016). It was the highest fine the CFPB had levied since its inception in 2011 (Minsky, 2017). On October 12, 2016, Morningstar's CEO of the year, John Stumpf, resigned his position ("Stumpfed," 2016; Wieczner, 2016). As cited by lead director, Stephen Sanger, new leadership could "guide Wells Fargo through its current challenges and take the company forward" (Gonzales, 2016, para. 5). This was a senior leader consequence example, but other consequences closer to the customer have occurred in retail PMS.

Frontline consequences. In the Fall of 2017, AT&T employees in Hawaii were fired for unethical sales practices because the company had detected employees were selling "free trials" of DirecTV streaming and not cancelling the trial prior to fees being charged to customers (Meyer, 2018, para. 2). According to AT&T, termination action was taken because employees were found to have "violated our policies" (Meyer, 2018, para. 4). But, according to the fired employees, managers had taught them how to manipulate these sales by cancelling the so-called trials after-the-fact, yet some of the sales "slipped through the cracks" and were not cancelled (Meyer, 2018, para. 6). Employees were clear their managers had "encouraged" the unethical behavior to meet quotas (Meyer, 2018, para. 7). There was nearly an identical unethical sales practice scandal in 20 Brooklyn, NY T-Mobile stores in January, 2013, where 22 managers and salespeople had been fired ("T-Mobile," 2013). When there is pressure to make goals, frontline salespeople and their managers are often both involved. In the case of Wells Fargo, 5,300 employees, like the Hawaiian AT&T and Brooklyn T-Mobile employees, had been fired over a

five-year period for violating the code of ethics (McCoy, 2016; Verschoor, 2016). Commenting on the bank's "sales culture" and "performance management programs," a publicized post-scandal independent Wells Fargo board review found that retail branch employees, like the AT&T and T-Mobile employees, had experienced "in some cases extreme, pressure . . . to meet or exceed . . . aggressive sales goals" ("Key findings," 2017, p. 5). These cases indicate an imbalanced PMS where frontline employees are pressured into unethical behavior, but leadership and employees are not the only stakeholders who suffer.

All stakeholders suffer. During the CFPB hearing September, 2016, it was disclosed that millions of unauthorized deposit accounts and credit cards had been opened by Wells Fargo employees adversely affecting customers (Augustyn, 2017; McCoy, 2016; Verschoor, 2016). In the case of AT&T, customers were charged after being promised the service was a free trial (Meyer, 2018). The T-Mobile case involved fraudulent bundling of services that did not meet promised benefits ("T-Mobile," 2013). As discussed earlier, in all three examples, strict enforcement of a code of ethics resulted in employee terminations, but if the PMS were balanced, the firings may have been unnecessary and employees spared (McCoy, 2016; Verschoor, 2016). In Wells Fargo's case, the world's most valuable bank lost \$25 billion in market capitalization in the months following its 2016 scandal, slipping globally from first to second place behind JPMorgan Chase ("Stumped," 2016). Thus, a calculated shareholder loss was a consequence in the case of Wells Fargo, but in all cases, an uncalculated reputation loss occurred. Nevertheless, in all cases, aggressive performance management encouraging unethical sales practices had harmed customers, employees, shareholders, and even senior leaders.

Imbalanced PMS. The Wells Fargo independent board review admitted sales performance was "out-weighting customer service and other factors," and the aggressive sales

“environment” was not considered when terminating those who were found violating the code of ethics (“Key findings,” 2017, p. 5). Further, after not hearing about the 5,300 firings until the day of the CFPB hearing, the board suggested the problems rested with senior leadership for creating such an environment and not transparently escalating issues to the board sooner (“Key findings,” 2017). The T-Mobile case cited “contradictory store policies and supervisor tactics” designed to increase store revenue with employees “caught in the middle” (“T-Mobile,” 2013, para. 2). While AT&T and T-Mobile defended their reasoning for terminations, it was clear there was a disconnection between senior leadership’s expectations and the frontline sales organization, suggesting an imbalanced PMS. When a PMS begins to harm customers, employees, shareholders, and eventually, leadership, the imbalance in the PMS becomes unsustainable over time. Summarily, in all cases, there was a gap between policy and practice, or in other words, unauthenticity between published values/expectations and PMS reality.

Problem Statement

General problem. The general problem to be addressed in this study is how unauthentic leadership, not staying true to values, leads to an imbalanced PMS, characterized by stretch sales goals and managerial time pressure, adversely affecting employee ethical behavior that, ultimately, adversely affects customers and firm reputation in retail organizations (Grover & Hui, 2005; Hochstein, Bonney, & Clark, 2015; Kaynak & Sert, 2012; Leonidou, Leonidou, & Kvasova, 2013; Mallin & Munoz, 2012; McClaren, 2013; Mesdaghinia, Rawat, & Nadavulakere, 2018; Niven & Healy, 2016; Starbird & Cavanagh, 2011). And, even when ethical training and enforcement of a code help create a more ethical climate, authentic ethical leadership has still been found to be the critical influence for instilling positive values (Hannah, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011; Ingram, LaForge, & Schwepker, 2007; Kaptein, 2011; McClaren, 2013).

Also, imbalanced outcome-based only PMS may overpower the ethical climate of a firm, making leadership a critical factor in a sales organization even while an enforced ethical code exists (Lašáková & Remišová, 2017; Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2010; McClaren, 2013; Mesdaghinia et al., 2018; Mulki, Jaramillo, & Locander, 2009; Roche, 2013). How a firm's leadership motivates employees to service customers ethically and to build trust is critical to its long-term success by building long lasting employee and customer relationships (Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Nuryakin & Surgiyarti, 2018; Varghese, Edward, & Amma, 2015). Authentic leadership, focused on both financial performance and a customer-oriented and employee-empowering value system, should prevent an overly acute focus on short-term financial gains over long-lasting stakeholder relationships creating and an imbalanced PMS in retail organizations.

Specific problem. The specific problem to be addressed in this study is how unauthentic leadership, not staying true to values and policies, leads to an imbalanced PMS, characterized by stretch sales goals and managerial time pressure, adversely affecting employee ethical behavior that, ultimately, adversely affects customers and firm reputation of retail mobile telecommunication (telecom) stores in greater North Atlanta, GA. While enforcing an ethical code in an overly aggressive sales culture, the senior leaders of AT&T, T-Mobile, and Wells Fargo's retail divisions were not authentic about their values, and thereby, outcomes became more important than how the outcomes were achieved ("Key findings," 2017; "T-Mobile," 2013). How leaders motivate their employees is critical to the balancing act of performance and values-centeredness, and alignment of both is the key to long lasting success of any firm (George, 2003). Specifically, this study will explore the effects of authentic and inauthentic leadership in retail telecom located in greater North Atlanta, GA. All brands of mobile phone

stores are plentiful in greater North Atlanta and are the focus of this study to garner a broader and deeper meaning of the effects of authentic leadership on retail mobile telecom PMS.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to add to the body of knowledge and gain insights into how authentic leadership maintains a balanced PMS and ethical culture within retail organizations of the four major telecom carriers with the greatest market share, creating sustainable firm value. The study also sought to confirm the presence of authentic senior leadership is more effective than ethical codes of conduct at motivating ethical customer-oriented practices. This study will add to authentic leadership theory, goal setting theory, other motivation theories, customer orientation, ethical decision making, and ethical climate research. A Biblical worldview, or the philosophical assumption the Bible defines right and wrong in discussions of ethics, was integrated into the study.

Nature of the Study

Method description. This study utilized a qualitative method to fulfill its purpose and answer its research questions. According to Stake (2010), science consists of both quantitative, or deductive, and qualitative, or inductive, methods. Like a two-sided coin. Stake (2010) further asserted that in addition to a quantitative side, “. . . science has a qualitative side in which personal experience, intuition, and skepticism work alongside each other to help refine the theories and experiments. By qualitative we mean that it relies primarily on human perception and understanding” (p. 11). Hammarberg, Kirkman, and de Lacey (2016) asserted that qualitative methods “answer questions about experience, meaning and perspective, most often from the standpoint of the participant” (p. 499). Citing Strauss and Corbin (1998), Yilmaz (2013) described qualitative research as “any type of research that produces findings not arrived

at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (p. 311). Qualitative research does not test theories by statistical means but uses various methods to find deeper meaning and perspective from participants that cannot be accomplished by administering a quantitative survey instrument (Yilmaz, 2013). This study seeks to induce deep meaning and varying perspectives from retail mobile telecommunication frontline salespeople about how their employers’ senior leadership instill values, motivate employee commitment, encourage customer-orientation, and foster other behaviors that lead to sustainable value creation.

Case study design. A case study design seeks to answer “how” and “why” research questions which are more explanatory than “what” questions which tend to be more exploratory in nature (Yin, 2014). Additionally, citing Schramm (1971), Yin (2014) also suggested that a case study “illuminates” decision making, why decision(s) are made, how they are implemented into a context, and with what results (p. 15; also cited by Ebneyamini1 & Reza Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018). Case study inquiry is characterized by how it:

 copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be more variables of interest than data points, and as one result, relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result, benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

(Yin, 2014, p. 17)

Retail PMS can be technical and distinctive with many variables about how senior leadership relates to the contemporary, everyday life of a salesperson in a store. Applying authentic leadership, goal-setting, and motivation theories will aid in developing open-ended interview questions to gain deeper understanding about elements within these theories that will be additive to the research. Applying existing theories in qualitative research is common and can help to

refine theory with deeper meaning from multiple participant perspectives (Gardner, 2009; Stake, 2013). Further, the case study design is favorable when the researcher has no control over the behavioral context or event, unlike experiments, for example, where the researcher is in control, and this design focuses on contemporary contexts or events rather than historical (Yin, 2014).

Research Questions

Based on the three foundational examples, the research questions for this study address issues from the problem being studied. The primary aim of the study seeks insights into how authentic leadership balances performance management systems of retail wireless telecommunication stores in North Atlanta, GA by creating an ethical culture of selling. If senior leadership at AT&T, T-Mobile, and Wells Fargo had created a more authentic, values-centered, positively motivated and trustworthy ethical climate, perhaps the three sales practice scandals could have been avoided. Thus, considering the background and specifics of the problem being studied, the following general research questions will be addressed:

RQ1: What is salesperson's experience with the authenticity of their organization's senior leadership?

RQ1a: What values seem most important to leadership and how are they communicated and demonstrated?

RQ1b: How does their leadership drive performance in retail stores?

RQ1c: How does their leadership prioritize stakeholders in their organization?

RQ2: How does the employer manage performance and ethics?

RQ3: How are salespeople personally motivated at work and why?

Conceptual Framework

Introduction. This study sought varying perspectives about the effectiveness of authentic leadership at creating balanced performance management systems (PMS) characterized by committed employees, satisfied customers, and sustainable shareholder value (George, 2003). This study sought deeper meaning about imbalanced performance management systems in retail telecom stores, characterized by stretch goals, time pressure to perform, and other factors, and how these factors affect ethical selling. In addition to seeking deeper meaning about goal-setting and ethical selling, self-determination, expectancy-value, human values, and other motivation theories were discussed and applied to better understand employee commitment. From the literature, theories most applicable to the problem and research questions are authentic leadership (AL) theory, goal setting theory, other motivation theories as well as constructs like customer orientation, ethical decision making and ethical climate. Within AL is the concept of combining values-centeredness and strong performance-drive into the same culture where integrity, transparency, customer-orientation, employee engagement, and shareholder value all exist harmoniously to create sustainable performance toward a shared purpose (George, 2003). Finally, self-regulation concepts, customer orientation, and external control versus internalized values, from the philosophical assumption of a Biblical worldview, will be integrated into this qualitative study (See Figure 1 below).

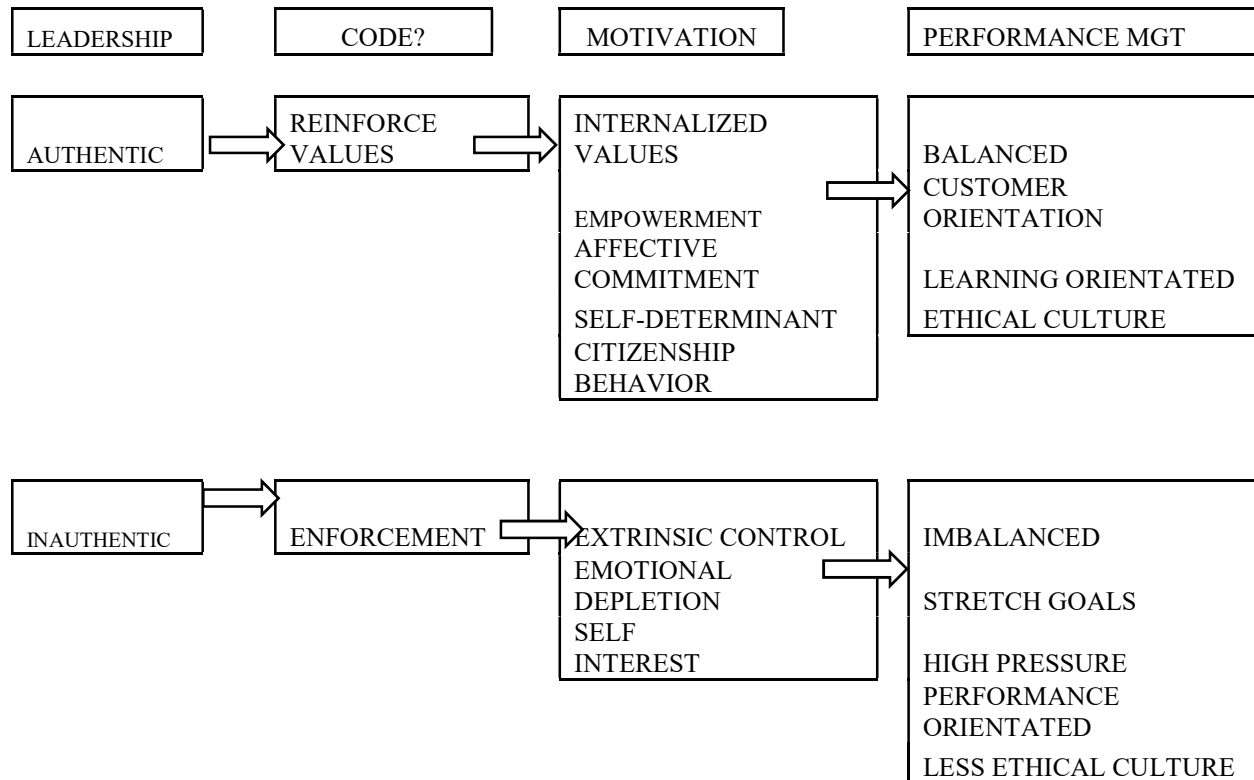


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

Authentic leadership (AL). This study did not focus on AL traits; rather, it examined the culture AL creates, primarily balancing values-centeredness with performance drive through empowering employees to serve customers, relational transparency, forming an executive team atop the hierarchy, and prioritizing stakeholders in decisions (George, 2003). George (2003) felt these cultural dimensions were responsible for sustained high performance at Medtronic while he served as CEO. AL has been found to benefit performance specifically through a knowledge sharing culture, innovation through empowerment, positive psychological capital, employee affective commitment, and extra-role behavior (Edu-Valsania, Moriano, & Molero, 2016; Malik & Lochan Dhar, 2017; Mehmood et al., 2016; Raguz & Zekan, 2016; Ribeiro, Gomes, & Kurian, 2018; Wang, Sui, Luthans, Wang, & Wu, 2014; Wong & Laschinger, 2013; Zhou, Ma, Cheng, & Xia, 2014). AL has also been found to increase employee satisfaction, commitment to organization and learning, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Coxen, van der Vart, &

Stander, 2016; Delić, Slåtten, Milić, Marjanović, & Vulanović, 2017; Gatling, Kang, & Kim, 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2017; Leigh, 2014). Among the many benefits of AL, promoting an ethical culture has been found to be one (Cianci et al., 2014; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Hannah et al., 2011; Zhu, Avolio, Riggio, & Sosik, 2011).

Goal setting theory. Pinder (1998) argued that goal setting theory, a task-based motivation theory, was one of the most rigorous organizational behavioral theories ever developed (as cited in Locke & Latham, 2009). According to Miner (2003), among 73 theories, goal setting theory was considered the most important organizational theory by organizational behaviorists (as cited in Neubert & Dyck, 2016). Goal setting theory asserts that difficult and specific goals are better at driving performance than easy ambiguous ones, and a set goal, versus no goal, will increase performance over 90% of the time (Gomez-Minambres, 2012; Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991, 2006, 2013). Because time is a dimension of goal setting, pressure to perform can be created which can adversely affect ethical customer-oriented selling (Welsh & Ordonez, 2015). Goal-setting is related to AL as AL seeks to balance performance with values.

Cited pitfalls of goal setting. Lock and Latham (2006) transparently addressed potential pitfalls with goal setting, one of which included the potential for dishonesty, especially when money was tied to making goals. To create an ethical climate while driving performance through goal setting, their recommendation was strong ethical leadership setting the example and zero tolerance for unethical behavior through terminations (Locke & Latham, 2006). But, as Wells Fargo learned after 5,300 terminations in five years, there may be more to creating an ethical climate than terminating the offenders (McCoy, 2016; Verschoor, 2016). Locke and Latham (2006) also addressed complexity and time pressure as additional pitfalls because when complex tasks are combined with time pressure to perform without allowing time for learning, too high a

goal can harm performance. Cited in Locke and Latham's (2013) book, *New developments in goal-setting and task performance*, Kerr and LePelley (2013) noted pitfalls associated with stretch goals, specifically, but did not mention any relationship to unethical behavior. Thus, this study aims to add to goal setting theory with more attention given to unethical sales practices. It has been found that AL can moderate performance drive and ethical climate through participative goals and accountability (George, 2003).

Other task-based motivation theories. In addition to goal-setting theory, this study will seek to apply concepts from self-determination theory, expectancy-value theory, and social cognition theory, all task-based motivation theories (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Self-determination theory describes the basic human needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness and the effects of these not being met (Deci & Ryan, 2002). It also discusses how internalization of external control factors are possible, thereby, preserving the autonomy need, however, it has been found that when external factors are considered controlling, like an ethical code, intrinsic motivation is diminished (Deci & Ryan, 2002). The cost factors involved with expectancy-value theory are most applicable to this study, especially emotional depletion experienced while completing an overly difficult task (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Flake, Barron, Hulleman, McCoach, & Welsh, 2015). Social cognition motivation theory focuses on self-efficacy as a primary motivating factor when completing a task as well as the human's ability to adapt, and this is important in performance management (Bandura, 2002). These theories related to AL's ability to create employee commitment through empowerment (George, 2003).

Motivation theory of universal human values. Unlike spirituality values, Schwartz (1994) asserted there are 10 universal human values. With the help of other researchers, Schwartz et al. (2012) later expanded the list of 10 to 19 universal human values. He placed

these universal values on a continuum as some values conflict as opposites on the continuum like self-enhancing values versus self-transcendence values for example (Schwartz, 1994). Values are important intrinsically-motivating factors in humans which adds support to this study, especially as it relates to concepts like customer orientation, or placing others' needs above one's own discussed next (Valenzuela, Mulki, & Jaramillo, 2010). It especially relates to AL's value-centeredness theme in balancing performance drive (George, 2003).

CO and ethical sales practice. Customer orientation (CO) involves forming strong, loyal customer relationships by focusing on serving the customer's needs and keeping them satisfied over a long period of time (Valenzuela et al., 2010). The most studied and important CO trait in the literature is trust, where customers must trust their salespeople, and salespeople must trust their leadership to create long-term customer and firm value by avoiding ethical breaches (Agnihotri & Krush, 2015; Alrubaiee, 2012; Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Bradford, Crant, & Phillips, 2009; Chen & Mau, 2009; DeConinck, 2011; Friend, Hamwi, & Rutherford, 2011; Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Schwepker & Good, 2010; Schwepker & Schultz, 2012; Wood, Whelan, Sogo, & Wong, 2013). According to the problem background of this study (i.e., the ethical sales practice breaches in Wells Fargo, AT&T, and T-Mobile retail stores) and per the literature, CO can be linked to ethical sales practices ("Key findings," 2017; Valenzuela et al., 2010). There is no universal definition of ethical sales practice and it is generally defined as actions "perceived as right and wrong" by one person in relationship to another (Chen & Mau, 2009, p. 61). Goad and Jaramillo (2014) asserted CO is founded on the moral premise of concern for another over oneself, and per Ivan (2014) and Madhani (2014), integrity and ethical sales practices are the foundations of long-term customer relationships. The literature links CO with ethical sales practices by describing CO as doing what is best for the customer at all times,

“protecting their interests,” never selling a product customers do not want or need, truthfully giving customers all the information needed to make purchase decisions, and generally, going the “extra mile” to ensure customers are satisfied (Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Ivan, 2014; “Key findings,” 2017; Valenzuela et al., 2010, p. 277). George (2003) asserted that the PMS can be balanced when the passion to serve customers dominates the value system of the firm.

Stretch goals. According to Sitkin et al. (2011), stretch goals have been considered an excellent strategic management tool to disrupt complacency and stimulate innovation. Sitkin et al. (2011) defined stretch goals as “an organizational goal with an objective probability of attainment that may be unknown but is seemingly impossible given current capabilities” (p. 547). But, research has shown some pitfalls with stretch goal setting. Markovitz (2012) cited three major pitfalls with stretch goal setting, one of which was deceiving customers. A Schwepker and Good (2012) study found that “quota difficulty” negatively impacted the “moral judgment” of financial service salespeople (p. 440). They also found that salespeople, operating under an outcome-based control system versus a behavior-based system, behaved less ethically, especially toward customers (Schwepker & Good, 2012). And, Zhang and Jia (2013) found a significant relationship between stretch goals and both unethical behavior and relationship conflict within teams in Chinese banking. Thus, this study aims to add to the existing research by seeking insights about how stretch goals affect selling behavior and their effect on employee commitment to customer orientation, a primary construct of AL (George, 2003).

Time pressure. Although there is a paucity of research on this subject, a public administration literature review by Belle and Cantarelli (2017) found that time pressure to perform had a significant relationship with unethical behavior in general. Ordonez and Welsh (2014) found that the number of consecutive goal periods negatively moderated goal structure

and ethical behavior over time. In other words, ethics deplete over the number of assigned goal periods which is related to the “how much by when” definition of this study. Related to expectancy-value motivation theory, emotional depletion is a legitimate cost while achieving a goal (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). In a qualitative study by Al-Saggaf, Burmeister, and Weckert (2015), pressure to perform was inductively discovered as an antecedent to unethical behavior in the Australian information and communications technology industry. But, this is a significant gap in the research that will be addressed in this study. Also, this study seeks to understand how AL affects emotional depletion.

Ethical decision-making and climate theory. Ethical decision-making theory includes (a) individual factors such as gender, personality, emotional mood and others; (b) organizational factors such as ethical code, ethical climate, rewards, sanctions, and others; and (c) moral intensity factors like social consensus (Craft, 2013; Lehnert, Park & Singh, 2015). The most practical ethical decision-making theory research for this study relates to organizational factors that make up a company’s ethical climate or culture, such as ethical codes, ethical leadership, norms and values, rewards and punishment, and managerial behavior (Craft, 2013; Lehnert et al., 2015; McClaren, 2013). This study focuses on ethical codes because although Wells Fargo, AT&T, and T-Mobile had an enforced code evidenced by many terminations, unethical selling was still prolific and problematic (Augustyn, 2017; “Key findings, 2017; McCoy, 2016; Meyer, 2018; “T-Mobile,” 2013). This study seeks to confirm if AL can positively affect the ethical climate of a retail frontline telecommunication store.

Ethical codes of conduct research. Hill and Rapp (2014) noted several pitfalls with how most organizations currently adopt codes of ethics including that few organizations have been able to create “processes for uncovering and articulating wider values” (p. 622). They also

asserted that organizations tend to implement codes of ethics in an elitist top-down fashion to regulate the rank and file (Hill & Rapp, 2014). Kaptein (2011) found empirically that the mere existence of an ethical program, such as a code, does not negatively impact unethical behavior. He further asserted that it requires an ethical culture that includes ethical role modeling of both management and supervisors, ethical behavior capability, ethical commitment, openness to discuss ethics issues, and reinforcement of ethical behavior (Kaptein, 2011). The dimension that is most related to this study is capability to behave ethically because salespeople under pressure to meet stretch goals may not have been capable to behave ethically. But, AL may prove to be more effective than ethical codes by creating employee commitment and improved organizational citizenship behavior (Edú-Valsania et al., 2016; Malik & Lochan Dhar, 2017; Mehmood et al., 2016; Raguz & Zekan, 2016; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2014; Wong & Laschinger, 2013; Zhou et al., 2014).

Biblical worldview philosophical assumption. This study assumes a Biblical worldview when approaching the problem and research questions of the study. This assumption relates to the study in three ways. First, the Bible has much to say about how moral disengagement and deviance comes from within humans as self-regulated beings, and the role of self is important to motivation theories and individual factors of ethical decision-making (Locke & Latham, 1991, 2013; MacDougall, Martin, Bagdasarov, & Mumford, 2014). Secondly, the Bible would support customer orientation and building long lasting relationships over short-term gains from an over-weighted selling orientation. Jesus taught, “love thy neighbor as thyself” (Mark 12:31, KJV). Third, the Bible fully supports internal values-centeredness from within the individual over the external regulation of an ethical code, not that a code cannot influence internal values. The new covenant made with Israel in Jeremiah 31:33 (KJV) states, “But this

shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts.” Because Israel failed at keeping the external regulation of the law given by the Mosaic covenant (i.e., old covenant), God made a new covenant through Jesus Christ meant to guide believers from within through a changed heart (Jeremiah 31:32; Luke 22:20, KJV). These three Biblical principles related positively to AL dimensions.

Definition of Terms

Authentic leadership (AL): Although the focus of the study will be on the balance between being values-centered and performance driven for which AL strives, identifying AL by its various dimensions will be necessary. The four major dimensions of AL, according to Cerro, dos Santos Mendes Monico, dos Santos, Hutz, and Pais (2016), are relational transparency, morals/ethics, balanced processing, and self-awareness. Relational transparency means the leader presents their genuine self to followers without modifications; morality and ethics of the leader means they lead with strong values and high standards; balanced processing means the leader considers others when making decisions; and self-awareness means the leader understands their own abilities and how they relate to others (Cerro et al., 2016).

Stretch goals: The definition of “stretch goal” in this study is from Sitkin et al. (2011, p. 547) who defined it as “an organizational goal with an objective probability of attainment that may be unknown but is seemingly impossible given current capabilities.” Baron, Mueller, and Wolfe (2016, p. 55) studied the effects of goals considered “unattainable,” which could serve as another definition of the term. Obviously, per goal setting theory, the difficulty of the goal will partially depend on the skills and ability of the participant (Locke & Latham, 1991, 2013).

Ethical selling and customer orientation: The literature equates ethical selling with customer orientation. Ethical selling was defined by Shadab (2015) as an exchange that is perceived as fair and just and results in a favorable perception from the customer. Further, a more detailed definition of ethical selling included meeting the needs of customers, truthfully giving all information needed by customers for decision-making and explaining benefits to customers without pressuring them (Madhani, 2014). According to Shadab (2015) and Madhani (2014), it is impossible to separate ethical selling from customer perception. Ethical selling involves a level of trust between a salesperson and customer (Chen & Mau, 2009; McClaren, 2013; Shadab, 2012; Valenzuela et al., 2010). Thus, unethical selling involves any salesperson behavior that erodes or eliminates that trust. When comparing descriptions of ethical sales behavior by Hansen and Riggle (2009) and Shadab (2012), unethical selling practices are unfair, unjust, and not in the customer's best interest. Thus, the literature has found it is nearly impossible to separate ethical selling from customer orientation.

Managerial time pressure: Time pressure was defined generally by Garling, Gamble, Fors, and Hjerm (2016) as “the difference between the amount of required and available time at disposal for performing an activity” (p. 1790). In the case of this study, time pressure will be related to the achievement of sales goals which could be defined as “how much by when” supervision. Ordonez and Welsh (2015) described these types of goals as “performance goals” where a specific outcome is expected within a specific time-period (p. 93). For example, a mobile phone salesperson may be required to open 10 new lines in a week or a month or a quarter, and a weekly goal would be considered greater time pressure than a quarterly goal.

Assumptions

Stretch goals. In this qualitative study, it is assumed that some retail mobile phone stores from which salespeople will be interviewed will have stretch goals. Another major assumption will be that those participating will be similar in ability. But, due to differences in ability, if a goal is considered nearly impossible to one participant at a particular company, it may not be to all at that company. As a demographical factor, years of salesperson experience will be asked in the interview to gauge experience of the salesperson being interviewed.

Unethical selling. The other main assumption in this study is that participants will admit to unethical behavior, or at least, having witnessed unethical behavior. Fortunately, in a qualitative study, interview questions can be generalized and not specific to the individual. This should help solve for a salesperson having to admit personally to unethical selling.

Biblical integration. The Biblical integration in this study philosophically assumes the Bible is true and without error as the very Word of God. It is also assumed that God is the Holy Creator of the universe who defines right and wrong in that universe. It should be noted the findings learned in the academic literature about ethical codes, value-based leadership, and customer orientation align well with already existing Biblical principles. This fact will be verified in the Biblical Integration section of the literature review and study.

Store behavior. Because only large mobile telecommunication companies with the most stores in North Atlanta, GA are being targeted for salesperson interviews, it is assumed they behave similarly with similar sales cultures amongst each other and other retail organizations like banks or department stores. A retail bank leader and a telecommunications salesperson, known to the author, both agreed that retail mobile telecommunications and banking recruit from each other due to similarities in their PMS. But, this cannot be verified due to preserving

participants' anonymity. To create a safe environment for each participant, who employs the participant will not be recorded. It is also assumed that all stores included in the study will have a sales culture that includes sales goals. However, the study design should be able to relate the existence of stretch goals and time pressure to the ethical climate of individual stores.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is that only the four most recognized mobile telecommunication carriers, both corporate and third-party dealers, in North Atlanta, GA are being included because they have the most stores. Each company, as a case study unit, will have different leadership and operate differently, and if one company does not use sales goals, for example, to help measure store performance, it may not be immediately apparent in the interview. Not all telecom employers will cooperate and agree to participate. Also, while it was desirable to recruit participants from both telecommunications and banking, the banking industry was found to be so concerned with confidentiality, it was impossible to recruit participants from that industry. Finally, even after taking extraordinary steps to protect the human subjects in this study, an additional limitation is asking participants about their leadership and witnessed unethical behavior. Unethical behavior data may be better collected by experimental means versus an interview, and this is disclosed as a potential major limitation to this study (Ordonez, Schweitzer, Galinsky, & Bazerman, 2009).

Delimitations

Although the population and sample are considered adequate for data saturation, the study is bound to the most recognized telecommunication brands, Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, and T-Mobile located in greater North Atlanta, GA. It is also bound to retail stores only, and each company will operate their stores differently, including both corporate and dealers..

Significance of Study

Reduction of gaps. Two primary foci for reducing gaps are related to authentic leadership's ability, through values-centeredness and increased employee commitment to perform ethically and at a high level, to balance PMS. This study includes factors like goals, time pressure, ethical codes, and others that affect ethical selling that will also serve to reduce gaps in the literature. What motivates or emotionally depletes retail salespeople will help support findings and reduce gaps in AL research.

Authentic leadership and code of ethics. Authentic leadership has been found to lower organizational deviance due to its ability to invoke trust, which in turn, is positively related to employee performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors ("Authentic," 2014; Coxen et al., 2016; Hannah et al., 2011; Jin & Hahm, 2017; Leigh, 2014; Penger & Cerne, 2014; Stander, de Beer, & Stander, 2015; Valsania, León, Alonso, & Cantisano, 2012). The effects of AL on the culture of a company have been found to be very positive, especially on the psychological capital of employees, which in turn, fosters self-efficacy, optimism, perseverance, and hope (Bouckennooghe, Zafar, & Raja, 2015; Joo & Jun Jo, 2017; Malik & Lochan Dhar, 2017; Munyaka, Boshoff, Pietersen, & Snelgar, 2017; Olaniyan & Hystad, 2016; Rego, Sousa, Marques, & Pina e Cunha, 2012). Per George (2003), AL fosters a values-centered and performance driven culture with a deeper sense of organizational commitment from employees which also fosters extra-role and knowledge sharing behavior (Edú-Valsania et al., 2016; Hirst, Walumbwa, Aryee, Butarbutar, & Hui Chen, 2016; Mehmood et al., 2016; Raguz & Zekan, 2016). This study means to advance the relationship of AL to ethical behavior, specifically sales practices. Ethical codes have been found to contribute "modestly" to an ethical climate, and there has been some evidence in the literature that codes do

not encourage deeper and wider ethical values (Hill & Rapp, 2014; Kaptein, 2011, p. 233). This study seeks to add to this literature to advance the notion that espoused values are more effective than the presence and enforcement of an ethical code externally regulated. This is further supported by motivation theories.

Imbalanced PMS in the literature. Gruman and Saks (2011) reported that less than one third of employees feel their company's PMS helps them improve, and performance management consistently rates low on employee engagement surveys. Overly demanding, or stretch, sales quotas or goals have been positively related to unethical behavior (Markovitz, 2012; Niven & Healy, 2016; Ojikutu, Obalola, & Omoteso, 2012; Ordonez et al., 2009; Starbird & Cavanagh, 2011; Zhang & Jia, 2013). One study found that sales goal difficulty was negatively related to trust in organization leading to lower sales performance, and the same study found that trust in organization was an important motivator of customer-oriented selling (Schwepker & Good, 2012). Much literature exists about how financial incentives can distract moral engagement leading to unethical behavior and other problems with both customer facing sales people and executives (Carmichael, 2017; Grover & Hui, 2005; Ims, Pedersen, & Zsolnai, 2014; Latham & Locke, 2006; Madhani, 2014). But, there are many less studies about how stretch goals and time pressure, specifically, affect ethical behavior. The Belle and Cantarelli (2017) recent and comprehensive meta-analysis and literature review, drawn from 137 experiments and 73 articles, on the antecedents to unethical behavior cited greed as the second most studied. But, goal setting and time pressure were ranked as the least studied amongst the 12 antecedents found in the meta-analysis (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017). This study seeks to add to the current literature regarding stretch goals and time pressure effects on ethical sales practices.

Implications for Biblical Integration

Internal leading versus external regulation. Just prior to his crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus made an amazing spiritual promise to His followers as follows:

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you will also live. In that day, you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and *I in you*. (John 14:18-20, ESV)

As mediator of the new covenant, Jesus fulfilled the new covenant promise made through the prophet, Jeremiah:

For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord; I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jeremiah 31:33, ESV)

Later in the same conversation with His followers, Jesus explained why He was leaving to be with His Father as follows:

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper [promised in Jeremiah 31:33] will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you. (John 16:7, ESV, brackets mine)

The “house of Israel” had failed at keeping the old conditional covenant delivered to Moses, a list of external regulations, and Jesus ushered in a new way. Back in Jeremiah 31, prior to promising an indwelling of the Holy Spirit as a guide, God said this about the new covenant, “not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:32, ESV). God clearly desires to guide, help, and lead His followers internally, not externally which integrates well with AL and self-determination theory

(Deci & Ryan, 2002; George, 2003). According to the Bible, internal espoused values are more effective than external regulation, and this study seeks to examine this relationship further in business performance settings.

Consequences of unethical behavior. Self-regulation and self-efficacy have much to do with goal setting theory and other task-based motivation theory (Locke & Latham, 1991, 2002; de Brabander & Martens, 2014). The Bible has much to say about issues with self, especially its inclination in a process described by James in his epistle, “But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived, gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death” (James 1:14-15, ESV). According to James, this process described as “sin,” or the transgression of God’s best for us, leads to destructive harm of the person themselves or those around them. Thus, just as unethical sales practices led to stakeholder harm in the cases of this study’s foundation, all sinful practice leads to harm of someone. When pressure is applied through stretch goals, time pressure, or other factors, it is postulated the selfish process described in James will ultimately lead to unethical behavior for multiple self-reasons such as self-preservation, self-promotion, and others.

Neighborly love and customer orientation (CO). Jesus was clear about how people should love one another, simply putting others’ needs above our own, when he commanded us, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27, KJV). This was the exact description of a customer selling orientation by Saxe and Weitz (1982) when they described CO as a concern for others and going the extra mile to meet customers’ needs.

Relationship to Field of Study

This study relates to the field of leadership in many ways. An authentic leader, Bill George (2003), felt that senior leadership was critical at uniting an organization behind a strong

vision through a strong values-centered and performance driven culture. This study will advance what is known about the benefits of authentic leadership, specifically, as well as values-based leadership, generally, in organizations. Leaders must ensure their performance management systems are balanced and healthy to all stakeholders, not just the shareholder.

Review of the Professional and Academic Research

The professional and academic literature, related to how authentic leadership (AL) can create a balanced and ethical performance management system, through values-centeredness and performance drive, contains many elements and theories to review. There is much literature about authentic leadership (AL) and its motivating effects on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and commitment, but how it moderates ethical behavior, specifically, is lacking in the literature. AL, based on the George (2003) book, addresses the practical prioritization of stakeholders when balancing values and performance. A major consideration to review in the literature is the customer orientation connection with ethical sales practices in relationship to authentic leadership and motivation theory of human values. In addition to the motivation theory of human values, other task-based motivation theories, like self-determination theory, expectancy-value theory, social cognition theory, and goal-setting theory, will be explored to support AL's balanced effects on a firm's performance management system (PMS). Ethical codes, imposed stretch goals, and time pressure are extrinsic control factors, as discussed in self-determination theory, and, in contrast to AL dimensions, these are explained as potential unethical behavior related factors. Thus, values-based authentic leadership appealing to intrinsic values of employees, ethical code as an extrinsic regulatory control, and customer orientation as an intrinsic and transcendent human value are the primary points of Biblical integration in the study. Summarily, the goal of this review is to identify any related gaps in the academic

literature, especially about how these elements relate to AL's ability to balance an organization's performance management system and ethical culture. It begins with AL theory.

Authentic Leadership (AL) in Organizations

Theory description. “Many scholars regard leadership as the key to organizational sustainability” because it is critical at “improving management development and sustained competitive advantage for organizational performance” (Suriyankietkaew, 2013, p. 177). Since George's book, *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the secrets creating lasting value*, was published in 2003, there has been a plethora of research about AL. AL has been described generally as acting according to one's own deep personal values and being true to one's convictions, which builds trust and credibility with followers (Weischer, Weibler, & Petersen, 2013). Being “true to self,” which George (2003) described as “being your own person,” is a key dimension of self-awareness and self-regulation, which is remaining true to one's internal values when taking action (p. 12; as cited in Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Feldman, Chao, Farh, & Bardi, 2015; Roof, 2014; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008; Wang et al., 2014; Weischer et al., 2013, p. 477; Xiong, Lin, Li, & Wang, 2016, p. 831). After all, citing Schwartz (1994), Feldman et al. (2015) asserted human values are “central to self” (p. 69). Authentic leaders do not shy from transparently sharing their core values and beliefs, promoting morality and positivity, while behaving consistently, which builds followers' trust in their leadership, positive psychological capital, and organizational commitment (Azanza, Moriano, Molero, & Lévy Mangin, 2015; Jin & Hahm, 2017; Leroy, Palanski, & Simons, 2012; Semedo, Coelho, & Ribeiro, 2016; Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Wang et al., 2014; Xiong et al., 2016). While authentic leaders have a strong sense of vision, or purpose, they also have a strong sense of responsibility to their followers, customers, and the organization, and inauthentic leaders may have a vision but

can be self-serving, even sacrificing followers and other stakeholders to accomplish their vision (Nichols & Erakovich, 2013). After George's 2003 book was published, Avolio and Gardner (2005) further developed the theory and asserted, "Our central premise is that through increased self-awareness, self-regulation, and positive modeling, authentic leaders foster the development of authenticity in followers" (p. 317). In turn, followers' authenticity contributes to their well-being and the attainment of sustainable and veritable performance. Much of the research has been dedicated to AL's more specific dimensions and traits, which is important when describing AL, but George (2003) also emphasized AL's ability to create a values-centered and performance driven culture.

AL dimensions and traits. Most research cites at least four primary dimensions of AL starting with *self-awareness*, which is knowing one's self, strengths, weaknesses, values, and beliefs, then acting consistently and transparently, withstanding pressure to act otherwise (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cervo et al., 2016; Hirst et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016; Weischer et al., 2013; Xiong et al., 2016). A second dimension found in the research is *relational transparency* which means to "present one's true self to others," openly sharing information and thoughts about a subject, while being unpretentious and "minimizing inappropriate emotions" (Cervo et al., 2016; Coxen et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016, p. 203; Weischer et al., 2013, p. 478). A third dimension in the literature is *internal moral perspective*, a form of self-regulation, which is behavior and decision making that is consistent with internal values, protecting against group think and other "societal pressures" (Coxen et al., 2016; Hirst et al., 2016; Men, 2014; Northouse, 2016; Weischer et al., 2013, p. 478). A fourth dimension of AL is *balanced processing* which is objectivity and thoroughness in gathering all relevant data, inviting perspectives from others, prior to drawing a conclusion in decision-making (Hirst et al., 2016; Men, 2014; Wong &

Laschinger, 2013). Important to this study, the authentic leader “has a specific moral dimension,” sets high ethical standards, and role models these behaviors to create an ethical culture (Northouse, 2016, p. 206; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). Authentic leaders facilitate high quality relationships, invoking trust and optimism from their followers by being relatable and approachable and by encouraging followers to engage with them and the organization (Malik & Lochan Dahr, 2017; Wong & Laschinger, 2013).

Mediating and moderating role of psychological capital (PC). Research has focused on AL’s ability to increase PC amongst followers which is usually comprised of four dimensions – self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency (Munyaka et al., 2017; Northouse, 2016; Olaniyan & Hystad, 2016; Wang et al., 2014; Zubair & Kamal, 2015). PC means employees have the *self-efficacy, or confidence*, to take on difficult challenging goals, are *optimistic* about being successful now and in the future, are *hopeful* at persevering toward goals, redirecting their path to the goal if necessary, and are *resilient* at overcoming obstacles, even failures, by rebounding to sustain performance (Munyaka et al., 2017; Northouse, 2016; Olaniyan & Hystad, 2016; Rego et al., 2012). Recently, Joo and Jun Jo (2017) found a positive link between perceived AL in supervisors and psychological empowerment of followers, another intrinsic element involving self-efficacy, self-regulation, and further, self-determination toward accomplishing organizational goals. Munyaka et al. (2017) found that PC mediated the relationships between AL and team commitment as well as AL and reduced turn-over intention (TI). Olaniyan and Hystad (2016) found that PC mediated the relationship of AL with increased employee job satisfaction, reduced job insecurity, and reduced TI. Zubair and Kamal (2015) and Rego et al. (2012) found that PC mediated the relationship between AL and employee innovation and creativity. Wang et al. (2014) found that PC moderated the relationship between AL and

employee performance through positive leader-member relationships. Because AL encourages followers to share the leader's values, the leader's integrity and trust in the leader, together forming a psychological contract, were a critical mediating factor between AL and the intrinsic motivator of psychological empowerment and other positive organizational behaviors (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Joo & Jun Jo, 2017; Olaniyan & Hystad, 2016; Zubair & Kamal, 2015). One of those beneficial organizational behaviors is increased affective commitment (AC).

AL and affective commitment (AC). AL has been found to benefit organizational performance through other various mediators. For example, Leroy et al. (2012), Ribeiro et al. (2018), Jin and Hahm (2018), Gatling et al. (2016), and Semedo et al. (2016) found that AL was positively linked to organizational commitment (OC), especially employee affective commitment (AC). In a study by Xiong et al. (2016), AL moderated the positive relationship of trust in supervisor and AC whereas the relationship was stronger with greater AL influence. AC is important because it means the employees are accepting of the strategy, values, and goals of the organization through an emotional bond, and AC has been found to increase individual work role performance, lower TI, and increase organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB; Delić et al., 2017; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). OCBs, like extra-role behavior, helping behavior, and knowledge sharing, are related to the learning organization, which according to Delic et al. (2012), is significant at sustaining a competitive advantage over time (Coxen et al., 2016; Edú-Valsania et al., 2016; Hirst et al., 2016; Malik & Lochan Dhar, 2017; Raguz & Zekan, 2016; Valsania et al., 2012). This finding by Delic et al. (2012), supported by others, is important to this study in that OCBs and other benefits from an AL driven culture could be a sustaining force in an organization's PMS.

Other benefits of AL. Other lasting positive organizational outcomes from AL found in the literature include higher employee engagement (EE), but not in a direct relationship. For example, through the mediation of trust and optimism, AL has been found to be positively linked to EE (Hsieh & Wang, 2015; Stander et al., 2015; Wang & Hsieh, 2013). Bamford, Wong, and Laschinger (2013) found that AL was positively linked to employee work engagement through the mediating effect of person-job fit according to six areas of work-life balance. Jiang and Men (2015) could not find a direct link between AL and EE, but they did find a strong positive link through the mediating effects of transparent communication and work-life enrichment. Joo, Lim, and Kim (2016) found a positive link between AL and EE through the mediating effect of PC, cited earlier in the review. Per Hsieh and Wang (2015) and Stander et al. (2015), employee work engagement produces higher quality employee behaviors, like greater effort and dedication toward goal achievement that drives improved performance. Other dimensions of goal setting theory, self-regulation and self-efficacy of teams, have been found to mediate the relationship of AL to team performance (Lyubovnikova, Legood, Turner, & Mamakouka, 2017; Xiong & Fang, 2014). Lyubovnikova et al. (2017) found that the self-regulatory dimension of team reflexivity, ability to redirect path-to-goal through learning and adaptation, improved team performance. Xiong and Fang (2014) found a direct positive relationship between AL and collective efficacy of a group, which in turn, improved group performance. AL is certainly linked to performance enhancing mediators and moderators, but this study must also understand how it is related to ethical behavior.

AL and ethical behavior. Important to this study, AL has been positively linked to ethical behavior (EB). EB was described as not only pursuing right over wrong but also internally resisting any temptation to do wrong, including pro-social behaviors, described as

going beyond self to help others, through the mediator of moral courage (Hannah et al., 2011). Hannah et al. (2011) asserted that AL directly affected moral courage through its role modeling and social behaviors related to all four of its dimensions, self-awareness, internal moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. Moral courage was defined as committing to act upon internal moral values and principles on behalf of others, even in the face of danger to oneself (Hannah et al., 2011). Erkutlu and Chafra (2013) found that AL was significantly and negatively related to organizational deviance, when unethical behavior harmed other stakeholders, through the moderating effects of employee trust and psychological contract violation. Their study found that the negative relationship with organizational deviance was a result of high quality leader-member relationships (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013). Related to extrinsic reward systems, Tang and Liu (2012) found that those employees with high love-of-money orientation but a supervisor with high authenticity and integrity had the lowest unethical intentions in their study. This would suggest that even when extrinsic rewards are present, an authentic supervisor can still invoke high ethical behavior. Related to ethical decision-making theory, Cianci et al. (2014) found that AL “significantly inhibited individuals from making unethical decisions in the face of temptation, whereas followers of neutral or less authentic leaders were more likely to succumb to temptation” (p. 581). Temptation was defined by Cianci et al. (2014) as any incentive that could influence the ethical decision-making of one trying to achieve a goal or a reward. While both internal and external factors can affect unethical behavior, George (2003) seemed most concerned about the internal through a values-centered culture.

Balancing values and performance. While ethical codes and rewards are externally motivating by nature, the ability of AL to motivate positive behaviors, intrinsically, is

compelling in the literature. George (2003) asserted that the most difficult organizational leadership challenge today is maintaining both a values-centered and performance driven culture “simultaneously,” a balanced PMS, that requires “skillful leadership” (p. 71). This review has studied what the literature has to say about AL and its ability to promote a performing ethical climate through various mediators and moderators, but it will now focus on its ability to balance the PMS through values-centeredness and performance drive.

Values centeredness according to Bill George. George (2003) claimed that “values-centeredness” is founded on telling the truth with integrity, meaning transparently and openly, including both success and failure, communicated both internally and externally, while meeting the needs of all stakeholders, not just shareholders (p. 71). A values-centered company collaboratively invites diverse opinions and perspectives with a “spirit of inquiry” which challenges people to meet their fullest potential (George, 2003, p. 71). Finally, leadership must maintain consistency and integrity with how they live out these values by continually reinforcing them through action at all levels of management, not through lip service to an ethical code of conduct (George, 2003). At Medtronic, either George, the CEO, or the founder of the company, participated in every new employee medallion ceremony where they learned of the company’s purpose and values prior to receiving a “medallion symbolizing the company’s mission” (George, 2003, p. 72). When the highest senior leaders are involved in teaching each new employee the vision and values of the company in-person, the importance of values-centeredness is certainly emphasized. In addition to George, other literature stresses the importance of values in leadership.

Other values-based leadership literature. How people experience a leader will determine how people will connect to them and their value system (Frost, 2014). Leaders can

influence others' values in three ways: (a) internalization – when a person adopts the value as their own; (b) compliance – with respect to a leader's power, a value is accepted; and (c) identification – acceptance of a value by identifying with another (Williams, Novicevic, & Ammeter, 2015). A values-based approach to leadership is considered necessary to advance a sustainable strategy by not only accounting for the creation of shareholder value (financial) but also social and ecological values (non-financial; Krzakiewicz, 2012; Peterlin, Pearse, & Dimovski, 2015). Tracy (2015) asserted values are foundational and should precede strategy emphasizing strategic planning should not begin without first understanding what one stands for or against, and “most successful companies in America are those that are crystal clear about their values” (p. 54). Although not exactly like AL, values-based leadership can be “organic,” which is less about the leader and more about the vision and values that are engrained in the organizational culture, promoting self-leadership of employees (Brown, 2014; Suriyankietkaew, 2013). Brown (2014) maintained that an organic leadership paradigm is more sustainable and oriented toward learning and innovation than a traditional mechanistic paradigm. Further, he found that organic leadership included “invisible control” through instilled values from the established vision and values of senior leadership (Brown, 2014, p. 184).

Stakeholder prioritization at Medtronic. Per George (2003), “shareholders come third,” meaning the following (p. 153):

Companies that put their customers first and empower their employees to serve them will inevitably provide greater growth in shareholder value than those corporations that focus primarily on getting their stock price up and only give lip service to other constituencies. (George, 2003, p. 153)

George (2003) believed the first purpose of an organization was to serve its customers, and the best measure of how well a company serves customers is market share. George (2003) also asserted that the leader must create an empowering climate that will enable employees to serve clients well by providing the resources, training, and support needed. Medtronic measured empowerment through an instrument that measured how closely employees felt connected to the company's mission and values (George, 2003). Finally, George (2003) felt that focusing on long-term value creation and managing shareholder short-term expectations was very challenging. He further asserted the key was to manage the shareholders and not allow them to manage him by being transparent, communicating the exact same messages inside and outside the company (George, 2003). Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory is purposely not addressed by this study as it pertains to social justice and other ethical issues less related to practical balanced performance management of an organization.

Performance drive according to Bill George. The reason why being values-centered is so challenging when striving for peak performance is because the competition typically takes a "win at any cost" approach (George, 2003, p. 76). According to George (2003) a "passionate commitment to performance" must be "incorporated into the organization's norms" because "practicing solid values does not guarantee results" (p. 76). George provided the key to balancing values with peak performance as follows:

An organization can be both values-centered and performance-driven. The key is aligning the organization's values and performance objectives. Working in complimentary fashion, practicing values and driving for performance reinforce each other and enable the creation of a great company. (George, 2003, p. 80)

For George (2003), accomplishing this took time and included a strongly realistic review of existing management talent and empowering managers responsibly by challenging their decisions with different perspectives. As George (2003) proposed, “Leaders need to develop a set of principles for each corporate value, ones that are aligned with the organization’s vision, mission, and strategic goals” (Sheehan & Isaac, 2014, p. 25). And, George (2003) believed that revenue and earnings per share growth, cash flow, and return on investment were still best at measuring company performance over time, while criticizing the short-term view of pleasing Wall Street expectations. To link his performance cultural changes to the company’s mission and values, George (2003) “framed them in terms of helping patients and winning in the marketplace,” but he had to overcome some obstacles (p. 77).

Obstacles to performance passion. Per George (2003), the first cultural obstacle he faced to add performance drive to an already strong valued-based culture was poor performance rationalization, excuses, and worse, adjusting goals downward when missed. This was cured with what George (2003) called “closed-loop performance management” which included agreeing on challenging goals then holding managers accountable to their commitments, not allowing excuses or readjusting the goal (p. 78). Another challenge facing George (2003) was the company tended to promote loyalty versus performance, but this was solved by taking a “tough-minded approach to assessing management talent” (p. 78). This was accomplished through what George (2003) referred to as “constructive conflict” with probing questions and insistence on objectivity without “sugar coating” (p. 79). Finally, George (2003) eventually instilled “empowerment with responsibility” into the management culture which meant managers were empowered in planning but could be challenged at any point by senior leadership (p. 79). Ultimately, the successful result of combining values-centeredness with performance drive at

Medtronic saw, in the 18 years from 1985-2003, annual growth rates of 18% in revenue, 22% in earnings per share, and 32% market capitalization (George, 2003, p. 202).

Other balanced performance literature. Cohen and Liu (2011) found that individual values were positively related to in-role performance, and this relationship was mediated by all three forms of OC and OCB. In other words, as one would expect, an individual's values influenced their commitment and behaviors accomplishing the expectations of their job. But, AL is focused on espoused organizational values. A study by Polychroniou and Trivellas (2018) found that a strong and balanced organizational culture, defined by the intensity of its values and low level of conflict amongst its values, will produce stronger performance internally through innovation and externally through financial results. Binder (2016) asserted that a balanced values-based strongly performing culture sets clear work output expectations while instilling strong aligned values to guide the behavior in accomplishing those outcomes. According to Binder (2016), both the work output and the value-guided behavior must be measured and monitored to ensure the alignment. Tracy (2015) claimed that companies with a set of clear, written, and shared values that everyone in the organization espoused, were consistently more profitable than companies that had values but did not communicate them clearly throughout their organizations. Further, Suriyankietkaew (2013) found that shared vision and values between leaders and employees have been proven to increase team and organizational performance as well as employee satisfaction and engagement. Task-based performance and motivation is discussed further in goal-setting and other motivation theories.

Motivation Theory

History and introduction of Motivation Theory. Motivation theory is very broad and includes a vast array of theories that have been integrated over time through a plethora of

psychological research not lacking in controversy. “During the 1930s and 1940s, motivation attained preeminent status in drive-based learning theories,” then lost favor during the 1950s and 1960s when psychological research turned its focus to cognitive structures and behaviorist views (Kanfer, 1990, p. 76; Locke & Latham, 2002). Locke and Latham (2002) asserted that motivation, as a research pursuit in the 1950s and 1960s, was disrespected by behaviorists, driven by a prevalent “anticonsciousness zertgeist,” who believed “motivation” was extrinsic only to the person through rewards and punishments (p. 705). Anticipating the “cognitive revolution,” in 1970, Ryan bucked this trend by stating “it seems a simple fact that human behavior is affected by conscious purposes, plans, intentions, tasks and the like” which has spawned additional motivation theories ever since, one of which was goal-setting theory (p. 18; as also cited by Kanfer, 1990; Locke & Latham, 2002, p. 705). Three other task-specific motivation theories related to this study are self-determination theory, defining intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, developed by Deci and Ryan (1985); expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation developed by Wigfield and Eccles (2000); and social cognition theory, focusing on self-efficacy versus expectancy, developed by Bandura (1977 as cited by de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Finally, related to this study’s consideration of AL and ethical sales practices, the motivation theory of human values, developed by Schwartz (1994), will be explored to see how values influence ethical decision making while performing a task or accomplishing a goal. Due to its massive influence on organizational behavior and task-based motivation literature, goal-setting theory is studied extensively next.

History of goal setting theory. Edwin Locke and Gary Latham, industrial-organizational psychologists, began their journey inductively formulating goal-setting theory, as part of a “cognitive revolution” in task-based motivation theory, with a single research question

in 1967 (Locke & Latham, 2002, p. 705; Latham & Locke, 2007; Locke & Latham, 2013). Studying logger's productivity, the original research question was, "Does goal setting affect one's performance on a task?" (Gomez-Minambres, 2012; Landers, Bauer, & Callan, 2017; Latham & Locke, 2007, p. 290). Locke and Latham have continued working together and with others for 50 years building and developing this "open-ended" motivational organizational theory (Latham & Locke, 2007, p. 290, 2009, p. 22). Prior to studies of Locke and Latham, there had existed several "ad hoc" academic attempts at forming a solid theoretical framework for how goal setting affects performance (Latham & Locke, 2007, p. 290; also cited in Neubert & Dyck, 2016). After "some 400" empirical and experimental studies in labs and the field, Locke and Latham first presented their comprehensive theory in their 1990 book, *A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance* (Locke & Latham, 2006, p. 263, 2013). Prior to 1990, the theory had been extensively tested for internal and external validity using 88 different tasks with more than 40,000 men and women subjects from four different continents – Asia, Australia, Europe, and North America (Locke & Latham, 1990, 2006). Between 1990 and 2013, an additional 600 studies, or about 1,000 total, had been conducted further developing the theory (Locke & Latham, 2013). According to Pinder (1998), it can be argued that goal setting theory is one of the most rigorous organizational behavioral theories ever developed (as cited in Locke & Latham, 2009). Per Miner (2003), among 73 theories reviewed, goal setting theory was considered the most important organizational theory by organizational behaviorists (as cited in Neubert & Dyck, 2016).

Description of goal setting theory. "Goal setting theory is based on the simplest of introspective observations, namely, that conscious human behavior is purposeful . . . regulated by the individual's goals" (Latham & Locke, 1991, p. 212; Locke & Latham, 1990). Importantly,

the intentional “operationalized” application of the theory has been to “predict, explain, and influence” organizational and task-based performance (Hazen, Overstreet, Hall, Huscroft, & Hanna, 2015, p. 161; Locke & Latham, 2002, p. 705). Because human beings possess the greatest reasoning capacity to set goals cognitively for long-term purposes, they are most adept at choosing what is best for their own personal welfare (Locke & Latham, 1991; Neubert & Dyck, 2016). In doing so, individuals set goals to achieve a perceived benefit, decide on which means are best at attaining such goals, and, must choose to act based on these cognitions (Belciug et al., 2016; Locke & Latham, 1991; Landers et al., 2017; Moon, Yun, & McNamee, 2016). Goals are future valued outcomes, which means goal setting is attempting to bridge the gap, motivationally, between a discontented present state and a desired future state to increase satisfaction (Alispahic, 2013; Landers et al., 2017; Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991, 2006). Self-evaluation and self-regulation play large roles in the goal performance effect (Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991; Martin, McNally, & Taggar, 2016). Discussed later, these important elements of goal-setting theory are integrated in certain aspects of motivation theory, namely self-determination and expectancy. In organizations, this process of self-evaluation, self-determination, and self-regulation improves a worker’s performance toward set goals. Locke and Latham (2002) found the probability of a set goal increasing an individual’s performance on a task is greater than 90% (also cited in Gomez-Minambres, 2012).

Performance enhancing content characteristics. According to the theory established by Locke and Latham (1990, 1991), two primary goal attributes were studied in relationship with performance, content and intensity (as cited in Demirkol & Nalla, 2017). Goal content refers to the future outcome being sought (i.e., increase revenues by 10%), and goal intensity refers to the required effort to set the goal, how important the goal is to the individual, and the level of

commitment required to achieve it (Demirkol & Nalla, 2017; Locke & Latham, 1991, 2013). In 1967, Locke found a linear relationship between degree of goal difficulty and a participant's performance at a task, and further, those with the highest set goals performed 250% better than those with the least difficult goals (Locke & Latham, 2013). Individuals generally adjust their level of effort to the degree of goal difficulty to a point depending on certain moderators - the individual's ability and commitment, feedback received during pursuit of goal, situational constraints, and the task's complexity (Locke & Latham, 1991, 2007). In addition to difficulty, specific goals, in contrast to ambiguous "do your best" goals, will enhance both individual and group performance (Landers et al., 2017, p. 510; Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991, p. 215, 2007, 2013; Neubert & Dyck, 2016, p. 308). Per Locke and Latham (1991), "maximum effort is not aroused under a do your best goal" during self-evaluation of one's performance (p. 215). Arousal also integrates with motivation theory. While ambiguous goals allow for several different outcomes, specificity has been found to reduce variability in performance (Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991, 2006, 2007, 2013). Thus, generally, the more difficult and specific the goal, the better the performance (Demirkol & Nalla, 2017; Landers et al., 2017; Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991, 2007, 2013; Moon et al., 2016).

Performance enhancing intensity characteristics. While goal content relates to what comprises the actual goal, goal intensity refers to the amount of mental process required to strategize and choose how the goal can be achieved (Locke & Latham, 1991). This cognitive intensity has been found to increase commitment which is the degree of an individual's attachment to the goal, level of importance of the goal, and amount of determination in achieving the goal (Belciug et al., 2016; Demirkol & Nalla, 2017; Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991). Motivated commitment in goal setting theory has been found to be empirically related to

employee engagement which produces positive organizational outcomes (Shoaib & Kohli, 2017). Commitment is both a predictor and a moderator in goal setting theory, and a performer's strategic cognition can benefit from participative versus assigned goals (Locke & Latham, 1991). This is because, through the basic need of satisfaction, related to self-determination motivation theory, internalized motivation, like commitment, can be "reinforced" by autonomy and competence (Kanfer, 1990; Rivkin, Diestel, & Schmidt, 2018, p. 99; Onu, Oats, & Kirchler, 2018). Additionally, also part of self-determination and social cognition motivation, factors that convince a performer the goal is both possible and important will increase commitment because expectancy of success and self-efficacy are enhanced (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Demirkol & Nalla, 2017; Kanfer, 1990; Locke & Latham, 1991, 2013). Leadership can have a large impact on goal setting choices. It facilitates commitment by persuading performers to believe the goals are both possible and important, and authority in assigning goals has been found both to increase commitment and to influence autonomously choosing more difficult goals (Locke & Latham, 1991, 2013). Important to this study, persistence and effort are affected by time and complexity whereas difficult and complex tasks require more learning and may cause overly acute focus on the goal, without taking time to learn strategies to accomplish the goal, ultimately hampering performance (Locke & Latham, 2006, 2013).

Boundaries to goal directed performance enhancement. Latham, Seijts, and Slocum (2016) described four "boundary conditions" to goal specificity and difficulty performance enhancements. First, when individuals reach the limits of their ability, the goal difficulty to performance linear relationship levels off, and while people can be very motivated to achieve a goal, without adequate ability, it is unlikely to affect performance (Latham et al., 2016; Locke & Latham, 1991, 2013). Secondly, high situational constraints (i.e., limited technology, financial

resources, etc.) can limit goal achievement because they represent obstacles that can be difficult to overcome (Latham et al., 2016; Locke & Latham, 1991). Third, an individual's commitment to achieving a difficult goal is typically low when the first two boundaries of ability and situational resources are low, and in fact, without commitment, the goal has essentially been rejected (Latham et al., 2016). This relates to expectancy-value motivation theory discussed later whereas costs, like emotional depletion, hampers motivation (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Unfortunately, it has been found that supervisors often misdiagnose low ability and situational constraints as low commitment which can result in abusive tactics on employees (Latham et al., 2016). Finally, objective feedback, or "goal intervention" like a leaderboard, before, during, and at the achievement of a goal is necessary for a difficult goal to enhance performance (Landers et al., 2017, p. 509; Latham et al., 2016).

Goal orientation, complexity, learning and satisfaction. Per Locke and Latham (1991, 2006), trying for specific, challenging, and complex goals without adequate training, especially, when the task is heuristic and there is immediate pressure to perform, can harm performance. When salespeople are not given time to learn appropriate strategies to meet challenging and complex goals, an over focus on the goals, or "tunnel vision," will harm performance (Locke & Latham, 1991, 2006, p. 266). This study will seek to answer its research questions by discovering, in addition to harming performance, if these pitfalls of inadequate training and pressure cause salespeople to be less ethical towards customers to meet their goal. This may also depend upon their goal orientation, cognitive adaptability, affective commitment, and satisfaction emotion.

Goal orientation (GO). GO addresses the challenging duality of learning and achievement while approaching goals because employees, especially salespeople, must often be

both adaptive and achievement oriented coincidentally to perform well (Domingues, Vieira, & Agnihotri, 2017). But, most will lean towards one orientation or another with a “goal preference in achievement situations” or a predisposed orientation (Lin, 2017, p. 1073; Miron-Spector & Beenen, 2015). Based in self-determination motivation theory, GO is related to how people intrinsically motivate themselves in the face of challenging goals (Miron-Spector & Beenen, 2015; Sorić, Penezić, & Burić, 2017). There are three primary GO: (a) mastery approach, also known as learning goal orientation (LGO) or learning orientation (LO); (b) performance approach, also known as performance goal orientation (PGO), performance prove goal orientation (PPGO), performance orientation (PO), or Capability-Validation (CV); and (c) performance avoidance, also known as performance avoidance goal orientation (PAGO; Goad & Jaramillo, 2014; Lin, 2017; Wood et al., 2013; Yu, Patterson, & de Ruyter, 2015). Those with an LGO are motivated to learn new skills and competencies in the face of challenging goals to master new situations, while those with PGO are outcome-focused and motivated to demonstrate their ability, especially in comparison with peers, when faced with challenging goals (Domingues et al., 2017; Lin, 2017; Yu et al., 2015). Those with PGO will sometimes view challenging goals as threatening, and performance avoidance, a variation of PGO, means individuals will avoid overly challenging situations and goals to avoid failure to preserve their image as a performer (Lin, 2017; Sorić et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2013).

Complexity and adaptation. Challenging and complex goals typically “increase the likelihood that known strategies will be used,” and strategies typically have a stronger positive relationship to performance than do specificity of goals (Locke & Latham, 1991, p. 229, 2013). Individuals require time to learn which strategies are effective at improving performance when faced with complex situations and challenging goals (Locke & Latham, 1991; Wood et al.,

2013). In fact, according to Wood et al. (2013), strategies are most often seen as a mediator of the goal-performance relationship, meaning that goals activate searching for and applying strategies while striving for a goal (Belciug et al., 2016). Miron-Spector and Beenen (2015) called this “cognitive flexibility” (p. 54). Empirical studies have found that strategies, especially those that facilitate and foster learning new skills, resoundingly and positively affect performance (Miron-Spector & Beenen, 2015; Wood et al., 2013). In a sales context, Goad and Jamarillo (2014) found that an adaptive selling orientation, the ability to listen, learn, and respond quickly to changing customer demands, mediated both selling and customer orientations when improving sales performance. As noted earlier, high situational constraints increase complexity and the need for adaptation while striving for goal performance, and new strategies must overcome the obstacles created by the constraints (Locke & Latham, 1991; Wood et al., 2013). Not surprising, per an extensive study of the relationship between GO and creative strategy development toward performance, Miron-Spector and Beenen (2015) and Wood et al. (2013) found that the LGO was much more positively related to strategy development than the other two orientations. Finally, LGO was found to be positively related to organizational performance (Che-Ha, Mavando, & Mohd-Said, 2014). Connected to this study’s research questions, stretch goals and time pressure may cause a person to develop an unethical selling strategy while striving for a goal.

Satisfaction and goal setting. Per goal setting theory, valence is “measured as expected or anticipated satisfaction with attaining each of the number of performance levels,” and there is a “negative relationship between goal level and valence” (Locke & Latham, 1991, p. 223). According to an article about task specific motivation, de Brabander and Martens (2014) asserted “affective valences are expectations about feelings while doing a task; cognitive valences are

expectations about the value of the consequences of an activity,” and both influence approach and/or avoidance motivations toward an activity (p. 27). Interestingly, Locke and Latham (1991) found that those aiming at a low goal are satisfied when they reach it and more satisfied when they exceed it, but those aiming at a high goal are minimally satisfied when reaching it but very dissatisfied when missing it, even after achieving the lower goal. In a study of security guards in Singapore, Nalla, Lim, and Demirkol (2015) found that role clarity, goal difficulty, and task significance were all positively related to job satisfaction. Goals can serve as an “inflection point” between satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Locke & Latham, 2002, p. 709). Very importantly, people with higher goals may be the least satisfied but still produce more than those with lower goals precisely because their dissatisfaction with less motivates them to achieve more (Locke & Latham, 2002). The apparent paradox between high goals and satisfaction can be explained by expectancy of intrinsic and potential extrinsic rewards such as pride in one’s accomplishments and/or future benefits such as promotion (Locke & Latham, 2002; Nalla, Lim, & Demirkol, 2015). Related to effects of satisfaction on performance, feedback, positive or negative, but mostly negative, creates emotional and cognitive reactions called attributions, and goal-performance discrepancies will affect a person’s emotions (Eberly, Liu, Mitchell, & Lee, 2013). This is related to self-regulation, self-determination motivation, and expectancy-value motivation.

Self-Regulation and goal setting theory. As a “mediator” between the goal and performance, “self-regulation is implicit in goal setting theory because the setting of goals and their translation into action is a volitional process” (Landers et al., 2017, p. 509; Locke & Latham, 1991, p. 233). In addition to volition, as noted earlier, goal-performance discrepancies also foster emotions that motivate action (Eberly et al., 2013). Negative appraisals, either self-

induced or from external feedback, will typically produce strategy development, a cognitive process, to overcome the dissatisfaction, which subsequently, will normally improve performance (Belciug et al., 2016; Locke & Latham, 1991). Referencing goal setting theory, Alispahic (2013) described this discrepancy-performance process as “incongruity” between the existing state and future ideal state which motivates one to form action plans toward the desired ideal state. Thus, from the literature, an emotion of dissatisfaction from a goal-performance discrepancy and the cognitive process of strategy development motivate action through a volitional process within the individual (Belciug et al., 2016; Eberly et al., 2013; Locke & Latham, 1991; Miron-Spector & Beenen, 2015; Wood et al., 2013). Specific hard goals are important to self-regulation because they limit the number of interpretations of acceptable performance, creating clarity for the individual to direct action (Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991). Self-efficacy, or the level of confidence or belief that one can accomplish the performance level of the goal, also has a “powerful, direct effect on performance” (Heslin & Caprar, 2013; Locke & Latham, 1991, p. 221). Cited by Kanfer (1990), Carver and Scheier stated “the concepts of motivation are essentially concepts of self-regulation” (p. 82). Thus, self, comprised of emotion, cognition, volition, and confidence, is critical to the study of goal setting theory and to this study.

Goal setting theory and performance management systems. In addition to the study of self (individuals), goal setting theory is important to organizations, especially organizational productivity to remain competitive over the long-term (Miron-Spector & Beenen, 2015; Pritchard, Young, Koenig, Schmerling, & Wright Dixon, 2013). Per Latham and Locke’s (2007) high performance cycle, organizations that challenge employees with high goals will experience higher performance under certain organizational circumstances, combined with the individual moderators and mediators in goal setting theory. These are, namely, supervisory supportive

feedback, contingent, and non-contingent rewards, all extrinsic motivations in self-determination theory (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Kanfer, 1990; Latham & Locke, 2007; Onu et al., 2018). Locke and Latham (2007) asserted these should lead employees to be more satisfied with their job which leads to higher commitment which leads to higher organizational performance, but this depends on internalization per self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Importantly, there is much literature that has found that promoting a learning goal orientation for employees can enhance firm performance, especially if the learning goals are set high, knowledge-sharing and training is provided, and positive process-focused supervisory feedback is offered (Latham & Locke, 2007; Lin, 2017; Miron-Spector & Beenen, 2015; Pritchard et al., 2013). And, as discussed later, there is controversy and, at times, “fierce debate,” in the motivation literature about how extrinsic motivators, such as rewards or penalties, can “undermine” an individual’s existing intrinsic motivation to perform a task (de Brabander & Martens, 2014, p. 28; Onu et al., 2018, p. 178). But, as Neubert and Dyck (2016) asserted, conventional goal setting theory is primarily short-term and task-based which makes it difficult to apply to large organizations containing many situational constraints and complexities. Bush, Bush, Oakley, and Cicala (2017) stressed that selling environments are especially complex, making motivation another key element in performance management systems. In addition to goal-setting, other task-based motivation theories relate to employee commitment and selling environments.

Self-determination theory (SDT). Like goal-setting theory, self-determination is a task-based motivation theory. A foundational aspect of SDT is that humans have three basic psychological needs, while interacting with their social environments on a task, which are competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2002 also cited in de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Kanfer, 1990). This is important to the study of leadership’s influence on

performance management systems or work environments in organizations because the satisfaction of these three basic needs determine how a person categorizes their environment, as either supportive or antagonistic (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Also, related to the foundation of this study is how Deci and Ryan (2002) were careful to differentiate between needs and motives whereas motives can distract a person from need fulfillment, thereby, distracting them from their own well-being. Through integration of other cognitive theories with SDT, Deci and Ryan (2002) found that extrinsic motivation, like feedback, regulation, rewards, or punishment, is usually perceived as detrimental to a person's intrinsic needs for competence and autonomy, thereby demotivating a person internally (also cited by de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Onu et al., 2018; Rivkin et al., 2018). That said, Deci and Ryan (2002) were careful to describe *internalization* as one's ability for autonomously choosing compliance with the extrinsic motivator, thereby preserving autonomy to a certain degree (also cited by Onu et al., 2018). Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that when extrinsic motivation is viewed as "controlling," it diminishes intrinsic motivation and satisfaction of basic psychological needs (de Brabander & Martens, 2018, p. 29; Deci & Ryan, 2002). Citing Ryan (1995) and Deci and Ryan (2008), White (2015) summarized SDT as follows:

High levels of motivation can be associated with any type of extrinsic motivation, but evidence has shown that behavior associated with higher levels of external control will be less consistent, less well performed and less enjoyed than activities that are undertaken for more autonomous or integrated reasons. Evidence across many domains of research clearly demonstrates that higher levels of self-determined behavior lead to increases in behavioral effectiveness, greater persistence and better integration of an individual into social networks. (p. 1926)

In relationship to this study, as discussed in the goal-setting theory section, this may explain why participative goals, espoused by AL, are more effective than imposed goals, and as discussed later, this could explain why training and enforcing an ethical code of conduct is less effective than expressing ethics through internalized values like customer orientation (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Locke & Latham, 1991). The difference can be summarized as a person “wanting to” or “being made to” on a how to perform a task, leading this discussion to other task-based motivation theories.

Expectancy-value theory. One of the controversies in motivation theory is between expectancy-value theory and social cognitive theory. Starting with expectancy-value theory, motivation in performance is influenced by two factors: expectancy of performance, or one’s ability to succeed at the task, and expectancy about the value of the outcome (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Value of the outcome includes (a) attainment value – the importance of completing the task; (b) intrinsic value – the satisfaction gained from completing the task; (c) utility value – the completion’s effect on future tasks; and (d) cost – the depletion of emotion, time, and other resources in the process of completing the task (de Brabander & Martens, 2014, p. 30). Specifically, a study by Flake et al. (2015) found that the negative motivating value factors involved with high costs could be further defined as task performance effort, outside effort (other responsibilities required outside of the task), loss of valued alternatives (i.e., opportunity costs), and emotional depletion from the effort. Related to this study is how AL’s ability to increase affective commitment and OCB internal to the employee relates to the positive expectancy motivation. And, this study also relates to how stretch goals associated with time pressure as well as enforced ethical codes may carry high motivational value costs, such as emotional depletion, that adversely affect a worker’s motivation.

Social cognitive theory. According to de Brabander and Martens (2014), social cognitive theory makes self-efficacy the “the chief factor in motivated behavior” because human beings have the capacity to diagnose their own abilities (p. 30). Bandura, the developer of social cognitive theory, argued that expectancy-value theory focused too much on outcome expectancy, or “a person’s estimate that a given behavior will lead to a certain outcome” (as cited in de Brabander & Martens, 2014, p. 30). Bandura also asserted that efficacy expectation, or a person’s confidence they can perform successfully at producing an outcome, is a better predictor of choice and performance (as cited by de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Bandura (2002) also stressed “an agentic perspective to human development, adaptation, and change” that “blends” individual agency, proxy agency (when a person allows another to act on their behalf), and collective agency when people act as a group (p. 269). Bandura (2002) also cautioned against “dualism” within the psychological field that pitted, as an example, “autonomy against interdependence or individualism against collectivism,” as he felt humans were capable of blending and adapting (p. 269). Because self-regulation is closely linked to this theory, there is much self-help literature that exists today, like improving nutrition and physical activity behaviors, with what is termed as social cognitive theory-based interventions (Stacey, James, Chapman, Courneya, & Lubans, 2015). But, as learned in goal-setting theory, confidence and expectation of success can only go so far due to situational constraints and other factors outside the control of the individual or group in a PMS. Values, instilled by AL, may help a person deal with both success and disappointment as discussed next.

Motivation theory of human values. As cited by Pohling, Bzdok, Eigenstetter, Stumpf, and Strobel (2016), Schwartz’s (1994) theory of universal human values described values as follows:

Values (1) are beliefs, (2) refer to desirable goals that motivate action, and (3) transcend specific actions and situations distinguishing them from norms and attitudes. (4) Values guide the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events. They are (5) ordered by importance forming, an ordered system on which people can differ inter-individually. And (6) the relative importance of multiple values guides action. (pp. 452-453)

Important to this study of AL, based on human values theory, behavior and action can be guided, or regulated, by an internalized set of values specific to an individual, or “central to self,” despite the presence of external norms and regulations (Feldman et al., 2015, p. 69; Pohling et al., 2016). Schwartz (1994) asserted these “formal features” of values distinguish values from concepts like attitudes, preferences, and needs, making values true motivations of behavior (p. 20). Citing Schwartz (1994), Feldman et al. (2015) asserted values are long-term and abstract goals reflecting “guiding principles and beliefs of what a person considers important in life,” and values are usually stable, enduring, and applicable to multiple situations and contexts (p. 69). Motivation of human values differs from task-based motivation in this way whereas the satisfaction of achievement or value given to an outcome can be more short-term and absolute in task-based motivations (Neubert & Dyck, 2016). This is key to AL’s effectiveness at balancing PMS, and the motivation theory of human values will be explored more in depth for this reason.

The Schwartz original continuum of universal values. Schwartz (1994) described a list of 10 universal values categorized into four higher level themes of self-enhancement, self-transcendence, conservation, and openness to change (as also cited in Pohling et al., 2015 and Feldman et al., 2016). Importantly, Schwartz (1994) defined an eleventh value type termed as “spirituality values,” representing a person’s worldview, or definition of the meaning of life, but

concluded these are not universal across cultures, and therefore, did not include the category in his universal continuum (p. 23). Under self-transcendence, Schwartz (1994) listed two values, *universalism* – “the appreciation, protection, understanding, and tolerance of ALL people and for nature” and *benevolence* – “the preservation and enhancement of those in close contact to us personally” (p. 22). Under the theme of conservation, Schwartz (1994) categorized three values, *conformity* – “Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms,” *tradition* – “Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide,” and *security* – “Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self” (p. 22). Contrasted to self-transcendence and conservation, Schwartz (1994) listed one variable, shared by the two higher themes of self-enhancement and openness to change, *hedonism* – “Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself” (p. 22). Under the theme of self-enhancement, specifically, Schwartz (1994) listed the two values of *power* – “Social status or prestige, control or dominance over people or resources” and *achievement* – “Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards” (p. 22). Finally, under the theme of openness to change, Schwartz (1994) listed the two values of *stimulation* – “Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life” and *self-direction* – “Independent thought and action—choosing, creating, exploring” (p. 22). One can observe there exist both compatibilities and conflicts among the various value themes, but generally, Schwartz (1994) concluded that “values form a continuum of motivations” (p. 24). Important to this study of AL are all four major dimensions, and certain specific values, in the continuum as they relate to ethical sales practices and the balancing of performance management systems, and Schwartz, along with a larger group of researchers, later expanded the continuum.

The expanded continuum of universal values. Research by Schwartz et al. (2012)

expanded the original set of 10 values in Schwartz's continuum of universal values. Schwartz et al. (2012) added nine values to the original list of 10 through a confirmed and tested survey instrument administered to over 6,000 people in 10 different countries. Schwartz et al. (2012) expanded six of the original ten values into 13 more clearly defined values as follows:

Self-direction-thought – “Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities”

Self-direction-action – “Freedom to determine one's own actions”

Power-dominance – “Power through exercising control over people”

Power-resources – “Power through control of material and social resources”

Security-personal – “Safety in one's immediate environment”

Security-societal – “Safety and stability in the wider society”

Conformity-rules – “Compliance with rules, laws, and formal obligations”

Conformity-interpersonal – “Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people”

Benevolence-dependability – “Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the in-group”

Benevolence-caring – “Devotion to the welfare of in-group members”

Universalism-concern – “Commitment to equality, justice, and protection for all people”

Universalism-nature – “Preservation of the natural environment”

Universalism-tolerance – “Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself” (p. 669).

In addition to these 13 more defined values in the continuum, Schwartz et al. (2012) kept the remaining four values of *hedonism*, *stimulation*, *achievement*, and *tradition* from the original 10 already defined earlier (as cited in Schwartz, 1994). Finally, to round out the expanded list of 19 values, Schwartz et al. (2012) added the two values of *face* – “Security and power through

maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation" and *humility* – "Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things" (p. 669). In addition to new values, Schwartz et al. (2012) added four additional higher-level themes to the four original dimensions of self-transcendence, conservation, self-enhancement, and openness to change. In the first higher level, the 19 values were split into personal focus and social focus, and in the highest level on the continuum, the values were split into anxiety-free growth and anxiety avoidance self-protection, (Schwartz et al., 2012, p. 669).

Integration of motivation theory of universal values. Related to this study's focus on AL's values-centeredness and unethical sales practices, Pohling et al. (2016) found that personal values can explain a larger proportion of variance of counterproductive work behavior (CWB), defined as "volitional negative employee behavior violating legitimate interests or norms of the respective organization" than personality traits can (p. 456). Not surprising, tradition, benevolence, and conformity were values most positively associated with CWB, and hedonism and stimulation were most negatively related (Pohling et al., 2016). Pohling et al. (2016) also found that moral cognition, or learning, was most related to self-transcendence, benevolence and universalism, and self-directed values. And, they found that moral conation, or volition, was most correlated with conservation values of conformity, security, and tradition (Pohling et al., 2016). In a study by Feldman et al. (2015), unethicality was defined to include both actionable behaviors "violating widely accepted social norms" such as lying, cheating, bribery, and stealing, and passive behavior like concealing witnessed unethical behavior and the breaking of laws and norms through inaction (p. 70). The study found empirically that self-enhancement values like power and achievement had the strongest motivational relationship to unethicality (Feldman et al., 2015). Contextually, when harm was directed toward others, self-transcendence values like

benevolence and universalism had the strongest inhibiting relationship to unethicity (Feldman et al., 2015). Specifically related to this study is the study of AL's ability to balance a PMS and create an ethical climate through customer orientation and employee empowerment.

Ethical Selling and Customer Orientation

Complexity of the sales role in organizations. It is difficult to categorize selling as a task because it involves a relationship to another person, the decision-making customer, who is comprised of their own emotions, cognitive creativity, and volition determining their satisfaction with and trust in a salesperson (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Kaynak & Sert, 2012; Leonidou et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2008). Also, sales and marketing functions are the most visible to and have the most direct contact with the external environment of an organization, making customer trust critical to a company's reputation and brand (Chen & Mau, 2009; Leonidou et al., 2013; Mallin & Munoz, 2012). Internal to an organization, the sales function spans many boundaries of business activity and is important to many stakeholders; and adding to its complexity, the sales function tends to be the most entrepreneurial function within an organization which can easily develop its own culture of norms and values (Bush et al., 2017; Mallin & Munoz, 2012). Due to globalization, technology advances, and multi-functionality, the sales role has become increasingly complex requiring more competency from salespeople (Bush et al., 2017). These complexities combine to create less predictable value creation contexts within organizations (Bush et al., 2017). After its unethical sales scandal in 2016, Wells Fargo made it clear that rebuilding trust with all stakeholders, improving governance, and importantly, simplifying what had become a very complex organization were priorities to move the company forward ("Key findings," 2017).

Ethical selling. Sales ethics are those principles, standards, and values that guide a salesperson's behaviors towards customers (Ivan, 2014). This definition integrates well with Schwartz (1994) view of values as enduring guiding principles motivating behavior. Hansen and Riggle (2009) defined ethical selling, simply, as salesperson behaviors that "promote the welfare of the customer" (p. 152). Ethical selling includes an exchange that is perceived as fair and just and results in a favorable perception from the customer (Shadab, 2012). A more detailed definition of ethical selling includes meeting the needs of customers, truthfully giving all information needed by customers to make informed decisions and explaining benefits to customers without pressuring them (Madhani, 2014). Ethical sales behavior was empirically linked to customers' trust in and commitment to a bank in a study by Alrubaiee (2012). Ethical selling is a "burgeoning" topic in the literature, and when defining ethical selling, the literature usually discusses the relationship between ethical behavior and trust between salespeople and customers (Bush et al., 2017, p. 549; Chen & Mau, 2009; McClaren, 2013; Shadab, 2012; Valenzuela et al., 2010). According to Evans, McFaraland, Dietz, and Jaramillo (2012), the influence of sales interactions in organizations is under-researched, and credibility with buyers is more important today than ever due to how well-informed buyers have become.

Importance of trust. The role of trust in the sales function cannot be overstated and may be the most critical aspect of relationship marketing because it not only influences purchase intention but also establishes loyalty with long-term ramifications (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Wood et al., 2008). In a sales exchange, the buyer is risking economic resources with an expectancy the seller will consider and advance their interests in the process, making trust an imperative (Wood et al., 2008). Trust is built with customers through the salesperson's demonstration of ethical values like "justice, fairness, respect, care and responsibility"

(Schwepker & Ingram, 2016, p. 915). This finding integrates well with benevolence and universalism values in the Schwartz et al. (2012) expanded continuum. Trust builds over time after repeated satisfactory salesperson-customer exchanges (Chen & Mau, 2009). Trust is a mediating factor between ethical selling and a number of benefits to the organization like customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, long-term customer relationships, and customer lifetime value (CLV; Alrubaiee, 2012; Chen & Mau, 2009; Madhani, 2014; Ou, Shih, & Chen, 2015).

Customer Orientation (CO). In 1982, Saxe and Weitz introduced the CO concept to challenge and contrast the traditional high-pressure sales approach of their day, and that 1982 article is considered one of the top 10 sales articles of the 20th century (as cited in Goad & Jaramillo, 2014). Saxe and Weitz (1982) contrasted CO with selling orientation (SO) by describing CO as a salesperson's "concern for others" and SO as a salesperson's "concern for oneself" (as cited in Goad & Jaramillo, 2014, p. 285). Saxe and Weitz (1982) also referred to CO as a needs-based, problem solving, and solution providing approach to selling. Valenzuela et al. (2010) described CO as never sacrificing the customer's best interest in exchange for a better chance at an immediate sale, and further, going the extra mile to protect a customer's interests. These findings integrate well with Schwartz et al. (2012) benevolent and universal values, and for this study, places importance on a salesperson's values. Since the Saxe and Weitz introduction of the concept, ethical selling has become nearly synonymous with CO in the literature. In fact, Bateman and Valentine (2015) found empirically that consumers believed they had been treated more ethically when salespeople took a CO, relationship building approach, over a transactional sales approach. Terho (2015) found that CO significantly and positively impacted a salesperson's "values-based selling" which, in turn, improved the salesperson's performance (p. 17). Alrubaiee (2012) also found that ethical sales behavior led to

high relationship quality (RQ) which led to customer loyalty. CO and RQ are considered synonymous in this study (Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Nuryakin & Surgiyarti, 2018; Varghese et al., 2015).

Benefits of CO. CO and RQ, through ethical sales behavior, have been positively linked to many organizational benefits like customer satisfaction, loyalty, commitment, and life-time value (CLV; Alrubaiee, 2012; Chen & Mau, 2009; Hansen & Riggle, 2009; Ivan, 2014; Lee, 2012; Madhani, 2014; Ou et al., 2012; Schwepker, 2017; Shadab, 2012). And, importantly, Ou et al. (2015) asserted that customer loyalty “has been recognized as one of the most essential sources of competitive advantage” stressing that RQ is more important than short-term gains from sales (p. 673). Clearly, long-term customer relationships are critical to the success of an organization. Madhani (2014) described CLV as “the sum of the individual value of all present and future customers measured over their lifetimes with the organization” (p. 204). Schwepker (2013) found that salespeople, individually, who are committed to providing “superior customer value” perform better (p. 390). “Superior customer value” was defined as going beyond the typical cost-benefit transactional sale by adding value and building the customer relationship over time (Schwepker, 2013, p. 390). Thus, in addition to organizational benefits, CO is important to the success of individual salespeople who must avoid unethical selling.

Unethical selling. The background of the problem in this study, namely, the AT&T, T-Mobile, and Wells Fargo unethical sales scandals in their retail stores and branches described what unethical selling is, as does the literature. A 2013 survey of 4,600 employees conducted by the U.S. based Ethics Resource Centre found that 41% of employees had witnessed unethical behavior, in general, at work (Niven & Healy, 2016). A 2010 survey of sales representatives revealed that 40% of sales reps surveyed admitted to using indiscretion, and further, 66% of the

indiscreet reps felt there would be no consequence for their behavior (Mallin & Munoz, 2012). Because salespeople span organizational boundaries, sales ethics are critical because there is more opportunity to commit unethical acts and the costs are magnified in a selling context (Hochstein, Lilly, & Stanley, 2017). Mallin and Munoz (2012) asserted that adding new customers requires entrepreneurial risk taking to increase demand which is an environment ripe with ethical challenges. Ultimately, unethical sales behaviors harm customer trust and relationships (Li & Murphy, 2012; Schwepker & Good, 2012). This integrates with findings by Pohling et al. (2016) about counterproductive work behavior (CWB) and with Feldman et al. (2015) findings about unethicality.

Unethical selling behaviors (USB). Kaynak and Sert (2012) listed several characteristics of unethical selling including, purposely using obscure language when communicating terms, exaggerating or making up benefits, purposely misleading the customer, and other deviant behaviors. In a goal-setting context, Ordonez et al. (2009) described unethical behavior in two forms of cheating behavior: (a) using “unethical methods” while striving for goals and (b) “misrepresenting performance” outcomes, or lying about reaching a goal (p. 10; also cited in Niven & Healy, 2016). Citing Murphy (2004), Li and Murphy (2012) listed six USBs, three of which specifically affect customers and three of which specifically affect the organization. The six USBs were (a) persuading customers to make forward purchases, (b) overemphasizing contest-targeted products, (c) making exaggerated claims about targeted products, (d) setting aside other job responsibilities to make a sale, (e) accepting too much credit risk, and (f) reducing knowledge sharing and helping amongst fellow salespeople (p. 225). In the background cases of this study, unethical sales practice included selling products the customer did not want or need, withholding product information that may have, otherwise, caused the

buyer to pause or reject the sale, or misrepresenting a product as free (“Key findings,” 2016; Meyer, 2018). Generally, when the descriptions of ethical sales behavior by Hansen and Riggle (2009) and Shadab (2012) are compared, unethical selling practice would include any selling practice that was unfair, unjust, and not in the customer’s best interest. Or, when integrating with Schwarts et al. (2012), any behavior that violates benevolent and universal concern values for others. As it relates to ethical decision-making and climate theory, there were organizational factors, other than existence of a code of ethics that affected the employees’ ethical behavior at AT&T, T-Mobile, and Wells Fargo.

Antecedents to general unethical behavior. Per ethical decision-making and climate constructs, there are both organizational and individual factors that are antecedents to unethical sales behavior. As stated earlier, it has been found that individual factors, like educational background, and organizational factors, like ethical climate, generally affect ethical behavior (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; McClaren, 2013; Roche, 2013). A literature review by Kish-Gephart, Harrison, and Klebe Trevino (2010) more extensively summarized antecedents to unethical behavior into individual factors (“bad apple”), moral issues (“bad case”), and organizational environmental (“bad barrel”; p. 1). In their study, individual factors included demographical like gender, age, and education as well as psychological like cognitive moral development, idealism, and relativism, and moral issue factors like magnitude of consequences (MOC), social consensus, and probability of effect (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010). Specifically, Ghosh (2017) found that job insecurity and embeddedness, a combination of job satisfaction and turn-over intention, affect pro-organizational unethical behaviors to preserve one’s employment. And, Grover and Hui (2005) found that job pressure and extrinsic rewards affected unethical individual behaviors. Organizational factors included code of conduct and three different types

of ethical climates – egoistic, benevolent, and principled (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010). Belle and Cantarelli (2017) composed a comprehensive and very recent list of antecedents found in the literature using experimentation techniques only. The top four most researched antecedents of unethical behavior in Belle and Cantarelli's (2017) review were: (a) social influences, like imitation; (b) greed, like perceived inequity of monetary rewards; (c) egocentrism, or the taking care of oneself over others; and (d) monitoring and being held responsible (pp. 330-331).

Egocentrism compares to self-enhancement values in the Schwartz et al (2012) expanded human values continuum. The three least researched in Belle and Cantarelli's (2017) study were (a) loss aversion, (b) goal setting, and (c) time pressure (p. 328). Hence, as stated in the theoretical framework, a gap in the literature exists with goal setting and time pressure as antecedents to unethical behavior in general, but specifically, this study is related to unethical sales practices.

Individual antecedents to unethical sales practice. As in the general unethical behavior literature, there are both individual and organizational antecedents to unethical sales practices, specifically. For example, individually, Amyx and Jarrell (2016) studied the effects of salesperson depression, poor performance, and emotional exhaustion on deviant sales behavior. They found that both salesperson low performance and related depression are positively linked to deviant behavior where depression partially mediated the low performance-deviance relationship (Amyx & Jarrell, 2016). Emotional depletion is related to expectancy-value motivation theory discussed earlier. Related to goal setting theory, specifically, emotion is also important factor in that dissatisfaction with poor goal performance can go beyond a desire to achieve better and drive deviant sales behaviors according to the Amyx and Jarrell (2016) study (also cited in Locke & Latham, 2006, 2013). Tang and Liu's (2012) study found that an individual's greed or love for money influenced unethical sales behavior. Hochstein et al. (2017) found that individual

factors such as long-term attitude (versus short-term), moral obligation (i.e., individual sense of right and wrong), consensus beliefs (i.e., others are doing it), impression management (i.e., looking good to others), and self-image congruence (i.e., maintaining self-image) all either positively or negatively impacted ethical sales behavior. Whether the salesperson cares more for the customer or for oneself in sales interactions is an important question, but there are organizational antecedents to unethical sales practice as well.

Organizational antecedents to unethical sales practice. As with individual antecedents, there are several organizational antecedents, outside the individual salesperson, to unethical sales practice starting with sales management. For example, in a pressure to perform environment, dysfunctional relationships can form between sales managers and salespeople where perceived abusive supervisory behavior lowers commitment of both the supervisor and the salesperson, leading to unethical sales practice (Gabler, Nagy, & Hill, 2014). Further, Schwepker (2017) found the quality of this leader-member exchange (LMX) directly impacted salesperson commitment to provide superior customer value, which in turn, directly impacted salesperson's unethical intent and performance. Sales contests are often used to stimulate sales in organizations, and these were found to cause certain salespeople, either competitive or status seeking, or both, to abandon ethical sales practice to win the contest (Pujoul, Harfouche, & Pezet, 2016). This finding is related to Schwartz et al. (2012) self-enhancement values in a salesperson. Carmichael (2017) cautioned the structure of monetary reward systems is a strong signal to financial services employees about what is most important to an organization, and he stressed balance of compliance, risk, and performance to avoid ethical, risk and compliance problems. Zoltners, Sinha, and Lorimer (2012) asserted that financial incentives can “encourage inappropriate salesforce behaviors” through an obsession with “making numbers” which creates

a short-term focus that does not build strong customer relationships (p. 172). The specific organizational antecedents, stretch goals and time pressure, will be discussed more in depth next as an indication that these can counter-act values-based leadership like AL.

Stretch Goals in Organizations

Description of stretch goals. Citing Sitkin et al. (2011) and Zhang and Jia (2013) described stretch goals as extremely difficult (i.e., nearly impossible) and/or extremely novel (i.e., no prior knowledge of how to meet the goal). Sitkin et al. (2011) described stretch goals as “seemingly impossible given current capabilities” (p. 544). Markovitz (2012) described stretch goals as “overwhelming and unattainable,” and further contended that stretch goals were “managerial absurdity” (p. 34). Per Pina e Cunha, Giustiniano, Rego, and Clegg (2016), stretch goals can be vertical, meaning they are in line with current activities, or horizontal, meaning they are in a different direction, or unaligned, with current activities. Zhang and Jia (2013) suggested that the reason stretch goals are seemingly impossible is because the organizational context may be without the required “skills, resources, and knowledge” needed to pursue such goals (p. 996). Baron et al. (2016) studied the effects of goals considered “unattainable” (p. 55). This was also addressed by Latham et al. (2016) as they asserted that without necessary ability or required resources to accomplish a goal, employee commitment is low, which could include rejecting the goal (also cited in Baron et al., 2016). It is important to integrate the very robust and comprehensive goal setting theory with stretch goal literature.

Relationship to goal setting theory. Goal setting theory has established that difficult and specific goals improve performance backed by hundreds of experiments on thousands of people from several continents (Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991, 2013). It should be noted Locke and Latham (1990), citing IRS goal setting consequences, discussed the potential of unethical

behavior in goal setting (as cited in Barsky, 2008). Baron et al. (2016) found that very difficult goals will have a curvilinear relationship with performance which mostly agrees with Locke and Latham's (1990, 1991, 2007, 2013) original findings in their goal setting experiments. In other words, the goal difficulty-performance relationship is positively linear to a point then actually diminishes performance after peaking when goals become too difficult and commitment drops. Kumar, Goreczny, and Maurer (2018) found an inverted u-shaped relationship between preset goals and goal achievement. Lee, Keil, and Ellick Wong (2014) asserted that a similar curvilinear relationship existed with employee commitment escalation whereas commitment escalates only to a point where a difficult goal is perceived as unattainable. Goal unattainability also affects valence (i.e., satisfaction) and expectancy (confidence in attainment) according to goal setting theory by Locke and Latham (2002), also cited by the Lee et al. (2014) study. However, failure to accomplish a goal can sometimes increase expectancy in a new venture post-failure (Lee et al., 2014; Locke & Latham, 1991, 2013). And, Baron et al. (2016) found that entrepreneurs can be overconfident (i.e., too much self-efficacy can be problematic) when setting goals, often making them unattainable which can create risk taking and other issues. Finally, and importantly, Locke and Latham (1991) cautioned that difficult goals significantly and positively influence performance when situational constraints are low, but, despite high commitment and self-efficacy, there are limits to a person's ability to overcome high barriers. But, these pitfalls and limits were not how organizational stretch goal research began.

Historical context in organizations. According to Pina e Cunha et al. (2016), the notion of stretch goals was "popularized in the C-suite" by Collins and Porras (1994), first describing them as "hairy goals" designed to "push people beyond their comfort zones" in "hypercompetitive contexts" (p. 142). This concept was further popularized by several success

stories such as GE, Southwest Airlines, and Toyota, with little debate in the beginning about any risks involved (Pina e Cunha et al., 2016; Sitkin et al., 2011). In fact, GE's iconic CEO from 1981 to 2001, Jack Welch, "mythologized" the practice of using stretch goals to achieve superior performance overseeing a four-fold increase in stock price during his tenure (Huy, 2017; Pina e Cunha et al., 2016, p. 142). But, the sustainability of Welch's commanding reorganization is questioned because at the end, employees were "left dazed and managers were exhausted" due to followers' over-dependence on a single charismatic leader (Huy, 2017, para. 3; Mhatre & Riggio, 2014). Citing Rousseau (1997), Zhang and Jia (2013) and Sitkin et al. (2011) asserted that stretch goals were intended to mandate innovation and crack assumptive thinking to break through the status quo barrier into extraordinary performance. But, although many had asserted there were unintended consequences with difficult and specific goals, including Locke and Latham (2006, 2013), "only a handful" began finding a link between stretch goals and unethical behavior, like falsified sales reporting in budgeting, beginning with Jensen (2001, 2003) and including Locke (2004), Barsky (2008), and Ordenez et al. (2009 as cited by Zhang & Jia, 2013, p. 994).

Relationship of stretch goals to ethical conduct. Markovitz (2012) cited three pitfalls with stretch goals: (a) the sapping of employees' intrinsic motivation; (b) citing a famous Sears Auto Repair example from the 1990s, encouraging unethical sales practices by deceiving customers; and (c) excessive risk taking. When incentives are tied to stretch goals, the goals are typically resisted by the honest employees and embraced by the dishonest ones through (a) "Cherry picking" – the easy tasks are searched for and taken by the unfair employees; (b) "Short cuts" – to reach the goal, employees' quality of work diminishes; and (c) "Creative cheating" – inventing ways to reflect results that are not true or belong to someone else (Starbird &

Cavanagh, 2011, p. 39). Zhang and Zia (2013) asserted that stretch goals can be “disruptive” to organizations by being linked to unethical behavior and by creating relationship conflict within the organization, moderated by either information-justice or interpersonal-justice contexts (p. 994). As Jensen (2001) also found, Clor-Proell, Kaplan, and Proell (2015) used an experiment to validate their prediction that overly difficult budget goals prompt employees to falsify reporting to make the goal, even in the absence of rewards like promotion prospects. Like Locke and Latham’s (2006) discussion of “tunnel vision” created by goal setting, Barsky (2008) and Ordonez et al. (2009) proposed that the more difficult a goal, the more focus it requires which distracts the employee from other important factors such as ethics and teamwork (p. 266). According to Barsky (2008), meeting the goal can overcome ethical recognition and moral engagement which lead to unethical behavior. Schwepker and Good (2012) also found that goal difficulty distracted financial salespeople’s moral judgment. Ordonez et al. (2009) asserted that “over challenging,” or stretch goals, can shift risk attitudes, encourage unethical behavior, and inflict psychological damage on employees (p. 9). Additionally, Mawritz, Folger, and Latham (2014) found a positive link between overly difficult goals and supervisory stress which, in turn, was linked to supervisory abusive behaviors on employees. Many of these findings are congruent with what Wells Fargo found in their published board sanctioned study (“Key Findings,” 2017). It is important to note there is controversy in the literature about goal setting and unethical behavior, and this study’s aim is to add to the literature in a scholarly way (Locke & Latham, 2009; Ordóñez et al., 2009). According to George (2003), it is possible through AL to drive performance ethically through values-centeredness to promote healthy customer relationships and avoid unethical sales practices.

Specific examples of stretch goals and unethical conduct. One of the most commonly cited examples of the stretch goal-unethical behavior link was the Sears auto repair centers in the early 1990s where service advisors “routinely overcharged for work, made unnecessary repairs and charged for work that was never done” to meet a \$147/hour sales target per auto repair staff person (Barsky, 2008, p. 63; Madhani, 2015; Niven & Healy, 2016; Ordonez et al., 2009).

Another common example of overzealous goal setting on the wrong measurement was Enron whose management team was still being paid large incentives for reaching revenue stretch goals, but producing negative profits, 10 months prior to failing (Barsky, 2008; Ordonez et al., 2009).

In the case of Enron, the wrong measurement of revenue was used for goal setting with no thought to the bottom line, and in some divisions, the bottom line had been misreported (Barsky, 2008). A very harmful case of unethical behavior was the production and cost goal setting with the Ford Pinto in the 1970s, whereas engineers predicted legal fees would cost less than halting production with the known danger of an exploding gas tank, costing 53 lives and many more injuries (Niven & Healy, 2016; Ordonez et al., 2009). In these cases, unethical, even immoral, conduct from stretch goals harmed many stakeholders, mostly customers but also shareholders and employees, and other factors, like time pressure, also contribute to unethical behavior.

Managerial Time Pressure

Description of managerial time pressure. As with stretch goal setting, time pressure was the least researched in relation to unethical conduct according to an exhaustive literature review by Belle and Cantarelli (2017). Garling et al. (2016) described time pressure as “time scarcity” defined as “the difference between the amount of required and available time at disposal for performing an activity” (p. 1790). Pressure included both product sales and project completion deadlines in an inductive study by Al-Saggaf et al. (2015), both related to

management demanding more in a faster time frame. Based on this inductive research, for this study, time pressure will be defined as “how much by when” where time is an additional dimension of the actual goal. Ordonez and Welsh (2015) described these types of goals as “performance goals” where a specific outcome is expected within a specific period of time (p. 93). A quote by Kotlar, De Massis, Wright, and Frattini (2018) may best describe time pressure in goal setting: “research differentiates goals in terms of their duration, which defines the time horizons used to evaluate a goal” (p. 57). Heslin and Wang (2013) described time as a contextual factor involved with goal setting, and they asserted that as a deadline approaches, the goal is often revised downward to protect one’s self esteem. Thus, achievement of a goal usually has a time horizon attached to it.

Relationship to goal setting theory. Citing Latham and Locke (1975), Belciug et al. (2016) asserted “tight deadlines lead to a more rapid work pace” (p. 924). But, Locke and Latham (1991) also proposed that when time pressure to perform exists, without enough time to learn, striving for complex and difficult goals can harm performance. Locke and Latham (1991, 2013) recommended allowing time for learning and training prior to assigning challenging and specific goals. Another relationship of goals to time is the difference between proximal and distal goals, where distal goals are the actual outcome and proximal goals consist of the distal goal broken into smaller performance goals (Heslin & Wang, 2013; Locke & Latham, 1991). And, accomplishment of proximal goals builds self-efficacy and persistence toward the accomplishment of the distal goal (Locke & Latham, 1991). Thus, the time dimension of goal setting is related to learning versus performance goals and proximal versus distal goals, and it is apparent learning goals that are proximal are ideal in the journey toward high performance distal goals (Locke & Latham, 1991, 2007, 2013). Saqib and Chan (2015) found that time pressure

usually causes people to believe the worst possible outcome is more probable than if there were no time pressure, affecting risk preference. In sales performance contexts and related to social cognition motivation theory, this could relate to self-efficacy and adversely affect the salesperson's belief in their ability to meet the goal. Per Al-Saggaf et al.'s (2015) inductive study, deadlines are a harsh reality in the complex world of business and create pressure on employees and possible unethical conduct.

Relationship to ethical conduct. In a qualitative study that asked participants in the information and communications technology industry what was causing unethical conduct in their workgroups, Al-Saggaf et al. (2015) inductively found that 42% attributed pressure to unethical conduct. Time pressure has been found to affect the quality of audits by CPA firms, where short cuts, affecting quality of work for the client, were cited to ensure making the quoted time budget (Svanberg & Ohman, 2013). Through empirical manipulation experiments, Andiappan and Dufour (2018) found that time pressure was related to self-interest intentions. Garling et al. (2016) found that time pressure was positively related to stress and goal impediment, but they did not include ethical conduct in their study. Although time pressure has a negative effect on a person's emotional well-being, this does not necessarily indicate a relationship with ethical conduct (Garling et al., 2016). There is a paucity of research on how time pressure affects ethical conduct, in general, and ethical sales conduct, specifically. According to George (2003), driving performance is ethically possible through values-centeredness and employee empowerment and commitment making ethics an important discussion in this review.

Ethical Climate and Codes in Organizations

Ethics and complex organizations. As AT&T, T-Mobile, and Wells Fargo learned, unethical conduct can have large-scale consequences in organizations, yet 49% of employees of for-profit organizations report witnessing some form of unethical conduct in their firms (MacDougall et al., 2014). According to Hill and Rapp (2013), due to the complexities of modern organizations, the ability to predict ethical dilemmas has become increasingly difficult for leadership. Kaptein (2011) described the prevention of unethical behavior as a prevalent leadership challenge in organizations. The sales process in organizations can benefit both salespeople and customers, but importantly, at any stage of the process, the salesperson can opportunistically deceive the buyer to win a sale (Roche, 2013). After all, a salesperson's primary objective is to persuade a customer to buy their product or service (Bradford et al., 2009). And, because salespeople often work independent of supervision and are usually incented to produce results, they may be more tempted to behave unethically towards customers (Bradford et al., 2009; Roche, 2013; Schwepker, 2013). Nevertheless, as found in the AL research, several advantages of having a strong ethical climate or culture have been found in other research.

Ethical decision-making theory. Ethical decision-making is an important organizational behavior topic and includes both individual factors, demographic like gender and psychographic like cognitive developmental, and organizational or issue-contingent factors, like ethical codes and extrinsic rewards (Agnihotri & Krush, 2015; Craft, 2013; Lehnert et al., 2015; MacDougall et al., 2014; McClaren, 2013). Ultimately, ethical behavior rests on the individual employee's decision making, but there is much research about the moderating role of an organization's ethical climate influencing the relationship between the employee's ethical choices and their organization's practices (Farkhani, Armoun, & Javidnia, 2013; Jaramillo, Mulki, & Boles, 2013;

McClaren, 2013; Mulki et al., 2009; Ning & Zhaoyi, 2017; Roche, 2013). For this study, the most relevant aspect of ethical climate and decision-making involves the sales role in organizations, and there is much literature discussing this specific relationship (Agnihotri & Krush, 2015; Briggs, Jaramillo, & Weeks, 2012; DeConinck, 2011; Mulki et al., 2009; Roche, 2013). Roche (2013) found three antecedents to an individual's ethical decision making: (a) their educational background, specifically being taught the difference between right and wrong; (b) the ethical climate of their workplace; and (c) their work experience with the interplay of ethical climate and decision making. Thus, ethical decision making is important to an organization, especially in selling.

Importance of Ethical culture/climate (EC). Organizational EC is an important antecedent to employee ethical decision making (Ning & Zhaoyi, 2017; Roche, 2013). EC was described by Ingram et al. (2007) as follows:

Organizational climate refers to shared employee perceptions regarding policies and procedures, and to the behaviors that are supported, rewarded, and expected by organizations. Because differences exist in individuals' positions, work groups, and employment histories, perceptions of organizational climate may vary within the firm. (pp. 302-303)

EC was also described as the "prevailing perceptions" of the firm's ethical policies and procedures, thus, it could be thought of as a "composite" of perceptions of the firm's ethical values (Ingram et al., 2007, p. 303). According to a study by Ning and Zhaoyi (2017), the relationship between an employee's psychological contract breach and their unethical behavior was mediated by their level of organizational identification, and EC moderated this relationship by weakening organizational dis-identification. In a selling context, DeConinck (2011)

summarized ethical sales climate to include two primary relational components, trust in supervisor and organizational identification, both strongly influencing the organizational commitment of the employee. In the same study, ethical factors influencing trust in supervisor and organizational identification were sales practices, peer behavior, ethical norms, and trust of salespeople, all creating an ethical climate (DeConinck, 2011). As found in the AL section of this review, AL has been positively linked to EC (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Hannah et al., 2011).

Benefits of EC. EC has been found to be negatively related to employee turnover intention (TI), meaning less people consider leaving firms with perceived higher ethical climates (Farkhani et al., 2013; Mulki et al., 2009; Pettijohn, Pettijohn, & Taylor, 2008). Asserting that “good ethics is good business,” Mulki et al. (2009) found that EC produced more positive work attitudes, lower job stress, and resulted in lower TI (p. 567). In a selling context, Pettijohn et al. (2008) and Fournier, Tanner, Chonko, and Manolis (2010) found that EC positively affected salespeople’s job satisfaction and negatively affected their TI. In addition to lost revenue, Fournier et al. (2010) asserted that salesperson TI is costly in other ways like separation costs, replacement costs, and training costs. In addition to educational background, especially the learning of right and wrong, Roche (2013) found that ethical climate, or atmosphere, had a significant influence on a salesperson’s ethical behavior. There are several aspects of creating an ethical climate that can negatively influence unethical behavior in organizations, one of which are ethical codes, but the empirical research has produced “inconsistent results” about the effectiveness of ethical codes alone (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Erwin, 2011, p. 535; Jondle, Ardichvili, & Mitchell, 2014; Kaptein, 2011; Perez-Batres, Doh, Miller, & Pisani, 2012; Winkler, 2011).

Ethical codes in organizations. The adoption of a code of ethics by organizations is increasing as a KMPG 2008 survey of the Fortune Global 200 companies revealed that 86% had adopted their own business code, an increase from 14% in 1990 (Singh, 2011). Codes of ethical conduct, or a formal set of ethical standards, are implemented by organizations for several reasons including, (a) as corporate governance initiatives and tools, (b) as an aid to leadership's understanding of ethical issues, (c) as a communicator of ethical commitment to stakeholders, and (d) as a booster of reputation and legitimacy to the market (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015). Many researchers have found that ethical codes have been adopted by organizations primarily for "legal compliance, symbolism over substance, and even window-dressing" (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015, p. 460; Perez-Batres et al., 2012; Winkler, 2011). A code of ethics is normally part of a broader corporate ethics program that can also include ethics training, an ethics committee, and whistle blower support programs (Kaptein, 2011; Singh, 2011). Erwin (2011) asserted an ethical code can be part of, or even fundamental to, a broader corporate social responsibility (CSR) program that communicates to all stakeholders an ethical and responsible culture. But, there is much literature that has found the mere existence of an ethical code of conduct does not necessarily deter unethical behavior in organizations long-term, but rather, a gap between policy and practice exists (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Erwin, 2011; Ingram et al., 2007; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011).

Importance of ethical leadership to EC. This study suggests that leadership, specifically AL, will have a more significant effect on ethical sales behavior than ethical codes. The importance of leadership, not only in creating an ethical climate but also significantly influencing individuals' ethical behavior, cannot be overstated (Badrinarayanan, Ramachandran, & Madhavaram, 2018; DeConinck, DeConinck, & Moss, 2016; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2009; Jondle et

al., 2014; Mayer et al., 2010; Schwepker & Schultz, 2015). Jondle et al. (2014) asserted that ethical organizations are led by ethical leaders who “walk the talk,” leading by example by aligning their personal values with organizational values with integrity (p. 31). In addition to being true to oneself as a leader, George (2003) also stressed ethical leadership in his book about AL. And, ethical leadership is closely related to authentic leadership in other literature, both strongly linked to promoting a healthy ethical climate (Bouckennooghe et al., 2015; Copeland, 2016; Hannah et al., 2011; Nichols & Erakovich, 2013).

Summary of Academic Literature

George (2003) asserted that through values-centeredness, one can drive performance to high levels effectively and ethically over a sustained period. It is clear from the very well-developed goal-setting theory from Locke and Latham (1990, 1991, 2002, 2007) that specific and difficult goals enhance performance more so than ambiguous “do your best” goals. Stretch goals, described as unattainable by Sitkin et al. (2011), have been effective historically for short periods of time during periods of transformation like at General Electric, but their sustainability is questionable. When pressure is applied to asking for the unattainable or nearly unattainable, from motivation theory, the cost of emotional depletion can not only affect performance but also distract from ethical decision-making (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Flake et al., 2015).

Unfortunately, there is a paucity of research related to the effects of stretch goals and time pressure on depletion and ethical sales practices, and this study seeks to fill those gaps while applying what is found in AL research as a contrast. Regarding ethical codes of conduct, it has been generally found this kind of external control is less effective than espoused internal values, as stressed by AL, which also aligns well with self-determination theory (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Erwin, 2011; Ingram et al., 2007; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011).

What is inducted in this study about values will add to the literature because per Schwartz (1994), values in the continuum of human values can conflict with each other. These values are important to an overall ethical culture of either egocentric, benevolent, or principled per Kish-Gephart et al. (2010). Values-centered leadership should make more of a difference than external controls when balancing a PMS. This leads to a Biblical integration and the origins of self, customer orientation, and instilled value systems.

Biblical Integration

Origins of self. What Van Duzer (2010) and Hardy (1990) called the “God-given mandate” or “Genesis mandate,” God created man in His own image and gave him a job in Genesis (Van Duzer, p. 71),

And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.’ (Genesis 1:26, KJV)

Thus, when God made mankind from the dust of the ground and “breathed into his nostrils, and man became a living being,” God had created the first self-regulated being on Earth with an assignment of stewardship over the Earth (Genesis 2:7, NASB; Hardy, 1990; Van Duzer, 2010). In the very next verse, the Bible states that God “caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food,” not giving the trees the same “breath of life” as He did the man, just “caused to grow” (Genesis 2:8, NASB). Man was different because he was the only creature given cognitive power and volitional choice to perform an entrusted task, the mandate to tend the garden (Genesis 1:26 & 2:15), to name the animals (Genesis 2:19), and to carry on God’s creative work on Earth, imaging God (Hardy, 1990; Wilmington, 1981). He was given a wife in

Genesis 2:22-25, a helping partner with whom he could relate and be more productive, and thus, the three needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in self-determination theory were met (Deci & Ryan, 2002). But unlike instinctive animals and plants, in the Holy God's creative wisdom, this cognitive and volitional ability given man included a rule to follow, a limit to man's self-determination (Genesis 2:16-17). Genesis 2:16-17(NASB) states, "Of every tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat." Why did God give the man a rule to follow, a choice to be selfish amongst all the gifted goods in a paradise free of death? As a "trial to which their fidelity could be exposed," it defined the relationship between a Holy Creator and a created man in the Creator's image (Jamieson, Faussett, & Brown, 1961, p. 15). This commandment also exposed our dependence upon our Creator for "life and breath and everything" for "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:25, 28, ESV; as cited in Hoekema, 1994). Yet, as a self-regulated emotional, cognitive and volitional being, with "relative independence," or autonomy per Deci and Ryan (2002), man was clearly the only creation who could have a trusting relationship with another self-regulated human, his wife, and with his self-regulated Creator, God (Hoekema, 1994, p. 5). As found in this review, it is difficult to separate ethics from relationship building.

Relationship to goal setting theory. Goal setting theory is founded in man's ability to self-regulate, through emotion, cognition, and volition, towards either an assigned or chosen purpose or goal (Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991, 2013; Martin et al., 2016). Anthony Hoekema asserted the following about man being a person, not a robot,

To be a person means to be able to make decisions, to set goals, and to move in the direction of those goals. It means to possess freedom – at least in the sense of being able to make one's own choices. The human being is not a robot whose course is totally

determined by forces outside of him; he has the power of self-determination and self-direction. (Hoekema, 1994, pp. 5-6)

This is entirely aligned with motivation theories. When dissatisfied (emotion) with his current state or position, man is able to develop strategies to achieve a more ideal state (cognition), then choose (volition) which is the best path toward that state (Alispahic, 2013; Locke & Latham, 1991). Although the “image of God” can only be theorized and is only mentioned three times in the Bible, one must consider man’s created “uniqueness” to self-regulate while accomplishing his assigned stewardship over the Earth as being made in the image of God (Hoekema, 1994, p. 11; Wilmington, 1981). Self, on its own, can be a very powerful force in this world. For example, Martin et al. (2016) found that, in the absence of external feedback from others, mankind’s self-knowledge will motivate a self-evaluation, which in turn, stimulates self-regulated performance toward a goal. But, self can be harmful to itself. For example, among other pitfalls with goal setting, Locke and Latham (2006) cited that self-identifying with a goal can cause one to base their self-esteem on goal achievement which, in turn, can be self-destructive when the goal is not met. Per Locke and Latham (2006), “Self-esteem is a foundational human need. Few people can live with the conviction they are ‘no good’” (p. 337). Although self is a powerful regulating force, this reveals that self, on its own, can be flawed; otherwise, there would be no pitfalls to goal setting and no unethical behavior.

Relationship to ethical decision making. If the human self were perfect, there would not be so much unethical behavior in the world, and there would not be any sorrow for it.

Unfortunately, according to Plinio, Young, and Lavery (2010), 49% of for-profit employees have witnessed unethical behavior in their workplaces, from lying to abusing resources, and according to MacDougall et al. (2014), these ethical violations are increasing. Moore et al. (2012) cited a

study by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners that fraudulent activity costs businesses, globally, \$2.9 Trillion annually. Yet, if MacDougall et al.'s assertion that ethical violations are increasing is correct, it is not because the ethical decision-making literature is decreasing as "the scope of ethical decision making and the vast array of studies relating to it constantly increases" (Lehnert et al., 2015, p. 196). Among this increasing literature, Roche (2013) found the learning of right and wrong in a person's educational background was positively linked to ethical sales behavior, making teaching right and wrong an important antecedent to ethical decision making. The very fact it must be taught means that self, at least, has the propensity to morally disengage and the propensity to do right. As Proverbs 22:6 (ESV) states, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." Yet, unethical behavior persists in organizations.

Moral disengagement origins. Moore et al. (2012) found, in five different studies of various unethical behaviors, "that the propensity to morally disengage consistently emerges as a significant predictor of a wide range of organizationally relevant unethical behaviors" (p. 34). According to the Bible, the foundational flaw with self, leading to moral disengagement, is self-interest. This agrees with Feldman et al. (2015) finding that self-enhancement human values lead to self-interested actions which often lead to unethicality. The Bible asserts this in many places, such as in Isaiah 53:6 (KJV) that states, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way." Admittedly, we all want our own way. This began back in Genesis where a once perfect trusting relationship existed between the Holy Creator and mankind before self-interest entered the garden in Genesis 3 and broke trust. Genesis 3:6 (ESV) states,

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

In the spirit of self-interest, the first man and woman morally disengaged and violated the single rule their generous Creator entrusted to them, and further, the Bible teaches all of us have inherited this self-interested propensity to morally disengage. Romans 5:12 (KJV) states, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 3:23 (KJV) states, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Not surprising, the top three antecedents to unethical behavior found by Belle and Cantarelli’s (2017) review relate to self-interest: (a) social influences, like imitation and image [whose image?]; (b) greed, like perceived inequity of monetary rewards; and (c) egocentrism, or the taking care of oneself over others (pp. 331-332; brackets mine). To align with Schwartz et al. (2012), these motivating self-enhancing values are universal, meaning in all of us at some level. Furthermore, Saxe and Weitz (1982) contrasted customer orientation (CO) with selling orientation (SO) by describing CO as a salesperson’s “concern for others” and SO as a salesperson’s “concern for oneself” (as cited in Goad & Jaramillo, 2014, p. 285). Thus, self-regulated humans have both the ability to morally disengage through self-interest, as in unethical sales practices, and the ability to place customers first to serve them, as in ethical sales practices. The good news is the Bible also teaches what conquers self-interest in service to others.

Relationship quality and customer orientation. Before time and the garden, the trinity of God was “inherently relational” as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and all glorious acts of creation were an “expression of this relationship” intended to return glory to Himself (Van Duzer, 2010, p. 31; Wilmington, 1981). Importantly, God did not create man because He was

lonely, but prior to mankind or angels, God had already existed in a harmonious trinity relationship (Wilmington, 1981). Nevertheless, Van Duzer (2010) asserted that because mankind is made in the image of God, we are also inherently relational beings and “only fully complete in community” (p. 32). This aligns with the relational transparency and customer orientation dimensions of AL (George, 2003). And, this also agrees with self-determination theory’s basic need for relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Therefore, Van Duzer (2010) further proposed the following,

To be true to the Genesis account, any theology of business must be relational and communitarian in character. Relationships in community must precede labor and productivity. Business must flow from relationship and be shaped so as to flow back to support the community. (p. 32)

In a sales context, as noted earlier, this is exactly why RQ and CO have been positively linked to many organizational benefits like customer satisfaction, loyalty, commitment, and life-time value (Alrubaiee, 2012; Chen & Mau, 2009; Hansen & Riggle, 2009; Ivan, 2014; Lee, 2012; Madhani, 2014; Ou et al., 2012; Schwepker, 2017; Shadab, 2012). According to the Genesis mandate, the world of business was designed to work this way. But, just as experienced by man when he disobeyed originally, as Wells Fargo, AT&T, T-Mobile, Sears and others learned, and as the ethical sales literature has found, ethical breaches and lost trust can have devastating effects on the RQ between a firm and its stakeholders (Berry, 2016; Cavico & Mujtaba, 2017). But, there is a Biblical solution to ensure RQ with customers and all stakeholders.

Love, the conqueror of all. The Apostle Paul was inspired to pen 1 Corinthians 13 to explain the foundational theme of a Christ-centered life, which in a single word is *love*, but not

just any *love*, God's perfect version of love. When we love one another, we are imaging God because God is love (1 John 4:8). 1 Corinthians describes it,

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8, ESV)

Related to this study, Biblical love does not “insist on its own way” (i.e., self-interest) nor does it “rejoice at wrong-doing” (i.e., moral disengagement), and most importantly, God's love will never end (i.e., sustained RQ; 1 Corinthians 13:5-8, ESV). The Bible teaches that God did not give up on man after his moral disengagement and ethical breach, but God demonstrated His love perfectly in giving His only Son to forgive it. John 3:16 (ESV) states, “For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” God was willing to break community, sacrificially, with his own beloved Son to redeem mankind from his destructive self-interest and to restore the original relationship He had with man in the garden. Sacrificial love means perfect RQ with absolutely no self-interest leading to moral disengagement leading to unethical behavior leading to costly destruction as seen in so many personal lives and organizational scandals. Paul summarized chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians (ESV) by stating in verse 13, “So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” Love is why, when asked, which was the greatest commandment, Jesus answered,

The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind

and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these. (Mark 12:29-31, ESV)

His answer includes both a restored relationship with the Creator and how we should relate to each other in community. Importantly, love has no end, thus love is the answer to sustained relationship quality as motivated by AL in organizational contexts (George, 2003).

Relationship equity and living purposes. As with George (2003), secular values-based leadership themes speak prominently of the importance of a comprehensive view toward stakeholder relationships and stewardship themes. For example, Bragdon (2009) suggested that “relational equity is the foundation of financial equity” and further asserted how firms relate to their employees, clients, vendors, and other stakeholders is critical to financial success (p. 1). Profit-driven only leaders are eventually “hampered by tunnel vision” and become “accident prone” lacking the ability to adapt to their changing environment (Bragdon, 2009, p. 2). Recall that “tunnel vision” was a cited pitfall of goal setting theory by Locke and Latham (1991, 2006). And, according to Rumelt (2013), the ability to pivot and adapt is very important to strategy execution. Nevertheless, Bragdon (2009) developed five relational attributes of organizations each relating to a different “living purpose” as follows (p. 2):

- Highly decentralized and networked organizations relating to the living purpose of feedback receptivity as the nervous system.
- Open, transparent, and self-managed organizations relating to the living purpose of speedy adaptive learning.
- Nurturing stakeholder relationships relating to the living purpose of building network (physical) strength.

- Frugality regarding energy and resource use relating to the living purposes of staying power (sustainability) and survival.
- A symbiotic nature with a futuristic vision relating to the living purpose of providing for future generations.

During the period of 1996 – 2006, statistically verified research of the top 60 global companies (i.e., Google and Toyota) found to be dedicated to life affirming stewardship by imitating living organisms outperformed industry peers in three financial indices (Bragdon, 2009). While Bragdon (2009) proposed that relationships and stewardship translating into profits (relationship equity) was humanly instinctive, the Biblical worldview would say God intended this relational stewardship mandate from the beginning (Genesis 1:26; Hardy, 1990; Van Duzer, 2010). But no matter who gets the credit, God or naturalism, the formula of relationship-building and service to customers and other stakeholders is successful at generating sustained profits, in that order (Bragdon, 2009; George, 2003; Van Duzer, 2010). As Bragdon (2009), Van Duzer (2010), and George (2003) asserted, a model that places the shareholder first, while increasing profit and stock price as the number one priority, is not only absent of living purpose but also unsustainable long-term. This theme is closely related to the ethics of business about which the Bible has much to teach.

Biblical regulation and ethics. God took a risk creating another self-regulated being in His own image and assigning him to steward His glorious creation as described in the Genesis 1:26 mandate. Van Duzer (2010) asserted it was God who made and risked the very first capital investment, in business terms, by creating and providing a world with such vast resources, then assigning the stewardship of it to Adam and Eve as its first trustees. Importantly, His perfect will was that mankind, whom He loved, would flourish forever caring for His glorious

workmanship, in perfect relationship to Him and each other (Van Duzer, 2010). But, as the owner of it all, how would He establish trust with the managerial self-regulated creatures? Per Van Duzer (2010, p. 33), God established a “limit” to the creature’s activity by establishing the first regulation of forbidding the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-5). The serpent’s temptation was ultimately, “you can be like God, knowing good and evil,” after all, in God’s image, man had amazing creative abilities like God, but not as God (Van Duzer, 2010; Wilmington, 1981; Genesis 3:5). The reason why the Creator-mankind relationship was so perfect in the beginning was because it was absent of any ethical breaches, but then man, the first “trustee,” in a moment of self-interest, was not satisfied with being limited, desiring more (Jamieson et al., 1961; Van Duzer, 2010, p. 29). And, as noted earlier from Romans 5:12, this self-interested desire for more, that violated the first established regulation, has passed generationally to all of mankind (Wilmington, 1981). Interestingly, from Genesis 3 onward, the Bible is dedicated only to the redemptive and consummative movements of God through covenant relationships (Pentecost, 1965; Van Duzer, 2010).

Covenant relationships after the breach. Per Levin (1966), due to an unwillingness to accept mortality, the moralist, trying to regain the lost paradise through “moral exertions,” looks back to his origins, but even forward-looking human kingdoms have a “propensity to fall by the wayside – or, at any rate, to linger in less exalted regions” (pp. 307-308, 324). God does not expect our reaching up to Him (i.e., moralist religious attempts) because, per the Bible, he has reached down to us through unconditional covenant relationships with chosen people (Lincoln, 1943; Pentecost, 1965; Van Duzer, 2010). Through Biblical covenants, or solemn agreements with man, the foundation of His eschatological redemptive program, God looks ahead, not backward, to an eventual consummated restoration of His original relationship with man

(Beckwith, 1987; Lincoln, 1943; Pentecost, 1965; Van Duzer, 2010). The five major Biblical covenants are usually unconditional, with one exception, as Lincoln described,

a definition of a divine major covenant may be expressed as follows: (1) It is a sovereign disposition of God, whereby He establishes an unconditional or declarative compact with Israel, obligating Himself, in grace, by the untrammelled formula, ‘I will,’ to bring to pass of Himself definite blessing for the covenanted ones, or (2) a proposal of God, wherein He promises, in a conditional or mutual compact with Israel, by the contingent formula, ‘If ye will,’ to grant special blessings to the covenanted ones, provided they fulfill perfectly certain conditions, and to execute definite punishment in case of their failure. (Lincoln, 1943, p. 316)

The first definition is unconditional where God is “obligating Himself, in grace” to bless the ones to whom He has covenanted, like Abraham in Genesis 12 and 15 (Lincoln, 1943; Pentecost, 1965). Because Abraham believed God would fulfill His promises, God covenanted with Abraham blessings of an inherited land that would one day extend to the entire world through Jesus Christ, Abraham’s promised “seed” or “Son” (Matthew 1:1, NKJV; Galatians 3:16, NKJV; Lincoln, 1943; Pentecost, 1965; Wilmington, 1981). But, there was one conditional covenant God made with His covenanted people, Israel, related to this study of the effectiveness of ethical codes as an external control.

The Mosaic covenant (or old covenant). The Mosaic covenant was made between God, through Moses as “covenant mediator,” with the nation of Israel, after God delivered them out of bondage in Egypt, was conditional, and consisted of three basic sections – the moral code, commonly known as the ten commandments, the spiritual code, and the social code (Merrill, 2008, p. 38; Wilmington, 1981). This “Regulation until Christ” covenant, or “Covenant of the

Law,” was conditional, with an “if” according to Wilmington (1981, p. 71) and Lincoln (1943, p. 442) citing the following verses:

If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. (Exodus 19:5-6a, KJV)

Further, “if” Israel obeyed the code, they could occupy the promise land and enjoy its blessings, but “if” she disobeyed, “she would forfeit all God’s blessings,” even be “cursed” as stated in Deuteronomy 28 (Wilmington, 1981, p. 880). According to Lincoln (1943, p. 447), the Mosaic covenant God made with Israel was a legal method of “testing man’s ability to satisfy the holy demands of God” based in compliance, not grace. Historically, a “chaotic kingdom stage” of good leader, leading Israel into compliance, and bad leader, leading Israel out of compliance, culminated in Jeremiah 39, when Jerusalem was demolished by Babylon, making it clear mankind was incapable of keeping the blessings of God through compliance (Wilmington, 1981, p. 140). God’s warning/promise in Deuteronomy 28 had come true. God makes it clear in the Old Testament and throughout the Bible, externally regulating self-interested, self-regulated people by the law does not produce righteousness. Galatians 3:11(ESV) states, “Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for ‘the righteous shall live by faith.’” Gratefully, eight chapters prior to Jerusalem’s destruction, a new covenant was made between God and Israel in Jeremiah 31.

The new covenant. The writer of Hebrews made it clear God is making the old covenant “obsolete” with a new covenant, first made with Israel through the prophet in Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Hebrews 8:13, NKJV). It is important to note the old covenant is obsolete, not the nation Israel, in God’s eschatological program. The new covenant is as follows,

Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34, ESV)

The Old Testament made it clear a chosen people was unable to relate to God through an externally regulated legal code because their self-interest had led them astray to their ultimate destruction (see Deuteronomy 28, Leviticus 26, and Jeremiah 39). But, God, in His wisdom and grace, made a new promise to regulate His people internally by writing His law in their hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, ESV). Further, speaking of the new covenant, Hebrews 8:6 states that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of "a better covenant, which was established on better promises." Hebrews 8:7 (NKJV) asserts the new covenant of internal regulation is superior to the old covenant of external regulation stating, "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second." Just as with self-determination theory, AL and values-based leadership, with the new covenant, God proved that guiding mankind's behavior externally through a code was ineffective, but His internal leadership through instilled values, what Schwartz (1994) called spirituality values, was the ultimate solution to mankind's self-interested moral disengagement. But, one must go through the mediator, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Biblically, the new covenant was mediated by Jesus Christ, the righteous, through His atoning death on the cross because as Hebrews 9:16 (NKJV) states, “For when there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.” This is good news because it means, Jesus died in our place in Romans 5:8 (NKJV), “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” As Lincoln (1943) asserted, “The blood of the New Covenant shed upon the cross of Calvary is the basis of all the blessings of the believer in the present age” (p. 570). Jesus’s atoning death made internal regulation through a Spiritual indwelling possible as Jesus asserted in John,

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. (John 14:18-20, ESV)

When we place our faith in what Jesus Christ has done for us, shedding His blood and rising the third day to conquer death, what was supposed to be our punishment for being self-interested and morally disengaged, He promised to come to us and guide us internally. Nichols and Erakovich (2013) asserted that authentic leaders not only lead with vision but also hold themselves accountable to serving their followers sacrificially. Jesus is the only perfect example of this. Jesus internally guides us through the “Helper,” spoken of in John 16:7 (NKJV), “Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you, but if I depart, I will send Him to you.” Thus, when AL and other leadership styles wish to “instill” life-affirming values into their followers to avoid ethical breaches, serving customers, empowering employees, building relationship equity for sustainable performance, they are imaging the perfect authentic leader, the Savior of the world, Jesus.

Literature Review Summary and Conclusion

From a Biblical perspective, this exhaustive literature review sought to examine all the concepts and theories related to how authentic leadership can balance performance management system (PMS) ethically. It exhaustively explored how values-based leadership, like AL, can effectively internally motivate employee commitment and behavior to create an ethical performance driven culture. As one of the important linkages discovered by the review, affective commitment is an important feature of goal-setting for performance, and according to the authentic leadership (AL) literature, AL significantly impacts the affective commitment of employees through empowerment, also linked to self-determination (Belciug et al., 2016; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Demirkol & Nalla, 2017; Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Locke & Latham, 1990, 1991; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). Another important relationship discovered by this review was how closely passionate customer orientation (CO), true to benevolent and universalism values per Schwartz (1994), is related to AL and ethical sales practices, nearly synonymous (Bateman & Valentine, 2015; George, 2003; Nuryakin & Surgiyarti, 2018; Varghese et al., 2015). Task-based motivation theories, like goal setting and self-determination theories, were reviewed to determine how external controls and motivation can potentially affect internal motivation and ethical behavior. There is a paucity of research with how stretch goals and time pressure relate to ethical behavior per an extensive and recent review by Belle and Cantarelli (2017), and this study will seek to fill that gap amongst others. The study should reinforce what self-determination theory and other literature already asserts about the ineffectiveness of ethical codes and imposed high pressure goals at governing individual ethical behavior (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Erwin, 2011; Ingram et al., 2007; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011). Finally, the Biblical worldview

integration of self, service to others promoted by AL, and the ineffectiveness of external regulation over intrinsic values, also promoted by AL, adds perspective to the study as a philosophical assumption.

Summary and Transition to Section 2

Section 1 develops the purpose of this qualitative study through a foundation and problem statements then briefly discusses its conceptual framework that is later exhaustively reviewed with a Biblical integration. Additionally, section one briefly explains the qualitative method, multiple case study design, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations and significance of the study. Section 2 will restate the purpose of the study while discussing in detail the roles of the researcher and participants, methodology and design of the study, the population and sample included in the study, the data collection and analysis techniques, and the reliability and validity of those techniques.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 of this study included a restatement of the purpose of this study while discussing the role of the researcher, describing the participants, and declaring the research method and design. This qualitative case study explained relationships like how authentic leadership influences the ethical culture and performance management systems of telecommunication (telecom) companies. Additionally, because employee engagement, citizenship behavior, and commitment are important to authentic leadership, employee motivation was also studied. Section 2 also explained the population and sampling of the study, telecom retail sales people, while describing the data collection and analysis techniques. The aim of the inductive analysis of the data collected was to gain deeper meaning of the effects of stretch goals and time pressure on performance management systems, ethical selling, and employee motivation.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to add to the body of knowledge and gain insights into how authentic leadership maintains a balanced PMS and ethical culture within retail stores of the four largest U.S. mobile phone carriers, creating sustainable firm value. The study also seeks to confirm the presence of authentic senior leadership is more effective than ethical codes of conduct at motivating ethical customer-oriented practices. This study will add to authentic leadership theory, goal setting theory, other motivation theories, customer orientation, ethical decision making, and ethical climate research. A Biblical worldview, or the philosophical assumption the Bible defines right and wrong in discussions of ethics, will be integrated into the study as that of the researcher.

Role of the Researcher

Qualitative researcher. Qualitative research is less mechanistic, grinding facts into meaningful data, and more humanistic whereas the qualitative researcher is involved in all aspects of the study by choosing concepts and theoretical propositions, planning the study, arranging situations to observe, interviewing other humans about their experiences, interpreting the responses, and organizing it all into a report (Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, & Cheraghi, 2014; Stake, 2010). In qualitative research, the human researcher interacts with the human phenomenon, creating certain ethical challenges, interprets what is inducted from the interactions, and communicates what is interpreted (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard, & Snape, 2014; Sanjari et al., 2014; Stake, 2010). Unlike quantitative research that statistically measures participant's responses for interpretation, qualitative research places an "immense" responsibility of interpretation on the researcher, and because interpretation can be faulty, triangulation is critical to qualitative research (Sanjari et al., 2014, p. 1; Stake, 2010). The qualitative researcher asks the "what," "why," and "how" questions rather than the "how many" as in quantitative research (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 3). In addition to interpretative skills, the researcher must possess interpersonal skills and strong ethics when interacting with participants in a qualitative research study (Sanjari et al., 2014).

Interpersonal and ethical challenges. Because the data are being gathered interpersonally, qualitative research is laden with a multitude of interpersonal and ethical challenges, and because the interpretation is subjective, the threat of bias must be handled appropriately (Roulston & Shelton, 2015; Sanjari et al., 2014). Because this study is an epistemological study, the relationship between the researcher and the researched can influence the relationship between facts and values, making it critical for the researcher to keep cases of

the phenomena “independent of and unaffected by the behavior of the researcher” (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 8). Ethically, the researcher must balance a respect for the participants’ privacy, yet establish open and honest interaction, all while avoiding misinterpretation which becomes especially challenging when contradictions arise (Sanjari et al., 2014). The conduct of qualitative research has important considerations like “Anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent,” and due to the sensitivity of concepts in this study, all three will be employed by the researcher to protect participants (Sanjari et al., 2014; Stake, 2010). The researcher plans to identify participants randomly using Google searches, contact participants by phone or in-person to request written consent, then interview participants by audio recording to gather data that will answer the research questions.

Participants

Participants in this study consisted of frontline salespeople working in retail stores, whether corporate or third-party dealer, of the four largest mobile phone carriers, AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile, and Sprint, in greater North Atlanta, GA. These carriers included both corporate stores and third-party authorized dealers which means there will be more employers, as case units, than the four carriers represented. By emphasizing that participant identities will be protected and kept anonymous, the researcher is assuming participants will be altruistic with minimal individual bias while interviewed. Anonymity is critical anytime there are relationships between participants, such as between employers and employees, as in the case of this study, where participants are asked about their leadership and the ethical cultures in their stores (Webster, Lewis, & Brown, 2014). For this study, in addition to the participant’s anonymity, employers of participants will not be specifically identified but linked to participants as “carrier A, B, C, or D.” In addition to anonymity, “the principle of informed consent stresses the

researcher's responsibility to completely inform participants of different aspects of the research in comprehensible language" and agreement from participants must be obtained prior to interviews (Sanjari et al., 2014).

Research Method and Design

Qualitative Method. Epistemological research is "concerned with ways of knowing and learning about the world and focuses on issues such as how we can learn about reality and what forms the basis of our knowledge" (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 6). Specific to this study, axiology, or the inclusion of the researcher's values, will be an additional philosophical assumption by including a Biblical worldview (Creswell, Hanson, Plano-Clark, & Morales, 2007). Acquiring knowledge can be accomplished in several ways, but in the case of this study, a qualitative method is being utilized because it is a common way to obtain knowledge inductively (Ormston et al., 2014; Stake, 2010). Induction is a "bottoms up" way of building knowledge through observation and, in turn, creating theories and laws (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 7). Citing Blaikie (2007), Ormston et al. (2014) also asserted that induction can be an over-simplified term, and in the case of this study, abduction would be a more fitting method to obtain the knowledge being sought to answer the research questions and fulfill the purpose of the study. Per Blaikie (2007), abduction is the taking away of a technical account from participants' personal accounts of their everyday activities while employing the researcher's categorical system of those accounts (as cited by Ormston et al., 2014). In other words, as the participants provide their accounts related to the purpose and research questions of a study, the researcher categorizes those responses by applying their own technical and theoretical knowledge. This study also includes two more detailed "strands of enquiry" which are *ethogenics*, the concern "with the role and rules through which people choose to act or not act," and *protocol analysis*, the exploring of "thinking

processes that are manifest when people are engaged in cognitive tasks” like selling (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 14). In this way, the research study’s purpose will be fulfilled, and research questions answered. Ultimately, the qualitative method empowers the participant to provide deeper meaning and perspective to a context than a quantitative method can (Creswell et al., 2007; Stake, 2010).

Case study design. The general design of this study will be a collective, or multiple, case study because the researcher wants to understand how more than one telecom company leads and develops citizenship behavior, affective commitment, ethical climates, and employee motivation within their stores (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2014). Taylor and Thomas-Gregory (2015) asserted case study research design has “under-used and under-explored potential” with “broad” and “flexible” methodological applications (p. 36). The research questions of case studies generally require “how” and “why” inquiries into contemporary “complex social phenomena” and “personal performance,” like personal selling in complex retail PMS (Ebneyamini & Reza Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018; Stake, 2010, p. 65; Yin, 2014, p. 4). Importantly, “how” and “why” questions “deal with operational links,” rather than “mere frequencies” of “how many,” making case study research more explanatory than exploratory (Yin, 2014, p. 10). Case study research allows the researcher to focus on the “case,” or cases, in a “holistic and real-world way” including “organizational and managerial processes” like PMS (Ebneyamini & Reza Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018; Yin, 2014, p. 4). Case studies have defined “case units,” a phenomenon within a bonded context like leadership and PMS of a single employer, and in the case of this study, several employers, whether a corporate telecom store or third party authorized dealer, are the case units (Taylor & Thomas-Gregory, 2015; Yin, 2014). Because case studies research contemporary events, they allow for both personal observation and

interviews (Taylor & Thomas-Gregory, 2015; Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) also asserted that case study design, with “how” and “why” research questions, works well because these questions can both explain and evaluate existing “propositions” that have been made within existing theories or otherwise (p. 30). This study is relying heavily on preconceived and pre-developed theory and concepts from the literature, and case study design is an excellent way of obtaining deeper meaning to explain and evaluate these propositions (Taylor & Thomas-Gregory, 2015; Yin, 2014).

Citing Herriott and Firestone (1983), Yin (2014) explained that many believe the multiple case design is more “robust” and “compelling” than a single case design, but it is important to note multiple cases could not address an “extreme, critical, or revelatory case” (p. 57). Because it is assumed the PMS of the employers, the case units of this study, will be similar in nature, a multiple case design should work well at providing deeper meaning from multiple perspectives of these employer’s salespeople. The key of multiple case design is “replication, not sampling, logic” where a finding should not be relied upon unless it is replicated across several case units under the exact conditions of the first finding (Yin, 2014, p. 57). Each case should be chosen purposely so that it can either “predict similar results (a literal replication) or predict contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons (a theoretical replication)” (Yin, 2014, p. 57). Both types of replication are expected in this study, and this is also addressed in the sampling discussion later. Important to this study, “only replications can convince of a general phenomenon” (Ebneyamini & Reza Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018; Yin, 2014, p. 58).

Summary of research method and design. In summary, because the study is exploring the phenomenon of performance management systems, including sales goals, codes of ethics, and leadership, in mobile phone stores, a qualitative approach is being taken. The researcher

wishes to gain knowledge inductively, and more specifically, by abduction, through multiple case replicative analysis of participants' experience with their employers' leadership and performance management systems. The qualitative method and multiple case study design will accomplish the purpose of the study and answer its research questions because it addresses "how" and "why" questions that help explain and evaluate existing propositions (Yin, 2014).

Population and Sampling

Introduction to population and sampling. Population and sampling are important considerations in any study. This study's research questions relate mostly to how humans behave within retail mobile phone performance management systems under certain contextual factors and leadership. The following was said about the importance and complexity of developing populations and sampling when studying self-regulated humans:

In research, people, unlike inanimate objects, are extremely problematic. They are complex and unpredictable; they cluster in groups determined by social class or specific interest; and, they often refuse to provide us with the information we seek – not a problem that often accompanies research into bricks or seawater. Secondly, the populations we seek to study are frequently huge, and the larger the population being studied, the greater the risk that a sample drawn from that population may be unrepresentative. For these two reasons, we have to take sampling seriously if our research is to offer genuine conclusions. (Hammersley & Mairs, 2004, p. 4)

Sampling depends on the research questions being asked, the method being utilized in the study, and what type of results one is seeking to obtain (Wilson, 2014). There are two general types of sampling found in research – probability sampling and nonprobability sampling (Wilson, 2014). Probability sampling, important to quantitative studies, is when every person in the selected

population has a known probability of being selected randomly as part of a normal distribution (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Wilson, 2014). Nonprobability, or purposive, or qualitative sampling is the selecting of participants based on a specific preconceived purpose, rather than randomly (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Per Teddlie and Yu (2007), the following is true about the two general types of sampling:

There is a classic methodological trade-off involved in the sample size difference between the two techniques: Purposive sampling leads to greater depth of information from a smaller number of carefully selected cases, whereas probability sampling leads to greater breadth of information from a larger number of units selected to be representative of the population. (p. 83)

For the purposes of this qualitative research study, purposive, or nonprobability, or qualitative sampling will be used because deeper meaning is being sought from fewer participants than would be required in a quantitative study.

Discussion of population. The most purposive aspect of the sampling for this study is the selection of the population assuming basic group characteristics will exist in those mobile phone stores of the four largest U.S. mobile telecommunication (telecom) companies. AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile, and Sprint were chosen as a population for a few reasons. First, these four companies dominate the overall U.S. market share by subscriber count, with others lagging far behind (Holst, 2019). As of the end of quarter three, 2018, Verizon led with 34.91%, AT&T was a close second at 34.07%, T-Mobile was third with 17.51%, and Sprint was fourth with 12.13% (Holst, 2019). Together, these four companies accounted for 98.62% of the national market share. Secondly, per Google, these four companies have plentiful stores in greater Atlanta, and

more specifically, the greater North Atlanta suburbs located in Cobb, Northern Fulton, and Forsyth counties.

Discussion of sampling. “Intensive case-finding through geographical sampling is based on the concept that like-minded people tend to congregate,” or in the case of this study, telecom companies who have invested in many stores will be like-minded because they must compete in the greater North Atlanta marketplace (Trotter, 2012, p. 399). As stated in the design section, replication logic is more important than sampling logic in a multiple case study design, making the sampling extremely purposive (Ebneyamini & Reza Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018; Yin, 2014). In the case of this study, to ensure replication and representation, at least three to five interviews from each of the four mobility carriers in Northern Greater Atlanta will be conducted, or 12-20 total interviews from a variety of corporate and authorized third-party employers. In the case responses from participants from each company do not begin to repeat, additional participants may be required for saturation (Saunders et al., 2018). Trotter (2012) also cautioned that those chosen should be “consensus experts” to ensure deep meaning and reflection (p. 399). Thus, in the case of this study, considering the amount of turn-over common to retail stores, a minimum of one year of experience in mobile phone sales will be a qualification for participant interviews.

Summary of population and sampling. The population is purposive, qualitative, and geographic but will ensure the participants have experienced the phenomenon of retail telecom store performance management and leadership by requiring a minimum one year of experience. Because qualitative research is seeking deeper meaning and reflection, smaller sample sizes are permitted assuming the participants are experienced with the phenomenon. Saturation has been considered in the sample number of participants. A limitation in this study is the assumption that mobility stores of the four dominant companies will compete similarly and have similar

performance management systems (PMS). This is critical to the needed replication required by multiple case study design. But, even if they have dissimilar PMS, the research questions will derive themes that can be categorized by case, allowing the various PMS to be compared.

Data Collection

Researcher as the instrument. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument used to collect data, a process described specifically by Sanjari et al. (2014) as follows:

It is argued that humans have increasingly become the "instrument of choice" for naturalistic research due to certain characteristics: they are highly responsive to environmental stimuli, have the ability to interact with the situation, pull together different pieces of information at multiple levels simultaneously, and perceive situations holistically; moreover, they are able to process findings the instant they become available, can present immediate feedback, and feel unusual responses. (p. 2)

The researcher must be the instrument in a qualitative study because they, through interpretation, are needed to “transform the world” into a “series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations” and other data types (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 7). Because the researcher is so involved in the research process, qualitative research is often referred to as naturalistic or interpretative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the case of multiple case studies, like this one, the researcher is needed to interact with participants through in-depth interviews and personal observation to explain the meaning and rich details of a specific real-world context through the experience of a generally small number of participants (Cooper, Endacott, & Chapman, 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Creswell et al., 2007; Neal, Neal, VanDyke, & Kornbluh, 2015; Yin, 2014). This requires interpersonal skill (Sanjari et al., 2014). Explained further in the data analysis section, the researcher is also needed to translate verbal

interviews into text in a reliable and valid way (Cooper et al., 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Specific to multiple case studies, the researcher must note both literal and theoretical replications (Ebneyamini & Reza Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018; Yin, 2014). Ultimately, for data collection purposes, the researcher develops an interview guide that will address the purpose and research questions of the study, but fluidity during the interview should be allowed in case studies (Yin, 2014).

Interview guide usage. The interview guide is an important part of a multiple case study to ensure consistency in interviews, helping to validate replication, and to serve as a linkage of relevant literature about the topic to the research problem and questions (Pedersen, Delmar, Falkmer, & Gronkjaer, 2015; Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) asserted that multiple case study interviews should not be too rigid but allow for fluidity, and the researcher will be cognizant of this. Creswell and Poth (2018) asserted the general thematic dimension should include 5-7 broad open-ended questions in the guide or “protocol” (p. 165). According to Pedersen et al. (2015), there are two primary dimensions to the interview guide, (a) a *thematic* dimension that covers general and broad questions regarding the research questions and (b) a *dynamic* dimension consisting of specific probing questions that create deeper meaning conversationally (p. 631). The interview guide, located in the appendix, includes both dimensions. Prior to the interview, the guide can include a reminder to obtain informed consent including the interview’s purpose, the amount of time it may take, their right to withdraw at any time, and explanation of anonymity (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The guide should begin with the interviewer’s name, the date, and time of the interview, and the participant’s identification number, assuming anonymity, and any demographic material needed about the participant like position or years of experience as in the case of this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). In the case of this

study, in addition to the participant's identification number, the participants' company identifying letter (i.e., company A) will be recorded. Then, the guide should include both the thematic broad questions and the dynamic more specific questions (Pedersen et al., 2015). Even when recording the interview, the guide can include space for notes taken during the interview (Creswell & Poth, 2018). After the interview is completed, reflection of the interview and the interviewer's performance in the interview are critical (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018).

Personal observation. It is anticipated that most participants will be recruited in-person at their store so that the researcher can properly qualify their experience while observing them in their real-world context per Yin (2014). The observations are expected to be casual in nature but will add to the data collection process to help define the various case units, the employers. These observations will be combined to help interpret the interview data as described by Yin (2014). Multiple forms of data collection are helpful in case study research, and although the interview will be the major source of data in this study, personal observation of participants in their specific contexts will help with interpretation of the data (Ebneyamini & Reza Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018; Yin, 2014). It will become particularly important if any conflicts or outliers in the interview data arise in the collection process.

Addressing research questions. The questions in the interview guide should address the research questions thematically and dynamically as stated above (Pederson et al., 2015). The questions are structured to examine both literal and theoretical replication needed in multiple case studies per Yin (2014). The first general research question (RQ1) is, what is the salesperson's experience with the authenticity of the senior leadership at their company? Three research sub-questions related to the first general research question more dynamically address their leadership's values, how performance is managed, and how stakeholders are prioritized.

The interview guide, developed by the researcher, further specifies these dimensions of authentic leadership with six detailed questions, and additional probes, about values, transparency, qualities that instill commitment, and how performance is driven by the company's leadership. The second general research question (RQ2) is, how does the company manage performance and ethics? In the interview guide, there are seven detailed questions and probes addressing this question including questions about assigned goals, how often goals are measured, ethical selling, performance measurement, ethical code communication and enforcement, and what motivates ethical selling in the organization. The third research question (RQ3) is, how is the salesperson motivated at work and why? The interview guide contains five detailed questions and probes to address RQ3 including questions about motivation, commitment, and emotional depletion. The interview guide addresses the three general research questions with a total of 18 questions and 13 further probing questions which should provide for very rich and thick data in which to analyze. Although structured, the researcher will allow for fluidity.

Use of audio recording. The interviews in this study will be audio recorded for several reasons. Importantly, recording allows for verbatim transcription which ensures rich details are not missed from interviews, allows the researcher to immerse themselves in the qualitative data, and adds flexibility to the data analysis (Neal et al., 2015). An advantage of verbatim transcription is detailed coding with qualitative data analysis software (Neal et al., 2015). According to Berazneva (2014), compliance reasons for audio recording include (a) documentation that the interviews took place, (b) reflective monitoring to ensure unbiased conversations took place, (c) data quality assurances for accurate interpretation and categorization, and (d) archival for later reference and sharing. Berazneva (2014) also stressed the necessity to disclose the interview will be recorded and found that none of the interviewees in

her study refused when their anonymity and confidentiality were promised to be protected.

Overall, recording the interviews will add quality to the analysis of the data.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis (QDA). Vaughn and Turner (2016) asserted qualitative data analysis has five challenges: (a) how to systematically organize large quantities of data, (b) choosing a data management tool, (c) how to store data in an accessible way for later retrieval, (d) ensuring consistency in one's coding of the data, and (e) appropriately interpreting the collected data (p. 43). Cassell and Bishop (2018) asserted that choosing from the many and various techniques of analyzing qualitative data is an additional challenge presented to the qualitative researcher. Choosing how to represent the data with matrices, tables, or other means also poses a challenge (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Textual data can be found in interview or focus group transcripts as well as in the public domain of documents, websites, blogs, and other sources (Cassell & Bishop, 2018). Maher, Hadfield, Hutchings, and de Eyto (2018) suggested that "constant interaction" with the data is important to the analysis methodology, and Revsbaek and Tanngaard (2015) suggested re-listening to recorded interviews is a way to immerse oneself in the data continually. And, as Elliott (2018) explained, even when an apparent straight-forward procedure of coding is employed, one must be cautious of locking into a strict and rigid set of procedural steps. In other words, how a researcher codes transcribed interviews "depends," and rather than seek hard and fast rules for coding and analyzing, one should identify guiding principles in their analysis of qualitative data (Elliott, 2018, p. 2850). Further discussion of the coding process is important to this study which plans to collect data through recorded and transcribed interviews of participants in addition to personal observation to help interpretation.

The coding of qualitative data. When discussing the coding process, Vaughn and Turner (2016) stated, “One of the greatest challenges of conducting qualitative research is determining what is worth analyzing. Coding along themes and topics can help to highlight priorities and provide focus to the process of analyzing qualitative data” (p. 50). But, Elliott (2018) asserted that the coding of data for most researchers becomes “instinctual” over time, simply replicating the same process from project to project, but it should be more purposeful and dependent on the project, not habit (p. 2850). Qualitative data analysis should go beyond “coding, sorting, and sifting of data” because being sensitive to the social contexts and situational issues in which a participant is involved must be considered, especially in case studies (Chowdhury, 2015, p. 1140; Yin, 2014). Nevertheless, the need for coding exists for good reason which is asserted by Creswell (2015) as: “Text data are dense data, and it takes a long time to go through them and make sense of them” (as also cited by Elliott, 2018, p. 2851). Coding is a way to tag data points by their relevance to a research question or theme, and it helps to index responses to avoid confusion while interpreting the data (Elliott, 2018). Elliott (2018) further asserted that coding is nearly a “universal” way of qualitative data analysis (p. 2850). This study will utilize a coding process described by Creswell and Poth (2018) and others.

The coding process of QDA. As Elliott (2018) also asserted project dependence on how to code data, Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested the coding process should not be “off-the-shelf, rather it is custom built” and revisable by project (p. 185). Creswell and Poth (2018) visualized the coding process as a downward spiral beginning with data organization at the top in the first loop by creating an electronic filing and sorting system, making the data easy to retrieve. Once organized, the second loop of the coding process should be repeatedly reading, listening, then “memoing” emergent ideas – not just “descriptive summaries of data but attempts to

synthesize them into higher analytic meaning” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 188). The third loop of the spiral is the “heart of qualitative data analysis,” coding or categorizing, terms used interchangeably by Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 189). But, citing Punch (2014), Elliott (2018) suggested there are two levels of codes, descriptive, less abstract, “low inference” codes, and higher inferential “pattern codes” that categorize material into a lower number of data units that are more abstract and thematic (p. 2852). Higher level themes or dimensions should form based on the researcher’s own views or expert judgment that aid interpretation of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A codebook can be developed that sorts the data from higher level themes to related codes that make up the theme, each code including a definition, a when to use and when not to use description, and an example from the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Elliott (2018) suggested there could be as many as 20-50 low inference codes that collapse into 7 or more themes depending on the project. Once the codebook is developed, as in the case of this study, the researcher can move onto interpretation and representing the data.

Computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). There are software packages available to assist the researcher in the manual tasks of organizing and analyzing large amounts of transcribed data so that they can focus more on identifying themes and interpreting the data (Cope, 2014). Critics of CAQDAS suggest it distances or disengages the researcher from the data (Cope, 2014; Welsh, 2002). But, Welsh (2002) stated,

proponents of CAQDAS argue that it serves to facilitate an accurate and transparent data analysis process whilst also providing a quick and simple way of counting who said what and when, which in turn, provides a reliable, general picture of the data. (para. 4)

Welsh (2002) also asserted that the use of the search function in CAQDAS, NVivo specifically, adds rigor to qualitative data analysis through enhanced consistency and accuracy in the

interrogating and coding of the data, the counting of who said what. But, Welsh (2002) also suggested CAQDAS was less effective at analyzing general themes in the data, thus, she suggested the software for counting and more manual processes for thematic analysis. The researcher plans to try NVivo to assist in coding, and the memo functions will assist at developing and synthesizing themes within the data.

Interpretation and representation. When the basic coding and categorizing are completed, the researcher can then interpret, or makes sense of, the data through thoughtful judgments about “what are meaningful patterns, themes, and categories generated by the analysis” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 199). Specific to case study research, pattern matching logic includes “comparing an empirically based pattern – that is, one based on the findings of your case study – with a predicted one made before you collected your data” (Ridder, 2017; Yin, 2014, p. 143). At this point in the analysis, Vaughn and Turner (2016) suggested asking questions such as, are there any relationships between the participant responses and existing theory and constructs and are there any responses that are generalizable? In this way, the researcher tries to “link his or her interpretation to the larger research literature,” and these links should be mapped (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 195; Vaughn & Turner, 2016). Yin (2014) suggested this gives an explanatory ability to the case study. At this juncture of the analysis, the data are transformed into findings and conclusions that can be represented and visualized (Chowdhury, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018). In a final phase, or the last loop of the spiral, the researcher represents the data and findings in a visual form (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Per Creswell and Poth (2018), the most abstract themes are at the top and break down into less abstract and raw data points (i.e., codes) in the visual representation such as a matrix or other graphical display. This study employed such a representation in the form of data tables.

Reliability and Validity

Introduction. According to Cypress (2017), establishing rigor in a qualitative research study is very challenging for several reasons including (a) planning and implementation of a design are usually simultaneous, sometimes changeable and emergent during the study, and not prescribed; (b) preliminary steps with participants like identifying, gaining entry, initial contact, building trust, and negotiating consent are required before implementation of a design can begin; (c) steps are repeated multiple times with multiple participants; (d) as the design unfolds, its elements may need to change requiring flexibility from the researcher through continuous reassessment and reiteration; and (e) at times using multiple techniques, the researcher is usually the sole data collection instrument (p. 254). Due to the above cited challenges and the nature of qualitative, or naturalistic, research in general, another challenge with it is a lack of preset standards by which the research can be judged (Noble & Smith, 2015). Another challenge is establishing terminology that suits qualitative research. For example, to further complicate qualitative rigor matters, some authors use the same terminology, like reliability, validity, and generalizability, as used in quantitative research, while others use different terms like trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability, neutrality, consistency, confirmability, and truth value (Cypress, 2017; Morse, 2015; Noble & Smith, 2015). This study established strategies to establish rigor and to ensure what is commonly known in research as reliability and validity.

Establishing reliability. Reliability in a qualitative research study is mostly related to its consistency and repeatability of data collection, interpretation, and analysis, or in summary, it is the study's ability to obtain similar results when repeated (Morse, 2015). Cypress (2017) described reliability more specifically as, "the scientific aspect of reliability assumes that

repeated measures of a phenomenon (with the same results) using objective methods establish the truth of the findings” (p. 256). Noble and Smith (2015) referred to aspects of reliability as “truth value” (p. 35). A thick description of the study is important described as follows:

a detailed description of the context and circumstances surrounding the phenomena being studied, so that the meaning and importance of behaviors and events can be fully understood. This requires the researcher to provide a rationale for the chosen method, clarify the research process, fully document the methods of data gathering, provide detail of the raw data generated, and finally to specify the analysis process undertaken. (Curtin & Fossey, 2007, p. 90)

Because human participants are incredibly complex, part of establishing reliability is experience and training in qualitative research, and in the case of this study, the researcher was trained in BUSI 715 at Liberty University and has been assigned a mentor by the same for peer debriefing (Cypress, 2017; Morse, 2015). In addition to experience and peer review, the researcher must demonstrate repeatability while obtaining thick, rich, and saturated data, and this will include several measures. First, semi-structured interviews of 3-5 participants from four different mobile carriers, a total of 12-20, will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, and the audio recordings and number of participants are important to allow for several revisits to ensure data thickness and richness (Morse, 2015; Noble & Smith, 2015). Second, because the interviews will be semi-structured using the same questions stemming from related research, a repeatable, standardized, and numbered coding system will be deployed in this study (Morse, 2015). Most importantly, the researcher will be transparent and detailed when describing the data collection process in the field study design section of this study (Cypress, 2017; Morse, 2015; Noble &

Smith, 2015). But, there is more to trustworthiness and credibility than reliability, validity must also be addressed.

Establishing validity. Noble and Smith (2015) described validity as the “precision in which the findings accurately represent the data” (p. 34). FitzPatrick (2019) asserted that the methods employed in the study are critical to the validity of its findings. Morse (2015) and Yin (2014) advised that validity could be increased with prolonged engagement with the participant to earn their trust because when trust is earned, the data are usually richer. The researcher of this study has 31 years of experience interviewing business owners and can establish rapport and trust quickly and easily through participant empowerment, competence, and relatedness as discussed in self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Trust was also gained by in-person recruiting of participants. Persistent observation also establishes validity by reducing observer bias, and in the case of this study, transcribing 12-20 semi-structured interviews, initially depending on saturation achievement, verbatim should accomplish this requirement (Cypress, 2017; Morse, 2015). A coding process of semi-structured interviews with clearly defined questions from a standardized interview guide, included in the data collection section, using standardized categorization of codes will increase validity (Morse, 2015; Noble & Smith, 2015). Member checking, or response validation, is a very important strategy to rule out misinterpretation and bias by allowing the participants to review the transcripts and thematic interpretations for accuracy (FitzPatrick, 2019; Taylor & Thomas-Gregory, 2015). In other words, with member checking, the researcher answers the question, “Is this what you really meant?” Another way to ensure accuracy in counting who said what (i.e., coding), the data will be organized by labeling each participant and carrier. Finally, peer review of the interpretive process will help ensure validity just as it will with reliability (Cypress, 2017; Morse, 2015;

Noble & Smith, 2015). Importantly, both triangulation and data saturation will be achieved with the sampling method and data collection in the study as well.

Triangulation and data saturation. Triangulation is an important aspect of ensuring rigor in a qualitative study by ensuring it is as “comprehensive and as accurate as possible” (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014; Moon, 2019, p. 103; Morse, 2015). Triangulation is a test of a study’s validity “through the convergence of information from different sources” (Carter et al., 2014, p. 545; Curtin & Fossey, 2007). There are several types of triangulation strategies including method, researcher, theoretical, and data source whereas, for example, in researcher triangulation, more than one researcher is used in a collaborative way to provide an additional perspective in the collection and interpretation of the data (Carter et al., 2014; Moon, 2019). Data source triangulation stresses variety in sampling and is a strategy of interviewing participants from different sources to obtain diverse meanings of the same phenomenon (Curtin & Fossey, 2007; Moon, 2019). In the case of this study, to ensure data source diversity, 3-5 different participants from 2-3 different employers of four different mobility carriers located in greater North Atlanta, GA were interviewed about the same phenomenon. Additionally, personal observation were used while recruiting participants.

Data saturation also helps ensure content validity and the overall research quality of a study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Saturation is achieved when there is enough data to replicate the study, when the ability to obtain additional data has been diminished, and when no further codes are being discovered (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Generally, data saturation is the deciding factor of when to discontinue further data collection because depth has been assured (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Saunders et al., 2018). van Rijnsoever (2017) recognized all variables involved with data saturation, including the population, sub-populations, number of data sources, codes, number of

codes, and themes, and in a simulation using three different scenarios, he found, generally, the sample size should be between 20 and 50 data sources. Because a case study is more concentrated, Yin (2014) asserted that 6-10 cases replicating similar findings should be enough. Important to case study research, literal and theoretical replication is more important than sample size (Yin, 2014). Saunders et al. (2018) asserted saturation is achieved when “conceptual depth” is achieved and can be reached early in the data collection process at times, but importantly, it should be viewed as an incremental process, not an event (p. 1901). With these perspectives in this multiple case study, replication is as important as saturation per Yin (2014), and this can be achieved with fewer case units, employers, but may require multiple participants from each employer.

Summary of reliability and validity. While reliability seeks to establish repeatability, validity seeks to ensure accurate findings from the data collected (Cypress, 2017; Morse, 2015). As Morse (2015) suggested, many of the same strategies are used to establish both reliability and validity like peer reviews, establishment of a standardized coding system, and semi-structured interviewing. Member checks were employed. Data source triangulation and data saturation was achieved through interviewing a variety of salespeople from a variety of employers in Northern Greater Atlanta, GA. The goal is to ensure data thickness, richness, and saturation through a prolonged and persistent process of an adequate sample size of participants (Morse, 2015; Noble & Smith, 2015). The researcher has been adequately trained through coursework in BUSI 715 that included executing the entire process of conducting a reliable and valid qualitative study on doctoral persistence. Important to case study research, replication of findings will be important to establish validity (Yin, 2014). The entirety of this study has been peer reviewed by

an adequately trained doctoral level mentor and will be reviewed by a committee comprised of entirely doctoral level peers.

Summary and Transition of Section 2

In addition to restating the purpose of this research study, section two described the components of a qualitative research project and how the study will develop findings and conclusions about authentic leadership's influence on ethically balancing performance management systems in retail banking. Those components consisted of defining the role of the researcher and the study's participants, discussing in detail the research's methodology and design, its population and sampling, its data collection and analysis techniques, and strategies to ensure reliability and validity in the data collection and analysis. The findings from the research project described in section two will be organized and discussed in detail in section three with the goal of finding useful applications to the professional practice of retail mobility stores. In addition to finding useful applications, section three will discuss recommendations for action and further study in the field of authentic leadership, ethics, and performance management systems in retail banking. Finally, the researcher will reflect on his experience with this research project, the potential of personal bias, and any changes to his own thought processes before summarizing and concluding the study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Section 3 provides an overview of this qualitative study of authentic leadership's ethical influence on the performance management systems of retail telecommunications (telecom) in the Northern counties of Greater Atlanta, GA. It includes an overview of how the field study fulfilled the purpose and addressed the research questions of this multiple case study. Section 3 also includes a presentation of the field study's findings and how these findings relate to the existing body of knowledge and address the research questions of this study, specifically. In addition to addressing gaps in the literature and adding to the body of knowledge of authentic leadership (AL), ethical climates, affective commitment, citizenship behavior, and motivation, an application to professional practice and recommendations for change has been developed from the study's findings. Also, recommendations for further study and the researcher's reflections on the study completes Section 3.

Overview of the Study

To address the purpose and research questions of this multiple case study, the field study collected data from 15 sales representatives from 10 different employers, case units, representing the four major retail telecom carriers, Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint, in the Northern counties of Greater Atlanta, Georgia. Telephonic interviews averaged about 38 minutes in length, the shortest being 32 minutes and the longest being 51 minutes. How similar the performance management systems (PMS) were amongst the 10 employers, including both corporate stores and third-party authorized dealers, was remarkable highlighting replication in the specific real-world contexts of the stores. Although performance management issues emerged, the similarity in PMS placed more focus on the participants' perception of senior leadership values, authenticity, store ethical climate, employee citizenship, affective commitment

and motivation in each case. Data saturation was achieved after 12-13 interviews, but the researcher desired at least three to five participants from each major carrier, reaching 15 total participants and 10 employers, or case units. The research questions were addressed completely. Although some important themes emerged during interviews, the inducted findings generally supported the conceptual framework, achieving both literal and theoretical replication (Yin, 2014). And, the findings will add to the body of knowledge, addressing certain gaps, related to AL, ethical climate, affective commitment, citizenship behavior, pressure, goal setting, and other task-based motivation, fulfilling the purpose of the study.

Presentation of Findings

General discussion. The presentation of findings includes what was inducted from 15 transcribed interviews that were coded, and the data from the coding was organized by carrier/participant to note replication and to induct pattern matching per Yin (2014) and Ridder (2017). To preserve anonymity, each participant was assigned a letter, representing the carrier, and number, representing the participant. As seen in the data analysis, the final coding was organized by theme in twenty data tables, available in Appendix A, to show which themes were the most prevalent and to provide a way to relate certain themes. This allowed the researcher to make conclusions and relate the data to the conceptual framework, answering all research questions. It also allowed the researcher to identify important emerging themes that add to the body of knowledge, addressing certain gaps, thereby fulfilling the purpose of the study.

Conclusions of Research Questions. Related to authentic leadership's (AL) balance of values-centeredness and financial performance drive per George (2003), five general research questions were framed in the interview guide to address this balance. The first research questions was about senior leadership values and also delved into citizenship behaviors and

affective commitment and how it related to AL. The second major research question was related to performance management and ethics at the unit level to determine if any negative influence of stretch goals or time pressure existed and which employers, case units, had ethical climates. The third research question related to the salesperson's personal motivation for any insights into task-motivation theories, thereby, adding to the body of knowledge.

RQ1 Authentic leadership (AL) dimensions. Three dominant themes emerged about senior leadership values in the field study per Table 1 in Appendix A. The most prevalent value was valuing employees, including diversity and inclusion. Strong ethics, like integrity and honesty, were the second most prominent theme. And, the third theme was customer orientation (i.e., customer service, needs based selling, etc.). All of these would support AL's values-centeredness part of the balance per George (2003) and other values-based literature (Krzakiewicz, 2012; Peterlin et al., 2015). The researcher became particularly interested in those employers, cases, where themes, valuing employee and customer orientation, were inducted. These align with AL theory well because authentic leaders feel a responsibility toward their followers, or employees, and their customers (George, 2003; Nichols & Erakovich, 2013; Weischer et al., 2013).

RQ1a. As a sub-question to RQ1, it was important to understand how senior leadership demonstrated these values per Table 2 in Appendix A. Authentic leaders act on their values, so their values are demonstrated in action (Weischer et al., 2013). Senior leaders demonstrated the valuing employee theme through supportive coaching, feedback receptivity, diversity days and events, and employee benefits/incentives. The coaching culture and feedback receptivity related well to the balanced processing dimension of AL per George (2003). Values were also demonstrated through what is termed, trickle-down effect, where values were demonstrated "top

to bottom” (A2) through all levels of management down to the store level. Demonstration of values at all corporate levels was important to George (2003) as well. Values were also demonstrated in corporate structure and processes. Two participants, A1 and A2, specifically mentioned an ethical needs-based sales process that is vigorously coached in their stores. Although their company did not have a code of ethics, the “every customer every time” process drove ethical selling in stores.

Values were, in almost every case, communicated electronically in various ways found in Table 3 in Appendix A. But, in addition to electronic methods, almost half the participants reported having met executives in-person or on web-based “round tables” where visual cues from leaders could be seen. The other half noted the trickle- down effect where they heard it from their store manager who had received it from the district manager, who had heard it from higher levels. The latter two would align well with authentic leadership where either Bill George, CEO, or the founder of Medtronic met every new employee in person to discuss the company’s values (George, 2003). George (2003) also felt it was imperative all levels of management demonstrate the company’s values, and this is also important to organically led companies, another values-based leadership theme (Brown, 2014).

In addition to the demonstration and communication of values, this study addressed AL’s positive effects on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and affective commitment (AC) as the literature purported a positive relationship with both (Delić et al., 2017; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). These questions were designed to add to the existing literature by gaining any additional insights with interview questions about values alignment and leader qualities that instill commitment from participants. This is analyzed in more detail in the data analysis section with results reported in Tables 6 and 7 in Appendix A,

but generally, those participants in authentically led companies were more aligned with company values and more committed to the company.

RQ1b. The second part of the George's (2003) balance in AL is driving financial performance through strong accountability to meeting financial targets, results found in Table 9 in Appendix A. As already noted, there was strong similarity amongst all 10 employers' PMS. Every employer used a real-time reporting system so that the salesperson and their manager knew where they stood to goal at every moment of every day of every month. Another similarity was monthly goals. All participants, without exception, were measured by monthly goals. And, according to most participants, "everything" (B1) is measured, one participant being measured on 17 different metrics. When asked the question directly, what drives financial performance in your company, about half the participants mentioned specific accountability related themes like goal gap assessments from daily to bi-monthly one-on-ones with their manager. It did not appear any organization waited until the end of the month to discuss performance-to-goal gaps. Secondly, about half responded that financial incentives drive performance, and it should be noted this industry is mostly a base pay plus commission paid industry. Thus, the financial incentives are important to participants because they can represent a significant percentage of their total compensation. Being data driven, it was obvious employers use incentives very well by targeting what they want to sell the most. Helpful promotions by the company were also cited by participants. Finally, supportive coaching was mentioned by a few as a driver of performance.

RQ1c. Stakeholder prioritization was another important AL dimension where George (2003) asserted it should be customers first through strong customer orientation, employees second through empowerment to serve customers, and shareholders third, or last. To avoid bias,

the question was asked by listing the stakeholders out of the authentic order, then asking the participant to prioritize them the way they felt their company did. As found in Table 4 in Appendix A, six participants responded with customers first, employees next, and shareholders/owners last. Then, all the various dimensions of AL were analyzed in the data qualitative analysis section to induct a pool of authentically led participants, thereby, completely answering the AL research questions before moving onto performance management and ethics.

RQ2 Performance management and ethics. To fill gaps in the literature, it was important to understand other issues like stretch goals and time pressure that could potentially create imbalance in the PMS of these employers. Goal setting and pressure were ranked among the least studied of 12 antecedents to unethical behavior found in a meta-analysis and extensive literature review by Belle and Cantarelli (2017). From Tables 10 and 11 in Appendix A, the four participants who had goal attainability issues, making it difficult or impossible to meet a goal, and the five who reported threatening pressure, were not included in either the authentic or the ethical organizations. In fact, most of these participants were listed in the unauthentic and unethical participant pools. This is analyzed in greater detail in the data analysis section.

The field study also addressed the effectiveness of ethical codes versus personal values. Much literature has found the mere existence of an ethical code does not necessarily deter unethical behavior in organizations long-term, but rather, a gap between policy and practice often exists (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Erwin, 2011; Ingram et al., 2007; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011). With its results found in table 16 in Appendix A, a question about ethical motivation was posed with an “or” without accommodating a third option, “which one motivates you more, ethical code or personal value system?” But, despite how the question was framed, a theme of “both” emerged by majority of participants. In addition to adding to the Biblical

integration of this study, this finding certainly adds to the body of knowledge around the effectiveness of codes and whether human values are more effective.

The field study also sought to understand the influence of AL, goal attainability, and pressure on ethical climates in these stores, and the results were noteworthy as found in Table 15 in Appendix A. The literature asserted that stretch goals and pressure negatively affect ethical behavior by distracting moral judgment (Al-Saggaf et al., 2015; Clor-Proell et al., 2015; Zhang & Zia, 2013). AL was found by many to influence ethical behavior positively (Cianci et al., 2014; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Hannah et al., 2011). All seven participants in the authentic leadership pool of participants were present in the ethical climate group as well. Also, none of those in the ethical climate pool were also located in either the threatening pressure pool or the unattainable goal issue group.

RQ3 Personal motivation. The way these employees are paid would cause one to assume most of them are motivated by extrinsic financial rewards of incentives, bonuses, and commissions. That was not the case as noted in Table 18 in Appendix A. Most are people-oriented, motivated by strong relationships with their customers and teams. Yes, a large group was motivated financially, but not as many as were motivated relationally. Of self-determination motivation theory's three basic needs while interacting with their social environments on a task, this relates most strongly to the relatedness need (Deci & Ryan, 2002). The retail salespeople interviewed were, by and large, people-oriented. They like being around people which is why negative customer or team interactions were considered the most emotionally depleting, which unlike expectancy-value theory, was not task related but people related (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Many of them made the connection that more customer interaction meant more commission, but increased customer interactions led in that equation. Thus, it was not surprising

to learn that slow store traffic was also emotionally depleting as well. Most looked forward to helping people. There were a few other extrinsic motivators like training, career prospects, and others, but not many.

Also, there was an emergent theme of store manager relationship and motivation. All four of the least motivated participants mentioned their store manager as the reason, and two mentioned they would be nearly twice as motivated once they changed to a different store manager as found in Table 19 in Appendix A. None of these were in the authentic or ethical climate groups. This leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship was a burgeoning topic in the literature and has been found to affect organizational behaviors like ethical intent and to decrease commitment (Gabler et al., 2014; Schwepker, 2017). Not specific to the guide, this LMX theme emerged in the motivation discussion of the interview unexpectedly, but nonetheless, it will add to this existing body of knowledge.

All data bounded by evidence collected. All data gathered in this field study were gathered in 15 interviews with 15 separate participants from 10 different employers, case units, in the retail telecom industry in three Northern Greater Atlanta counties (Northern Fulton, Forsyth, and Cobb counties). All data collected from the 15 verbatim transcribed interviews were broken down into various codes and recorded in a codebook. The codes were then organized by pre-conceived themes related to the interview questions and by the participants, labeled by a letter and a number, whose responses were attached to each code within each theme. Although many themes were pre-conceived from the conceptual framework and literature review, a few emerged in the data collection process. No other data were used in the field study, except that which was audio recorded and verbatim transcribed in the interview process. Twenty data tables organized all bounded data so that it could be properly analyzed, available in the

appendices of this study. Personal observations were used to resolve the few conflicts and outliers in the data after-the-fact during analysis, not during the collection process.

Relationships to larger body of knowledge. The findings are laden with pattern matches with pre-conceived themes from the literature per Yin (2014) and Ridder (2017). Adding to the body of AL literature per George (2003) and others, the AL dimensions of balanced processing (i.e., feedback receptivity), relational transparency, customer orientation, equipped/empowered employees, and stakeholder prioritization were inducted through interview questions in the field study (Cervo et al., 2016; Hirst et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016; Weischer et al., 2013; Xiong et al., 2016). PMS imbalance topics like goal attainability and performance pressure were also examined in the field study with noteworthy findings. Specifically, this study's findings about pressure to perform will make noteworthy additions to the paucity of research about pressure as noted by Belle and Cantarelli's (2017) study. The theme of self-regulated leadership in goal achievement was also inducted which aligned very well with goal setting and self-determination task-based motivation theories as a "mediator" between goals and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Landers et al., 2017, p. 509; Locke & Latham, 1991, p. 233). The ethical climates of those stores in the field study was also studied to determine AL's influence on ethical climates in retail telecom stores, and the findings were noteworthy as seen in the data analysis, also aligning well with the literature citing moral courage as a mediator between AL and ethical behavior (Hannah et al., 2011). AL's influence on organizational citizenship and affective commitment, as mediators between AL and ethical climate, lower turnover intention, and overall work performance, were inducted as well (Cianci et al., 2014; Delić et al., 2017; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). The effectiveness of ethical codes versus personal value systems was studied, and the emergent

theme of both being needed to affect a participant's ethical decision making was inducted. This also adds to the existing body of knowledge about codes and values where ethical codes, by themselves, were found lacking in effectiveness (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Erwin, 2011; Ingram et al., 2007; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011). Finally, the personal motivation of most participants was people-oriented or relationship-based, and although extrinsic financial reward was also a prevalent motivating factor, people-orientation dominated the personal motivation theme. This aligns with literature about psychological capital that mediates AL with teamwork and other positive organizational behaviors (Munyaka et al., 2017). Negative personal interactions were the most emotionally depleting to most participants, rather than task-based issues found in expectancy-value theory (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Finally, the store manager relationship was important to employee motivation as another emergent relationship theme. This will add to the body of LMX literature, including how negative store manager relationships can lead to unethical sales practice by lowering a salesperson's commitment to provide superior customer value (Gabler et al., 2014; Schwepker, 2017).

Outliers or discrepancies. There were a few outlying data points. First, participant B3 was the only commission-only salesperson in the study which caused his answers to be more focused on self-leadership, self-efficacy, autonomy, with heavy emphasis on extrinsic financial rewards in all aspects of the study. Most of his data were not replicable per Yin (2014). There were other minor conflicts in the data from B4, D3 and D4, primarily, but for the most part, these were minor and explained in the analysis through the researcher's personal experience during recruitment and conversation with these participants as part of the triangulation process.

Analysis summary. Through interview questions focused on senior leader (SL) values, the researcher was able to induct various AL dimensions connected to AL theory, thereby,

creating a pool of participants belonging to authentically led employers. This group of participants could then be compared to groups of participants in the positive citizenship behavior, affective commitment, ethical climate, and personal motivation pools, relating positively in each case through pattern-matching per Yin (2014) and Ridder (2017). How organizations drove financial performance was discussed with participants to understand this other part of the AL balance. Also, which participants belonged to ethical or unethical climates could be determined with the question, have you ever witnessed unethical selling? Any unattainable goal issues and what kind of performance pressure participants faced in the organizations were also inducted to be compared with the authentically led, ethical, and unethical groups. Supportive and positive pressures were also inducted from the performance pressure question. Participants defined ethical selling and how it relates to customer orientation. One of the most important inducted influencers of employee motivation was the store manager relationship. Finally, the personal motivation of these retail salespeople was discussed and analyzed in this study and there was a surprising result of people-orientation that will add to the body of knowledge around motivation in performance management systems.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Senior leadership values. Because authentic leadership is a values-based leadership theory (George, 2003), the first interview question asked participants, what values seemed most important to their senior leaders? Although a few participants struggled with the question, being far removed from their senior leadership, the participants were able to speak about the values of their corporations, assuming these values stemmed from those in the C-suite. Many of the third-party dealer employees had met senior leaders and owners. As found in Table 1 in Appendix A, there were three dominant value themes. First, the valuing employee theme from participants

C2, A2, B2, A1, D3, C3, D1, A3, B3, C4, D2, B1, and B4, was most prevalent with 13 of 15 participants, an example of literal replication amongst multiple cases per Yin (2014). Secondly, the strong ethics (i.e., integrity and honesty) theme was very prominent with nine participants, B1, C1, B4, B2, D3, C4, A3, B3, and A1. These values are important to AL where leaders demonstrate high ethical standards and moral character (Northouse, 2016; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). And, customer orientation was the third most prevalent theme with eight participants, B2, A1, D3, C3, C1, B4, A2, and C4. Valuing employees included sub-themes like feedback receptivity, team building or relationships, diversity and inclusion, learning, growth, and winning drive described particularly as an encouragement to “push yourself” (D2) and have a “winning attitude” (A3). This related well to leadership’s ability to increase psychological capital in their employees through four dimensions of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency, as an example of theoretical replication (Munyaka et al., 2017; Northouse, 2016; Olaniyan & Hystad, 2016; Wang et al., 2014; Yin, 2014; Zubair & Kamal, 2015). The participant pool was very ethnically diverse, and it is not surprising the diversity and inclusion theme was important throughout this study of leadership. Perhaps, not surprising in retail organizations, values like customer service, needs-based selling, and doing what is best for the customer aligned well with the customer orientation (CO) concept developed by Saxe and Weitz in 1982 (Goad & Jaramillo, 2014).

There were negative value themes from two different participants that arose and from one outlier that did not relate to the question. The first negative theme, from participant D4, a representative in a corporate store, was simply a bottom-line focus to maximize shareholder wealth with no care for employees. The company had just gone through a round of lay-offs and had cut sales support to the stores, making the participant’s job more difficult with the same

goals and less support. This result is opposed to values-based literature that asserts both financial value and non-financial socio-ecological values, like empowering employees, are important (Krzakiewicz, 2012; Peterlin et al., 2015). The second negative theme, from participant D2, a third-party dealer representative, was unauthentic leadership that claimed they valued employees but disrespected long-term loyal employees with what was described as a, “what have you done for me now?” (D2) attitude from leaders. In other words, although an employee may have been a contributor for many years, they were only as valuable as their last month’s production, all the while, the leaders claiming to value employees. This is the opposite of AL that requires a leader to be true to their values (George, 2003). The outlier, participant B3, was the only commission-only sales representative in the study, and he possessed such a strong autonomous motivation, his response to senior leader values was, “they let me run it like I own it.” With self-determination theory, he certainly appreciated the basic need of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2002). In other words, he was there to just produce as much as he could to make more commission with little regard to anything extrinsic to himself. However, this alone did not make him unethical as will be seen later in the analysis.

Values demonstration. Next, the participants were asked how senior leaders demonstrated these various values. The different demonstrations of values will add to the authentic leadership dimension discussion later in this analysis. As found in Table 2 in Appendix A, most demonstration responses related to the prominent theme of valuing employees. The first was a supportive coaching culture, meaning the desire of the company to support the employee with coaching and training resources for improvement, very related to George’s (2003) empowering employee theme. Feedback receptivity was also a prominent demonstration response as part of the valuing employee theme which will be included in the AL

dimension of balanced processing (George, 2003; Hirst et al., 2016; Men, 2014; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). Diversity and inclusion groups, days, and special events also supported the valuing employee senior leader value. Finally, benefit/incentive programs were felt to support the valuing employee theme. It was considered by many that the values of the organization were demonstrated by a trickle-down, meaning through all management levels from “top to bottom” (A2). This aligns well with George’s (2003) discussion of value demonstration at all levels to create an ethical culture throughout the organization (also cited by Northouse, 2016; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). It was also inducted the values were “visible” (D3) in consistent structure and processes. The only negative demonstration response was from participant D2 who felt the senior leader values were “hype with no action.” In other words, there was no demonstration of the spoken values, and this is the exact opposite of what George (2003) called authenticity.

Values communication. Remaining with the theme of senior leader values, participants were asked how their senior leaders communicated these values to the organization with results organized in Table 3 in Appendix A. Nearly all participants mentioned electronic methods of communicating values to employees, including e-mail, intranet bulletins/articles, webcasts, the GroupMe application, and other electronic means, another example of literal replication per Yin (2014). In this age of technology and considering these are technology companies, it should not be surprising that leaders will communicate innovatively with technology. But, there were two other communication themes important to the study of AL because authentic leaders facilitate high quality relationships, invoking trust and optimism from their followers by being relatable and approachable, encouraging followers to engage with them and the organization (Malik & Lochan Dahr, 2017; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). There were eight participants who had in-person interactions with senior leaders, either physically or in web-based “round tables” where

all participants are visible and in-person electronically. These were participants A1, A3, B3, B4, C1, C2, C4, and D1. Participant B4 mentioned her initial onboarding experience at the home office of her third-party dealer employer that sounded familiar to George's (2003) Medtronic onboarding with him or the founder. Participant C1 spoke of web-based "round tables" where the leaders were "real and casual" people who emitted visual cues when discussing values. The second theme of communication, as with demonstration, was a top to bottom trickle down through levels of management important to AL, evident of a true culture (George, 2003; Northouse, 2016; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). This theme came from participants C1, C2, D1, A2, A1, C3, A3, and B3. In other words, they were hearing value-based messaging from their store manager that had been already trickled down from the top. This also supports the organic values-based leadership literature (Brown, 2014; Suriyankietkaew, 2013). There was one negative response with this theme, again, from participant D2 who explained they endured multiple calls per day and micromanagement from leaders. This aligns with Deci and Ryans's (2002) self-determination theory that asserted external "controlling" motivations lessen intrinsic motivation, which was the case with D2.

Authentic leadership (AL) dimensions. The study is about how authentic leadership balances the performance management system and influences ethical climate in retail telecom stores. Per George (2003) and others, the AL dimensions of balanced processing (i.e., feedback receptivity), relational transparency, customer orientation, equipped/empowered employees, and stakeholder prioritization were inducted through interview questions (Cervo et al., 2016; Coxen et al., 2016; Hirst et al., 2016; Men, 2014; Northouse, 2016; Weischer et al., 2013). Each dimension was addressed in this analysis, and it was seen how the results, organized in Table 4 in Appendix A, related strongly to the theory and existing body of knowledge with theoretical

replication per Yin (2014). At this stage in the analysis, it is important to track which participants responded positively to various AL dimension questions. Importantly, the only direct questions related to AL dimensions were senior leadership transparency, senior leader trueness to themselves (authenticity), and stakeholder prioritization as described by George (2003). Feedback receptivity was inducted through the values discussion, and the equipped/empowered employee theme was determined to be all participants due to the many performance tools described by all, even the most negative participant, D2. As discussed in the performance management section of the analysis, every company provided adequate tools, systems, product lines, supportive advertising, and other empowering tools to accommodate the employee engagement and empowerment themes as evidence of literal replication (George, 2003; Hsieh & Wang, 2015; Stander et al., 2015; Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Yin, 2014).

Positive respondents to AL dimensions. Regarding the AL dimension of feedback receptivity (balanced processing), seven participants responded positively including C2, D1, A1, A3, C4, C3, and C1. Eight participants responded positively to senior leader “trueness to themselves,” or authentic, dimension including B2, C4, B3, A2, A1, C3, A3, and D1. For analysis purposes, thus far, participants D1, A1, A3, C4, and C3 responded positively to both the first two dimensions. Next, when asked if their senior leaders were transparent with both good and bad news, there were nine participants who agreed with the transparency, “kept in the loop” (D1), dimension of AL – B2, C4, A1, D3, C3, A3, B3, D1, and A2. Thus far, those agreeing with at least two of the first three dimensions were B2, C4, A1, C3, D1, A3, and A2. Finally, when asked to stack rank (prioritize) stakeholders the way their senior leaders do, those who placed customers first, employees second, and shareholders last per George (2003), were D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, and C4. Importantly, to avoid bias, these stakeholders were not given to the

participants in the correct order, and participants were asked to place these relationships in the order their senior leaders did. Finally, the researcher considered those participants who had responded to at least three of the four AL dimensions positively to be employed by a mostly authentically led organization. These seven participants were D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, C4, and A1, representing five different employers (half), four third party dealers and one corporate carrier.

For reliability purposes, it should be noted that C3 and C4 were from the same third-party dealer, in different stores, and A1 and A2 were from the same third-party dealer as well. The other three are from separate employers. Consequently, three of the seven participants, considering their leaders authentic, represented one carrier and included all the participants related to that carrier, including one employed by a corporate store. This means that one of the carriers, whether a third-party dealer or corporate store, was considered to have authentic leadership. The other three carriers were represented by three different third-party dealers considered to be authentic by their employees. These seven participants will be important to the discussion of how authentic leadership influences employee citizenship behaviors, affective commitment and ethical climate per Leroy et al. (2012), Ribeiro et al. (2018), Jin and Hahm (2018), Gatling et al. (2016), Semedo et al. (2016), and Erkutlu and Chafra (2013).

Negative respondents to AL dimensions. Results found in Table 5 in Appendix A, there were two participants, D2 and D4, who had responded negatively to the concept of feedback receptivity of their leadership. Participants D2, D3, and D4 responded negatively to the authenticity question of “trueness.” D3 specifically mentioned that although the diversity and inclusion value is communicated, it is not demonstrated throughout all levels of management. Again, D2 felt his leaders were all “hype with no action.” Explaining their companies always communicated with a “positive spin,” five participants responded negatively to the transparency

dimension of AL – C1, B4, D4, D2, and B1. Finally, those participants who responded that their leaders placed shareholders or owners first in their organizations, some with employees last and some with customers last, were D2, D3, D4, and B4. None of these align with AL per George (2003).

Although B1 responded negatively to only one dimension, he is included in the unauthentic group because he specifically stated he has been encouraged to sell unethically by his store manager when the organization touts integrity slogans. This is an obvious disconnect in the organization and certainly unauthentic per George (2003). Because there is a conflict with participant B4 that will be discussed later in the analysis, B1, D2, D3, and D4 were considered employed by mostly unauthentic organizations. This participant group will be important when unethical climate and imbalanced PMS is discussed later in the analysis.

AL's influence on citizenship behavior and affective commitment. Organizational citizenship was measured by inducted senior leader/organizational core values and behaviors with which participants felt they were aligned personally. Because the responses were inducted from participants, the participants were allowed more than one value of theirs that aligned with their organizational values. Additionally, it was considered that if the employees were aligned, they would express the citizenship behaviors stemming from these values. Secondly, participants were asked directly what leader qualities instilled commitment from them. These two themes, organizational citizenship and affective commitment, were analyzed because the body of knowledge asserts that AL positively affects both, which are mediators to positive performance (Delić et al., 2017; Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016).

Organizational citizenship alignment. Concerning organizational citizenship, relationship-based values were prevalent in the inducted data analysis organized in Table 6 in Appendix A, including strong employee, customer and team relationships. This aligns very well with the Biblical integration, psychological capital, and affective commitment literature (Lyubovnikova et al., 2017; Munyaka et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2014; Xiong & Fang, 2014). It is important to note, these citizenship values were inducted, not given to participants from which to choose, and the strong lasting relationship theme, both employee and customer, was prevalent throughout this study. Six participants aligned with the strong ethics (integrity) organizational citizenship theme – B1, B4, A2, A1, D3, and C4. Six participants aligned with employee relationship-enhancing citizenship behaviors – C1, A2, B2, D1, D3, and A3. Seven participants aligned with strong customer orientation behaviors – B4, A2, C2, B4, C4, and C3. Eight participants aligned with a strong teamwork (i.e., store relationships) organizational citizenship behavior – D1, A2, A1, C3, B4, A2, A1, and B2. Four participants aligned with an authentic, relationally transparent organizational citizenship theme – D1, B2, A1, and A3. Finally, four participants aligned with a goal-oriented, “winning attitude,” (A3) organizational citizenship theme – C4, A3, B3, and C3. Thus, those participants who were mostly aligned with positive citizenship behaviors were D1, B4, A2, A1, A3, C3, C4, B2, and D3. It should be noted that those seven participants considered to be part of the most authentically led organizations, D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, C4, and A1, are all included in the list of nine participants most aligned with positive citizenship behaviors. This analysis outcome aligns very well with the literature about AL’s positive effect on organizational citizenship behaviors with theoretical replication (Delić et al., 2017; Yin, 2014).

Organizational citizenship behavior misalignment. As found in Table 7 in Appendix A, there were also participants who were unable to align with what they considered negative organizational behaviors. It should be noted that participants were not asked about misalignment, but only alignment. Rather, these negative themes were voluntarily offered by participants, thus, they were inducted in the interview process as emergent citizenship themes. There were four participants who complained about negative organizational behaviors in which they were unable to align – D2, D4, B1, and C2. They complained about organizational behaviors such as “only interested in the numbers, not people,” (B1) “broken promises related to career growth,” (C2) “all hype, not authentic with values,” (D2) “don’t care about employees, only profits” (D4). Three of the four participants misaligned with their organizations’ negative citizenship behaviors were considered members of the unauthentic organizations – B1, D2 and D4. These instances are related to the mediator of trust in leadership, or mistrust in these cases, and affective commitment found by Xiong et al. (2016).

Affective commitment (AC) alignment. As referenced earlier, per the literature, AL has been found to instill AC, an intrinsic theme, into employees (Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). When participants were asked what senior leader qualities instilled commitment from them, the following authentic leadership themes were inducted by the following participants as found in Table 8 in Appendix A. The most dominant theme inducted was employee relations, which included benefits, incentives, diversity, and other themes that the organizations “give” the employees. This was not considered either an AC or AL theme, more of a self-serving “what I get out of it” theme unrelated to intrinsic commitment or an emotional bond as found in the literature (Delić et al., 2017; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). The

same goes for another theme of extrinsic financial rewards under this instilled AC theme.

Although six participants mentioned this as a commitment instilling theme, it was not included as being related to authentic leadership's ability to instill commitment internally.

But, three AL related themes per George (2003) were inducted in this part of the interview. For example, the theme of authenticity and transparency from leadership, was mentioned by five participants, D1, B2, A1, A3, and C1, as a senior leader quality that instilled AC in them. Equipped and empowered employees is a second AL dimension specifically mentioned by five participants as a leadership quality instilling commitment from them – A3, D3, D2, A1, and C3. This was inducted from participants who mentioned how the organization had trained them, equipped them with effective tools, and supportive coaching just as George (2003) asserted. Specifically, one said, “they give us the tools to be successful” (D3). Finally, three participants responded that their senior leaders' strong core values, an AL theme, instilled commitment from them – A2, A3, and B4 (Northouse, 2016; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). Thus, those who had specifically mentioned any one of the three AL themes instilling commitment in them were D1, B2, A1, A3, C1, A2, B4, D3, D2, and C3. Recall that those participants from the most authentically led organizations were D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, C4, and A1. Notice that C4 is missing from the instilled commitment list, but the other six are included. This also supports, with theoretical replication, the literature about how AL has been found to instill AC in employees, a mediator to positive performance (Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016; Yin, 2014).

While the data from both the citizenship behavior alignment and the leader qualities instilling AC themes are mostly connected to the authentically led organizational data, a conflict in the data exists with participant B4. It was mentioned earlier that B4 was part of an

unauthentic organization, but she considers her leaders' strong core values as instilling commitment from her. She also was included in the citizenship behavior alignment themes. Both these data points would suggest she is part of a more authentically led organization. This may be a result of her citizenship behaviors and affective commitment stemming from her self-leadership and strong psychological capital (PC) which may or may not be a result of AL in her organization (Munyaka et al., 2017; Northouse, 2016; Olaniyan & Hystad, 2016; Rego et al., 2012). From a triangulation stand point, the researcher's personal experience with B4 would suggest the latter. She appeared to be an extremely self-motivated, very positive, and self-led participant with little need of extrinsic leadership to create this PC in herself.

Emergent theme of self-leadership. As discussed with B4, when asked about how senior leaders instill commitment in them, participants D4 and B3, specifically responded in a self-led manner, suggesting no need for extrinsic leadership to aid their citizenship or commitment. D4 specifically mentioned that the company is too large and leaders too distant to be able to accomplish this in him. He also mentioned the company does not really care about these matters, just their bottom line. This is considered an emerging theme of self-leadership where the participant is so autonomous, extrinsic leadership qualities do not matter to him. Secondly, the outlier, B3, being the only commission-only paid representative in the entire study, all others being hourly base plus commission, shared the same self-led attitude of "it all falls on me." He admitted working extra hours, six days a week, in order to make more money, not because senior leaders were instilling any commitment. Thus, in addition to a self-led theme, the extrinsic financial reward comes into play with B3. These attributes of participants D4 and B3 seem most related to self-determination and goal setting theories where the basic need of satisfaction and internalized motivation, like commitment, can be "reinforced" by autonomy and competence

(Kanfer, 1990; Onu et al., 2018; Rivkin et al., 2018, p. 99). And, the relatedness need of self-determination theory seemed unimportant to these two, but autonomy and competence were very important (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Driving financial performance. In addition to the four AL dimensions of balanced processing (i.e., feedback receptivity), trueness/authenticity, empowered employees, and stakeholder prioritization, George (2003) spoke of a strong drive for financial results through accountability. At this point, it should be repeated that the performance management systems, generally, in all organizations studied, are very similar, and all contained accountability mechanisms like real-time performance-to-goal reporting. But, importantly, in addition to accountability mechanisms, there were two other themes inducted from the data as found in Table 9 in Appendix A. Eight participants, B1, A2, D3, A1, C1, C2, B2, and B3, mentioned specific accountability methods, envisioned by George (2003), like timely gap assessments by manager (e.g., bi-weekly, weekly, and even daily reviews), real-time leaderboards, both electronic and manual in the store, and others for theoretical replication (Yin, 2014). Interestingly, even the outlier, B3, understood his accountability to numbers with his monthly GP goal that he was required to make if he was to make any commission that month. The two emergent themes were extrinsic financial aids/tools and supportive coaching in the store. The extrinsic financial aids and tools, including special product promotions, targeted incentives on certain products, and commission schedules used to motivate both customers to buy and salespeople to sell, were inducted from eight, C2, D1, B4, D3, C4, C3, D2, and A3. Supportive coaching to drive financial results was inducted from three, A1, D3, and A3. All in all, the total number of positive extrinsic drive factors, including the specific accountability methods, were reported by 13 of 15 participants. Supervisory supportive feedback (i.e., coaching), contingent,

and non-contingent rewards (i.e., financial aids and tools), all extrinsic motivations in self-determination theory, were all listed as positive moderators in the goal-performance relationship in the literature (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Kanfer, 1990; Latham & Locke, 2007; Onu et al., 2018). Nevertheless, driving financial performance is not lacking in retail telecom stores, no matter the employer.

However, there were three responses that included negative and counter-productive methods to drive financial performance. B1 reported that meeting sales goals are more important than customer satisfaction in his company, violating stakeholder prioritization per George (2003). D2 reported his company uses daily after hours or before hours “punishment” calls when the store is behind on its goals, a method that clearly induced bitterness and resentment more than motivation. Per self-determination theory, when extrinsic motivation is deemed “controlling,” it diminishes intrinsic motivation to perform a task (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Then, D4 repeated that staff cuts are used to drive financial results in his company, specifically stating, “no one is safe.” Again, this violates stakeholder prioritization (George, 2003).

PMS issues of goal attainability and time pressure. In the literature review of this study, the issues of stretch goals and time pressure were found to be lacking in the literature, specifically noted as the least studied in a recent literature review by Belle and Cantarelli (2017). And, one of the aims of this study is adding to the research of these two issues, specifically, and how they create imbalance in PMS. It cannot be overstated how similar the PMS are in all 10 employers studied, and all these assigned goals like phone sales, non-phone sales, accessory sales, activations, upgrades, insurance protection, customer service surveys, gross profit, future revenue, and others. One employer used 17 metrics in which to measure their employees’ performance. Most were around 10-12 metrics. Nevertheless, accountability to goals was

prevalent with all employers. Real time leaderboards and sales contests were also very common, and considered positive by most, which conflicts with the literature about their influence on ethical behavior (Pujoul et al., 2016). B2, a member of the authentically led and ethical climate groups, raved about how much she enjoyed the sales contests rewards and the recognition that comes with leaderboards, as will be seen under the “positive pressure” section of this analysis.

Goal attainability. The literature review discusses at length the various pitfalls with goals, goal-setting being one of the most studied organizational behavior topics ever in the task-based motivation literature (Neubert & Dyck, 2016). Specifically, the researcher wished to add to the literature about the effects of stretch or unattainable goals, purporting the possibility that stretch goals could create imbalance in the PMS, even causing unethical behavior, as found by some (Ordanez et al., 2009; Schwepker & Good, 2012). As found in Table 10 in Appendix A, a few participants reported goals were “difficult but attainable,” but unattainable goals in this study were not extremely prevalent. However, there were specific attainability issues like disbelief in a certain product (B1 and C2) where the salesperson found it difficult to meet goal, only because they would not buy the product themselves and were unmotivated to sell it. C1 and C2, both from the same employer, reported there was a certain product that was nearly impossible to sell, but no one in their company seemed to be able to sell it. They figured the employer would eventually change the strategy. D3 reported that goal attainability was more difficult than ever due to staff cuts, but still attainable. The researcher does not consider any of these attainability issues as a case where the employer has assigned unattainable goals employees cannot meet, and thereby, causing imbalance and ethical issues in the PMS as noted by Ordanez et al. (2009) and Schwepker and Good (2012). Much of the reason may be that most participant’s employers were so data driven, goals could be set based on the previous year, store traffic, and other sales trends,

making the goal setting per store very fair and “on target” for most (D2). That said, it should be noted that B1, C1, C2, and D3 had goal attainability issues which may or may not relate to ethical climate, and it should be noted none of these participants are part of the authentically led employer pool.

Time and other pressure. Based on Belle and Cantarelli’s (2017) very recent study, there is a paucity in the research about the effects of pressure on unethical behavior, and one of the aims of this study was to address this gap in the literature. It should be noted here that all participants were measured by monthly goals, providing literal replication in this case study (Yin, 2014). And, it turns out, that unlike goal attainability, this data set was more impactful and will add to the paucity of research regarding pressure in sales organizations. From Table 11 in Appendix A, there were five participants (one third) that reported threatening pressure to make their goals, B1, C1, C2, D3, and D2, from four of the 10 employers (40%). Thus, threatening pressure was not extremely prevalent in the study, however, it did exist in these four companies, and it should be noted that none of these participants are in the authentic leadership participant pool. There were four sub-themes under the threatening pressure theme. The first was end-of-month pressure to make goal, creating stress, reported by three participants, B1, C1, and C2. One of these participants reported that he was under pressure to sell unethically by his store manager to make monthly store goals. Thus, extrinsic deliberate pressure to sell unethically only existed in one employer, and obviously, there was a clear disconnect between senior leader values and the practice at the store level in this single example, defying values-based leadership connecting practice to the value system (Williams et al., 2015). Participant D2 reported what he referred to as “punishing daily before hours and after hours calls” when the store was behind on its goals during the month. This meant if the store was behind on a few goals, all store personnel

would be required to join a call at 7 a.m., and D2 made it clear, it was the opposite of supportive coaching. This type of pressure could be considered negative and controlling extrinsic motivation that decreases intrinsic motivation and commitment per self-determination motivation theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Further, all five of these participants reported there was pressure to make goals, or else, their job was in jeopardy, B1, C1, C2, D3, and D2. None are in the authentically led group. Al-Saggaf et al. (2015) reported that 42% of the participants in their study attributed pressure to unethical behavior whereas in this study, only one third reported pressure existed, about a 9% difference. Again, one reason may be the data used by most telecom employers to be fair in goal setting.

Positive and helpful pressure. When the question about pressure to perform arose in the interview, there were five “positive pressure” (B4) themes that emerged unexpectedly. For example, one, B2, offered that her team was supportive and helped each other which reduced performance pressure. This example of organizational citizenship behavior could be a result of AL since B2 was in that group (Delić et al., 2017; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). Eight participants, including some from the threatening pressure theme, reported they had supportive coaching to help them perform (C1, C2, D1, B4, B2, D4, A1, and C3). Thus, although the pressure to perform included consequences up to termination, C1 and C2 mentioned their new store manager would be more helpful and supportive, helping them achieve goals, than their current manager. Supportive feedback (i.e., coaching) is critical to goal setting and performance in the literature and was theoretically replicated in the case study (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Kanfer, 1990; Latham & Locke, 2007; Onu et al., 2018; Yin, 2014). The store manager theme is discussed more in length later. Six participants simply stated pressure to perform was non-threatening, and they did not know of

anyone who had lost their job (D1, B4, B2, D4, A1, and C3). It was noted that all six of these were included in the supportive coaching group, thus, it can be concluded, with theoretical replication, these organizations do not threaten, they coach supportively, instead. Less prominent themes of time to learn strategies (D1 and C1) and equipped with the tools to make goals (A3 and D2) also emerged, both a part of goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1991). Interestingly, although D2 belonged to one of the worst threatening pressure companies, he acknowledged the company provided useful tools to be successful. Still, that seems like a schizophrenic organization with carrots and sticks which will be revealed in the employee motivation section. It should be noted that five of the seven authentically led participants could be found in this positive pressure participant pool with none in the threatening pressure group.

Self-regulated intrinsic pressure. Another emergent theme that arose in the discussions of pressure to perform was self-regulated intrinsic pressure where the participant felt it was “up to me” (B4) to perform, taking personal accountability and being self-led to accomplish goals. This aligns well and supports goal setting theory where goals are known to cause participants to focus on the goal and regulate themselves to meet it (Locke & Latham, 1991). Ten participants, B1, C1, D1, B4, A2, D4, D3, C3, A3, and B3, all felt this way about pressure to perform providing strong theoretical replication in multiple cases (Yin, 2014). This is important to the overall subject of task-based motivation theory as it is autonomous and competent from self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002) as well as self-expectant from expectancy-value theory (deBrabander & Martens, 2014). But, it relates most strongly to goal setting theory where self-regulation is the “mediator” between the goal and performance (Landers et al., 2017, p. 509; Locke & Latham, 1991, p. 233). D4 was particularly self-confident by stating, “my best is enough, and I make my goals” which relates to self-efficacy in both goal setting and social

cognitive theory (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Locke & Latham, 1991). It is noteworthy an interview question about pressure to perform inducted this self-regulation theme. And, it supports the already strong body of knowledge on this subject.

Ethical selling. From the interviews, the researcher inducted how participants defined ethical and unethical selling, results found in Table 12 in Appendix A. The most dominant theme in the discussion of ethical selling was transparency with customers, which included full disclosure, honesty, and integrity themes with 13 of 15 participants including it in their definitions (D1, A2, A1, C4, C3, A3, B1, B4, B2, D4, D3, D2, and B3). Customer orientation (CO), defined by participants as needs based only, what is best for customer, and customer service, was second in prominence with eight participants (C1, C2, B4, A2, A1, C4, C3, and D2). But, technically, full disclosure and the transparency themes are included in the literature's CO definition, thus, all participants felt CO was synonymous with ethical selling with strong theoretical replication in the cases. Per the literature, CO is doing what is best for the customer at all times, "protecting their interests," never selling a product customers do not want or need, truthfully giving customers all the information needed to make purchase decisions, and generally, going the "extra mile" to ensure customers are satisfied (Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Ivan, 2014; Valenzuela et al., 2010, p. 277). Three participants, C2, B4, D4, mentioned the golden rule while defining ethical selling of which D4 had the most Southern definition, "I think of my family. I would not want anyone taking advantage of my less informed mama, so when your mama comes in, how could I possibly take advantage of her?" The golden rule aligns with one of the Biblical integration themes of loving your neighbor, or someone's mama, as yourself (Mark 12:31, D4).

Unethical selling. Also found in Table 12 in Appendix A, many participants defined unethical selling as the “opposite” (D1) of their ethical selling definitions. For example, seven (B1, D1, B4, A2, D4, A1, and B3) defined it as non-disclosure of details, especially as it relates to the customer’s bill, stating specifically that “it will come back to haunt you in the customer’s first bill” (B3). It should be noted that, in this way, the industry is somewhat self-regulated regarding full-disclosure because, as B3 asserted, an angry customer will be back with their bill if something was not disclosed properly. Six participants (C2, D1, A2, D4, A1, and D3) defined it as lying or deceitful. B1, A1, and C2 defined it as selling unneeded products or manipulating discounts to get customers to purchase what they do not need. Some, like C3, could not define it stating, “I cannot even think that way!” A3 mentioned “that [unethical selling] gets weeded out in the hiring process.” Every participant understood the importance of building trust with customers, team mates, and supervisors per the literature, with strong literal and theoretical replication (Agnihotri & Krush, 2015; Alrubaiee, 2012; Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Bradford et al., 2009; Chen & Mau, 2009; DeConinck, 2011; Friend et al., 2011; Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Schwepker & Good, 2010; Schwepker & Schultz, 2012; Wood et al., 2013; Yin, 2014). The self-serving outlier, B3, stated he was glad when others sold unethically because “it benefits me.” Unethical selling drives customers from other vendors into his store making it easy to switch the angry customers to his carrier. Again, the industry has a way of self-regulating and checking itself this way.

Ethical code enforcement. As found in Table 13 in Appendix A, majority of participants, 11 of the 15, representing 8 of 10 employers, had a published code of ethics (C1, C2, D1, B4, D4, D3, C4, A3, B3, D2, and C3). Only two employers, cases, did not (participants A1, A2, and B1) providing strong literal replication amongst cases per Yin (2014). There was a

conflict with B2 and B3, who are from the same employer but in different stores. B3 stated there was a published code of ethics in a handbook, and B2 did not. It is assumed B3, who had much longer tenure with the company (15 years), was correct as B2 had just 3 years. Most of the participants who had a published code also had either annual or bi-annual online ethics training, most of which was mandated by the carriers they represented. This was supported by the literature that asserted a code of ethics is normally part of a broader corporate ethics program that can also include ethics training, an ethics committee, and whistle blower support programs (Kaptein, 2011; Singh, 2011). A1 and A2 advised they did not feel a code was necessary because their sales process, a tool used in “every customer, every time” interactions was very ethical as needs based and coached emphatically by the company at all levels. B1 was the only one that said his organization just used slogans to communicate ethics in webcasts and emails. As one may expect, he was in one of the most blatantly unethical stores.

Code enforcement. From Table 14 in Appendix A, eight participants (C2, D1, B4, B2, D3, C4, B3, and D2), representing seven of the 10 employers, reported that the ethical code was enforced strongly, including termination of employment. A few participants had witnessed terminations of others for what they suspected was a violation of the code. Five participants (A1, A2, A3, B1, and D4), representing four employers, reported that enforcement was either light, “slap on the wrist” (D4), or medium where “warnings were issued first” (A3), then termination. There was a conflict between D3 and D4, both employed by a larger corporate in different stores. While D4 had been with the company longer (6.5 years), he had not witnessed a termination. D3 had witnessed a termination in his shorter tenure (3.5 years). Three participants, B1 C2, and C4, mentioned their companies had electronic back office ways of monitoring for unethical selling. Finally, D3 and A3, both from different carrier corporate stores, advised that there was an ethics

hotline in their companies that encouraged anonymous whistle blowing. Both the study by Kaptein (2011) and Singh (2011) found that whistle blowing protection programs were common in broader ethical code enforcement programs. As an emergent theme, it should be noted that five participants (C2, A1, C4, B2, and A3) felt that, oftentimes, unethical selling is unintentional or accidental. This will require further study.

Ethical climate (EC). It was important to this study to understand which stores had ethical climates, and which ones did not, without appearing threatening to the participant. This was accomplished with the non-threatening question of, have you ever witnessed unethical selling? For benefit of future research in qualitative inquiry, this strategy worked well because it was not as important to the study if the participant, individually, had committed unethical selling. Rather, it was important to the study to find if unethical selling existed in their store, the climate. Per the literature, EC positively affected salespeople's job satisfaction and negatively affected their turn-over intention (Pettijohn et al., 2008; Fournier et al., 2010). This part of the analysis is also extremely important to this study's assertions, in agreement with the literature, about authentic leadership's ability to influence ethical climate positively, and the results are very noteworthy (Cianci et al., 2014). This study adds to the literature about the ability of authentically led organizations to influence EC with literal and theoretical replication, strengthening validity, per Yin (2014).

Unethical climates. Starting with unethical selling being witnessed often as found in Table 15 in Appendix A, which included any time-frame from "daily" (B1) to "plenty of times" (D4) or "all the time" (D2) or "often, hey, it happens" (C1 and C2), six participants responded including C1, C2, B1, D4, D3, and D2, representing four of 10 employers. Six of 15 participants, or 40%, had witnessed unethical selling often, and this aligns very closely with the

2013 Ethics Resource Centre study that found 41% of employees had witnessed unethical behavior, in general, at work (Niven & Healy, 2016). This study's results were 9% lower than MacDougall et al. (2014) report that 49% of employees of for-profit organizations had witnessed unethical behavior. Further, these results can be relied upon because more than one participant from the same employer, but different stores, responded the same way (C1, C2, D3, and D4). Amongst those in unethical climates, B1, D2, D3, and D4, four of six, were from the unauthentic leadership pool. Five of the six participants in unethical climates were also in the threatening pressure to perform pool, B1, C1, C2, D3, and D2 which is compelling evidence about threatening pressure, adding support to Belle and Cantarelli's (2017) and Grover and Hui (2005) studies about job pressure as an antecedent to unethical behavior. Finally, four of the six also had unattainable goal issues that varied from staff cuts to pressure to sell unethically by store manager (B1, C1, C2, and D3). This adds support to studies of how stretch goals lead to unethical behavior by Schwepker and Good (2012) and Ordonez et al. (2009). While the unethical climates provide some compelling results, the ethical climates align even more with the conceptual framework with even stronger theoretical replication.

Ethical climates. Also found in Table 15 in Appendix A, there were eight participants (D1, B4, A2, B2, A1, C3, A3, C4, and B3), representing six of 10 employers, that reported either no unethical selling witnessed, in rare circumstances or accidental, or only through second-hand knowledge, not actually witnessed in their store. Therefore, there was a 60/40 split amongst employers in this study – 60% ethical climate and 40% unethical. Amongst the participants, 60% were in ethical climates. Important to this study, all seven participants in the authentic leadership pool of participants were present in the ethical climate pool as well supporting the studies by Cianci et al. (2014) and Erkutlu and Chafra (2013) with strong theoretical replication.

It should also be noted that none of those in the ethical climate pool were also located in the threatening pressure pool. Also, no participant in the ethical climate pool has any unattainable goal issues. From the opposite perspective of ethical versus unethical, this should add to the Belle and Cantarelli (2017), Schwepker and Good (2012), and Ordonez et al. (2009) studies. If there is no threatening pressure or unattainable goals, a leader can expect an ethical climate with literal and theoretical replication as demonstrated.

Ethical motivation. Important to the study of ethical motivation is the difference between an extrinsically imposed code of ethics, or external regulation, and intrinsic values, or intrinsic regulation. This is an important issue for organizations and at the heart of the foundation of this study. Much literature has found the mere existence of an ethical code of conduct does not necessarily deter unethical behavior in organizations long-term, but rather, a gap between policy and practice exists (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Erwin, 2011; Ingram et al., 2007; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011). Other literature suggests ethical and authentic leadership values are critical to establishing ethical climates in organizations (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Jondle et al., 2014). To gain deeper meaning as to which is more effective, an external code or a person's intrinsic values, this study inducted very interesting findings. The question was posed to participants, what motivates you more to sell ethically – the enforcement of a code of ethics or your own personal value system?

Code or values? The question forced participants to consider why they sold ethically with results organized in Table 16 in Appendix A. By itself, the threat of ethical code enforcement was only mentioned once by C1. She was the only one who started with, “yeah, I want to keep my job” as her answer. Seven participants responded with their personal value system only, with no regard to the code (D4, A1, D3, A3, D2, and B1) with some literal

replication. D4 was adamant the published code meant nothing to him, only his own values. Although the question was posed with an “or,” unexpectedly, the majority, eight in total (C1, D1, A2, B2, C4, C3, B3, and C2), responded they felt ethical selling was motivated by both a code of ethics and their own personal values with literal replication amongst cases. This was an important emergent theme in the study that adds to the body of knowledge around ethical motivation and decision-making. Those studies (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2015; Erwin, 2011; Ingram et al., 2007; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011) saying an ethical code is not enough and those who proposed the importance of ethical leadership instilling ethical values (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Jondle et al., 2014) are both right. Most sales people on the front lines, those faced with ethical selling every day, believe ethical selling requires both internal values and a code with literal replication.

Values to sell ethically. When asked what values motivate them to sell ethically, there were four major themes that emerged from participants organized in Table 17 in Appendix A. Majority of participants, 12 in all, mentioned customer orientation-relational trust (C2, D1, A2, B2, D4, A1, C4, C3, A3, B1, C1, and B3). It should be noted that all those in the ethical climate group were present in the customer orientation-relational trust pool as well. Many cited that repeat business, a self-serving benefit to salespeople, resulted from forming trusting relationships as found in the customer orientation literature (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Wood et al., 2008). In fact, B3, the only commission-only rep interviewed, considered repeat business from trusting relationships as “survival” for him personally. Two additional themes, personal values (i.e., integrity and honesty) and the golden rule, each garnered eight participants – personal values from C1, C2, B4, B2, D4, A1, D3, and A3 and golden rule from C1, C2, B4, B2, D4, C4, and C3, D2. These both align well with literature about moral courage defined as committing to act

upon internal moral values on behalf of others, even in the face of danger to oneself, like loss of a sale (Hannah et al., 2011). There were three (B1, C4, D2) who responded with “guilt or the need to sleep at night” as motivation to sell ethically. These wanted to leave work with a “clear conscience” (D2) so that they could “sleep at night” (D2 and C4). B1, in particular, was struggling with guilt because his manager encouraged unethical selling in his store.

Personal motivation. Important to the study was understanding how telecom salespeople were motivated personally. Participants were allowed to mention more than one motivating factor. And, while the researcher desired to organize the data into only extrinsic or intrinsic factors, the following results were obtained from the data gathered. At this point, it should be reiterated that the sales function is not a simple task. It involves a relationship to another person, the decision-making customer, who is comprised of their own emotions, cognitive creativity, and volition determining their satisfaction with and trust in a salesperson (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Kaynak & Sert, 2012; Leonidou et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2008). This understanding from the literature will be supported by what was inducted about personal motivation of these telecom salespeople with both literal and theoretical replication amongst cases.

Personal job motivation factors. As found in Table 18 in Appendix A, nine participants (D1, A2, C4, C3, A3, D2, D1, A1, and B2), the majority, cited relationships or a people-orientation as a motivation to be retail telecom salespeople. Most of the participants just enjoy interacting with other people, making selling less of a task and more of an opportunity to build a relationship per the literature (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Kaynak & Sert, 2012; Leonidou et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2008). D2 said, he enjoyed “helping people from all walks of life,” thus, the variety and diversity of customer interactions motivated him, personally. Inductively, both from

the AL and ethical climate groups, D1 and A1, reported that their team relationships in the store were more important than their commissions, an organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), supporting the OCB literature (Delić et al., 2017; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). Relationships dominated responses. But, eight participants, B1, C1, C2, D1, B2, D4, C3, and B3, listed extrinsic financial reward (i.e. commissions, bonuses, etc.) as personal motivation. D1, B2, and C3 listed both people orientation and extrinsic financial reward whereas B1, C1, C2, D4, and B3 listed extrinsic financial reward without including people orientation. Four of these five (B1, C1, C2, and D4) were part of unethical climate group, and this, unfortunately, supports literature about extrinsic financial rewards detracting from moral judgment with theoretical replication (Tang & Liu, 2012; Zoltners et al., 2012). Understandably, B3 is the only commission-only outlier in the group, and one would expect his response, not making him part of an unethical climate necessarily. Four participants, D1, A3, A1, and D4, listed other intrinsic factors such as loyalty, learning and growth, low stress, and schedule flexibility. D4 mentioned loyalty referring to the fact, “after several tries, this was the first employer to give me a shot after college.” He had been with his employer 6.5 years and had no plans to change even though he was in an unauthentic and unethical climate, but he was one of the most self-led participants in the group. Thus, although not due to AL or ethical climate, D4 had low turn-over intent, evidence of his affective commitment, albeit self-led, per the literature (Delić et al., 2017; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). Finally, other extrinsic factors like the technology industry, benefit package, and career prospects were cited by three participants (D4, B4, and D3). B4 was excited to be in the technology business stating, “I’ve owned every I-phone that has ever come out. I am a technology junkie.”

Motivation ratings. The participants were asked to rate their current motivation level at work from 1-10, and then answer why? The data were organized into two groups, those motivated 7 or above, and those motivated 6 or below in Table 19 in Appendix A. There is a reason why it was not split between 1-5 and 6-10. The following was inducted by this question. Eleven participants were in the more motivated group (A1, A2, A3, B2, B3, B4, C3, C4, D1, D3, and D4), and only four were part of the less motivated group (B1, C1, C2, and D2). Although C1 was motivated at a level of 6, she explained that when she changes store managers the following month, she will move to a 9 on the motivation scale. Her co-worker (C1), both working under the same manager at the time of the interview, advised he would move from a 4 to an 8 when the manager change happened. Interestingly, they both adamantly volunteered this information in separate interviews. B1 cited a reason for being so demotivated, 2 rating, was because his manager forced him to sell unethically. And, D2, 1 rating, cited his store leadership as having no feedback receptivity, uncaring about people, and only numbers-oriented. All four of the less motivated participants cited mostly store management related issues as the cause. These issues included not relational (C1), know-it-all (C2), self-interested (C2), numbers only, no care for employee (C1 and D2), disrespectful (D2), and encourages unethical behavior (B1). This strongly supports the literature about the sales supervisor's impact on a salesperson's ethical behavior. Dysfunctional relationships between sales managers and salespeople lowers commitment of both the supervisor and the salesperson, leading to unethical intent and sales practice (Gabler et al., 2014; Schwepker, 2017). C4, who had seven years of experience and was satisfied with his current store manager, stated, "It all starts with the store leadership. If it is not there, it is a sinking ship." All four of the less motivated participants, mostly due to dysfunctional store manager relationships, were in the unauthentic, time pressured, and unethical

climate groups. Three of the four (B1, C1, and C2) had unattainable goal issues. This is compelling evidence about store manager influence and requires further study.

Positive motivation factors. Nine participants, A1, A2, A3, B2, B4, C3, C4, D1, and D3, were motivated personally in their job by 7 or above. A few outliers are discussed below. Four, A1, A2, B4, and D1, cited the store environment or team relationships as a primary motivating factor for them. B4 also cited career prospects. B2, C3, and C4 cited customer relationships as their primary motivating factor, with C3 and B2 admitting more customer interactions meant more commissions. Nevertheless, seven cited relationships, either store or customer, as their primary motivating factors. This relates strongly to “relatedness” in self-determination theory as well as the Biblical integration of the study (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Positive relationships are related to the self-transcendence value, per Schwartz (1994), which includes *universalism* – “the appreciation, protection, understanding, and tolerance of all people and for nature” and *benevolence* – “the preservation and enhancement of those in close contact to us personally” (p. 22). Three, C3, C4, and A3, cited job fit as a motivating factor, and with all three being part of the AL pool, this aligned with the literature that linked AL with job satisfaction through the mediators of job fit and work-life balance (Bamford et al., 2013). C4 stated, “I like people and sales.” Participant A3, 10 rating, also cited her “gratefulness to God” for her job, a very intrinsic and personal motivation to say the least, also related to the Biblical integration of the study regarding intrinsic motivation.

Positive motivation outliers. The 10 rating from participant D3 was surprising because he was in the unattainable goal issue, threatening pressure, unauthentic, and unethical groups. However, due primarily to his self-leadership, career prospects, and even his belief that God deserved his best every day, his personal motivation was not affected due to a mix of intrinsic

and extrinsic factors. A second outlier was D4 who was also part of the unauthentic, unethical groups, citing entirely intrinsic factors of self-leadership and autonomy. He said, “I don’t care what goes on around me. You can cut staff, do whatever. I give my best, and that usually places me [in sales rankings] where nobody bothers me” (D4, brackets mine). As stated earlier under personal job motivation factors, it is apparent one can possess affective commitment (AC) and loyalty without AL and EC. This requires further study about the antecedents to AC. Finally, B3, the only commission-only salesperson, cited a 7 rating because the best time of year for making commissions was approaching, the holidays. He was ready to “make more money.”

Emotional depletion. Based on the expectancy-value motivation theory, emotional depletion, can be a cost in completing a task, especially if too much effort is required (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Participants were asked, what emotionally depletes you at work? Results are organized in Table 20 in Appendix A. Interestingly, the majority, or nine (C1, A2, D1, B2, D4, A1, C4, C2, and A3) cited negative customer or team interactions with other people (i.e., disgruntled negative customers). Two, C2 and C3, cited slow store traffic, or boredom, as emotionally depleting, again due mostly to lack of customer interactions. D3 cited failed strategies to improve. B4 could not think of anything that emotionally depleted her. Again, B4 was very self-motivated as described earlier. B1 cited the guilt that came from being forced to sell unethically, and D2 cited not being valued as an employee by leadership, another relational issue. Finally, the outlier, B3, cited the long hours it took as a commission-only rep to make “good money.” B1, B3, and D3 were the only three task-related emotional depletion cases. All the rest, 12, were relational in nature which should be interesting to any study of organizational behavior and are related to both the basic human need of relatedness per self-determination theory and the values of universalism and benevolence per Schwartz’s motivation theory of

human values (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Schwartz, 1994). It also aligns with the Biblical integration of this study.

What would improve motivation. One additional question about motivation was asked in order to understand the participants' personal motivation. This question was, what would cause you to be more motivated at work? The results were not surprising based on previous answers, and it became somewhat of a redundant question. Nine participants cited relational issues like increased store traffic and improved store relationships. Six cited increased extrinsic financial rewards, or "more money" (B3). Five cited other extrinsic factors such as more training, better products, reliable systems, and more recognition. Finally, D2 cited improved leadership who would respect him more for his 10 years of loyal service. How can this analysis be applied?

Summary of findings. The findings from the 15 participants were laden with both literal and theoretical replication, strengthening the validity of this multiple case study per Yin (2014). Beginning with senior leader values, the three most prevalent values were valuing employees through various means, strong ethical standards like integrity, and customer orientation. Two negative values were inducted as well like bottom line focus without care for employees and unauthentic to values touted by senior leaders. Senior leaders in the study demonstrated the valuing employee value through supportive coaching cultures, supportive training resources, feedback receptivity, and through all levels of management, which all aligned well with authentic leadership's (AL) balanced processing, empowering employees, and values at all levels dimensions, creating a true authentic culture per George (2003), Northouse (2016), and Wong and Laschinger (2013). One participant noted his company's values were "all hype with no action" (D2), the exact opposite of authentic leadership. All 10 employers used many electronic means to communicate values to their employees, but many also included in-person interaction

through meetings or web-based round tables and a “top to bottom” trickle down through levels of management (A2) which are more in line with AL. “Controlling” micromanagement was also mentioned in the discussion of values communication (D2) which according to self-determination theory decreases intrinsic motivation, having the opposite desired effect (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Seven participants responded favorably to the balanced processing (i.e., feedback receptivity) dimension; eight were represented in the authentic (i.e., senior leader true to selves) dimension; nine were included in the relational transparency dimension, while just six felt their senior leaders prioritized stakeholders as customers first, employees second, and shareholders last per George (2003). There were seven participants that responded positively to at least three of the four AL dimensions measured, D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, C4, and A1. To understand how AL influences an organization’s PMS, these seven, representing five different employers (four third party dealers and one corporate), were important when comparing to the organizational citizenship, affective commitment, threatening pressure, unattainable goals, and ethical climate data. There were four participants who had responded negatively to at least two of the four AL dimensions, also important for later comparisons – B1, D2, D3, and D4.

AL group comparisons to organizational citizenship and affective commitment. All seven of those participants belonging to the five mostly authentically led organizations were also part of the aligned organizational citizenship group of participants. This aligns with existing literature about AL’s positive influence on organizational citizenship behaviors, as mediators to performance (Delić et al., 2017). Three of the four participants in mostly unauthentic companies were misaligned with OCB’s related entirely to their mistrust in leadership per Xiong et al. (2016). Six of the seven authentically led participants were also in the affective commitment (AC) pool of participants, agreeing with the literature about AL’s positive influence on AC,

another mediator between AL and performance (Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012, Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). At this point in the analysis, D4 and B3 were committed in a self-led and autonomous way, not crediting their leadership for instilling their AC. This relates to self-determination theory's finding that the basic needs of satisfaction and internalized motivation, like commitment, can be "reinforced" by autonomy and competence (Kanfer, 1990; Onu et al., 2018; Rivkin et al., 2018, p. 99).

Financial performance drive and other PMS issues. To this point, the half of values-centeredness of AL balance was studied, and the interviews moved into the driving financial performance through accountability part of the balance, while studying other PMS issues like pressure and goal attainability. Eight reported timely gap-to-goal assessments as specific accountability practices, while others reported that financial aids and tools, like special promotions and targeted incentives, and supportive coaching drove financial performance. Thirteen (13) of 15 participants mentioned positive extrinsic financial drive factors, thus driving financial performance accountability was not lacking in any of these employers. Although specific drive factors differed, the PMS of all 10 employers were remarkably similar with similar monthly goals. Importantly, three participants (D2, D4, and B1), all members of the unauthentic employer group, reported counter-productive and negative ways of driving financial performance. Four participants, all part of the unauthentic group, reported negative goal attainability issues causing potential imbalance in the PMS per the literature (Ordanez et al., 2009; Schwepker & Good, 2012). Adding to the paucity of research about pressure and unethical behavior, five participants from four of the 10 employers reported threatening pressure tactics by their management including threat of termination, punishing after hour calls, and even encouraging unethical selling to make goals against one's conscience. None of these five were

in the authentically led group of participants. One third of the participants in this study compares to 42% attributing pressure to unethical behavior in the Al-Saggaf et al. (2015) study. Several participants reported “positive pressure” (B4) techniques such as supportive team members, supportive supervisory coaching, with six mentioning no threatening pressure existed in their stores. All six of these were in the supportive coaching group which means effective organizations do not threaten, they coach, supporting the task-based motivation literature (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Kanfer, 1990; Latham & Locke, 2007; Onu et al., 2018). Other less prominent themes like time to learn strategies and the right tools to succeed supported goal setting theory by Locke and Latham (1991). Of significant note, 10 of the 15 participants mentioned self-regulated intrinsic “on me” personal accountability pressure for making goals which aligned very well with goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1991). This self-regulation theme was inducted when asked about pressure to perform.

Ethical selling, climate, and code enforcement. All participants defined ethical selling synonymously with the customer orientation literature as doing what is best for the customer, full disclosure, needs based only, and excellent customer service (Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Ivan, 2014; Valenzuela et al., 2010). The golden rule was also a theme per the Biblical integration of the study. The industry is somewhat self-regulated with regard to full disclosure as B3 stated, non-disclosure will “come back to haunt you on the customer’s first month’s bill.” Eleven (11) of 15 participants and 8 of 10 employers had a published code of ethics, most of which included annual or bi-annual ethics training enforced by the national carriers. Eight felt the code was strictly enforced by termination of employment, while five felt it was enforced lightly as a “slap on the wrist” (D4) or with several warnings first (A3). Two different corporate stores mentioned an anonymous whistle blower program and ethics hotline. Six of the 15 participants, or 40%,

advised they had witnessed unethical selling often, even “daily” (B1), which compared nearly exactly to the 2013 Ethics Resource Centre study that found 41% of employees had witnessed general unethical behavior at work (Niven & Healy, 2016). Four of these six in unethical climates were in the unauthentic leadership group; five of the six were in the threatening pressure pool, while all of those with unattainable goal issues were part of unethical climates. This adds to the literature about unattainable goals and pressure as antecedents to unethical behavior (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Schwepker & Good, 2012). All seven of the authentically led participants were part of the ethical climate pool of participants supporting one of the major propositions of this study that authentic leadership positively influences ethical culture (Cianci et al., 2014; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013). None in the ethical climate group were in the threatening pressure or unattainable goal issue groups, and from a backwards perspective, this also supports the Belle and Cantarelli (2017), Schwepker and Good (2012), and the Ordonez et al. (2009) studies. Only one participant, C1, initially responded that threat of termination motivated her to be ethical, while seven participants felt their ethical behavior was a result of their own personal value system only. C1 later changed her mind and joined an emerging group, the majority, that felt both code enforcement and personal values were required for ethical behavior. The majority, 12 of 15, felt customer orientation and relational trust were needed values to be ethical, and all of those in the ethical climate group were part of this pool of 12. Strong core values like integrity and the golden rule were also prominent value themes needed to sell ethically supporting the Biblical integration of the study.

Personal motivation. Participants were allowed to list more than one personal motivation factor. The majority of participants, nine of 15, cited relationships or a people-orientation as personal motivation in their jobs. Eight listed extrinsic financial rewards as their

job motivation. Four of the five that listed extrinsic financial rewards without including people-orientation were in unethical climates supporting the literature about how extrinsic financial rewards can distract moral judgment (Tang & Liu, 2012; Zoltners et al., 2012). Four listed other intrinsic factors like loyalty, learning and growth, low stress, and flexibility. When asked to rate their motivation from 1-10, the majority, 11, were motivated at 7 or above, while four were motivated 6 or below. All four of the less motivated ones cited negative store manager relationship issues as the cause which aligns well with existing LMX literature about dysfunctional store manager relationships (Gabler et al., 2014; Schwepker, 2017). All four of these were in the unauthentic, unethical, and threatening pressure groups, while three of the four had unattainable goal issues. This is very compelling evidence about dysfunctional sales manager relationships as they relate to ethical behavior and other PMS factors requiring further study. Most of the more motivated group were motivated by team or customer relationships. There were two positively motivated outliers, D3 and D4, who were both part of the unauthentic and unethical groups, whereas D3 was also part of the threatening pressure and unattainable goal group. It was determined that through strong autonomy, competence, and commitment without authentic leadership or even an ethical climate, one can be motivated at work through self-leadership, requiring further study. Considering most participants were motivated by people-orientation and positive relationships, most, 12 of 15, were emotionally depleted by negative customer or team member interactions, not task related issues, as expectancy-value theory asserts (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). Only three were emotionally depleted by a task-based issue like long hours to make “good money” as his company’s only commission-only rep (B3). By and large, personal motivation of most of these in retail telecom was relational in nature, requiring more study.

Application to Professional Practice

There are many ways this study applies to professional practice of any organization, but especially retail sales organizations. The study found compelling evidence supporting authentic leadership as a viable leadership theory that is effective at garnering citizenship behavior, values alignment, affective commitment, and especially ethical climates, as also found in other literature (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). Leadership makes a difference in an organization. There are practical ways to apply authentic leadership that was inducted from the participants who were part of authentically led organizations. In addition to adding to the body of knowledge around these topics, another aim of the research study is to provide practical applications to professional practice in performance management systems and how employees are motivated.

Authentic leadership's (AL) influence on an organization. It was clear in the literature review of this study that authentic leadership was found to have a positive impact on an organization in many ways including ethical climate, organizational citizenship behavior, and affective commitment (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). These are all positive organizational behavior topics that any company leader should desire for his company. Specifically, this study of retail telecom stores in Northern Greater Atlanta was no exception. Those companies that had most or all the AL dimensions, as inducted from their employees, also had the most aligned citizenship behaviors, the most affective commitment, and the most ethical climates in their stores. Those employees who were members of an authentically led company were more customer-oriented, functioned better as teams, were supportively coached, had strong ethics, and generally, were positive with a winning attitude.

Practical AL. Company leaders should consider practical application of the AL dimensions like feedback receptivity – finding ways to gain feedback from employees; transparency – keeping all employees in the loop of both the good and bad, including admitting mistakes; trueness to themselves by demonstrating to the whole organization their values; and properly prioritizing stakeholders with customers truly first, empowered and equipped employees second, then owners and shareholders last per George (2003). Authentic leaders do not put themselves or their shareholders first with an acute focus on profits alone (George, 2003). While considering these dimensions, leaders should ask themselves, are there any disconnections between the vision and values of their company and what is practiced in the field of my company every day? If a leader cannot connect with employees in person, they should ensure consistent values are being demonstrated throughout all levels of the organization, from top to bottom (George, 2003). Per the results of this study, employees are not fooled by positive spin, empty slogans, or other unauthentic demonstration of values. From this study, it was clear employees, no matter what their tenure, could see through unauthentic attempts to be values-centered while financially driven. They know when they work for a group of owners who place themselves first over customers and employees. Nevertheless, there is hope for even unauthentic companies.

Self-regulation and leadership. If a company desires to remain unauthentic, making it all about the shareholders or owners, the field study would recommend they hire highly autonomous self-led people who are less affected by the extrinsic per self-determination and social cognition theories (Deci & Ryan, 2002; de Brabander & Martens, 2014). The field study found that even some in blatantly unauthentic organizations, unethical climates, with few around them with any citizenship behavior or affective commitment, could lead themselves and still be motivated at their jobs. They were led ethically, and otherwise, by their own personal value

systems supporting Schwartz's (1994) motivation theory of human values. Loyalty, resilience, autonomy, personal drive, self-efficacy, and even God-fearing qualities were present in these participants by both their responses and through the researcher's personal experience with them. They were unaffected by a lack of care for employees, staff cuts that took away sales support, and found a bright side to longer hours – more income. Adopting this hiring strategy, unauthentic leaders can be less concerned with sustainability because two of these highly autonomous self-led participants were loyal, one 15 years and another 6.5 years (B3 and D4).

Driving financial performance. It was impressive to the researcher just how data-driven every employer was in the field study. Other industries could learn from how the retail telecom industry manages with great data. From the smallest third-party dealer to the largest corporation, real-time sales reporting was present in every case by store, meaning last year's trends and traffic count could predict this year's numbers. Employees know exactly how they are trending toward monthly goals every moment of every day. True, no employee has any excuse of not knowing where their goal gaps exist during the month. But, how leadership responds to that information is the key to motivated and committed employees. Supportive coaching and feedback, even side-by-side in the moment, with a helpful attitude, was highly effective and is recommended versus threatening pressure that included a continual "or else" or micromanagement component (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Kanfer, 1990; Latham & Locke, 2007; Onu et al., 2018). And, all these companies should keep up the good work around targeted incentives, special product promotions, leaderboards, rewarded contests, and healthy commission schedules that excite both employee and customer. One participant, B2, described how her leadership, who clearly understood the "give to get" concept, "cared" for her through the little incentives or contest awards, like gift cards, in addition to her regular base plus commission pay (B2). The little

rewards and targeted incentives matter to employees. She also appreciated the recognition that came with leaderboards and contests aligning with literature about how these enhance goal performance (Landers et al., 2017, p. 509; Latham et al., 2016).

Applying the right pressure. Per this study, there are two ways leaders can apply pressure, either positive or threatening, and they both get drastically different results regarding ethical selling climates. There was evidence from this study that found threatening pressure from management led to unethical climates as found in the articles making up the foundation of the study (“Key Findings,” 2017; Meyer, 2018, para. 7). All participants under threatening pressure in this study were in unethical selling climates. So, who is to blame here, the one applying threatening pressure or the one being threateningly pressured? Most under positive pressure, like supportive coaching through timely gap assessment and helpful trending discussions, were in ethical selling climates. And, all participants under non-threatening pressure were in ethical selling climates. Effective ethical organizations do not threaten, they coach and find helpful ways to assist salespeople with their goals. Employees do not mind being held accountable to even difficult goals through non-threatening ways like coaching with time to strategize, and the right tools to succeed (Latham & Locke, 2007; Locke & Latham, 1991; Onu et al., 2018; Wood et al., 2013). Goal setting was found to stimulate self-regulation in performance as an inducted theme by most participants which entirely aligns with the over 50 year-old theory development of Locke and Latham (1991). Also, those employers who use sales data and trending to set goals in a fair manner, understanding every store does not get the same traffic, fare better ethically by being fair, pun intentional. This did not go unnoticed by employees, and it was an important emergent theme that not all stores are created equal regarding traffic and potential. But, it is not recommended either to cut sales support staff while

keeping the goals the same or require employees to join calls at 7 a.m. as punishment for being behind goal per D2 and D4. The negative tactics are wasting everyone's time, manager and salesperson alike, and showing employees their leaders "disrespect" them with no care about their historical contributions (D2). In this study, those who felt cared for and supported by their managers were more ethical and more motivated through positive leader-member exchange (LMX; Schwepker, 2017).

Ethical codes or values. While asking participants to define ethical selling, the study found that ethical selling and customer orientation truly are synonymous. Customer orientation and relational trust far dominated the list of values needed to sell ethically aligning perfectly with CO literature (Bateman & Valentine, 2015). The golden rule was also a dominant ethical selling value aligning well with Jesus's teaching of loving your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:39, NKJV). While several were motivated by their own personal value systems alone to sell ethically, most felt both an ethical code and personal value system helped them remain ethical. Another effective way of ensuring ethical selling came from a consistently coached ethical sales process that every salesperson was expected to employ in every customer interaction every time. The coaching of this consistent ethical customer-oriented sales process did not require a code to have an ethical climate and is shared as a best practice. But, absent this process, it appeared from the field study that both an ethical code and values-centeredness worked best, a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic. Thus, company leaders should ensure they are training on both ethics and customer-oriented values assuming those values are demonstrated by leadership at all levels of the organization (George, 2003; Jondle et al., 2014; Kaptein, 2011). Or, a gap between policy and practice can be expected.

Employee motivation. Less retail telecom employees are motivated extrinsically by financial rewards alone than most leaders likely believe. This study found that more employees are motivated relationally than financially because people in retail telecom tend to be very relationship-driven. They appreciate the way their leaders drive traffic to their stores with product promotions and other ways because that means more people. They are emotionally depleted, not by the effort to achieve goals, but when an interaction with a customer or co-worker goes wrong, somewhat defying task-based motivation theory that states effort to achieve goals is what depletes emotionally (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). It is not because they fear a negative customer survey; it is because they could not find a way to make the person happy. It literally “ruins their day” when they are unable to make a disgruntled customer happy again (D1). For this reason, the researcher had little trouble recruiting participants. He was just another person in which to interact and relate. Yes, the extrinsic rewards were important in motivating many participants, but in addition to financial motivation, keep hiring people lovers. They are more customer-oriented, co-worker friendly, and generally, more naturally ethical because they cannot stand the thought of harming anyone, especially someone’s mama, according to participant D4.

Biblical integration. In a retail sales environment, there is no shortage of self-regulated behavior from everyone involved, customer, salesperson, manager, senior leaders, owners and all other levels of management. And, these various interactions are all important at influencing not only the performance management system and ethics of a single store, but the performance of the entire company. Just as God took an enormous risk creating another self-regulated being, mankind, to steward His creation, companies take risks hiring customer-facing salespeople who are highly influential to how customers perceive the company (Genesis 1:26). As found in the

foundation of the study, if customers are treated unethically, it adversely affects all stakeholders. Per the study's self-regulated participants, both external and internal controls are important at motivating ethical behavior. One involves an ethical code, a list of rules and policies external to the salesperson, and the other involves values-based leadership, instilling internal values to guide the salesperson. Many of these values are personal and present prior to joining a company, as expressed by many participants. Biblically, this integrates well because God has given His children an external guide, the written Word of God, and an internal guide, the Holy Spirit to those who are "born again" (John 3). Both are needed to accomplish the Father's will of transforming us into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29 & 12:2).

Finally, the participants were as motivated relationally as they were financially. God is highly relational, triune in His being, who desires a relationship with His children by grace through faith in His Son, over people's performance-based religion. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10, NKJV). God's love and grace, meaning His undeserved favor, gave us His Son so that we would not perish but have everlasting life with Him! (John 3:16). That is a relational God, giving all He had so that we could be with Him forever. And, per this study, it was obvious that strong relationships, customer, team member, manager, leader, and owner, are what sustain effective ethical organizations.

Cognate integration. Leadership makes a difference in an organization at all levels, including self-leadership. One must be able to lead themselves, ethically and otherwise, before they can lead others, and that was an inducted theme in this study. This does not undermine the

need for authentic senior leadership who can demonstrate their values and instill commitment from their followers as George (2003) did at Medtronic. This study added to the body of knowledge related to authentic leadership, specifically, and values-based leadership in general. Authentically led participants were members of ethical climates, were aligned with positive organizational behaviors, and were affectively committed to the organization and its leadership. Effective leadership is not threatening, and per this study, threatening pressure actually garners the opposite of what is desired. Effective leadership supports its people with helpful coaching and other means, is receptive to feedback, is relationally transparent, and ‘walks its talk’ at all levels of the organization.

Recommendation for Action

Remain or become authentic leaders. Share Bill George’s 2003 book, *Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value* with senior leaders in the company. Get your senior team on the same page. Consider adopting four practical dimensions of authentic leadership all per George (2003). First, feedback receptivity, in this age of technology, could easily be accomplished by electronic surveys, inviting responses to intranet articles, and various social media channels. Find ways to listen to employees. Secondly, develop ways and use data to equip your employees with effective tools that help them help customers, not just keep track of where they stand to goal. Encourage and create settings where employees can share best practices amongst peers to empower each other. This will both empower employees and create a positive team atmosphere. Third, be transparent when communicating, including the good, bad and when mistakes are made. Do not pretend to be perfect with a positive spin. Being transparent will earn the respect of your employees as they see right through the positive spin. Fourth, leaders should ensure all levels of management,

especially the store level management, are living the values of the company in order to avoid disconnects between values and practice.

Leaders should find ways to demonstrate their values and be true to themselves in-person as much as possible, even in web-based ways, because it builds trust with all stakeholders.

Ignore leadership prognosticators promoting the idea leaders must be chameleons. Be authentic.

Finally, if leaders ensure the organization is placing customers first with a passion to serve and help them through ethical selling, creating trusting relationships, then empower employees to serve customers well, owners and shareholders will see sustainable value (George, 2003).

Leaders should not focus on the bottom line only, driving only for financial results with no care for the customer or employee. It is guaranteed to create unethical climates in the organization and increase the chance of appearing in the news like those in the foundation of this study (McCoy, 2016; Meyer, 2018; “T-Mobile,” 2013; Verschoor, 2016).

Use supportive ways to drive financial performance. Use positive means to drive financial performance through supportive data-driven coaching, targeted incentives, product promotions, leaderboards, and even little gifts, like contest rewards, and other small incentives showing the employees they are supported. Use non-threatening and positive pressure, not threatening pressure tactics creating a culture where no one feels safe. This includes promoting the right people into store management. The influence, either good or bad, of the store manager in the case of this industry, or the sales manager in other industries, cannot be overstated according to participants in this study. Ensure those promoted into store management are not those who only know how to obtain results but also can be supportive, helpful, and caring coaches. Non-threatening and positive means of pressure lead to ethical climates, aligned organizational citizenship behaviors, and affective commitment from employees. Threatening

pressure garners exactly the opposite. Goals can be difficult but must be attainable. Track store data to ensure goal setting is fair, considering the store's traffic and potential. Most in telecom already do this, so this is shared as a best practice to other industries. It was a very positive best practice in performance management systems of telecom.

Ethical codes and values. This is an issue of “and,” not “or.” Use both ethical codes (extrinsic) and values demonstration (intrinsic) to motivate ethical selling. It was considered by participants to be more effective than one or the other in this study. Ethical training is important and more supportive than threat of termination (Kaptein, 2011; Singh, 2011). Online training seemed to be effective enough. But, also ensure leadership is demonstrating values with which employees can align themselves per George (2003). Leaders should speak about values in-person whenever possible, even if it is in webcasts, or video recorded round tables, where employees can see leaders in-person discussing why values are important to them personally as well as to the company (George, 2003). Values like transparency, honesty, integrity, customer orientation, and employee care should be discussed. Leaders should not bother talking about values unless they plan to live them in front of their employees and demonstrate them at all levels of the organization. Employees can see right through “hype with no action” (D2).

Customer service resources. Leaders should ensure the company knows how to hire people lovers. Effective retail salespeople are as motivated relationally as financially. Financial rewards are also important, but per this study, retail salespeople are in retail to meet people from all walks of life and help them. People lovers make better customer-oriented salespeople, better team mates, and better employees in retail. Either through training or coaching, leaders should find ways to reduce the number of negative customer interactions in the store. Specialized customer service resources to where salespeople can refer negative customers would keep

salespeople more motivated. Let customer service specialists fix customer problems because nothing ruins a people-loving salesperson's day faster than negative customer interactions. These people-loving salespeople were a true joy from which to learn and induct the important data of this study.

Recommendations for Further Study

Intrinsic autonomous self-leadership. There were several emergent themes that were unexpected in the field study, while considering the conceptual framework of the study. One of these concepts was the autonomous intrinsic ability of salespeople to be self-led remaining highly motivated. Although some participants were in unauthentic, unethical, and even threatening pressure situations, their job motivation was unaffected, primarily due to their autonomous ability to lead themselves intrinsically. These participants' motivation was unaffected by extrinsic influences, including unauthentic and unethical leadership, providing support for self-determination and social cognition theories (Deci & Ryan, 2002; de Brabander & Martens, 2014). They led themselves ethically by their own personal values per Schwartz (1994), when most said it required both extrinsic codes and intrinsic values. This does not diminish the study of authentic leadership or any other leadership theory, but it should be studied further for deeper understanding that this study was not designed to perform. This theme of self-leadership is related to another theme of intrinsic self-pressure where participants felt a personal accountability to achieve their goals, supporting the very well-developed theory of goal setting (Locke & Latham, 1991). While the interview was designed to induct extrinsic pressure methods from management, this intrinsic theme was also inducted. Although it is strongly related to self-regulation in goal-setting theory and it could be semantics, how salespeople "pressure" themselves should be studied further as a "pressure" theme (Locke & Latham, 1991).

Negative effects of threatening pressure. What was inducted from this study was not so much the time dimension of goal setting but more how threatening pressure affected the salesperson negatively. All participants had monthly goals, and while two of the participants mentioned daily gap assessments, if the coaching was supportive, not threatening as the case with A1 and A2, the daily time dimension was considered helpful. But, when a salesperson is required to attend a 7 a.m. “punishing” conference call because the store is behind goal in a few areas, and the conversation is not supportive, it is not only disrespectful and threatening, it is an absolute waste of time per D2. Not to mention, it demotivates, not motivates as D2 was a 1 rating on a personal motivation scale of 1-10. Also, when the store manager is not supportive, but threatening and forcing unethical behavior, expect salespeople to rank their motivation a 1 on a 1-10 scale, like B1 and D2. Thus, pressure, in a threatening or non-threatening sense, should be studied further in addition to the time dimension of pressure, like deadlines, to continue adding to the paucity of research around pressure as an antecedent to unethical behavior (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017). This may be accomplished better with experimental studies versus qualitative studies, nevertheless, the theme of threatening pressure requires additional study.

Ethical motivation. The interview specifically framed this question, which motivates you more to sell ethically – an ethical code or your own personal values? With an “or.” And, both an ethical code and personal values was somehow the most prominent answer. Participants were not going to be hemmed in with an “or” option. This is worth further study, especially on the personal values side of the “or” like how organizations can positively influence their salespeople’s value systems. Although the study found that authentic leadership positively influences ethical climates, how organizations specifically influence values is worth further study (George, 2003). It is fairly simple to implement an ethical code of ethics and require online

training as most of these employers do, so that side of the “or” does not require further study. The key is to ensure both an ethical code with training and values-centeredness exist.

The store manager influence. It should be expected that the store manager is a large influencer of salespeople motivation, but in this study, this LMX relationship seemed only mentioned when it was negative. A positive store manager relationship was part of the overall team chemistry, or team relationship theme that was prevalent in the study as a motivating factor. But, when the store manager is demeaning, critical, disrespectful, unethical, or unsupportive as a coach, their demotivation power is enormous. Speaking of some previous managers, C4 advised, “It starts with the store leadership. If it is not there, it’s a sinking ship.” Thus, the store manager’s influence on the motivation of a store’s employees and the performance of the store cannot be understated, especially when it is negative. Although it can be found in the literature, this relationship in robust retail sales PMS should be studied further and more specifically as a topic (Schwepker, 2017).

People or relationship orientation. In a study of robust performance management where there is a plethora of various goals and extrinsic rewards like bonuses, commissions, targeted incentives, contests, and the like, one of the more surprising findings was how much retail telecom salespeople are motivated by people. They enjoy “helping people from all walks of life” (D2). They are motivated by their customer and their team’s relationships (B2 and D1). And, rather than anything task related, they are emotionally depleted the most by negative relationship interactions, whether with customers or co-workers. This is worthy of further study for a few reasons. It could be demographical, or, more specifically, generational. This study fell short here because it was not designed to focus on demographics, just the qualification of at least one year in the industry. It may be generational whereas salespeople in the past were more

extrinsically motivated than younger generations are today. Nevertheless, this may be an important shift in retail sales where salespeople are all about relationships with everybody – customers, teammates, managers, senior leaders, researchers, anyone. They want to make other people happy and are emotionally depleted when they are unable to do so, which is more complex than not completing a task as in expectancy-value theory (de Brabander & Martens, 2014). The sales function is more complex than a task because it involves two self-regulated people, both with their own cognitions, emotions, and volition (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Kaynak & Sert, 2012; Leonidou et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2008). This leads to the reflection of the researcher.

Researcher's Reflections

The researcher's experience with the research process of this study began differently than it ended because, initially, the researcher desired to study personal bankers in retail bank branches. But, considering the researcher's 32-year career in commercial banking, reflecting back, it was best that banks, in general, do not share anything and were impossible from which to recruit. Confidentiality is at an entirely different level at financial institutions, as it should be, and after pleading with several retail bank leaders for cooperation and being turned away, a new strategy was developed. In hindsight, the researcher would have had more bias issues studying retail branches due to his preconceived views about his employer's various competitors. Fortunately, after discovering from a retail banking leader and from a retail telecom salesperson that retail banking recruits from retail telecom because both industries have robust performance management systems, the researcher was comfortable changing the sample and population to telecom. Aside from one carrier's corporate stores, it was much easier to recruit from telecom which made completing the field study possible. Also, having no experience with the industry,

the researcher had no bias entering the field study, and being ignorant about the industry made the field study an enjoyable learning experience from a ground zero perspective. This would not have been the case with retail banking.

Authentic leadership (AL) was chosen as a topic partly because the researcher's own value system aligned with the theory. Another reason was the amount of literature available on the topic of AL and how it related to important organizational behavior issues like affective commitment, citizenship behavior, and ethical climate (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Gatling et al., 2018; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016). Entering the field study, the researcher had no idea what he would find about authentic leadership within the telecom industry and could not be more pleased with the results. The researcher designed the interview guide purposely to induct from participants any AL dimensions starting with a discussion on their senior leaders' values alone. From there, the discussion was able to flow into how values were demonstrated and communicated, and from there, the discussion about dimensions like transparency, authenticity, and stakeholder prioritization more deeply inducted AL qualities, if they existed. Importantly, this was entirely an induction process, and the researcher was very pleased how the interview guide flowed through that process. Also, the researcher was pleasantly surprised how well it worked at inducting AL themes like feedback receptivity, valuing employees, customer orientation, relational transparency, and authenticity per George (2003). Further, the researcher was pleased with how the strategy of inducting ethical versus unethical climates worked by asking the question, have you ever witnessed unethical selling? This was an unobtrusive and safe question for the participant to share, and it worked extremely well. One flaw with the interview guide was the redundancy while discussing personal motivation, and that part of the guide could have been designed better. It was like

asking the same question three different ways and was not intended to be that way. It is not efficient when participants are using the phrase “like I said.”

The researcher’s personal experience with the participants was important, especially while considering any conflicts in the data. Due to his ignorance of the industry, the researcher personally recruited most participants in person within their store environment. This allowed the researcher to gain a better understanding of the participant’s environment and industry, and it helped the researcher understand the participant better. All interviews were, by approved protocol, recorded telephone interviews on the participant’s own time outside of work and later transcribed verbatim. The transcriptions were sent for member checking and there was no disagreement garnered from that process. Speaking outside of work was important because they were free to talk openly on their own time. Generally, the participants were very open and easy to interview. Retail telecom salespeople are people-oriented and because full disclosure is an important aspect of their job every day, induction was not difficult, including the positive and negative experiences of their personal phenomenon. The researcher does not believe anything was withheld, and the meaning inducted was the true meaning in all participant cases.

What the researcher learned most from the participants was how important relationships are in life, far more important than performance, yet goals are not evil, either, and help salespeople self-regulate. But, relationships come first, and this was an inducted theme throughout the field study with adequate replication. The golden rule was inducted many times, and even it often started with the participant thinking about their familial relationships and how they could never treat anyone else’s family members differently than they would treat their own. The researcher did not expect this expanded version of the golden rule. The researcher has been in business-to-business relationship management his entire 32-year career as part of a very high-

performance management system most of those years. By God's grace, the researcher has been blessed with success most years in a challenging and competitive industry, but it has been easy to neglect some relationships while being so performance-driven. Relationships are often undervalued and should not be. This was the crux of George's (2003) AL balance. Importantly and Biblically, God desires a relationship with us, not our religion, so much so, that He gave His own Son to redeem a world steeped in performance-based religion. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, NKJV). Relational trust is what a triune God desires from us (Proverbs 3:5). What better leader to follow than our Heavenly Father and Creator of the universe (Genesis 1) and the lover of your soul, Jesus Christ, while being given the Holy Spirit as an internal guide (John 3:1-16)?

Finally, the researcher also gained an expanded perspective of the extrinsic influence of God's Word and the intrinsic influence of the Holy Spirit. As with the participants' view of ethical motivation, including both an ethical code and their personal value system, the researcher was forced to consider how powerful the combination of God's revelation of Himself, the Bible, and His gift of the Holy Spirit is to those who are "born again" (John 3:3, NKJV). It requires both to accomplish God's goal for us, "to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29, NKJV). God is a God of "ands" and is not about to be hemmed in by any "or." Jesus Christ did not abolish the law, He fulfilled it in Himself and through the power of His resurrection in us, passing us from death in sin to a life of liberty in His Spirit (Ephesians 2:1). Both the Bible and His Spirit are important to a Christian's maturity, making us complete in Him.

Summary of the Study

George's (2003) ideas about how authentic leadership can positively affect organization behavior, including ethical climate, organizational citizenship, and affective commitment, was confirmed by this study of retail telecom with strong literal and theoretical replication (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013; Gatling et al., 2016; Jin & Hahm, 2018; Leroy et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Semedo et al., 2016; Yin, 2014). Through interview questions focused on senior leader (SL) values, the researcher was able to induct various AL dimensions connected to AL theory, thereby, creating a pool of participants belonging to authentically led employers. This group of participants could then be compared to groups of participants in the positive citizenship behavior, affective commitment, ethical climate, and personal motivation pools, relating positively in each case. Again, this aligns extremely well with all concepts in the literature. Also, in support from the opposite perspective, most in unethical climates, threateningly pressured, and citizenship misalignment groups were part of the unauthentic organizations. All of this aligns with the AL literature and its positive influence on ethical climate, citizenship behavior, and affective commitment accomplishing the purpose of this study.

Participants defined ethical selling synonymously with customer orientation creating lasting customer relationships that lead to repeat business, aligning extremely well with customer orientation literature (Bateman & Valentine, 2015; Goad & Jaramillo, 2014; Valenzuela et al., 2010). Difficult goals, if attainable, did not bother participants, the majority of which felt accountability to accomplishing goals, placing intrinsic pressure on themselves to do so which was in full support of goal setting theory by Locke and Latham (1991). However, this should caution organizations around threatening pressure. This study's findings about pressure contributes to the paucity of research on this topic whereas all of those in the unauthentic and

unethical pools of participants were also members of the threatening pressure group.

Threatening pressure is not positive for ethical selling, commitment, or citizenship behavior, and this study found that effective PMS do not use threatening pressure on salespeople adding to the paucity of research on this topic (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017). The effective telecom employers supportively coach their people, instead, per certain literature (de Brabander & Martens, 2014; Kanfer, 1990; Latham & Locke, 2007; Onu et al., 2018). Supportive coaching was a persistent theme in this study included in the themes of values demonstration of leadership, driving financial performance, and an emergent theme of “positive pressure” on performance.

Speaking of coaching, one of the most important influencers of employee motivation was the store manager relationship, especially if negative, aligning with certain LMX literature about how dysfunctional sales manager relationships can detract from ethical behavior and adding customer value (Schwepker, 2017). In fact, no other relationship had such an ability to reduce overall personal motivation than did the store manager in this study. Finally, perhaps surprisingly, retail salespeople in this study were as motivated by positive customer and team relationships as they were with extrinsic financial rewards with literal replication. Retail salespeople are people-oriented, and what emotionally depletes them the most are negative customer and co-worker interactions, not task-related effort or other issues. As with the ethical motivation finding of both codes and values and the threatening pressure findings, this relational motivation finding, over financial motivation, should encourage further study of the topic as it may be generational in nature. Another finding requiring further study would be how self-led salespeople can be highly self-motivated while not members of authentically led companies, instilling no commitment, or ethical climates as was the case with a few participants. Generally, this study accomplished its purpose of adding to the body of knowledge and reducing gaps with

regard to authentic leadership's ethical and other influences on performance management systems and employee motivation in the retail telecom industry.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

Authentic leadership's influence on performance management and ethical selling

Type of Interview: Audio recorded telephone conversation.

Interviewer: Arin S. Crandall, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Participant: Anonymous Telecom Salesperson No. _____

Participant's Place: _____

Participant Experience: Years in retail telecom industry? _____

Telecom Carrier: _____ A _____ B _____ C _____ D

Date & Time: _____

[Brief Explanation of the Project]

Informed Consent Delivery and Receipt: _____

Interview Questions:

Main Theme 1: What is salesperson's experience with authenticity of company's senior leadership?

- A. What values seem most important to your senior leadership? Probes: How are they consistently demonstrated? How are senior leaders "true" to themselves?
- B. How does senior leadership generally communicate to the organization? Probe: How transparent is both good and bad news?
- C. How does the organization prioritize its primary stakeholder relationships – employees, customers, communities, and shareholders? Probe: Must rank - no equal ratings.
- D. What senior leadership qualities motivate and instill commitment from you?
- E. How do senior leadership values align with your personal value system? Why?
- F. How does senior leadership drive financial performance in the organization?

Main Theme 2: How does the company manage performance?

- A. What type of goals are assigned to you and how attainable are they?
- B. How often are goals measured? Probe: What, if any, pressure to you feel to perform?
- C. What does ethical selling mean to you? Probe: With relation to customers?
- D. How is your performance evaluated and measured? Probe: Specific elements measured?
- E. How does organization communicate and enforce ethics in the store or company-wide?
- F. Have you ever witnessed unethical selling in store? Probe: With relation to customer?
- G. What motivates you to sell ethically, code of ethics or values? Probe: What values?

Main Theme 3: What are salesperson's Motivation and Affective Commitment?

- A. What is most and least motivating about your job itself? Probe: Intrinsically and extrinsically?
- B. Generally, on a scale of 1-10, how motivated are you at work? Why or why not?
- C. What is most and least motivating about your current work environment (the store)?
- D. What emotionally depletes you at work? Why?
- E. What might cause you to be more motivated at work?

Appendix B: Tables

Table 1

<u>Theme - Senior Leader Values</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Valuing Employees	C2, A2, B2, A1, D3, C3, D1, A3, B3, C4, D2, B1, B4
Sub: Feedback Receptivity	C2, D1, A1, A3
Sub: Team building relationships	D1, A2, B2, C3, B3
Sub: Learning/Growth/Winning Drive	D1, C4, A3, D2
Sub: Diversity and Inclusion	B1, D1, B4, D3, A3
Strong ethics like integrity/honesty	B1, C1, B4, B2, D3, C4, A3, B3, A1
Customer Orientation	B2, A1, D3, C3, C1, B4, A2, C4
Consistency/Structure/Process/Tools	D3, D4, A3
Outliers:	“Run It Like You Own It” Autonomy (B3)
	Only care about bottom line (D4)

Table 2

<u>Theme – Values Demonstration</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Positive Themes	
In-Person or Round Tables	B1, C1, C2, B4, B2, A1, C4, A2
Values visible at all levels/trickle-down effect	B2, A1, A3, B4, A2, D3
Feedback Receptive/Listen	C1, C2, A1, C4, A3
Consistent Structured Processes/tools	D3, A3, B4, A1, D1
Supportive coaching culture	D1, B4, A1, A3
Benefit/incentive program/employee care	B2, C3, B3, C2
Diversity and inclusion groups/days	D3, A3
Negative Themes:	“Hype-no action”
Lay-offs to meet bottom line	D4

Table 3

<u>Theme – Values Communication</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Electronically (i.e., e-mail, intranet, online articles, etc.)	ALL
In-Person/Visible	A1, A3, B3, B4, C1, C2, C4, D1
All Levels/Trickle-down	C1, C2, D1, A2, A1, C3, A3, B3
Negative: Multiple calls per day/micromanagement	D2

Table 4

<u>Theme – Authentic Dimensions</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Authentic/Walk-the-Talk/In Person or All Levels Equipped Employees/Tools/Process	B2, C4, A3, B3, A2, A1, C4, C3, A3, D1
Relational Transparency	ALL
Balanced Processing/Feedback Receptive	B2, C4, A1, D3, C3, A3, B3, D1, A2, C2, D1, A1, A3, C4, C3, C1
Stakeholder Prioritization	D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, C4
Authentic Group (three of four dimensions)	D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, C4, A1

Table 5

<u>Theme – Unauthentic Responses</u>	<u>Participants</u>
No Receptivity/Value to Employee Feedback	D2, D4
Not true/Unauthenticity/Impersonal	D2, D3, D4
Relational Transparency/Positive “Spin” only	C1, B4, D4, D2, B1
Stakeholder Prioritization/Owners First	D2, D3, D4, B4
Mostly Unauthentic (2 of 4 negative/unauthentic)	D2, D3, D4, B4

Table 6

<u>Theme – Citizenship Behavior Alignment</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Store Relationships/Teamwork	D1, A2, A1, C3, B4, A2, A1, B2
Strong Customer Orientation	B4, A2, C2, B4, A2, C4, C3
Strong Ethics Importance	B1, B4, A2, A1, D3, C4
Employee Relations (inc. D&I)	C1, A2, B2 D1, D3, A3
Goal Orientation/Winning Attitude	C4, C3, A3, B3, A3, C3
Authentic/Transparency	D1, B2, A1, A3
Tools to Succeed	D3, A3
Mostly Aligned OCB Values	D1, B4, A2, A1, A3, C3, C4, B2, D3

Table 7

<u>Theme – Citizenship Misalignment</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Don’t Care about Employees	C2, D4, D2
Numbers More Important Than People	B1, C2, D2
Selfish/All about corporate profit	D4, D2
Broken Promises	C2
Unauthentic/Non-transparent/Hype	D2
MOSTLY MISALIGNED VALUES	D2, D4, B1, C2

Table 8

<u>Theme – Affective Commitment</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Intrinsic	
Employee Relations/Care/Team Culture/D&I	D1, A2, A1, C3, B4, C2, B2, B3, D3
Transparency/Authenticity	D1, B2, A1, A3, C1
Tools/Coaching/Training Provided	A3, D3, D2, A1, C3
Corporate Value System/Winning Attitude	A2, A3, B4
AL Themed qualities	D1, B2, A1, A3, C1, A2, B4, D3, D2, C3
Extrinsic	
Extrinsic Financial Reward	B1, C2, B2, B3, D2, B3
Emergent theme: SELF ONLY	
Too big of a company to care – all me	D4
Commission only – all me	B3

Table 9

<u>Theme – Driving Financial Performance</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Specific Accountability (inc. leaderboards)	B1, A2, D3, A1, C1, C2, B2, B3
Extrinsic Financial Aids/Tools	C2, D1, B4, D3, C4, C3, D2, A3
Supportive Coaching	A1, D3, A3
Positive Extrinsic Drive Issues: A1, B1, A2, D3, C1, C2, B2, B3, D1, B4, C4, D2, A3	
Negative Financial Drivers:	
“Sales goals are more important than customer satisfaction”	B1
Daily after hour punishment calls when behind goal	D2
Lay-offs, cutting staff to improve bottom line – “no one is safe”	D4
Outlier: Normally top salesperson in company and winner of contests/self-driven autonomy - B3	

Table 10

<u>Theme – Goal Attainability</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Attainable Goals	14 of 15 participants
Goal attainability issues:	
Sub: Unbelief in the product	B1, C2
Sub: One nearly impossible goal	C1, C2
Sub: Staff cuts/Same Goals	D3
Outlier: B3 – only commission only rep in company/monthly GP goal only/attained 10 of 12 mos.	

Table 11

Theme – Time & Other Pressure	Participants
Time Pressure (Everyone had monthly goals)	
Sub: End of Month Pressure	B1, C1, C2
Sub: Punishment/termination threatened	B1, C2, D3, C4, D2
Sub: Pressure from Mgt to sell unethically	B1
Sub: “Punishing” daily pressure at times	D2
Threatening Time Pressure	B1, C1, C2, D3, D2
Positive Pressure Examples	Participants _____
Sub: Team/Help Each other	B2
Sub: Supportive Coaching	C1, C2, D1, B4, B2, D4, A1, C3
Sub: Non-threatening	D1, B4, B2, D4, A1, C3
Sub: Time to learn strategies	D1, C1
Sub: Equipped with good tools	A3, D2
Positive Extrinsic Pressure Issues	B2, D1, B4, D4, A1, C3, A3. C1, C2
Self-Regulated Pressure – “it’s on me”	B1, C1, D1, B4, A2, D4, D3, C3, A3, B3

Table 12

Theme – Ethical Selling Definitions	Participants
Ethical Selling Defined	
Transparency/Full Disclosure/Honesty	D1, A2, A1, C4, C3, A3, B1, B4, B2, D4, D3, D2, B3
Customer Orientation/Service	C1, C2, B4, A2, A1, C4, C3, D2
Golden Rule	C2, B4, D4
Unethical Selling Defined:	
Non-disclosure of details	B1, D1, B4, A2, D4, A1, B3 Lying/Deceit
	C2, D1, A2, D4, A1, D3 Unneeded products
	B1, A1, C2
Emergent positive: Future consequences “will come back to haunt you in the customer’s first bill” (B3)	
“I cannot even think that way” (C3)	

Table 13

Theme – Ethical Codes	Participants
Published Code/Handbook	C1, C2, D1, B4, D4, D3, C4, A3, B3, D2, C3
Online training of ethics (carrier requirement)	C2, D1, B4, B2, D4, D3, C4, A3, B3, D2
Values/Slogans Communicated	B1, A1, A2, B2
NO Published Code	B1, A2, B2, A1
Emergent: Coached ethical “every customer every time” sales process (A1, A2)	

Table 14

<u>Theme – Code Enforcement</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Strongly enforced (including termination)	C2, D1, B4, B2, D3, C4, B3, D2
Lightly or medium enforced (“slap on wrist” D4)	A1, A2, A3, B1, D4
Back office monitoring	B1, C2, C4
Ethics hotline/Whistle blowing encouraged	D3, A3
Emergent: Can be accidental or unintentional	C2, A1, C4, B2, A3

Table 15

<u>Theme – Ethical/Unethical Climate</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Unethical Climates/Witnessed often	C1, C2, B1, D2, D3, D4
COMPARE: MOSTLY UNAUTHENTIC	D2, D3, D4, B4
COMPARE: TIME PRESSURE	B1, C1, C2, D3, D2
COMPARE: ATTAINABLE GOAL ISSUES	B1, C1, C2, D3
COMPARE: LOW PERSONAL MOTIVATION	D2, B1, C1, C2
Ethical Climates/None or rare	D1, B4, A2, B2, A1, C3, A3, C4, B3
COMPARE: CONSISTENT AUTHENTIC THEME	D1, B2, A2, A3, C3, C4, A1
Emergent: Second-hand or accidental	C2, A1, C4, B2, A3

Table 16

<u>Theme – Code or Values?</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Code Enforcement Alone	C1 (changed mind to both)
Personal Values Alone	D4, A1, D3, A3, D2, B1
Both Code and Values	C1, D1, A2, B2, C4, C3, B3, C2

Table 17

<u>Theme – Ethical Selling Values</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Customer orientation/relational trust	C2, D1, A2, B2, D4, A1, C4, C3, A3, B1, C1, B3
Personal values/integrity/honesty	C1, C2, B4, B2, D4, A1, D3, A3
Golden Rule	C1, C2, B4, B2, D4, C4, C3, D2
Guilt carry/”sleep at night”	B1, C4, D2

Table 18

Theme – Personal Motivation	Participants
Relationships/People Orientation	D1, A2, C4, C3, A3, D2, D1, A1, B2
Extrinsic Financial	B1, C1, C2, D1, B2, D4, C3, B3
Other Intrinsic (loyalty, learning, low stress, flexibility)	D1, A3, A1, D4
Other extrinsic (tech business, benefits, Career Prospects)	D4, B4, D3

Table 19

Theme – Motivation Ratings	Participants
Rating of Seven or Above:	D1, B4, A2, B2, A1, D3, C4, C3, A3, D4, B3
Sub: Relationships/Team/Customer	D1, B4, A2, B2, A1, C4, C3
Sub: Job Fit	C4, C3, A3
Sub: Career Prospects	B4, D3
Sub: God-related	D3, A3
Sub: Earning more commission	B2, B3
Sub: Intrinsic only/self-led autonomy	D4
Outliers:	B3 was extrinsic-only as commission-only – “good money” D4 was intrinsic only and autonomous
Rating of Six or Below:	
Sub: Not valued by management	D2 (1 rating)
Sub: Unethical store manager/environment	B1 (2 rating)
Sub: Store manager relationship	C1 (6 will improve to 9 with change)
Sub: Store manager relationship	C2 (4 will improve to 8 with change)

Table 20

Theme – Emotional Depletion	Participants
Negative customer/co-worker interactions	C1, A2, D1, B2, D4, A1, C4, C2, A3
Slow store traffic/boredom	C3
Nothing	B4
Failed strategies to improve	D3
Forced to sell unethically/guilt	B1
No value to loyalty/what did you do yesterday	D2
Outlier – Self-determined working long hours to make commission	B3