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### Research on Behavioral Integrity: A Promising Construct for Positive Organizational Scholarship

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## Research on Behavioral Integrity: A Promising Construct for Positive Organizational Scholarship

### Abstract

Behavioral integrity (BI) is the perception that another person, group, or entity lives by his word—delivers on promises and enacts the same values he espouses. This construct is more basic than trust or justice, and is typically measured as the perceived pattern of alignment between words and deeds. Empirical studies have shown it to have powerful positive consequences for the attitudes and performance of followers, managers, and organizations, and also that BI moderates the impact of other leader behaviors on these outcomes. Only a few studies have examined antecedents, and fewer still have examined moderated antecedents. Although initial terrain has been sketched out by early studies, there is much yet to learn about the workings of this high-potential construct.

### Keywords

behavioral integrity, leadership, trust, values

### Disciplines

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### Comments

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Research on Behavioral Integrity: A Promising Construct for Positive Organizational  
Scholarship

*Chapter prepared for The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*

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## **Abstract**

Behavioral integrity (BI) is the perception that another person, group, or entity lives by his word—delivers on promises and enacts the same values he espouses. This construct is more basic than trust or justice, and is typically measured as the perceived pattern of alignment between words and deeds. Empirical studies have shown it to have powerful positive consequences for the attitudes and performance of followers, managers, and organizations, and also that BI moderates the impact of other leader behaviors on these outcomes. Only a few studies have examined antecedents, and fewer still have examined moderated antecedents. Although initial terrain has been sketched out by early studies, there is much yet to learn about the workings of this high-potential construct.

**Keywords:** Behavioral integrity, leadership, trust, values

## **Research on Behavioral Integrity: A Promising Construct for Positive Organizational Scholarship**

Behavioral integrity (BI) was defined by Simons (Simons 1999, 2002) as the perceived pattern of alignment between a target's words and actions—how well that target tends to keep promises and tends to demonstrate espoused values. It is a judgment, in essence, of the strength and reliability of the other's word, and it is a trait ascribed to the target. BI or its lack can be ascribed to a person, a group (e.g., “the leadership team”), or a company. Unlike common-usage notions of integrity or trustworthiness, BI does not consider the benevolence, the moral content, or the observer's acceptance of the target's espoused values. We may dislike and mistrust someone who espouses and enacts values we consider despicable, but we will give them some credit for representing those values honestly, and thus displaying BI. This construct has attracted attention among scholars for its conceptual simplicity and apparent predictive power, and among practitioners for its intuitive appeal. The sense that another's word can be relied upon seems to be essential for effective leadership (see Mishra & Mishra [2011], Chapter 34, this volume), and for effective relationships in other settings as well. The growing body of research on this construct has established connections spanning a wide range of organizational behavior literatures, from employee job attitudes to performance-related behaviors, and from perceptions of effective leadership to substantive measures of unit-level and organizational performance in diverse settings. The emerging BI construct is well enough grounded to sustain inquiry, has generated very promising initial research results, and is new enough to represent extremely fertile terrain for scholarship.

Here, we inventory the current state of BI research using the conceptual model presented in Figure 25.1. First, we offer a key distinction: BI is by definition an ascribed trait, in the eye of the beholder—but this perception is based in part upon the objective behavior of the target: Does this person, in fact, make promises that are not kept, and does this person, in fact, espouse values that differ from those he or she enacts? These objective facts are filtered through the observer's perceptual screens to yield a BI perception. It is useful, for both predictive and intervention purposes, to differentiate two relevant constructs: actual word-deed alignment (an antecedent to BI) and perceived alignment (BI itself).

With this distinction in mind, we proceed by discussing the status of BI as it compares conceptually and empirically to related constructs. We review several applications of BI with different measures, different levels of analysis and aggregation, and with different referents. BI occupies a unique position in the nomological net and seems to function robustly across different applications. Next, we systematically discuss each of the components in Figure 25.1: consequences, moderated consequences, antecedents, and moderated antecedents. Table 25.1 shows all studies described in this review, sorted according to the categories in Figure 25.1, along with sample size and effect sizes.

### **The Behavioral Integrity Construct: Conceptualization and Measurement**

Several constructs occupy a similar conceptual space to BI. Simons (2002) meaningfully differentiated BI from trust, justice, hypocrisy, psychological contracts, and credibility. Because BI is by definition a perceived attribute, and also because we expect self-assessed BI to be biased (Simons, 2002), most existing measures ask respondents to describe the BI of another—typically, their boss, supervisor, CEO, or a group such as “senior management.” Aggregating

responses of multiple observers' (e.g., subordinates') perceptions yields the most reliable measure of an actor's (e.g., manager's) BI, as it filters out many individual perceiver biases, but measuring individual perceptions is appropriate for some research questions.

Most empirical studies of the BI construct have used the survey measure that was developed by Simons and McLean Parks (2000) and reported in Simons, Friedman, Liu, and McLean Parks (2007). This eight-item scale has demonstrated consistently high reliabilities in English ( $\alpha = 0.96$ ), Spanish ( $\alpha = 0.94$ ), and Dutch ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ). This scale may be divided into two four-item subscales: one that focuses on alignment between enacted and espoused values ( $\alpha = 0.83$ ) and a second that focuses on follow-through on promises ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ). These two subdimensions were intercorrelated at  $r = 0.94$  in an initial sample of hotel employees, which rendered the subdimensions indistinguishable; but in a sample of high school teachers, the two were only intercorrelated at  $r = 0.72$ . Simons has found that a six-item version of the scale correlates with the original scale at  $r = 0.97$  and maintains reliabilities above 0.80 for both the whole scale and for the abbreviated three-item subscales. These original BI scales and subscales can be used as general measures of a perceived attribute, or may usefully be focused on a specific value (e.g., "BI regarding safety," Leroy et al., 2010).

A second survey measure of BI was developed by Dineen, Lewicki, and Tomlinson (2006). Dineen et al. developed a four-item measure of BI that focuses on whether the manager in question enacts values *and rules* as espoused. Their measure showed reliability over  $\alpha = 0.80$ , and it correlated with the values subcomponent of Simons and McLean Parks' (2000) scale at  $r = 0.72$ . The addition of personally adhering to and enforcing rules adds a useful element to BI that probably does not stand as a separate dimension, but is clearly appropriate for measuring the construct.

A third survey measure was developed by Palanski (2008). This measure consists of two open-ended questions that elicit the target leader's espoused values and promises, and two Likert-scaled items that ask how often those espoused values are enacted and how often the promises are kept. Palanski reported good interitem correlations and predictive power for the two closed-ended items used as a scale, and found correlations between it and the Simons and McLean Parks' (2000) scale of between  $r = 0.6$  and  $r = 0.7$ . Open-ended questions about specific promises and values provide useful qualitative information about BI, although the statistical properties of the scale are not ideal.

A fourth approach to BI measurement focuses on particular values relevant to the context, and measures espousal and enactment separately. This approach allows targeting of a particular slice of word-action consistency that might be especially predictive of the outcomes under study. It also allows for examination of the unresolved question about the relationship between issue-specific BI and generalized perceptions of it. Finally, it allows for consideration of asymmetries between overpromising and underpromising, and the differentiation of the benefits of simple enactment as opposed to the alignment between espousal and enactment. Leroy, Halbesleben, Dierynck, Savage, and Simons (2010), in a study of safety in hospitals, developed separate scales for supervising nurses' espousal of safety protocols and their enactment and enforcement of these protocols. Cording, Simons, and Smith (2009) examined the espoused value placed on employees and customers in a sample of annual reports (using word/phrase frequencies as an indicator) and compared those with an index of the enactment of these values in their respective companies' policies. Note that this approach measured actual rather than perceived word-action consistency—BI is the latter. This approach, distinguishing value-specific espousals and



enactments, shows promise. It would be especially useful to assess how the separate espousal and enactment scales combine and relate to one of the generalized BI scales.

Other measures have been used to approximate BI with varying levels of accuracy. Prottas (2008) measured BI using two items: “I can trust what my managers say in this organization,” which is a reasonable BI item, and “Managers in my organization behave honestly and ethically when dealing with employees and clients or customers,” which extends well beyond BI toward ethics (see Stansbury & Sonenshein [2011], Chapter 26, this volume, for treatment of the latter). BI is explicitly void of ethical or moral content, as it focuses exclusively on alignment between words and deeds. Several of the studies drawn upon in Davis and Rothstein's (2006) meta-analysis of BI and attitudinal consequences use the Perceived Leader Integrity Scale (PLIS; Craig & Gustafson, 1998), which similarly includes an ethical dimension that is explicitly distinct from the BI construct. However, measures of psychological contract breach (e.g., Robinson & Rousseau, 1994) may be considered as assessing an element of BI that is especially germane for employees in organizations (Simons, 2002). In this vein, Deery et al. (2006) examined discrepancies between espoused and enacted behavioral standards at an organization in their study of psychological contract breach. This approach may be described as an assessment of organization-level BI.

In sum, the scale developed by Simons et al. (2007) has shown very strong psychometric properties in a variety of settings, and it and its two subscales can be adapted or focused for different uses. The notion of separate measures of espousal and enactment also shows promise for further exploring how BI functions. In considering additional measures, care must be taken to avoid assessing concepts that are not part of the BI construct (e.g., moral rectitude, benevolence)

and to remain cognizant of the distinction between a perceived pattern of word-action consistency (BI) and *actual* consistency (an antecedent to BI).

### **Consequences of Behavioral Integrity**

Simons (2002) argued that managerial BI would drive specific follower attitudes and behaviors. Subsequent research has confirmed these relationships and demonstrated how BI relates to manager performance and organization-level operational and financial measures as well. In Figure 25.1, we argue that BI has consequences at three levels: follower, managerial, and organizational. We discuss each of these outcomes in turn.

#### **Follower Outcomes**

Empirical work on BI has confirmed its association with key employee attitudes, employee well-being, and performance-related behaviors at both individual and group levels.

#### **Employee Attitudes**

An examination of the attitudinal consequences of BI is useful for understanding how BI works to ultimately affect behavioral, operational, and financial outcomes. Attitudes likely mediate the practical impact of BI. In a meta-analysis on the relationship between BI and employee attitudes, Davis and Rothstein (2006) found strong positive relationships between perceptions of supervisor BI and employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, satisfaction with the leader, and affect toward the organization (overall average  $r = 0.48$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Supervisory BI has also been found to predict follower engagement (Vogelgesang et al., 2010) and followers' organizational identity (Tomlinson et al., 2006).

Simons (2002) specifically posited that BI would be a significant predictor of trust as it directly pertains to the issue of reliability of one's word, a position that is consistent with several prominent theories of trust development (e.g., Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; Mayer et al., 1995). A number of studies have confirmed this relationship (Simons et al., 2007; Simons & Hagen, 2006; Simons & McLean Parks, 2000; Velez, 2000). There has also been some empirical support for the prediction that trust mediates the positive relationships between BI and employee attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (Simons, 2002). Kannan-Narasimhan and Lawrence (2010) found that trust completely mediated the relationship between senior management BI and organizational commitment; trust partially mediated the relationship between supervisory BI and organizational cynicism, and fully mediated the relationship between supervisory BI and turnover intentions. Similarly, Hinkin and Schriesheim (2009) found that trust partially mediated the impact of supervisory BI on organizational commitment and satisfaction (but not leader effectiveness). When the impact of BI is mediated by trust and when it is not is an open question.

More recently, Simons (2008) has asserted that leader BI affects employee engagement and performance through the additional mediation of communication clarity. Although BI increases trust in leadership, which has positive effects, it also means that leadership is sending congruent messages through its various verbal and nonverbal channels; as a consequence, subordinates know more precisely what is expected or desired of them. Leroy et al. (2010) found preliminary support for this dual-mechanism model.

## **Employee Well-being and Performance-related Behaviors**

Managers' BI has been associated with employee stress- and health-related outcomes, such as burnout (Leroy, 2009; Prottas, 2008), as well as life satisfaction (Prottas, 2008). These consequences likely emerge from the mediation of uncertainty, mistrust, and possibly anger.

Simons (2002) posited that supervisory BI would predict several employee performance-related behaviors (intent to stay, organizational citizenship behaviors [OCBs], receptiveness to change efforts, and job performance). Empirical research has generally confirmed these relationships and uncovered other performance-related consequences of BI. Leroy (2009) found that BI was positively associated with employee proficiency and adaptability. Palanski and Yammarino (in press) show that leader BI indirectly affects follower job performance through trust in and satisfaction with the leader. They further found that follower job performance was predicted by the *follower's* BI. Vogelgesang et al. (2010) found that manager BI predicted military cadets' engagement, which in turn predicted their performance ratings.

In a study of a large banking organization, Dineen et al. (2006) found that individual employee perceptions of supervisory BI were positively related to employee intentions to perform OCBs. Furthermore, they found that BI was negatively related to deviance directed at the organization, and that aggregate perceptions of BI (in a separate field sample) were negatively related to individual-level deviance (cf. Tang & Liu, 2010). Way, Simons, and Tuleja (2010) demonstrated the impact of BI on employee job performance behaviors (OCBI, OCBO, and task performance). McLean Parks and Ma (2008) found that supervisory BI negatively predicted employee expedience behaviors (i.e., cutting corners). Recent work has also begun to explore how managerial BI negatively affects employee absenteeism (Prottas, 2008) and turnover (Simons et al., 2007; Simons & McLean Parks, 2000).

Examination of aggregate group-level BI perceptions allows examination of group and organization-level outcomes. Simons and McLean Parks (2000) found that, in a sample of 6,800 employees at 597 hotel departments, department-level perceptions of manager BI were positively related to discretionary service behavior. BI perceptions have further been found to have an impact on group-level phenomena such as higher group cohesion and effective group processes and outcomes (Rozell & Gunderson, 2003). In both lab and field studies, Palanski, Kahai, and Yammarino (2010) found that information sharing within teams affects team-level perceptions of BI, which in turn affects team-level trust and performance.

### **Managerial Outcomes**

#### ***Perceptions of Leadership***

Initial conceptual work on BI also posited its relationship to effective leadership (Simons, 1999, 2002). Parry and Proctor-Thomson (2002) found ratings of integrity to be significantly correlated with transformational leadership behaviors. In leaderless work groups, BI predicted leader emergence (Palanski & Carroll, 2006).

#### ***Job Performance Behaviors***

Way et al. (2010) found that managerial BI, as rated by a subordinate, predicted the manager's own job performance behaviors as rated by his or her supervisor.

### **Organizational Outcomes**

A small number of studies have examined BI in relation to various metrics of operational and/or financial success. Simons and McLean Parks (2000) found in a sample of 76 hotels that BI was correlated with customer satisfaction scores, employee turnover rates, and unit-level hotel

profitability. In fact, BI accounted for 13% of the variance in profitability among this sample of hotels. A study by Cording et al. (2009) found that alignment between espousal and action, in a sample of 377 acquired companies in various industries, was associated with employee performance and ultimately with company stock performance. Given the practical implications of these effects, further study in this area is definitely warranted.

### *Summary*

The initial examinations of BI outcomes have been impressive. To our knowledge, no studies examine employee willingness to implement espoused change, which is a proposed outcome in the Simons (2002) model. Research has also begun to explore novel outcomes that do not fit neatly within the traditional categories listed above. For example, data from a large megachurch indicated that low leader (pastor) BI was associated with follower façade creation (i.e., falsely portraying oneself as embracing organizational values) (Hewlin et al., 2010). New research is also examining the effect that nursing supervisor BI has on follower psychological safety, adherence to safety protocols, and ultimately accident rates (Leroy et al., 2010).

It would be useful to have more studies that examine job/task performance as an outcome. Davis and Rothstein (2006) called for more research on how BI affects individual behavior and organizational performance, and we agree. The bottom-line impact of BI needs to be demonstrated in more industries, manufacturing as well as service. It is possible that service industries are more sensitive to managerial BI, as problems with employee morale directly and immediately affect the customer (Simons, 1999). Further, the mechanisms by which BI affects performance need to be more fully articulated and tested. The relationship between BI and certain outcome variables might be determined by the referent of the BI perception. Kannan-

Narasimhan and Lawrence (2010) found that top management BI predicted organizational commitment, whereas supervisory BI did not; conversely, supervisory BI predicted turnover intentions and organizational cynicism.

### **Moderated Consequences of Behavioral Integrity**

Although not specified in Simons' (2002) model, an increasing number of scholars have begun to consider BI as a moderator of the effects of other leader behavior. This approach is based on the insight that just about anything a leader says will be interpreted through a lens that asks whether the leader truly means it—whether, in fact, she demonstrates BI. Leaders' exhortations, directions, standards, espousals, or coaching must depend ultimately on the leader's credibility to make them work. Simons (2008) has proposed BI as a *necessary but not sufficient* condition for effective leadership to occur. Accordingly, researchers have explored interactions between BI and a variety of moderators on key outcomes. In Figure 25.1, we include leader behaviors, organizational context, national culture, and follower characteristics.

#### ***Leader Behavior***

Dineen et al. (2006) posited that BI and supervisory guidance would exert independent and interactive relationships on employee conduct. In two separate samples of banking employees, Dineen et al. found that supervisory guidance (providing instruction to employees) interacted with supervisory BI to affect both OCBs and deviance. Specifically, OCBs were highest and deviance was lowest when high guidance was accompanied by high BI. Conversely, the worst outcomes (lowest OCBs, highest deviance) were associated with high guidance, but low BI.

### ***Contextual Factors***

Ma, McLean Parks, and Gallagher (2010) found that BI perceptions moderated the impact of workers' role overload on expediency behaviors (i.e., bending or breaking rules in order to fulfill organizational objectives), with more constructive responses resulting when perceived leader BI was high. Simons and Hagen (2006) found in separate samples of supermarket buyers and suppliers that volition power moderates the impact of BI on trust, such that BI is a more powerful predictor of trust when the trustee has more relative power than the trustor.

### ***Follower Characteristics***

Recent research has focused attention on how BI may interact with value congruence (i.e., alignment between the employee's and manager's views on work-related issues). In a sample of manufacturing employees, perceptions of managers' BI interacted with value congruence to affect organizational identity, such that when congruence is high, organizational identity remains at a relatively high level regardless of BI; however, when congruence is low, organizational identity increases at a small rate as BI increases (Tomlinson et al., 2006). Thus, BI serves as a partial substitute for value congruence—if the boss does not agree with you, it lessens the negative impact if she can at least be consistent.

In terms of other potential moderators, Davis and Rothstein (2006) did not find any support for cultural effects on the relationship between BI and employee attitudes, but their meta-analysis did suggest that employee gender and number of levels separating employee and manager may moderate the BI-employee attitude relationship (although Prottas [2008] did not



find support for a gender moderator). Prottas (2008) proposed the degree of interdependence and degree of employee autonomy as potential moderators of the impact of BI.

### **Antecedents to Behavioral Integrity**

In Figure 25.1, one of most the important drivers of BI is actual managerial consistency. In turn, actual managerial consistency is a function of individual, organizational, and environmental variables. In this section, we look at these different antecedents to BI. We indicate which relationships have been supported by existing research and which need to be examined further.

Simons (1999) asserted that BI would be associated with effective transformational leadership, as the trust that it engenders is necessary for profound interpersonal influence. Subsequent empirical studies confirmed BI to be associated with transformational leadership behavior (Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002) and leader charisma (Palanski, 2008), authentic leadership behaviors (Leroy, 2009), and leader political skills (Basik, 2010). BI has thus been shown to be associated with a broad range of effective leadership behaviors. Future research should continue to clarify what role leader BI plays in different leadership models, as a cause or a consequence of other leader behaviors.

Simons (2002) proposed several leader personal characteristics that would affect their actual word-action alignment and so drive BI. These include ambivalence toward change, self-awareness, and personality traits of self-monitoring and conscientiousness. Palanski and Carroll (2006) confirmed BI to be related to the Big Five personality trait of conscientiousness. Simons (2008) suggested that personal discipline supports BI, and that it can be developed through

developing skills and habits of delaying gratification, facing personal fears, building self-awareness, vigilance, and other self-management techniques.

A few behavioral antecedents have been examined. Hinkin and Schriesheim (2009) showed that a leader-contingent display of both rewards and punishment to followers had a positive impact on follower perceptions of leader BI (see also Palanski, 2008). Vogelgesang and Lester (2008) found in a sample of army cadets that leader interactional transparency was associated with BI.

In addition to leaders' personal characteristics and behaviors, Simons (2002) posited that alignment between a manager's words and deeds can be a function of contextual factors. For instance, actual BI may be impaired because of the job complexity and role ambiguity the manager faces. Managers need to satisfy diverse stakeholders and are sometimes confronted with opposing demands that make them renege on their promises. Another example of an impeding factor to word-deed alignment is organizational change. Whether institutionally driven through managerial fads and fashions or specific organizational change initiatives, change may impair the manager's ability to be true to his or her word. Even the best managers in some companies may face the implementation of multiple but partial change efforts over time, the poor integration of management techniques and technology, and overall poorly integrated policies and procedures. The initial studies of BI impact have examined companies in volatile industries (e.g., hospitality industry; Simons, 2000). No studies have examined BI in the dwindling pool of stable industries. Also, none has looked explicitly at the impact of managerial role ambiguity, multiple accountabilities, or change initiatives on BI.

In addition to environmental turbulence, Simons (2008) suggested that BI can be a function of the overall culture of the organization. Way et al. (2010) found that leader

perceptions of positive organizational support were associated with followers' perceptions that the leader displays high BI. Friedman et al. (2007) found that leaders' perceptions of *their* leaders' BI “trickled down” to affect their *own* BI as assessed by their followers. This trickle-down effect could be a result of emulation of superiors, or of leaders simply passing along the fair treatment they receive. Palanski (2008) similarly found that the BI of leaders trickles down to influence follower BI. Leroy (2010) demonstrated that BI is associated with an ethical organizational culture that values accountability, sanctionability, and discussability. Kannan-Narasimhan (2006) proposed that alignment between corporate culture and climate would support BI.

### ***Summary***

In sum, theory on BI (Simons, 1999, 2002, 2008) has suggested several different antecedents to BI, and those that have been tested were largely supported. Research has confirmed that BI is influenced by personal characteristics (specific leadership behaviors and personality factors) and contextual characteristics (organizational and environmental factors). Yet, several theoretical propositions have been left unexplored. For instance, future research may examine the impact of managerial role ambiguity or change initiatives on perceived BI.

### **Moderated Antecedents to Behavioral Integrity**

Simons (2002) suggested that a number of perceptual filters moderate between the manager's actual word-deed alignment and the *perceived* pattern of word-deed alignment that is BI, as BI is subjectively determined and ascribed. In Figure 25.1, we include several factors as moderators of the association between actual managerial consistency and BI: observer's

dependence on the manager (for instance through a hierarchical relationship), observer caring about the promise or underlying value that is espoused, manager's social accounts of potential mismatches, and observer's chronic construct accessibility for related concepts (integrity, honesty, sincerity, or hypocrisy). Empirical examination of these propositions is just beginning.

Simons et al. (2007) found that black employees were more likely to notice and respond to BI violations than were nonblack employees, suggesting that BI is a more salient concept to them. Friedman et al. (2009) found in a vignette study that Indian respondents were less likely to interpret a leader's promise breach as indicative of low BI than were American respondents. Future research needs to consider these effects in sample selection, and to further articulate the role of culture and demographics in the attribution and significance of BI.

The role of values content in driving BI perceptions is relatively unexplored. Clemenson (2008) found that the impact of managers' perceived value content on BI was moderated by employees' assessment of value congruence with their managers. The relationships among BI, value congruence, and value content have not yet been conclusively unpacked.

Finally, the context and history through which the observer views the target affect BI perceptions. When a leader breaks a promise, followers become more vigilant for future promise-breaking behavior (Simons, 2002). Cha and Edmondson (2006) studied how employees form attributions of discrepancies between values and actions. When such discrepancies were attributed to hypocrisy, employees became disenchanted. Cha (2009) found that strong organizational values can create a “buffer” that reduces negative BI attributions in response to a leader's value breaches. The role of attribution also highlights the importance of a leaders' ability to communicate in such a way as to allow followers to *perceive* consistency and recognize it as BI.

Future research should continue to consider observer and context effects that determine how a given manager's conduct will affect BI perceptions. BI perceptions appear to be strongly influenced by the demographics and sense-making processes of the perceiver(s). One unexplored area is that managers' social accounts may moderate the impact of a leader's value breach on BI.

### **Future Directions**

Regarding the BI construct itself, open questions remain regarding the relationship between value-specific BI and broader BI ascriptions. Do people form multiple assessments of their leaders' BI, perhaps focusing on various specific values, or do they form a unitary judgment? Does perceived hypocrisy regarding a single value taint all judgments of that leader's BI? Does it depend on the value violated (e.g., presidential marital infidelity)? Does it depend on characteristics of the observer? New BI measures that focus on single values, and that separately assess enactment and espousal, can be compared to general measures to address these questions.

At this point, the most well-established outcomes of BI are individual attitudes: Trust, commitment, and satisfaction of various types have been replicated across diverse settings. Individual, group, and organizational performance and operational outcomes have been demonstrated in service industries, but need to be replicated in a manufacturing setting. Such outcomes are especially critical for attracting the attention of executives and intervention-oriented practitioners. Further, there has been little longitudinal research into this area to cement causal assertions. Especially needed are intervention studies that track the performance implications of a BI intervention over time.

An additional realm that is relatively untapped is the notion of moderated consequences. It stands to reason that a leader's BI will strongly affect the success or failure of her managerial

initiatives. Is the leader—who is exhorting behavioral change, heightened standards, or a particular value—someone to be believed or not? One can imagine that the consequence of many leader initiatives depends on the leader's BI. Again, a few studies have begun to explore this area, but the potential seems huge.

Relatively unexplored are the antecedents of BI. What conditions, at the individual, organizational, and environmental levels, cause managers to behave inconsistently, and so to be seen as having low BI? Simons (1999, 2002) proposed that times of organizational change and environmental uncertainty are especially challenging for BI, but hard numbers have not yet been attached to that assertion. Is it harder to maintain BI when your job requires juggling the needs of multiple, diverse stakeholders? Does self-knowledge really help with the maintenance of BI? Are some leader personality traits beyond conscientiousness associated with subordinate perceptions of BI?

Perceptual moderators, several of which were proposed by Simons (2002), also represent a relatively untapped area for research questions. What factors on the part of observers make them especially sensitive or insensitive to leaders' behavioral inconsistencies? Studies of cultural and cross-cultural effects can fall into this category, as would considerations of observers' personalities or value structures as perceptual moderators. Are some kinds of people more harsh or forgiving when judging the BI of other groups of people? It is worth noting that a study of perceptual moderators with a single given target of observation—a sample of a company's employees asked to assess their CEOs BI, for example, or employee responses to a given vignette—will appear in that study as main effects. Conceptually, though, these phenomena represent filters through which objective reality is perceived, and thus fall into this category of perceptual moderators.

In sum, there is little one might ask about the BI construct that would not represent a new and promising area for research.

### **Conclusion**

Behavioral integrity is a relatively new construct for research, but it is one with great intuitive appeal, as most businesspeople track closely whose word can be relied upon and whose cannot. The notion that an effective leader must walk her talk, lead by example, and keep her promises is hardly novel. Most treatises on leadership address the idea in some way, but the construct has not yet received the focused and sustained research attention it warrants. Initial tests of attitudinal correlates have been solid and leave room for incremental advances as one looks at the relative importance of BI among other drivers of trust, commitment, and engagement. When one extends beyond attitudes to examine behavioral and organizational performance outcomes, the story becomes much more exciting: Initial studies suggest very substantial behavioral and bottom-line performance consequences for BI. Most of the empirical studies to date are cross-sectional survey studies, so that these results limit inferences of causality. However, some studies are longitudinal (e.g., Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2010), employ methods that rely on covariance structure analysis that evaluates the plausibility of causality (e.g., Simons & McLean Parks, 2000), or use an experimental method (e.g., Palanski et al., 2010), and these studies generate more confidence in asserting causal direction.

## **Notes**

1. I do not refer to sexualized forms of intimacy, which can be related to sexual harassment at work, a topic that has been well documented and researched in the organizational literature.



**Table 1.** Overview of empirical studies linking behavioral integrity to other variables

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Illustrative Study/ Studies</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Observed Correlation</b>
<b>CONSEQUENCES: Employee Attitudes</b>			
Job satisfaction	Vitell & Davis, 1990a	61	0.40
	Robinson & Rousseau, 1994a	128	0.76
	Viswesvaran & Deshpande, 1996a	150	0.53
	Ryncarz, 1997a	44	0.69
	Viswesvaran et al., 1998a	77	0.11
	Koh & Boo, 2001a	237	0.38
	Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003a	103	0.59
	Neumann, 2005		
	BI measures on 14 different values	3037	0.28-0.60
	Simons, Friedman, Liu, & McLean Parks, 2007	1944	0.64
	Palanski, 2008		
	Study 1	140	0.57
	Study 2	149	0.29
Study 3	83	0.68	
Prottas, 2008	2542	0.44	
Negative affect toward organization	Kickul, 2001a	322	-0.45
Organizational commitment	Schwepker, 1999a	152	0.24
	Mize et al., 2000a	99	0.44

	Simons & McLean Parks, 2000		
	Individual level	6800	0.55
	Department level	597	0.44
	Business unit level	76	0.73
	Johnson & O'Leary- Kelly, 2003a	103	0.52
	Narasimhan, 2007		165
	Supervisory BI		0.23
	Senior management BI		0.30
	Simons, Friedman, Liu, & McLean Parks, 2007	1944	0.54
	Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2009	456	0.53
Trust	Robinson & Rousseau, 1994a	128	0.79
	Simons & McLean Parks, 2000		
	Individual level	6800	0.73
	Department level	597	0.74
	Business unit level	76	0.82
	<b>CONSEQUENCES: Employee Attitudes</b>		
	Simons & Hagen, 2006	379	0.57
	Narasimhan, 2007		
	Supervisor BI		
	Trust in senior management	165	0.26
	Trust in supervisor	165	0.43
	Senior management BI		
	Trust in senior management	165	0.46
	Trust in supervisor	165	0.20

	Simons, Friedman, Liu, & McLean Parks, 2007	1944	0.74
	Palanski & Yammarino, in press		
	Study 1	140	0.56
	Study 2	149	0.22
	Study 3	83	0.56
	Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2009	456	0.73
Organizational identity	Tomlinson, Ash, & Hall, 2006	51	0.40
Organizational cynicism	Johnson & O'Leary- Kelly, 2003a		
	Cognitive cynicism	103	-0.62
	Affective cynicism	103	-0.55
	Narasimhan, 2007		
	Supervisory BI	165	-0.45
	Senior management BI	165	-0.41
Follower Engagement	Vogelgesang & Lester, 2008		
	BI, Time 1		
	Follower engagement, T1	418	0.16
	Follower engagement, T2	313	0.21
	BI, Time 2		
	Follower engagement, T1	310	0.22
	Follower engagement, T2	344	0.28
	Leroy, 2009	210	0.39
Follower Well-being	Prottas, 2008		
	Employee stress	2542	-0.21

	Johnson & O'Leary- Kelly, 2003a		
	Emotional exhaustion	103	-0.38
<b>CONSEQUENCES: Employee Attitudes</b>			
	Prottas, 2008		
	Employee health	2542	-0.12
	Prottas, 2008		
	Employee life satisfaction	2542	0.19
	Leroy, 2009		
	Burnout	210	-0.36
<b>CONSEQUENCES: Employee Judgments About Leadership</b>			
Interpersonal justice	Simons, Friedman, Liu, & McLean Parks, 2007	1944	0.59
Interactional justice	Kickul, 2001a	322	0.42
	Narasimhan, 2007		165
	Supervisory BI		0.76
	Senior management BI		0.45
Procedural justice	Kickul, 2001a	322	0.34
	Dineen, Lewicki, & Tomlinson, 2006		
	Bank A (individual level)	838	0.44
	Bank B (group level)	264	0.38
	Narasimhan, 2007		
	Supervisory BI	165	0.51
	Senior management BI	165	0.70
Leadership perceptions	Palanski & Carroll, 2006		

	Leader emergence	213	0.50
	Palanski & Yammarino, in press		
	Study 2: satisfaction with leader	83	0.83
	Study 3: satisfaction with leader	113	0.35
<b>CONSEQUENCES: Employee Behaviors</b>			
In-role performance	Johnson & O'Leary- Kelly, 2003a	103	0.33
	Leroy, 2009		
	Proactive performance	210	0.13
	Adaptive performance	210	0.18
Job performance	Way, Simons, & Tuleja, 2010	89	0.26-0.27b
	Palanski & Yammarino, in press		
	Study 2	83	0.43
	Study 3	113	0.27
<b>CONSEQUENCES: Employee Behaviors</b>			
Discretionary service behaviors	Simons & McLean Parks, 2000		
	Department level	597	0.17
	Business unit level	76	0.42
Organizational citizenship behaviors	Johnson & O'Leary- Kelly, 2003a		
	Helping behaviors	103	0.07
	Dineen, Lewicki, & Tomlinson, 2006		
	Bank A (individual level)	838	0.13

	Bank B (group level)	264	0.17
Deviant behavior	Kickul, 2001a	322	-0.33
	Dineen, Lewicki, & Tomlinson, 2006		
	Individual/Organizational deviance		
	Bank A (individual level)	838	-0.14/-0.06
	Bank B (group level)	264	-0.11/-0.16
Absenteeism	Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003a	103	-0.27
	Prottas, 2008	2542	-0.06
	Intent to stay	Robinson & Rousseau, 1994a	
	Time 2	128	0.42
	Simons, Friedman, Liu, & McLean Parks, 2007	1944	0.33
Intent to quit	Narasimhan, 2007		
	Supervisory BI	165	-0.25
	Senior management BI	165	-0.17
Turnover	Robinson & Rousseau, 1994a	128	0.32
	Simons & McLean Parks, 2000 Business unit level	76	-.11
	With client company	384	0.53-0.67

### **MODERATED CONSEQUENCES**

Supervisory guidance \* BI → Dineen, Lewicki, & Tomlinson, 2006

employee deviance/  
OCB

Role overload \* BI → expedience  
Ma, Mclean Parks, & Gallagher, 2010

Value breach \* culture strength → cynical attributions  
Cha, 2009

Volition of others \* BI → trust  
Simons & Hagen, 2006

Congruence \* BI → organizational identity  
Tomlinson, Ash, & Hall, 2006

Culture \* BI → trust  
Friedman, Simons, & Hong, 2009

**ANTECEDENTS: Personal characteristics**

Leadership behaviors	Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002a		
	Transformational leadership	1354	0.44
	Palanski, 2008		
	Charisma, Study 2	149	0.57
	Charisma, Study 3	83	0.72
	Leroy, 2009		
	Authentic leadership	210	0.49
	Basik, 2010		
	Leader political skills	99-108	0.65-0.68
Personal characteristics	Palanski & Carroll, 2006		
	Conscientiousness	213	0.18
	Vogelgesang & Lester, 2008		
	BI, Time 1		

	Interactional transparency T1	422	0.53
	Interactional transparency T2	314	0.44
	BI, Time 2		
	Interactional transparency T1	315	0.36
	Interactional transparency T2	345	0.62
Leader contingent reward or punishment	Palanski, 2008		
	Leader contingent reward, Study 1	140	0.29
	Leader contingent reward, Study 2	149	0.53
	Leader contingent reward, Study 3	83	0.57
	Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2005		
	Contingent reward	456	0.61

**ANTECEDENTS: Personal characteristics**

	Hinkin & Schresheim, 2005		
	Contingent punishment	456	0.38
	Reward omission	456	-0.52
	Punishment omission	456	-0.31

**ANTECEDENTS: Contextual effects**

Organizational culture	Way, Simons, & Tuleja, 2010		
	Perceived organizational support	87	0.30b



	Leroy, 2009		
	Ethical culture	210	0.42b
Trickle-down	Simons, Friedman, Liu, & Mclean Parks, 2007		
	Upper management BI		
	Palanski, 2008		
	Leader BI		

**ANTECEDENTS: Historical effects**

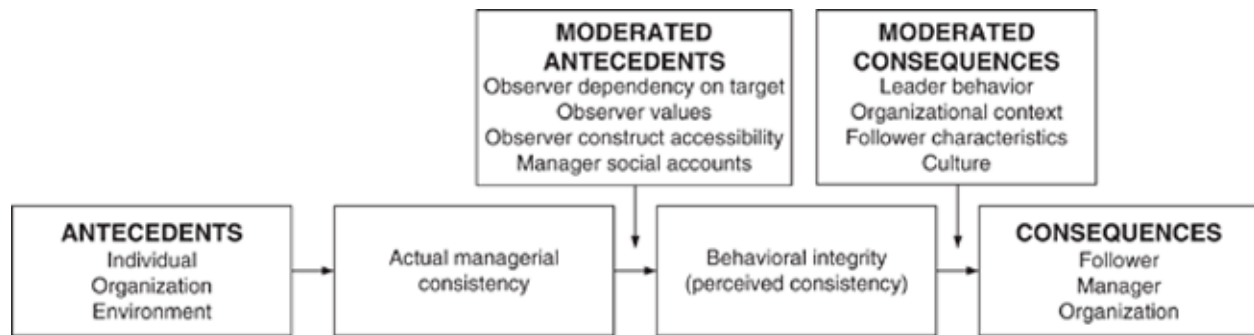
Previous value breaches	Cha, 2009		
	Hewlin, Cha, & Hewlin, 2010		
Morality of value-content	Clemenson, 2007		
	Leader's follower-rated value for achievement	286	0.46
	Leader's follower-rated value for integrity	286	0.29
	Leader's follower-rated value for fairness	286	0.29

**MODERATED ANTECEDENTS**

BI violation * race (Black)	Simons, Friedman, Liu, & Mclean Parks, 2007		
BI violation * culture	Friedman, Simons, & Hong, 2009		
Morality of value content * value congruence	Clemenson, 2007		

<sup>a</sup> Studies were included in a meta-analysis on behavioral integrity by Davis and Rothstein (2006), and include narrow measures that are consistent with, but do not fully capture, BI (e.g., psychological contract breach).

<sup>b</sup> Path coefficient from a structural equation model.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual diagram of review.

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