PERCEIVED AUTHENTICITY OF LEADERS: ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES

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1 INTRODUCTION

Organizations in the 21st century are facing a dynamic and complex competition, driven by sociological changes, technological advances coupled with increased globalization (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007) and, in the last years, severe recession. In addition, managerial malfeasance has been observed publicly, as it has manifested itself in corporate scandals of organizational leaders, in companies such as Enron, WorldCom, Siemens or Samsung (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007). This unethical behavior within these companies has shockingly confronted the public with the reality of a leadership crisis among executives in major corporations (George, 2004). As well as these media-accompanied scandals we can unfortunately find failed leadership in organizations each and every day (DesJardins, 2009). The decline of ethical conduct induces various conflicts in organizations and oftentimes arouses resistance on the side of the employees. This expresses itself, for example, in absenteeism, disobedience, reduced commitment or even sabotage and results in multifaceted internal and external problems and consequences (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999).

Whereas on the side of organizations, these drawbacks and blunders generate an awakened interest in sustainable orientation and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR; Crane, McWilliams, Matten, Moon, & Siegel, 2009), leadership research calls for a more positive and holistic view on leadership (Podolny, Khurana, & Hill-Popper, 2005). Leaders are required to be capable of producing “sustainable economic performance” (Spitzmuller & Illies, 2010, p. 305), that means ethical corporate behavior reflecting the interests of all the company’s stakeholders. As a
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result, researchers among Bruce Avolio, William Gardner, Remus Ilies and Fred Luthans (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004, Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003) have discussed the concept of authentic leadership (Spitzmuller & Ilies, 2010, p. 307). Authentic leadership has been conceptualized as the “root construct” for other positive leadership behaviors, such as charismatic or transformational leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 316) and was introduced as the “essence of all positive approaches to leadership” (Spitzmuller & Ilies, 2010, p. 307). Authentic leaders are deeply aware of their own values, virtues, and beliefs (Ilies et al., 2005). They express their true selves in order to build value-based relationships, and continuously reflect on whether their actions are consistent with their values and beliefs (Gardner et al., 2005). Proponents of the construct believe that authentic leaders can make fundamental differences in today’s organizations as they contribute to numerous positive outcomes such as trust, engagement, commitment, job satisfaction, and workplace-wellbeing (Avolio et al., 2004, Gardner et al., 2005, pp. 364ff). All these positive effects are thought to establish a positive climate which then cultivates a competitive advantage to develop sustainable, veritable follower performance (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 367).

Leaders’ behaving authentically is the key theme of this dissertation. Even though this research topic has been theoretically discussed widely in the last ten years (Avolio et al., 2004; Ilies et al., 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005), empirical investigations are still rare and mostly limited to analyzing consequences and outcomes of authentic leadership (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). This dissertation attempts to increase insight into the construct of authentic leadership by focusing on followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. More specifically, research topics that will be addressed are: antecedents to followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity, the measurement of authentic leadership, authentic
leadership in relation to subjective and quasi objective organizational outcomes, the role of sympathy and Romance of Leadership (RoL) in the authentic leader-follower behavior relationship, and the relation of the authentic leadership construct towards other positive forms of leadership, such as charismatic or transformational leadership.

In this introductory chapter, a brief review of authentic leadership, its origins and components will be presented. Followers’ perceptions of a leader’s authenticity will then be accentuated as being seminal for the leader’s influence. Subsequently, the current research on authentic leadership and the following research deficits will be discussed, resulting in a research question that builds the foundation of the current dissertation. The literature presented in this chapter provides the background against which this dissertation was carried out. The chapter will conclude with an outline of the chapters that follow.

1.1 Authentic Leadership

Authenticity stands for genuineness, faithfulness and originality. The roots of the concept of authenticity lie in the Greek philosophy: “To thine own self be true” (Shakespeare, Hamlet, act I, scene III, lines 78-80). The terms authentic and authenticity have been used from antiquity to the present day. The original Greek term authentikos (original, genuine, principle) is a derivative of the noun authentes (doer, master), which was formed from auto (self) and the base -hentes (worker, doer, being), and points to independent self-expression. The modern conception of authenticity was developed to a great extent during the last few hundred years (Erickson, 1995a, Erickson, 1995b).

Based on positive psychology (Snyder & Lopez, 2002), authenticity was defined by Harter (2002) as: “owning one's personal experiences, be they thoughts, emotions, needs, wants, preferences, or beliefs” (p. 382). And moreover
authenticity implies acting in accordance with the “true self”. Kernis (2003) defined authenticity as “the unobstructed operation of one’s true, or core, self in one’s daily enterprise” (p. 1). That means that living out of oneself contrary to passive repression, a specific ethos or an external presetting of identity, leads to a meaningful and fulfilled life (Fromm, 2000). Accordingly, authenticity involves an intuitive feeling of what is “right” and what is “wrong”. Most of the time, authenticity is associated with terms like veracity and sincerity. In an extended social meaning, the construct of authenticity receives components of connectivity, compassion and commitment to other people (Küpers, 2006, p. 340). In this regard Schmid (2007, p. 17) stated that only the ones that know how to handle themselves are capable of handling the relationships with others. Hence, authenticity is not a one-sided construct. In particular, Illies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang (2005) stated that authenticity requires a relational orientation on the actor’s side “reflecting one’s general tendencies to view oneself within one’s social environment” (p. 367).

Importantly, authenticity is not an either-or-condition. Individuals are never completely authentic nor completely inauthentic. In this context, Erickson (1995b) emphasizes that individuals can only be described as being more or less authentic. Thus, authenticity is often explained with the not-authentic. Inauthentic behavior expresses itself for example in a societal role play, in conformity influenced by society or media, in the imitation of heroic figures or in a pretended style (Küpers, 2006, p. 342).

A suitable case for deepening the considerations on authenticity is leadership, because the ascription of being a leader or being in fruitful leadership relations, is suggested as being dependent on being authentic (e.g. George, 2004). Thereby, authentic leadership has become an important field of research during the last decade (Avolio et al., 2004, Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

In this regard, Avolio and colleagues (2004) defined authentic leaders as
“those individuals who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others’ values/moral perspective, knowledge, and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and high on moral character” (pp. 802f).

Hence, authentic leaders are characterized by a high level of authenticity, because they know who they are and what to believe in. They align their behavior with their values and beliefs, act according to criteria of high integrity, and they lead based on an internal value-based conviction (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 345). Authentic leaders also draw from the positive psychological states that accompany optimal self-esteem (Kernis, 2003) and positive psychological capital, such as confidence, optimism, hope and resilience (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007), to model and cultivate the development of these states in others (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 345).

Authentic leadership, for its part, goes beyond the authenticity of the leading person and incorporates the authentic relations with followers and associates (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 345). Luthans and Avolio (2003) were the first to define authentic leadership in organizations as

“a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development” (p. 243).

By being true to one’s core values and beliefs and by displaying authentic behaviors, the leader positively promotes the development of the followers. Authentic followership is achieved by “followers who follow the leaders for authentic reasons and have an authentic relationship with the leader” (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 400f). Thus, authentic followership can be understood as an
integral component and consequence of authentic leadership. The followers’ own development may mirror wide fractions of the developmental process of authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 346). Beyond this, authentic followers may be able to affirm the authenticity of their leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 401). Here, we can see that authenticity is a phenomenon which needs to be ascribed to the leader after followers perceive their leader as being authentic (Endrissat, Mueller, & Kaudela-Baum, 2007; Fields, 2007; Harvey, Martinko, & Gardner, 2006). Only this ascription may lead to positive follower development and outcomes. We have learned that leadership means influencing others through socially accepted behavior so that it provokes directly or indirectly an intended performance (Weibler, 2012, p. 19). This makes leadership a two-sided construct, because managers are only also leaders if leadership is ascribed to them by their followers (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Recently, this follower-centered view of leadership has been increasingly promoted (Bligh & Schyns, 2007; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Shamir, Pillai, & Bligh, 2007; de Vries & Van Gelder, 2005). The mechanisms and characteristics of this perception-based perspective on authentic leadership are described further in Chapter 1.1.2

In the next chapter, a more precise understanding of the construct of authentic leadership will be generated. In particular, the main components of authentic leadership will be identified and discussed.

1.1.1 Components of Authentic Leadership

In the last few years, many authors have tried to elucidate the components of authentic leadership and their definitions have converged around several underlying dimensions. Luthans and Avolio (2003) based their definition on the positive psychological capacities of confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience. Ilies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang (2005) proposed a more focused four-component model of authentic leadership that does not only encompass these positive
psychological capacities. Drawing on Kernis’ (2003) conception of authenticity their model included self-awareness, unbiased processing, authentic behavior/acting, and authentic relational orientation. Shamir and Eilam (2005) described authentic leaders as people having the following attributes:

1. “the role of the leader is a central component of their self-concept”,
2. “they have achieved a high level of self-resolution or self-concept clarity”,
3. “their goals are self-concordant”, and
4. “their behavior is self-expressive” (pp. 398f).

This dissertation is mainly based on the authentic leadership construct of Gardner and his colleagues (2005) and their self-based model of authenticity. The authors have attempted to integrate the various perspectives and definitions of authentic leadership and have proposed a model that focuses on the core self-awareness and self-regulation components of authentic leadership. Consistent with the framework of Ilies and his colleagues (2005), their model is influenced heavily by Kernis’ (2003) design of authenticity, Deci and Ryan’s (2002) self-determination theory, positive psychology (Seligman, 2002; Snyder & Lopez, 2002), and positive organizational behavior (Luthans & Avolio, 2009; Luthans et al., 2007). In addition, it is based on the multi-component conceptualization of authenticity by Kernis and Goldman (2006). The authors identified four central themes in the historical literature that could reflect how people discover and construct a core sense of self:

“authentic functioning is characterized in terms of people’s (1) self-understanding, (2) openness to objectively recognizing their ontological realities (e.g., evaluating their desirable and undesirable self-aspects), (3) actions, and (4) orientation towards interpersonal relationships” (Kernis & Goldman, 2006, p. 284).
Based on these four key components, the authors designed the multi-component conceptualization of authenticity: (1) self-awareness, (2) unbiased processing, (3) authentic behavior, and (4) relational orientation. This conceptualization provided the theoretical ground for various theories of authentic leadership, including the model by Gardner and colleagues (2005), and the continuation of Walumbwa and colleagues (2008). The latter therewith modified the initial definition of authentic leadership by Luthans and Avolio (2003). They, accordingly, defined authentic leadership as:

“a pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development” (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94).

In the following chapters, all four core components of authentic leadership will be explained in more detail.

1.1.1.1 Relational Transparency

The first of the four authentic leadership components discussed here is relational transparency. This component, as identified by Kernis (2003) “is relational in nature, in as much as it involves valuing and achieving openness and truthfulness in one’s close relationships” (p. 15). Hence, this component refers to presenting one’s authentic self to others, and not presenting a “fake” or distorted self. On the one hand, such behavior involves openly sharing information and expressions of one’s true feelings and thoughts, and on the other hand, it implies minimizing displays of inappropriate emotions.
Thus, relational transparency points to a selective process of self-disclosure (Kernis, 2003, p. 15). In this regard, Jones and George (1998) identified the “free exchange of knowledge and information” as one element of unconditional trust that leads to cooperation and teamwork. Ilies and his colleagues (2005, p. 382) point to the fact that transparency fosters personal learning and development and leads to positive relationships characterized by unconditional trust. Accordingly, the leader’s integrity will manifest itself in their relational transparency towards their followers. Those with high levels of integrity will approach social interactions with openness and truthfulness. To be authentic, leaders have to be transparent in linking inner desires, expectations, and values to the way they behave every day, in each and every interaction (May, Chan, Hodges, & Avolio, 2003, p. 248). In a decision-making process, the transparent evaluation of all available alternatives means keeping these deliberations in the open as much as possible. In that way, the process will be easily accessible for review by the leader’s associates (May et al., 2003, p. 254).

Gardner and his colleagues (2005, p. 358) are of the opinion that as the leaders’ self-awareness and self-acceptance increases, they become more transparent in communicating their values, identity, emotions, goals and motives to others.

1.1.1.2 Internalized Moral Perspective

The internalized moral perspective refers to an internalized and integrated form of self-regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2003). In detail, this sort of self-regulation is guided by internal moral standards and values against group, organizational, and societal pressures. Self-regulation results in expressed decision-making and behavior that is consistent with the internalized values. Walumbwa and his colleagues (2008, p. 95) stated that the internalized moral perspective is composed of “internalized regulation processes” and “authentic behavior”, established by Gardner and his colleagues (2005) as well as by Ilies and his colleagues (2005) as elements of authentic leadership. Both ideas seem to be conceptually equivalent,
as they involve displaying behavior that is consistent with one’s internal values and beliefs. The single dimension “internalized moral perspective” involves a leader’s inner drive to achieve behavioral integrity, which means the consistency between values and actions.

Drawing on Deci and Ryan’s (1995) self-determination theory it is possible to claim that authenticity is associated with internalized regulation processes. Self-determination refers to how individuals can choose and perform their actions freely. The primary assumption is that the integrative processes of self-development are motivated by basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2003). According to the authors the authentic self evolves as “one acts volitionally (i.e., autonomously), experiences an inner sense of efficacy (i.e., competence), and is loved (i.e., feels related to) for who one is rather than for matching an external standard” (Deci & Ryan, 1995, p. 33).

Thereby, every individual has various identities that differ heavily in their respective assimilation to the self. The roles and actions that are employed as identities of the self vary considerably in their level of internalization and integration. The self-determination theory assumes that the more poorly the internalization of an identity proceeds, the less stable and therefore less positively involved is this identity. As a result, this identity cannot contribute much to the wellbeing of the individual (Ryan & Deci, 2003, p. 269). Concerning the identity of the leader, one can conclude that leaders find satisfaction in their leader-identity to the extent that it: (1) helps them feel connected to other members of a collective; (2) elicits feelings of efficacy; and (3) provides a means for expressing their true self (Ryan & Deci, 2003, p. 268). In this regard, the authors identified different types of regulation styles that describe the variation of identity-assimilation to the self (Deci & Ryan, 1995). These styles range from external regulation, to introjected regulation and identified regulation to integrated regulation, whereby the latter is the highest and most autonomous form of self-
regulation. Thereby, integrated regulation originates from the full integration of identified values and regulations into the leader’s sense of self, and is assumed to lead to authentic leader behavior (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 355).

In addition to this self-regulated part of the internalized moral perspective, the moral or ethical perspective is of high importance to fully understand this component of authentic leadership. The term *morality* originates from the Latin *moralities* which means manner, character or proper behavior and is a sense of behavioral conduct that differentiates intentions, decisions, and actions between those that are good (or right) and bad (or wrong). Morality indicates the magnitude of all norms of actions that are the basis of societal practice, as long as they are bindingly accepted by a society or group (Lay, 1983, pp. 58f). Thereby the term *norm* designates a benchmark or principle that determines the attitudes, behaviors and actions of people (Berkel & Herzog, 1997, p. 46). By contrast, the term *ethics* originates from the Greek term *ethos* (tradition, custom, habit). Ethics has evolved from a long tradition of thinking about the “right” behavior and developed as a branch of practical philosophy. Thus, ethics can be defined as the science of moral actions (Pieper, 1985, p. 13), and, accordingly constitutes the systematic reflection about moral behavior. Hereinafter, this dissertation does not differentiate between the terms *morality* and *ethics*, whereby we follow a long line of researchers (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996; Neuberger, 2002, p. 278).

In the last 100 years, a long tradition of authors has been of the opinion that the development of ethics and morality are inevitable for the economic coexistence of our society (Bentham, 2007, c1907; Garrett, 1986; Wirtenberger, 1962). In terms of leadership research, Ciulla (1995) developed a leadership ethics and studied the ethical issues that are linked to leadership. She holds the belief that all discussions about “What is leadership?” are ultimately discussions about “What is good leadership?”; whereby “good” leadership refers to both ethics and competence.
Leadership development appears to be incomplete if its attention is not focused more heavily on ethical responsibilities that accompany a leadership role. Kanungo and Mendonca (1996) complied with this view and explored the ethical dimensions of leadership. They stated that without the inclusion of ethics and morality, the understanding of leadership is not only incomplete, but also disturbed. Also Duignan and Bhindi (1997) claimed an injection of values and a concern for ethics and morality into organizational life.

In this regard, the importance of ethical leadership was taken up by Trevino, Brown and their colleagues (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005; Treviño, 1986; Treviño, Hartman, & Brown, 2000). A leader always has to be perceived not only as an ethical person, but also as an ethical manager, by creating a strong ethics message that gets employees’ attention and influences their thoughts and behaviors (Treviño et al., 2000, p. 128). The only way to be perceived as an ethical leader by the followers is to engage in socially salient behavior that makes the leader stand out as an ethical figure against an ethical neutral group (Treviño, Brown, & Hartman, 2003, p. 5). Also Burns (1978) and Bass (1998) realized early on that a leadership behavior can only be acknowledged as being “transformational”, if it possesses a connection to ethical or moral concepts, otherwise it can be only labeled “pseudo-transformational” or “inauthentic”.

Howell and Avolio (1992) as well as Bass and Steidlmeyer (1999) examined the morality of transformational and charismatic leadership and explained that real transformational or charismatic leadership should be built upon a moral foundation. Ethical charismatic leaders possess the three primary virtues of courage, a sense of fairness or justice and integrity and can thus be distinguished from immoral leaders (Howell & Avolio, 1992). Authentic transformational leadership is dependent upon the moral character of the leaders, the ethical values that are embedded in their visions and articulations as well as upon the social
ethical options and actions that can be followed by the leaders and their followers (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Zhu, Avolio, Riggio, & Sosik, 2011).

May and his colleagues (2003) were the first to generate a model for the development of the moral component of authentic leadership. They showed how leaders make authentic decisions, act in an authentic moral manner, and sustain that behavior over time. As transparent decision makers authentic leaders have to use their moral capacity, moral courage as well as moral resiliency to recognize moral dilemmas and to come to sustainable moral decisions (May et al., 2003, pp. 257f). Authentic decision-making involves recognizing the level of intensity associated with each moral decision as well as the transparent evaluation of all relevant alternatives before developing the intention to act authentically. Thereby, the recognition of moral dilemmas is easier for leaders with a high level of moral capacity, which is composed of how the leaders construct their leadership role, their perspective-taking ability, and their experience with previous moral dilemmas (May et al., 2003, pp. 253f).

In this regard, Gardner, Avolio and Walumbwa (2005, pp. 395f) showed that every effort for the development of authentic leadership should consider the moral evolution of the leader, so that a sincere and veritable development may take place. According to Hannah, Lester and Vogelgesang (2005), authentic leaders activate a moral self-concept as soon they are confronted with moral dilemmas. If the leaders are perceived as morally authentic, virtuous and altruistic by their followers, a greater influence is assigned to them and they can accordingly have a more positive impact to the organization. In this context the authors define the moral component of authentic leadership as

“the exercise of altruistic, virtuous leadership by a highly developed leader who acts in concert with his or her self-concept to achieve agency over the moral aspects of his or her leadership domain” (Hannah et al., 2005, p. 44).
According to the authors, in order to exercise authentic leadership, both leader and followers need a highly developed self-concept with an especially high trained moral component. This moral component of the self-concept only enables a moral perception and later a moral decision-making process (Butterfield, Treviño, & Weaver, 2000; Jones & Ryan, 1997). This self-concept constructs the requirements if and how a leader can make moral decisions (Hannah et al., 2005, p. 46).

Contrary to this widely accepted opinion of a moral component to authentic leadership, Shamir and Eilam (2005, p. 398) are of the opinion that the conceptualization of authentic leadership does not say anything about the content of the leader’s values or convictions. They define authentic leaders only on the basis of their self-concepts and the relationships between their self-concepts and their actions. Thus, they think that authentic leaders may be true to themselves without achieving a high level of moral development and without applying ethical standards. Also Sparrowe (2005) asserted that “to thine own self be true” (p. 424) is resolute in its indifference to moral postures. He is of the opinion that authentic leaders look inwards before recognizing others, and thus, their basic orientation is narcissism.

1.1.1.3 Balanced Processing of Information

This third component of authentic leadership refers to objectively analyzing all relevant data before coming to a decision. Balanced processing means to collect without prejudice and interpret self-relevant information, whether it is positive or negative in nature. Thus, “the leader does not distort, exaggerate, or ignore externally based evaluations of the self nor internal experiences and private knowledge that might inform self-development” (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 347).

Kernis (2003) was one of the first to name the unbiased processing of self-relevant information as one element of authentic leadership. This element of
authentic leadership involves “objectivity and acceptance of one’s positive and negative aspects, attributes, and qualities” (Kernis, 2003, p. 14). Leaders who exhibit unbiased processing of information should more accurately interpret task feedback and should be able to better estimate their skill level. Thus, choosing challenging situations with high developmental potential and unbiased processing have important implications for leaders’ decision-making and the organizational outcomes resulting from their decisions (Ilies et al., 2005, pp. 378ff).

In order to completely understand this component it is helpful to acknowledge the self as an elaborate and easily accessible memory structure that encompasses the scope of meta-knowledge (Kihlstrom, Beer, & Klein, 2003; Markus, 1977; Markus & Wurf, 1987). Meta-knowledge is organized in schematic structures and is chained up into each other to build a multidimensional self-concept. Self-knowledge is more prominent and familiar than other knowledge and, accordingly, can be retrieved more easily during the processing of certain situations. By this means, self-knowledge can be processed more efficiently and completely. In order to morally process information adequately, the achieving of meta-knowledge about oneself is inevitable (Hannah et al., 2005, p. 52). Meta-knowledge is gained through the social learning processes (Bandura, 2001; Kihlstrom et al., 2003) and deals with one’s own cognitive abilities of learning and understanding. The moral meta-knowledge, which is a specific component of the stored, general knowledge, can be retrieved either in a controlled manner or automatically during a moral processing of information (Rest, 1986). This may be the case if a leader evaluates alternatives in a moral dilemma situation. Hannah and his colleagues (2005) therefore assume that the more robustly and centrally the moral meta-knowledge is stored in the self-concept of leaders, the bigger the probability is that this knowledge may be activated by the leaders to lead them through leadership episodes. Authentic leaders are assumed to possess a particularly distinctive set of meta-cognitive abilities that enables them to reflect on moral issues (Metcalf & Shimamura, 1996). Meta-cognition facilitates a self-
transformation and a complete interpretation of the self-concept (Flavell, 1979). The moral meta-knowledge may be labeled as a heightened level of ethical information processing capacity, that means all knowledge and beliefs about morality that are stored in the long-term memory. Higher levels of moral meta-knowledge lead to enhanced moral decision-making and moral behavior (Swanson & Hill, 1993). Hence, meta-cognition facilitates a transparent processing of information during moral dilemmas. Authentic leaders achieve high levels of self-awareness through heightened levels of meta-cognitive abilities that result in both controlled processing of information, and also their motivation to use these during moral dilemmas (Chan, Hannah, & Gardner, 2005; Hannah et al., 2005, p. 60).

1.1.1.4 Self-Awareness

The fourth and last component identified for the multi-component conceptualization of authentic leadership (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Walumbwa et al., 2008) is self-awareness. Self-awareness refers to demonstrating an understanding of how one derives and makes sense of the world and how that sense-making process impacts the way one views oneself over time. It also refers to showing and understanding one’s strengths and weaknesses and the multifaceted nature of the self (Kernis, 2003, p. 13), as well as one’s emotions and personality (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 378). Thus, the awareness component of authentic leadership involves “having awareness of, and trust in, one’s motives, feelings, desires, and self-relevant cognitions” (Kernis, 2003, p. 13). Importantly, self-awareness is not an end in itself but a process that leads to reflection on one’s unique values, identity, emotions, goals, knowledge, talents and/or capabilities (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 349).

The concept of self-awareness has its roots in psychology and sociology. Even James (1980) recognized that the self has a unique ability that he labeled “reflexivity”. This capability makes it possible to look back on oneself as the
object of one’s own reflection. Thereby this awareness may be triggered by many different stimuli. Some people recognize especially the things that happen externally, and others concentrate their attention on experiences that happen internally (Carver, 2003, p. 179). Self-reflection may be acquired through introspection, a method that was already used by Sigmund Freud as a source of insight for understanding one’s own personality (Freud, 1976). Introspection, the looking into oneself, should encourage self-concept clarity about one’s own identity, values, emotions, motives, goals and beliefs with the help of a never ending process of self-reflection. Gaining self-awareness leads to an understanding of how one derives and makes sense of the world based on introspective, self-reflective testing of our own hypotheses and self-schema (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 347).

Literature on social psychology may also give evidence on the concept of self-awareness. For example, Campbell and his colleagues (1996) investigated self-concept clarity, defined as “the extent to which the contents of an individual’s self-concept (e.g., perceived personal attributes) are clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and temporally stable” (p. 141). The authors showed that high self-concept clarity is positively associated with self-esteem, extraversion and positive affect and negatively related to anxiety, depression, and negative affect. Baumgardner (1990) found out that individuals, who possess greater certainty about the self, exhibit higher levels of global self-esteem and positive affect. Self-certainty thereby is the extent to which one is confident about one’s self-views across various domains. Thus, self-awareness - including the clarity and certainty of self-knowledge - is an important determinant of psychological well-being (Kernis, 2003).

Largely associated with the conceptualization of self-awareness is the social identity theory (Hogg, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Self-concept clarity about one’s own identity seems to be inevitable for the development of a moral self as
well as for the exercise of moral authentic leadership. Identity designates a cognitive schema that is constituted of characteristics, expectations and features and represents the stable self-conception of an individual (Steinmann & Schreyögg, 2005, p. 699). According to identity theory, reflexive self-observation and contention and interaction with the environment (other people as well as events) lead to the construction of a specific self-concept (Lührmann, 2004, p. 441). People gain their identity through a balanced mediation of expectations of the social environment (society, group, significant others), and their own early acquired and later lifelong enriched needs, wishes, and emotional affectivities. In this context, identity is a product of self-adjustment which is capable of acting and has the ability to survive.

Most crucial for the concept of authentic leadership is the social identity theory (Hogg, 2001) that makes identity the key for an emergent development of leadership in groups. Theoretical backgrounds for its application in the leadership context have been given by the social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner (1979) as well as by the social categorization theory of Tajfel (1972) and later Turner (1999). Tajfel (1972) introduced the idea of social identity to theorize how people conceptualize themselves in intergroup contexts and how a system of social categorizations “creates and defines an individual’s own place in society” (p. 293). Social identity thereby is defined as “the individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of his group membership” (Tajfel, 1972, p. 292). The authors are of the opinion that an individual pursues positive self-worth and therefore a positive self-concept. For these purposes the individuals employ social comparison processes and win their self-definition predominantly from the collective identities of groups. Because groups only exist in relation to other groups, they derive their descriptive and evaluative features, as well as their social meaning, in relation to the other groups. In this regard, Hogg (2001) states that leadership is a group processes generated by social categorization and prototype-
based depersonalization processes which are associated with identity. Thereby the identity is stable, but not inflexible; it is decomposed of partial identities (e.g. leader identity) and always aligns itself through interactions to new requirements.

"The basic idea is that a social category (e.g., nationality, political affiliation, sports team) into which one falls, and to which one feels one belongs, provides a definition of who one is in terms of the defining characteristics of the category - a self-definition that is part of the self-concept" (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995, p. 259).

Hence, the identity of an individual may evolve through the partial identities that have been modeled in different contexts (Schreyögg & Lührmann, 2006, p. 13). By differentiating these partial identities by the different living environments (job, family, spare time, etc.), one can identify a collective level that understands individuals as a member of a social entity. Its characteristic and prototypical attributes and values are particularly important for the identity formation, also known as the collective self-concept (Lord & Brown, 2001, pp. 137ff). According to social identity theory, a group recognizes an individual as a leader, who embodies these prototypical attributes and values most intensively and thus, the leader identity is ascribed to him or her. As a result, the perceived social identity of the group serves for the categorization of every individual into “leader” or “not-leader”.

Authentic leaders, as defined earlier, are true to themselves and show a high level of moral integrity. Accordingly, they embody integrity, respect for others, fairness, trustworthiness, reliability and responsibility in their personal identity. Members, who express prototypical group values and aspirations are especially likely to emerge as leaders. But this may be only the case, if such values as integrity, transparency and justice are widely shared by other members of the collective. Only then the prototypical member who best exemplifies these attributes will be viewed as socially attractive and disproportionately influential.
At the interpersonal level of identity, authentic leaders will incorporate the role of the leader into their identity and come to see themselves as positive role models for others (Gardner et al., 2005, pp. 550ff). The followers will then identify themselves with the leader (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 382).

To conclude, this dissertation understands authentic leadership as a multi-component construct composed of the four described components: relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information and self-awareness. We have learned before that followers play a crucial part in the authentic leadership construct (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 400ff). Importantly, being an authentic leader for followers deserves a judgment by them that the leaders act true to themselves. Only such an ascription will make a difference regarding the leader’s influence (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Fields, 2007, p. 198). Therefore, this dissertation focuses explicitly on followers’ role in the authentication of the leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 401), which will be explained in more detail in the next chapter.

1.1.2 Followers’ Perceptions of the Leader’s Authenticity

We have learned that leadership is a two-sided engagement between leaders and followers (Eagly, 2005), which is defined as “the process of being perceived by others as a leader” (Lord & Maher, 1993, p. 11). Follower-centric approaches to leadership have recently been widely promoted (Bligh & Schyns, 2007; Shamir, Pillai, & Bligh, 2007; de Vries & Van Gelder, 2005). Meindl’s (1995) social constructionist approach understands leadership as a social construction that is dependent upon the subjective experiences of the followers as well as on the context in which they are embedded. As an emergent phenomenon, “leadership is considered to be emerged [...] when followers interpret their relationship as having a leadership-followership dimension” (Meindl, 1995, p. 332). Thus, followers give power to leader, influence his or her behavior, and determine the
outcomes of the relationship (Howell & Shamir, 2005). Thereby, followers’ perceptions of the leader are mainly shaped by followers’ prior expectations and cognitive prototypes (Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984; Lord & Maher, 1993). The basis of followers’ perceptions is their stereotypical preconception of leadership qualities, which is itself shaped by their own experiences and observations during processes of socialization. Based on these socialization processes, followers form implicit theories of leadership (Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Schyns & Schilling, 2011), which are influenced by their beliefs, values, personality traits, and cultural norms. Thus, in a given leadership situation, followers observe the leader's behavior and cognitively match this behavior to their ideal representation of leadership. In fact, leader behavior has been identified as having an even greater impact on leadership effectiveness criteria than leader traits (DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011).

Applying the self-constructionist view (Meindl, 1995) to the construct of authentic leadership, authenticity ascriptions presuppose corresponding perceptions of followers. Only such an ascription will make a difference regarding the leader’s influence (Fields, 2007, p. 198). Theories of social (Kenny, 1991) as well as leader perception (Lord & Emrich, 2000; Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985) can be viewed as a theoretical foundation underlying this understanding. In their review article, Gardner and colleagues (2011, p. 1129) subsumed attribution theory with social or leader perceptions to construct this theoretical foundation.

In detail, the attributional perspective is one of the most recognized theories for explaining the emergence of leadership. As a social-psychological theory it was applied foremost in the context of leadership at the end of the seventies (McElroy, 1982). Basically it deals with the way that people make judgments about the causalities of their own and others behaviors and about how people ascribe events or results to factors that determines them. Thus, attributions are the assessments of causality that people make about events (Weiner et al., 1971). This procedure is
an extremely relevant prerequisite for the individual agency, because attributions are able to structure and organize the heterogeneous environment (Meyer & Schmalt, 1978). The motivation for research on attributions is based on a paper by Calder (1977), who incorporates general attributional considerations of Kelley (1973) and affiliates his theory to the “naive psychology” of Fritz Heider (1958). He noted that people organize their world and make it predictable by assigning events not to an unmanageable number of situational factors but to individual actors.

Leadership can be understood as a very distinctive way of reducing the complexity and finding personal causations for a certain behavior or for the consequence of a behavior (Meindl, 1993). In explaining the attributional processes, Calder (1977) proceeds on the assumption that there is no leadership per se, but that it is a hypothetical construct that followers form in their own heads. So, the basis of the attributional performance of followers is their stereotypical preconception of leadership qualities which is itself shaped by their own experiences and observations during processes of socialization.

Research showed that attributions are not always accurate perceptions of reality, but that they are often biased (Novicevic, Harvey, Ronald, & Brown-Radford, 2006, p. 3). The most researched cognitive biases to influence attributions are the self-serving bias, which refers to the tendency to take credit for successful outcomes, while blaming external factors for failure (Dobbins & Russel, 1986), or the actor-observer bias, which corresponds to the tendency of actors to attribute the outcomes of their efforts to situational factors, while attributing the outcomes of others to the dispositional traits of the actor (Jones & Nisbett, 1972). In addition, the fundamental attribution bias has to be acknowledged here (Ross, 1977). It explains that people’s behavior becomes dominant in the observers’ perception, which means that followers tend to underestimate the effect of the
situation and overestimate the effect of the person or figure (Langdridge & Butt, 2004, p. 359).

Basic attribution theory has been applied to the study of authentic leadership by Harvey, Martinko and Gardner (2006). The authors explained how an accurate and balanced attribution style facilitates authentic leadership. They stated that accurate attributions promote authentic behaviors by facilitating congruent emotional responses of leaders and followers to trigger events, self-awareness needed to behave authentically and behavioral self-regulation. In detail, they argued that certain trigger events initiate a causal search process which promotes the development of authentic leadership. Such a balanced causal search process is supported by individual factors like positive psychological capital defined by self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience as well as by a transparent and supportive organizational context with low causal ambiguity (Harvey et al., 2006, p. 4). This balanced processing of information (Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005) leads to an objective attribution style that is not internally nor externally biased and finally motivates accurate self-awareness.

However, this dissertation follows the differentiation of attribution theory and perceptions recently formulated by Martinko, Harvey, and Douglas (2007). The authors explained that the rational information processes described by attribution theory involve an unrealistic cognitive load, which could be burdensome in many situations (Martinko et al., 2007, p. 574). Therefore, this dissertation - like many other studies before (Cronshaw & Lord, 1987; Lord & Smith, 1983) - intends to measure general leadership impressions as opposed to causal ascriptions for the outcomes of specific behaviors (Martinko et al., 2007, p. 575).

Followers’ social construction of leadership has been investigated widely for general leadership impressions, as for example for charismatic leadership (Gardner & Avolio, 1998) or transformational leadership (Hater & Bass, 1988). Thereby, research focused mainly on followers’ judgments about personal
characteristics (Lord & Smith, 1983). With regard to authentic leadership, there is only very little research that builds upon social or leader perception (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1129). In particular, the work of Fields (2007) should be recognized here. The author explains that the authenticity and integrity of a leader are only able to have an impact on the leader’s influence if they are perceived and recognized by followers. Building on Kenny’s (1991) Weighted Average Model of social perception, Fields designed a model of person perception and identified certain determinants like a specific follower behavior as well as a situational context that can affect followers’ perceptions of the leader. As a result, followers’ evaluations of their leader’s authenticity do not only result from contextual factors, but also from variables connected to the leader’s actions or special statements (Fields, 2007, p. 203). In this regard, if followers do not perceive that their leader is trying to enact positive psychological states, then they will not perceive the leader as being authentic, regardless of the leader’s true intentions (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2005, p. 283).

As a result, it is crucial to understand when and under what conditions followers perceive leadership and how these perceptions affect the leadership process (Bligh, Kohles, & Pillai, 2011). So, this dissertation is mainly interested in a question already posed by Shamir and Eilam (2005): “How do followers decide about the authenticity of the leader?” (p. 408).

### 1.2 Existing Research and Research Deficit

Due to the relatively new nature of the authentic leadership construct, Gardner and his colleagues (2011) recently identified only 25 empirical publications on the topic throughout their literature search. Starting not earlier than 2003, most of the work has been published in the last two years.
Thereby, more than 30% are qualitative studies. The authors point to the fact that authentic leadership still seems to be in its first stage of development (Reichers & Schneider, 1990), and thus qualitative methods are applied in order to generate new theories (Edmondson & McManus, 2007; Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1131). Among them, Endrissat, Müller and Kaudela-Baum (2007) conducted narrative interviews (Czarniawska, 2008), in order to define and understand the authentic leadership construct. In detail, they searched for similarities between empirically-based subjective theories of practitioners and existing theoretical concepts of authentic leadership. By following a “bottom-up” approach in analyzing the interview data the authors were able to understand the meaning of leadership from the “narrator’s point of view” (Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, & Keil, 1988, p. 61). After having interpreted all interviews, they were aggregated and grouped together on the basis of their specific meaning and content, and they were also screened for similarities and recurring topics in order to receive “clusters” (Endrissat et al., 2007, pp. 210f). In the end, Endrissat and her colleagues (2007) came to the conclusion that authenticity was a central concept for the practitioners, even though they have not been directly requested to tell about authenticity. Other qualitative research in this field collected data by applying for example focus groups (Pittinsky & Tyson, 2005), narrative analyses (Liu, 2010) or case studies (Branson, 2007).

In the last ten years, the amount of quantitative studies has increased enormously. Starting in 2006, Jensen and Luthans (2006a) conducted one of the first noticeable exploratory studies on authentic leadership. Participants of the survey method applied were employees of newer, smaller businesses with a single owner still active in daily operations. For measuring employees’ perception of authentic leadership, the authors used recognized, standardized scales based on the respective theory that evaluated the leader’s authentic-like behaviors, future orientation and ethical climate. As no unified measures were available at that time, standardized scores on selected items from other available leadership scales,
such as the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X; Bass & Avolio, 2000) were summed up to create an overall authentic leadership score (Jensen & Luthans, 2006a, p. 654). Therewith, the authors found initial empirical support for a positive impact of authentic leadership on employees’ work-related attitudes, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and work happiness (Jensen & Luthans, 2006a, p. 658). Despite these advancements, the study failed to explicitly measure all core components of authentic leadership identified by theory. In addition, the adoption of existing scales as proxies for authentic leadership could be regarded as highly problematic, as these existing scales were developed to measure constructs that may overlap conceptually with authentic leadership, but which are distinct after all (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1138). Cooper, Scandura and Schriesheim (2005, pp. 477f) therefore called for laying a necessary conceptual and empirical groundwork by operationally defining, measuring, and providing evidence of the discriminant validity of the construct.

In response to this call, Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson (2008) developed and validated a theory-based measure to rate authentic leadership - the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ). The ALQ introduced the four-component model of authentic leadership comprising of relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing and self-awareness. The authors identified a higher-order authentic leadership factor incorporating the four first-order factors of the authenticity components. Furthermore, the authors demonstrated discriminant validity of the authentic leadership construct. They showed that the ALQ accounts for the variance beyond measures of transformational (MLQ-5X; Bass & Avolio, 2000) or ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005). In addition, they evidenced a positive relationship between authentic leadership, job satisfaction and supervisor-rated performance (Walumbwa et al., 2008, pp. 112ff). In total, the authors utilized multiple samples obtained from China, Kenya and the United States and reported findings from multiple studies and sources.
The ALQ is the most frequently used method to measure authentic leadership, even though there is also psychometric support for the Authenticity Inventory (AI: 3) developed by Kernis and Goldman (2005; 2006). The AI: 3 is an instrument comprised of 45 items and four subscales (self-awareness, unbiased processing, behavior, and relational orientation), summed to form a composite authenticity score. The instrument was recently employed in empirical research (Spitzmüller & Ilies, 2010; Toor & Ofori, 2009). However, it was designed to measure individual authenticity, as opposed to authentic leadership captured by the ALQ (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1134).

Building on the ALQ and its components, various studies in recent years have investigated the consequences and outcomes of authentic leadership. Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck and Avolio (2010) analyzed the direct and indirect effects of authentic leadership on followers’ work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The authors collected data from a sample of two telecom firms in China, whereby questionnaires were filled out by supervisors and their immediate direct reports. Their study was able to show that authentic leadership enhances followers’ work engagement and OCB, whereby these relationships were mediated by feelings of empowerment and identification with the leader. Thus, the authors could empirically prove the theoretical assumed positive relationship between authentic leadership and followers’ well-being and engagement (Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005; Kernis, 2003). In addition, these results were also confirmed by studies of Wong and Cummings (2009a) and Giallonardo, Wong and Iwasiw (2010).

Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang and Avey (2009) investigated the relationships between perceptions of authentic leadership, trust in management, positive psychological capital (PsyCap), and firm financial performance. The authors collected data from a US chain of retail clothing, whereby the employees were asked to answer paper-and-pencil surveys. In order to analyze the data at the
group level of analysis, constructs were aggregated to the store level. The authors concluded that trust in management mediated the relationship between PsyCap and performance, and that it partially mediated the relationship between authentic leadership and performance.

Another study at the group level of analysis was conducted by Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey and Oke (2011). The authors analyzed the role of collective psychological capital and trust on the relationship between authentic leadership and work groups’ desired outcomes. In detail, they collected data from existing work groups and their respective immediate supervisors from a large US bank. Support was found that group-level psychological capital and trust were not only positively related to work-group citizenship behavior and performance, but also mediated the relationship between authentic leadership and the two desired group outcomes. The positive relationship between authentic leadership and trust was also confirmed in other studies (Wong & Cummings, 2009b; Wong, Spence Laschinger, & Cummings, 2010).

In addition, different researchers tested the relationship between authentic leadership and related leadership constructs. Walumbwa and associates (2008) found positive relations between authentic leadership with transformational and ethical leadership. In addition, they could prove that authentic leadership accounted for the variance in various work outcomes beyond that explained by transformational or ethical leadership. Thus, they concluded that authentic leadership is related, but empirically distinct to transformational and ethical leadership. In another study, Walumbwa and colleagues (2011) further underlined the unique role of authentic leadership by controlling their results for transformational leadership.

To conclude, up to now most empirical studies have applied survey measures in order to examine the consequences of authentic leadership. Gardner and associates (2011, p. 1140) therefore have called for more diverse methods,
especially experimental designs. Following that call, one study was recently published that analyzed the impact of leader’s PsyCap and level of transparency on followers’ perceptions of trust and the leader’s overall effectiveness, conducted by Norman, Avolio and Luthans (2010). Importantly, the authors did not use the whole ALQ for measuring authentic leadership, as they only asked participants to answer the items of the ALQ concerning relational transparency. In detail, the field experiment utilized a 2 x 2 between groups design resulting in four conditions, whereby the leader’s positivity and transparency were both manipulated twice. The authors concluded that both the leader’s level of positivity and transparency impacted followers’ perceived trust and evaluations of leader effectiveness.

However, cross-sectional, non-experimental designs dominate the existing authentic leadership literature (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1134). Furthermore, most of the studies concentrated on the consequences and implications of authentic leadership. Only two studies could be identified that explored the influence of selected antecedents on authentic leadership. Jensen and Luthans (2006b) therefore analyzed the leader’s psychological capital with respect to their self-perception as an authentic leader. Using a sample of entrepreneurs, the authors concluded that the positive organizational behavior (POB) states of optimism, resiliency and hope as well as an aggregated measure of PsyCap were both positively related with the leader’s authentic leadership. As in their previous study (Jensen & Luthans, 2006a), the authors operationalized authentic leadership by summing scores from selected items of related leadership scales. The second study that treated possible antecedents to authentic leadership was conducted by Tate (2008), who analyzed undergraduate student work groups in a longitudinal study. However, the author’s prediction that self-monitoring negatively influences authentic leadership could not be supported by results. Authentic leadership was thereby measured with the help of a 17-item self-report measure based on George’s (2004) five dimensions of authentic leadership. As a matter of fact, the
results of both studies have to be interpreted with caution and should be replicated with instruments specifically designed to measure authentic leadership, such as the ALQ (Gardner et al., 2011, pp. 1133f).

Summing up the existing empirical research, this dissertation identifies huge deficits in authentic leadership research. First, further assessment of the ALQ and its construct validity is needed, especially in a German context, as respective research has never been published before. In addition, the authentic leadership construct needs alternative approaches to measure the construct, as for example experimental designs (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1141). Second, the majority of studies concentrated on examining the consequences and outcomes of authentic leadership, without taking into account possible antecedents. Although antecedents were theoretically predicted by researchers in the past (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003, e.g. positive psychological capacities, trigger events, personal history), only one study investigated a predicted antecedent (Jensen & Luthans, 2006b). Third, prior research did not intend to explain and operationalize the processes of follower perceptions that lead to ascribed authenticity. Authentic leadership research does not clarify how the true self of the leader becomes apparent to followers (Fields, 2007, p. 196), as interior states are not always directly evident to observers (Pittinsky & Tyson, 2005). As a result, there is no study analyzing individual factors that could influence followers’ perceptions and encourage followers to judge the leader as authentic.

The outline above illustrates that the authentic leadership literature is a newly emerging field of inquiry and has made progress especially in identifying and empirically affirming the consequences of authentic leadership. However, key questions remain, especially with regard to antecedents to followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity.
1.3 Keys Issues of the Thesis and Outline

This dissertation aims to answer the key question already posed by Shamir and Eilam (2005): “How do followers decide about the authenticity of the leader?” (p. 408). Therefore, possible antecedents of followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity are developed and investigated. In addition, authentic leadership measurement will be addressed and important organizational outcomes are verified. These key issues are explored in three separate studies. A theory-driven model was developed in the first study (Chapter 2) - the Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity - on which both the following experimental studies (Chapters 3 and 4) are based. Each of these chapters was written so that it can be read independently from the other chapters. Hence, some overlap exists across the chapters in the theory and method description. Chapter 5 then presents additional computations on the authentic leadership construct. Below, an overview of each of the chapters is given.

Chapter 2 focuses on the development of the Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity combining possible antecedents of followers’ perception of the leader’s authenticity. In detail, the model identifies two antecedents that may in particular reveal the leader’s true self to followers and therefore help to construct the leader as an authentic person: (1) life storytelling and (2) leader enactment. As followers base their assessment of the leader’s authenticity mainly on direct observations of the leader, their authenticity constructions vary systematically with the information they receive while observing the leader’s behavior (Fields, 2007, p. 200; Hansen, Ropo, & Sauer, 2007, p. 551). Based on narrative research, this study shows that life storytelling is an important medium for transporting information about the leader’s self-concept to followers. In addition, following a dramaturgical approach (Goffman, 1959; Mangham & Overington, 1987), a leader’s body language as well as nonverbal cues are emphasized as being valuable for assessing the leader’s self-concept. Resulting
from followers’ enhanced perceptions of the leader’s authenticity, the model presents subjective and objective organizational outcomes as being positively influenced. The chapter concludes with a discussion on implications and limitations, as well as future research directions.

Chapter 3 concentrates on one of the antecedents described in the enacted life stories approach of Chapter 2 - leader enactment -, because it has never been theoretically nor empirically operationalized before. Based on findings from drama theory (Goffman, 1959; Stanislavski, 1996), this chapter outlines the importance of how the leader enacts for followers’ perceptions. Therefore, the chapter provides an operationalization of strong versus weak enactment that was proved to be valid for manipulating behavior. Following the call of Gardner and associates (2011, p. 1140) to utilize a wider range of methods, this chapter employs a between-group experimental design to investigate the relationships between enactment and perceived leader authenticity. Followers’ generalized beliefs about leadership (Romance of Leadership, RoL; Schyns, Meindl, & Croon, 2007) and followers’ sympathy towards the leader served as covariates. 105 participants were randomly assigned to both experimental conditions - strong versus weak enactment. The results substantiate the hypothesis that a strong opposed to a weak enactment style exhibited by the leader positively influenced the authenticity that participants ascribed to the leader. This relationship holds, even while controlling for RoL and the followers’ sympathy towards the leader. As a result of this process, participants rated higher levels of trust towards the leader and perceived higher leader effectiveness.

Chapter 4 builds on the previous chapters by investigating the full Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity presented in Chapter 2. To test if life storytelling and leader enactment influence followers’ authenticity perceptions of the leader, again a between-group experimental design was chosen. 334 participants were randomly assigned to six experimental conditions. The results
supported the hypotheses that life storytelling and leader enactment have a positive relationship with followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Furthermore, the positive impact of perceived leader authenticity on organizational outcomes is affirmed. The chapter concludes with a discussion on limitations, future research possibilities, and practical implications.

Consequentially, the research presented in Chapters 2 to 4 contributes to the existing authentic leadership literature by highlighting the process of followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity that directly follow a certain leader behavior, namely, life storytelling and leader enactment. This dissertation uniquely combines life storytelling and leader enactment as antecedents to followers’ perceptions in order to construct the leader’s true self. In addition, this research is among the first to empirically verify that both antecedents positively influence followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. In detail, leaders’ life storytelling - especially if it includes negative turning points - could help followers to perceive the leaders’ true self and thus ascribe authenticity to them. However, the effect only holds if the leader displays a strong enactment. The results of both studies in Chapters 3 and 4 substantiate the hypothesis that a strong as opposed to a weak enactment style exhibited by the leader positively influenced the authenticity that followers ascribed to the leader. In addition, Chapter 3 shows that the positive effect of a strong enactment on perceived leader authenticity holds, even while controlling for followers’ generalized beliefs about leadership (RoL) and followers’ sympathy towards the leader. And finally, this dissertation supports existing empirical research on authentic leadership by evidencing the positive influence of perceived leader authenticity on organizational outcomes.

Thereafter, Chapter 5 will discuss in detail the authentic leadership construct. Therefore, the measurement of authentic leadership will be addressed and the effect of the four single subscales of authentic leadership (relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and self-awareness) are
outlined. In addition, the importance of perceived leader authenticity is further demonstrated by differentiating the construct from perceptions of charismatic (Conger & Kanungo, 1988) or transformational leadership (Bass, 1999).

Finally, Chapter 6 provides a general discussion on the research presented in this dissertation. Therefore, potential limitations of the research as well as some future research suggestions are presented. The dissertation concludes with potential practical implications.
Leaders perceived as authentic by their followers produce favorable organizational outcomes. Less is known about cues that could influence this ascription process on followers’ side. Combining theoretical approaches from narratives and theater dramaturgy enables us to identify more precisely such drivers for followers’ authenticity perceptions. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of our proposed Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity for further research.

1 An article based on this chapter is currently under review. Coauthor is Jürgen Weibler. A previous version of this chapter entitled “The Life Stories Approach to Enacted Authentic Leadership: A Theoretical Contribution” was presented at the 11th European Academy of Management (EURAM) Annual Conference, 1st-4th June 2011 in Tallinn, Estonia.
2.1 Introduction

Current theories and future directions in leadership research show a tendency towards integrity, morality, honesty and sincerity in leadership, like ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005; Treviño et al., 2000) or servant leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Greenleaf, 2002). In particular, authentic leadership has become an important field of research during the last decade (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Gardner et al., 2005), serving as a root construct underlying all positive forms of leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 316). The roots of the concept of authenticity lie in an aphorism derived from Greek philosophy and expounded by Shakespeare’s Polonius: “To thine own self be true” (Shakespeare, Hamlet, act I, scene III, lines 78-80). Gardner and associates (2005) defined authentic leaders as being true to themselves, basing their actions on their values and convictions, and with an ongoing consistency among their beliefs, words, and actions. Proceeding from this definition, the research question arises: “How do followers decide about the authenticity of the leader?” (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 408).

Gardner et al. (2005) already started to answer that question by stating that “followers authenticate the leader when they see consistency between who they are and what they do” (p. 348). Perceiving leaders as authentic therefore deserves a judgment that the leaders display consistency among their values, beliefs, and actions. Only such a perception will make a difference regarding the leader’s influence (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Fields, 2007, p. 198). In line with the respective theory, perceiving leaders as authentic will result in a sustainable and veritable performance on the followers’ side (Jensen & Luthans, 2006a; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

However, up to now, most studies concentrated only on examining the consequences of authentic leadership (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al.,
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2008; Walumbwa et al., 2010), without explicitly focusing on the antecedents that encourage followers to judge their leader as being authentic. We therefore follow the recent call by Gardner and associates (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1140), who encourage researchers to consider antecedents of perceived leader authenticity and how they influence the leader-follower relationship. In that way, our paper is among the first to concentrate on individual factors that affect followers' authenticity perceptions. Followers’ social construction of leadership has been investigated widely for general leadership impressions (e.g. charismatic leadership (Gardner & Avolio, 1998), or transformational leadership (Hater & Bass, 1988)), especially in making judgments about the leader's personal characteristics (Lord & Smith, 1983). In fact, followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity have not been investigated sufficiently (Avolio et al., 2009, pp. 427f). Up to now, authentic leadership research does not clarify how the authenticity of the leader becomes apparent to followers (Fields, 2007, p. 196), as interior states are not always directly evident to observers (Pittinsky & Tyson, 2005).

Our paper contributes to the existing literature by investigating two antecedents that may help followers to perceive the leader as authentic: (1) leader’s life storytelling, and (2) leader enactment. First, the leader’s life storytelling has already been identified by Gardner et al. (2005) as an important antecedent to the leader’s authenticity. Life storytelling thereby is a written or oral account of a life, or a segment of a life, as told by the individual concerned (Gergen & Gergen, 1986; McAdams, 2001; Sparrowe, 2005). Second, we introduce leader enactment as an antecedent to followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Followers’ perceptions of leadership are influenced to a great extent by observations of the leader’s behavior (Fields, 2007, p. 200; Hansen et al., 2007, p. 551). In this regard, the leader’s communication style or rhetoric has already been associated with perceptions of leadership (Holladay & Coombs, 1993). Although experimental studies have proved the importance of communication skills for
followers’ perceptions (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Gardner, 2003), research on perceptions of leader authenticity is limited.

Ladkin and Taylor (2010) recently highlighted the importance of bodily behaviors. They argued that the enactment by the leader is important for followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Thereby, “enactment” refers to the setting and public display of a creation or a case. In a narrower sense, this pertains to the performing arts; and, in a wider sense, every exposure or embodiment can be seen as an enactment (Schicha & Ontrup, 1999, p. 7; Willems, 2009, p. 80). Ladkin and Taylor claimed that followers perceive a leader “performance” as authentic, if the somatic sense of the “true self” of the leader contributes to the felt sense of authenticity (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 64). Followers perceive this consistency, which then influences their perception of the leader’s authenticity. In order to operationalize this construct, Ladkin and Taylor (2010) turned to basic theater theory, in particular, Stanislavski’s (1996) Method acting approach. Following these thoughts, the manner in which a leader enacts towards the followers is varied across two levels: strong versus weak. Strong enactment will encourage followers’ judgment of the leader’s authenticity, whereby weak enactment will reduce it.

There are three major contributions of our paper: First, our research is among the first to highlight the process of followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity that directly follow a specific leader behavior, in particular life storytelling and leader enactment. Second, the enacted life stories approach, as proposed in our paper, contributes to existing authentic leadership literature by uniquely combining life storytelling and leader enactment as antecedents to followers’ authenticity perceptions. And third, our research model contributes to the existing literature by linking the perceptions of a leader’s authenticity that follow life storytelling and leader enactment to subjective and objective organizational outcomes.
**2.2 A Model**

In combining existing research on authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003) with the literature on life storytelling (McAdams, 2001; Shamir, Dayan-Horesh, & Adler, 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005) and enactment (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Stanislavski, 1996), we generate a promising theoretical contribution for understanding authenticity ascriptions of leaders. The importance of these connections is highlighted by presenting subjective and objective organizational outcomes that could be enhanced by perceived leader authenticity. By designing the Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity, we make several noteworthy contributions to leadership literature (see Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1: Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity**

**2.2.1 Perceived Leader Authenticity**

In recent years, authentic leadership has grown to be an important field of research (Avolio et al., 2004, Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Based on positive psychology (Snyder & Lopez, 2002), authenticity has been
defined as accepting all personal experiences, such as thoughts, emotions, needs or preferences (Harter, 2002, p. 382). Moreover, authenticity implies acting in accordance with the true self. We follow the definition of Gardner and associates (2005), who emphasized the importance of showing consistency among one’s beliefs, words, and actions for being perceived as an authentic leader by the followers. The complex ontological nature of authentic leadership construct (Cooper et al., 2005) is thereby built upon several key theoretical conceptions. It draws heavily on social psychology, including Deci and Ryan's (2002) self-determination theory, Kerni’s (2003) design of authenticity, positive psychology (Seligman, 2002; Snyder & Lopez, 2002), and positive organizational behavior (Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Avolio, 2009).

Grounded on these social psychological constructs, researchers proposed that authentic leaders possess four core characteristics: they exhibit high levels of self-awareness and self-regulated behaviors, they offer a balanced processing of information (Avolio et al., 2004, Gardner et al., 2005), and they show an advanced moral development in the form of stable moral values, intentions, and actions (Hannah et al., 2005; May et al., 2003). Here, we already recognize that authentic leadership includes a positive moral perspective (Hannah et al., 2005; May et al., 2003; Novicevic et al., 2006). If the leaders are perceived by their followers as morally authentic, virtuous and altruistic, greater influence is assigned to them by these followers. Accordingly, they can have a more positive impact.

In this context, Hannah et al. (2005) defined the moral component of authentic leadership as “the exercise of altruistic, virtuous leadership by a highly developed leader who acts in concert with his or her self-concept to achieve agency over the moral aspects of his or her leadership domain” (p. 44). Thus, authentic leadership only emerges if both leader and followers have a highly developed self-concept with an especially high trained moral component. This moral component of the
self-concept only enables a moral perception and later a moral decision-making process (Butterfield et al., 2000; Jones & Ryan, 1997). Following the theoretical framework of Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) and the proceedings of Zhu et al. (2011), which are essentially based on the work of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), we conclude that leadership behaviors can only be titled as “authentic” if they possess a connection to ethical or moral concepts, otherwise they can only be labeled as “pseudo-authentic”.

Like ethical (Treviño et al., 2000) and servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002), authentic leadership emphasizes integrity, morality, honesty and sincerity. Ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005, p. 120) in particular has many overlaps and similarities with authentic leadership. Both theories describe the leader as a moral person (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 103). However, there are major differences, as authenticity is not a necessary component of ethical leadership (Avolio et al., 2004), such as leaders may act ethically, because they fear punishment, and not because they are self-aware that the unethical behavior would be inconsistent with their true self (Zhu et al., 2011, p. 805). Servant leadership holds that the leader’s main impulse is to serve people, and thus the leader will attract followership based on trust (Greenleaf, 2002). Thereby, servant leadership implicitly recognizes the role of leader self-awareness and regulation (Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004; Spears & Lawrence, 2002), but lacks the impact of the followers in the leadership process as well as the role of positive psychological capital (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 331).

The following thoughts are based heavily on Meindl’s (1995) social construction of leadership and followers’ active role in the leadership process (Bligh et al., 2011). Followers' perceptions of the leader have been identified as being seminal for the leadership process (Meindl, 1995), as leadership is defined as “the process of being perceived by others as a leader” (Lord & Maher, 1993). Thus, leadership is understood as a social construction, which is dependent upon the subjective
experiences of the followers as well as on the context in which they are embedded. According to Howell and Shamir (2005), followers are actually heavily and actively responsible for creating the leadership relationship by giving power to the leaders, influencing their behavior, and determining the outcomes. Here, followers’ prior expectations and cognitive prototypes have been identified as being essential for shaping perceptions of the leader (Lord et al., 1984; Lord & Maher, 1993). The basis of followers’ perceptions is their stereotypical preconception of leadership qualities, which is itself shaped by own experiences and observations during processes of socialization. In a given leadership situation, followers observe the leaders behavior and cognitively match this behavior to their ideal representation of leadership. Thus, it is important to understand when and under what conditions followers perceive leadership, and how these perceptions affect the leadership process (Bligh et al., 2011).

We will show in the following that followers judge the leaders’ behavior as authentic, and thus authenticate them (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 408f) with the help of two different antecedents to the leader’s authenticity. Based on the definition of authentic leadership that emphasizes the consistency among the leader’s beliefs, values, convictions, and actions (Gardner et al., 2005), we focus on antecedents that help to reveal this consistency to followers. The first information that encourages followers to judge the leader’s authenticity is information about the leader’s life story (Shamir & Eilam, 2005) and the second information is the leader enactment (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010).

2.2.2 Narrated Leader Authenticity

The first antecedent that helps followers to perceive the leader’s authenticity is the leader’s life story. On the one hand, the construction of their own life story is an important element in the construction of the true self of the leaders, and therefore, the development of the leaders’ authenticity, and, on the other hand, the narrative
itself is a fundamental source of information for followers on which to base their judgment of the leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 402).

*Life storytelling* is often used interchangeably with the terms *life narrative* or *life history* (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Ligon, Hunter, & Mumford, 2008), and is a written or oral account of a life or a segment of a life as told by the individual concerned (Gergen & Gergen, 1986; McAdams, 2001; Sparrowe, 2005). Importantly, life storytelling refers to the process of sharing one’s life story with others (Miller, 1994). In the leadership context, life storytelling indicates the telling of past life events by the leaders to their followers that are relevant to the leaders themselves (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Thereby, life stories could imply telling any personal or job related stories, they do not have to be leadership-related.

In general, a story can be defined as “*an oral or written performance involving two or more people interpreting past or anticipated experience*” (Boje, 1995, p. 1000). For centuries, storytelling has been an integral part of human experience, dealing with themes like identity, group membership, past and future incidents, as well as good and evil (Edwards & Sienkewicz, 1991). Storytelling is also used strategically to convey traditions and certain values, or it helps to picture events, incidents, and successes or failures (Boal & Schultz, 2007, p. 419). Storytelling in organizations is not only used as a tool for knowledge management (Kleiner & Roth, 1998) or communication (Forster et al., 1999, p. 12), it is also applied as an important instrument for influencing others (Simmons, 2006). In the context of leadership, one very important narrative has been identified as a person's own life story (Denning, 2011, pp. 77ff; Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005). Thereby, life storytelling fulfills two purposes: First, leaders construct their true self by telling their life story; and second, followers judge the leader’s authenticity through listening to the life story.
In constructing their authentic self, leaders choose their own experiences for designing their life story. Thus, a life story is based on biographical facts, but goes beyond them (McAdams, 1985). Personal goals and other interests shape the coding and recollecting of self-defining memories that will have a privileged status in the life story (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000). As a result, life narratives are not an enumeration of facts, but a system for sense making to overcome the chaos of perceptions and real experiences in life (Josselson & Lieblich, 1993). Furthermore, the construction of one's life story displays an attempt to assemble coherent conjunctions between the individual experiences (Gergen & Gergen, 1986). Consequently, the own life story serves as an explanatory social construction to define one's personal identity and thus the self-concept: “autobiographical stories reflect who we are, and they also reflect the world in which we live” (McAdams, 2001, p. 117). In addition, life stories serve as valuable information for followers. Telling the life story is an instrument for achieving legitimacy from followers. In this way, the leader is able to execute a highly effective leadership process (Denning, 2011; George & Sims, 2007; Ligon et al., 2008).

In this regard, Shamir and Eilam (2005) explained in detail why life stories are important for followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Therefore, the authors (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 408) proposed different reasons: First, the life story itself should provide coherence and believability that followers then ascribe to the leader personality. Second, a life story may be regarded as more legitimate and convincing than leaders directly declaring their traits, values, and convictions. Cha and Edmondson (2006) already stated that explicit statements about their values by leaders could be problematic, because followers may interpret the behavior negatively, as they use an expanded set of values for comparison and judgment. Fields (2007, p. 200) draws the conclusion that in absence of explicit statements followers focus on the leader’s actions and infer values from these actions, in this case, from the life story. Third, as followers’ authentication of the
leader is a continuous process, followers compare the content of the life story with other information about the leader that they receive from sources like colleagues, journalists or associates. In addition, followers constantly compare the life story with the leader’s actions, and in this way monitor the consistency among the leader’s beliefs, values, convictions, and actions. And this, most importantly, makes it easier for the followers to judge the authentic nature of their leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 409).

Here it becomes apparent that manipulating the life story to fabricate leader authenticity is not easy in the long run, as followers constantly compare the consistency among the leaders’ life stories and their actions, values and beliefs, and with other information they receive about the leaders. And as soon as the leaders’ actions are no longer in line with the fabricated life story, followers will not judge the leaders as authentic (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 409).

In conclusion, the information followers get from the narrated life story of the leader may act as one very important mechanism for making the self-referent aspects of a leader’s authenticity recognizable to the followers. Only if these authenticity aspects are recognized are they able to make a difference in the degree of the leader’s influence (Fields, 2007, pp. 195f).

**Proposition 1a:** Leaders’ life stories will enhance followers’ authenticity perceptions of their leaders.

In addition, the content of the life story is especially important for (1) strengthening the leader’s self-awareness (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 347), and (2) provoking emotions and sympathy on the part of the listeners (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982; Kermode, 2000). The important content elements in the leader’s life story are the so called “authenticity markers” (Pittinsky & Tyson, 2005). Shamir and Eilam (2005, p. 408) have already identified them to be
especially important for followers’ authentication of the leader. Following McAdams (2001) and Avolio and Luthans (2006), we assume that these authenticity markers may be “trigger events”. Trigger events are morally intense events that are unexpected and relevant to the individual, whereby the emotional moral intensity relates to an event that is likely to affect individuals positively or negatively (May et al., 2003, p. 251).

In regard of the leader’s self-awareness, trigger events help to further develop their own identity and to stimulate leaders’ positive growth (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 347). In doing this they can operate negatively through certain crises, such as the loss of a family member or financial problems, or they can have a positive influence, such as an important promotion at work, the accomplishment of a particularly difficult task or meeting new inspiring colleagues (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 348). Leadership research has discovered that negative trigger events in particular can cause self-awareness on the part of the leader (Avolio & Luthans, 2006, Luthans & Avolio, 2003). In detail, negative trigger events can initiate a distinctive reflection about past failures that help persons to become more familiar with their own values and beliefs (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247). They affect the leader’s self-awareness, drive, values, and emotions, and contribute to the development of leader’s identity (Turner & Mavin, 2008).

Regarding the influence on followers, we suggest that the content may influence the life story’s power to have an impact on followers’ judgments about the leader (Ligon et al., 2008, p. 315). In particular, trigger events in the leader’s life that mark a turning point or break in the previously normal pattern provoke more emotions and sympathy from listeners and readers (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247). By sharing sensitive personal information through telling about negative trigger events, leaders show transparency, vulnerability and weakness (Bunker, 1997). This enhanced vulnerability leads to greater trust in the leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 410f). Following these thoughts, we assume that primarily the
sharing of negative intense moments in one’s life, such as telling about a failure at work, or about the death of a family member, exposes more vulnerability than telling about an extremely positive event. This transparent behavior may cause followers to enhance their trust in the leaders as well as their identification with them (Lapidot, Kark, & Shamir, 2007), and ultimately reinforce the authentication of the leaders.

Pillemer (2000) and McAdams (2001) identified six different types of life events that may be used for constructing a person's life story: originating events, anchoring events, analogous events, reminiscence bump, contamination sequences, and turning points. Of course, some events contain more lessons learned, integrative themes, and personal meaning than others (McAdams, 1985). The turning point seems to be the strongest and generally known trigger event, as most researchers describe turning points by giving examples about trigger events in general (Ligon et al., 2008; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Turner & Mavin, 2008). Turning points delineate precise episodes that are perceived as abruptly redirecting a life plan. A frequently cited example of such a trigger event is Gandhi’s journey to South Africa, where he experienced racial discrimination on his own for the first time in his life. This activated not only his wish to liberate his home country India from British rule, but also triggered his will to do this peacefully (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247). Thus, we understand turning points as going beyond the incident of a mere trigger event, because they convey a strong sense of causality, as “the initial episode is tied mentally to life choices that followed” (Pillemer, 2001, p. 127).

As a discussion of all possible trigger events would exceed the scope of this paper, we concentrate on the presumed most effective one, namely negative turning points. We thereby understand a negative incident that (a) abruptly triggered a redirection and turnaround of the life plan, which (b) then ultimately led to something positive. We expect the strongest reaction of followers to these
stories, because these turning points represent sensitive personal information that exposes the greatest vulnerability and weakness of the leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 410f). Therefore, they will be extremely memorable and plausible to most of the listeners. In this way, followers are “triggered” by the leader’s life story content to perceive and construct the self-referent authentic identity of that leader.

**Proposition 1b**: The telling of negative turning points in the leaders’ life stories will elicit higher levels of perceived leader authenticity.

### 2.2.3 Enacted Leader Authenticity

The second antecedent that helps followers to frame the authentic personality of the leader is the leader enactment. As we have learned, followers authenticate leaders by judging their authenticity, that means by perceiving high levels of consistency among the leader’s values, beliefs and actions. Besides the content of the information provided by the leader to facilitate the authentication process, the way this information is “enacted” is another very important factor for followers’ perceptions (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). Based on the work of Constantin Stanislavski (1863-1938), actor, director, and reformer of theater theory, the concept of leader enactment seeks ways in which a leader performance may be experienced as authentic by followers (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010).

Authenticity constructions may vary systematically with the information that followers receive while observing the leader’s behavior (Hansen et al., 2007, p. 551), because followers base their assessment of the leader’s authenticity mainly on direct observation and interactions with the leader (Fields, 2007, p. 200). As a result of these thoughts, followers’ judgment of the leader’s authenticity relies to some extent on the behavior of the leaders in a given situation, which means on their actual enactment.
These thoughts follow the ideas of the dramaturgical perspective (Mangham & Overington, 1987), which has been promoted in organizational research since the last quarter of the 20th century. The dramaturgical approach (Burke, 1969; Combs & Mansfield, 1976) involves an image of organizational life as a creative and artistic affair, in which "organizational members enact roles, interpret and improvise 'scripts', work in scenes, act toward plots, and use dramaturgical rhetorical styles, to address, impress, influence, identify, or mystify an audience" (Sinha, 2010, pp. 187f). Therefore, leadership is also not only a cognitive but also a "bodily practice", whose accomplishment is often "highly dramatic and full-bodied" (Sinclair, 2005, p. 387). The inclusion of the leader's body and its embodiment and aesthetic processes, as well as its effects on followers, are important for fully understanding followers' perceptions and the organizational performance. Consequently, the aesthetic and expressed aspects of leading move into the focus of interest, because followers' judgments about leadership qualities are often implicit and subjective criteria (Ladkin, 2008). Followers legitimate leaders with social influence capabilities, whereby these judgments involve sense making processes that rely at least partially on "subjective tacit knowledge and aesthetic sensibilities" (Hansen et al., 2007, p. 551).

Basic theater theory builds on these thoughts and promotes the idea that to be perceived as authentic, actors have to somatically express the emotions and feelings they really feel (Moore, 1984; Stanislavski, 1996). Projecting these thoughts to our understanding of perceived leader authenticity, followers judge the leader as authentic based on the enactment style of the leader. Enactment is characterized through the "physical action" of the leader, the root of Stanislavski's (1996) theater theory. The physical action is the understanding that there is in fact a psychophysical interplay between the body and the soul, between the inside and the outside. Human psychological life - moods, desires, feelings, intentions, ambitions - is thereby expressed through simple physical actions (Moore, 1984, p. 12). Moore (1984) describes the importance of physical actions by saying that
“every nuance of emotion is connected with a particular physical action. Therefore that action must be carefully selected on the basis of the play’s circumstances. It must be the indispensable physical action connected with the emotion which the actor must bring out” (p. 19).

Accordingly, Stanislavski’s ideas are based on a natural relationship between bodily behaviors and psychic dispositions. In detail, he developed methods on how the actors can transmit genuineness on stage instead of merely evoking an emotion from the audience. Therefore, actors should activate an emotional process inside themselves before they can enact that emotion. Even the most intensive experience only makes sense if the actors are able to enact it through their bodies. This natural expression is a kind of genuineness for Stanislavski, and today might also be known under the keyword of “authenticity” (Roselt, 2009, p. 231). Stanislavski’s ideas were subsequently advanced by Lee Strasberg (1901-1982), an American actor, director and acting teacher, who introduced the term of “method acting” to the theatrical world. Thus, method acting refers to a set of techniques by which the actors try to create in themselves the real thoughts and emotions of the character and thereby develop lifelike performances.

Ladkin and Taylor (2010, pp. 71f) explored this physical action for the context of authentic leadership. They concluded that although authentic leadership may be rooted in the notion of a true self, it is through the embodiment of that true self that leaders are perceived as authentic or not. As a consequence, in assessing a leader’s level of authenticity, followers will first of all scrutinize the leader’s bodily signals (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 66). Thus, followers are able to draw conclusions about the leader’s motives, hidden agendas, and purposes based on the difficult to quantify aspects of a leader’s enactment that are gathered at a preverbal level of apprehension (Ladkin, 2008, p. 38).

As a result, in order to be perceived as authentic, leaders should also demonstrate consistency between their values and actions by displaying a strong enactment.
Strong enactment thereby refers to the physical action claimed by Stanislavski, which means displaying a consistency between the inside and the outside. Followers may perceive this if the leaders, for example, show mimic and gestures that fit their statements, display facial expressions that match their emotions, or present themselves with confidence and in awareness of their body movements. Weak enactment refers to leaders unable to align their bodily behaviors and inner thoughts.

Recognizing leaders as “social actors” (Goffman, 1959), we are convinced that we can transfer Stanislavski’s knowledge from the theater world into an organizational context.

**Proposition 2**: Strong as opposed to weak enactment will enhance followers’ authenticity perceptions of their leaders.

When looking at a leader’s behavior, interdependencies and overlays may be seen between the leaders telling their life story and the enactment of that particular speech. We have learned that leaders perceived as authentic have to display consistency between their words and actions. Thus, followers may continuously compare the content of the leader’s life story to the leader’s enactment (Warstat, 2010). In that way they are able to judge the leader’s authenticity (Gardner et al., 2005). Charismatic leadership research discovered a relationship between the content of a message and its delivery (Holladay & Coombs, 1994). Awamleh and Gardner (1999) concluded that the highest levels of perceived leader charisma and effectiveness were found for the combination of strong delivery with visionary speech content. Applying these thoughts to perceived leader authenticity, we expect the strongest reactions of followers to a combination of both antecedents.
**Proposition 3**: Leaders’ strong enactment and their telling of life stories, including negative turning points, will elicit higher levels of perceived leader authenticity than any other combination of enactment and life storytelling.

Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between both assumed antecedents and followers' perceptions of the leader’s authenticity.

### 2.2.4 Organizational Outcomes

According to our theoretical model, followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity finally lead to enhanced organizational outcomes (see Figure 2.1). Currently, there are a myriad of outcomes that have been consistently connected theoretically to authenticity (Erickson, 1995b; Ilies et al., 2005; Michie & Gooty, 2005). In addition, perceived authenticity has already been empirically analyzed to positively affect organizational outcomes. Many different authors have investigated these outcomes in recent years, whereby the most important influence of authentic leadership is found to be on follower satisfaction (Jensen & Luthans, 2006a), follower performance (Avey, Avolio, & Luthans, 2011), organization performance, organizational citizenship (Walumbwa et al., 2008), trust (Norman et al., 2010) and market share growth (Jensen, 2006). As a result, we picked three outcome variables for our model that seemed to have dominated leadership research recently. In addition, we differentiated between subjective organizational outcomes that lie in the eye of the followers, such as trust and emotions, and objective organizational outcomes that represent a tougher measure of the effects of ascribed authenticity, such as follower performance.

Concerning the subjective organizational outcomes, followers’ trust in the leader has gained considerable research attention in the last decade (Shamir & Lapidot,
Telling and Enacting the "True Self": Antecedents to Followers’ Perceptions of the Leader’s Authenticity

2003). Rousseau and her colleagues (1998) defined trust as the “psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (p. 395). In the last few years, a very broad and systematic research effort on the perception of the leader’s character and behavior and the way in which these may influence follower’s trust has been carried out by Mayer and his colleagues (Mayer & Davis, 1999; Mayer & Gavin, 2005). According to Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995), the best way to understand why a certain person will have greater or lesser trust is to consider the attributes of the trustee, here the leader. Accordingly, the authors identified three characteristics of a trustee that are crucial for the development of trust: competence, benevolence, and integrity. The trustors, here the followers, make an effort to draw inferences about the trustee’s characteristics and these inferences have consequences for the work attitudes and behaviors (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). In regard to authentic leadership, Avolio et al. (2004, p. 810) showed that authentic leaders “build benevolence and integrity with their followers by encouraging totally open communication, engaging their followers, sharing critical information, and sharing their perceptions and feelings about the people with whom they work”.

Following Norman et al. (2010, p. 351) authentic leaders show more competence than inauthentic leaders, as they display higher levels of positivity. The components of positivity (hope, efficacy, optimism, and resiliency) have been proved to account for higher levels of performance (Rousseau et al., 1998). And thus, authentic leaders are perceived as being more competent and in turn more trustworthy. In addition, Avolio et al. (2004, p. 810) showed that authentic leaders promote followers’ levels of personal and social identification. In that way, a “realistic social relationship” may arise. Following the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) we have learned that in that kind of relationship gestures of goodwill are reciprocated. So, in an authentic relationship where the reputation of the leader is favorable, positive expectations of followers are enhanced and these foster their
levels of trust and willingness to cooperate with the leader. In other words, followers develop trust in the leader by observing the leader displaying behaviors that foster his or her true self, that is showing integrity, competence, commitment to core ethical values, transparent decision-making and self-awareness (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 347).

The evoked emotions shown by followers have a prominent position in leadership literature (Ashkanasy, 2004). Emotions are a conscious or unconscious multi-component response tendency that evolve and manifest over relatively short periods of time (Fredrickson, 2001). According to Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), “affective events” account for the difficulties and uplifts that employees experience at work. Thus, leaders are seen to be a major source of these difficulties and uplifts (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2003). The emotional reactions that employees experience as a result of the hassles and uplifts determine their direct behaviors as well as their attitudes. With respect to authentic leadership, followers’ emotions have recently been a highly discussed topic (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2005; Michie & Gooty, 2005). As we have learned, authentic leaders feel and display positive psychological states, such as confidence, hopefulness and optimism, and thus, they are likely to promote positive follower emotions (Ilies et al., 2005). As leader’s and followers’ emotions converge through emotional contagion (Barsade, 2002), the positive affective states of authentic leaders are transferred to their followers and these will experience more positive affective states compared to followers of less authentic leaders (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 384). These positive emotions tend to be “high in arousal”, which means that they triggers intense emotional reaction and motivate a drive to act (Hmiesleski, Cole, & Baron, 2011, p. 6; Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007; for more details on the level of arousal please see research on the Affect Circumplex Model; e.g. Damen, van Knippenberg, & van Knippenberg, 2008; Russell, 1980). In addition, authentic leaders try to offset their negative emotional experiences with positive ones (Michie & Gooty, 2005, p. 447) and hence, they
are associated with arousing positive follower emotions and avoiding negative emotions (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2005, p. 286).

In addition, our model enriches the existing discussion by also presenting the influence of perceived leader authenticity on objective organizational outcomes, in detail on follower performance. We outlined before that an authentic leader shows strong consistency between his or her actions, beliefs and values. In this regard, Sosik (2005) noticed that followers responded to higher levels of perceived agreement between the leader’s behaviors and motives with extra effort and higher levels of organizational citizenship behavior. This extra effort is very similar to the follower engagement term used by Gardner et al. (2005, p. 365) and it “refers to individual’s involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harter, 2002, p. 269). Engagement contributes to higher levels of follower performance (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 366). Harter (2002) discovered a positive relation of engagement with critical business performance outcomes, including productivity, profit and employee turnover. Authentic leaders foster followers’ engagement by helping them to discover their true talents and showing them how to use those talents in order to achieve consistency between their self-goals and work roles (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 366). Further, authentic leaders are known to be exemplary role models (Bandura, 1977) in terms of moral attitudes, emotions, values, and behavior, and are found to be more successful in terms of sustaining higher levels of follower performance (Zhu et al., 2011, p. 807). Authentic leaders arouse more positivity in followers than less authentic leaders (Ilies et al., 2005), and, in this context, followers who are generally more positive, may be better performers than less positive followers (Avey et al., 2011, p. 284).

Gardner and his colleagues (2005, pp. 364ff) have already stated that there are interdependencies and overlaps between the outcome effects, for example, great trust in the leader may result in increased follower performance. Nevertheless, we assume that all of these three outcomes are very important dimensions in
measuring the effects of perceived leader authenticity. Figure 2.1 demonstrates these relationships.

**Proposition 4**: Perceived leader authenticity is positively related to subjective (trust, emotions) and objective organizational outcomes (performance).

### 2.3 Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper we have argued for the consideration of the enacted life stories approach in authentic leadership research. Authentic leadership has become an important field of research, and has already been theoretically analyzed and refined systematically (Fields, 2007; Gardner et al., 2005). Empirical validation of the construct, and proof of its consequences, are also available (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2010), but up to now there have been very few approaches for classifying the antecedents to followers’ perception of a leader’s authenticity. By building on the framework provided by Gardner and colleagues (2005), we introduced an enacted life stories approach that highlights possible antecedents to a leader’s authenticity. In combining existing research on authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003) with the literature on life storytelling (McAdams, 2001; Shamir & Eilam, 2005) and enactment (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Stanislavski, 1996), we formulated our Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity (see Figure 2.1). Thereby, we generated a promising theoretical contribution for understanding judgments of authenticity to leaders. Thus, our research is the first to concentrate on followers’ perceptions of a leader’s authenticity that follow life storytelling realizations and leader enactment.
2.3.1 Future Research Agenda

The model presented here suggests a number of areas for future research on perceived leader authenticity in organizations. It opens up a myriad of opportunities for empirical research, as well as for investigating and developing its theoretical claims.

Firstly, the content of the leader’s life storytelling and its impact has to be deepened theoretically and empirically. Other researchers have begun to investigate and label different story content (McAdams, 2001; Pillemer, 2000), and first attempts have also been made to qualitatively analyze the impact of the story’s content on the leader’s inner self (Shamir et al., 2005; Turner & Mavin, 2008). But until now there have been no real efforts to analyze the content’s differing influence on perceived leader authenticity. For example, the subjective relevance of the life story to followers is a very interesting point that should be considered more closely in subsequent research. In line with charismatic leadership research (Holladay & Coombs, 1994), which has identified a visionary speech as being most influential, it would be interesting to analyze if a leader’s life story that is related to goal achievement or one that is related to particular projects would yield higher perceptions of authenticity. Besides our effort to identify a negative turning point as the most influential trigger event in a leader’s life story, the importance of other trigger events needs further research (for example, the influence of originating events). Also, it might be interesting to examine if there is an optimal amount of storytelling for affecting followers’ authenticity perceptions, as some information may just be overloaded (Lord & Maher, 1993, p. 68).

Secondly, leader enactment itself leaves room for various research possibilities. In particular, the operationalization of strong and weak enactment, as suggested in the second proposition, has to be empirically pretested. As there are no empirical studies that differentiate exactly between these enactment styles, the construct
validity of our assumptions would have to be validated before the enactment style could be used for empirically analyzing its impact on perceived leader authenticity.

Thirdly, the relationship between both independent variables - life storytelling and leader enactment - has to be explored further. Our approach presents both variables as independently or jointly influencing authenticity ascriptions. It may also be possible that leader enactment moderates the influence ability of life storytelling, or that life storytelling offsets the effect of leader enactment. Following this thought, the relative influence both antecedents for followers’ perceptions has to be evaluated further. Which of these antecedents has more impact on perceiving the leader as authentic? Charismatic leadership research has already tried to examine the relative impact of speech delivery and speech content (e.g. Holladay & Coombs, 1994), and found that delivery offsets the effect of speech content and organizational performance (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999). In the case of authentic leadership, further research should examine if this is true for leader enactment as well.

Fourthly, the possible “dark side” of authentic leadership that could result from manipulating life storytelling and leader enactment should be explored further. Charismatic and transformational leadership research showed that there is a dark side of leadership that leaves room for manipulation and abuse (Howell & Shamir, 2005, p. 108). The concept of leadership perceptions through observing the leader’s behavior leaves room for possibilities of impression management (Gardner & Martinko, 1988). This “pseudo-authentic” leadership behavior, following the “pseudo-transformational” leadership understanding of Bass and Steidlmeier (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), lacks a moral foundation and legitimate values. We learned from social psychological research that first impressions are very important for perceptions, as individuals form impressions of the people they see based on mere glimpses of them (Rule et al., 2011). Manipulating a first
impression of the followers (Olivola & Todorov, 2010) by fabricating a specific life story, or by “acting authentic”, cannot be neglected completely in our approach. However, by understanding the authentication of a leader by followers as a continuous process, manipulating the true self through storytelling and enactment might be difficult in the long run (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 409). Up to now, there have not been any empirical studies to clarify these aspects.

In this regard, it would be well to observe the borderline between perceived leader authenticity and impression management (Bolino & Turnley, 2003; Gardner & Martinko, 1988). Authenticity is exactly the opposite of impression management, but, as Ladkin and Taylor (2010) have already discovered, “a leadership performance that is perceived as authentic is not accomplished through sheer naivety” (p. 67). But can we talk of “authenticity” if a leader tries to act the true self? There must a fine line between acting oneself and merely impressing listeners with a certain displayed image. Answers may be found in theater theory. Here, in particular, drama theories have dealt with the crucial questions whether actors should act as “real” persons, or just follow role instructions to the letter on stage (Roselt, 2009, p. 15). Warstat (2010) recently showed that an enactment is not contradictory to being authentic, if the enactment is perceived as coherent and not artificial or forced. By transferring these problems to organizational storytelling, differences in “authentic” enactment will have to be further evaluated.

Fifthly, it could be very valuable to establish differential effects based on individual follower differences (Woolley, Caza, & Levy, 2011). As followers differ with regard to their ideal leadership prototypes (Lord et al., 1984), inter-individual differences in followers’ preferences could also influence their authenticity ascriptions. For example, the extent to which followers personally identify with the leader (Avey et al., 2011, p. 292) or their addiction to romanticize leadership (Schyns et al., 2007) could make them more susceptible to
their leaders’ expressing authentic behaviors. In addition, followers may be influenced differently by differing story content or by personal preferences regarding a leader’s expressions. Different personality traits (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002) may be helpful to understand why certain followers are more inclined to perceive authenticity than others. In addition, researchers have yet to discover how implicit leadership theories exactly influence followers’ authenticity ascriptions. A variety of researchers investigated how followers’ traits, emotions, and attitudes influence their perceptions of leaders and their preferences for certain leader types (Bligh & Schyns, 2007; Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003), but as yet there is no research on authentic leadership.

Future work should definitely include an empirical test of the propositions. Researchers have developed first approaches for empirically analyzing the relationship between life storytelling and leadership (Ligon et al., 2008; Shamir et al., 2005; Turner & Mavin, 2008). As yet, there is no research on examining life storytelling and leader enactment as antecedents to perceived leader authenticity, not to mention possible indirect effects on outcome variables. An experiment could help here, as it is known to be the failsafe way to generate causal evidence (Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart, & Lalive, 2010, p. 1086). An experimental approach regarding authentic leadership was recently developed by Norman, Avolio and Luthans (2010), who made use of an online study. In extension to their written manipulations, and by focusing on the enactment-component of our propositions, a video experiment could be the right way to manipulate strong and weak leader enactment. The constructs mentioned could be measured with already existing instruments (e.g. Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) for perceived leader authenticity (Walumbwa et al., 2008)).
2.3.2 Practical Implications

We assume that our approach will contribute practically to the use of storytelling and enactment in organizations and its implications for organizational relationships. Therefore we are hopeful that we could fulfill a requirement recently articulated by Corley and Gioia (2011), who tried to reason the importance of practice-oriented utility for developing useful theoretical contributions.

In line with charismatic leadership researchers who share the opinion that charisma is, to some extent, trainable (Conger & Kanungo, 1988), we think that leader authenticity could be taught in some way. The enacted life stories approach could be a useful step towards a practical application of advancing authenticity in further education. As other authors have suggested (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Turner & Mavin, 2008), it may be possible to implement a guided process to reflect about their lives for leaders in leadership development programs, or leaders could be motivated to write diaries or their autobiographies. By outlining the importance of different trigger events, it may also be possible that special training will help leaders to identify important moments in their lives and to write about them. We also suggest that leader enactment itself has various implications for leadership development. There is now a growing industry that uses a dramaturgical approach for leadership development (Halpern & Lubar, 2003), but most of this lacks in general a well-developed theoretical basis (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 72). Our work could be a useful step towards developing a theoretical understanding that could be used to operationalize strong leader enactment, and in this way help to construct theatrical leadership development programs.
2.3.3 Conclusion

Our pioneering research will constitute a new theoretical input to the scientific discussion of authentic leadership as a positive leadership construct. By emphasizing the, as yet, overlooked authenticity perceptions by followers, our theory brings into focus specific antecedents for being accepted or refused as an authentic leader. It is our hope that our theory-based propositions will provide guidance for further empirical investigations into the nature of authentic relationships.
3 DRAMA AND AUTHENTICITY: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON LEADER ENACTMENT AND PERCEIVED LEADER AUTHENTICITY

This study investigates how leader enactment influences followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Based on findings from drama theory, we explain why strong versus weak enactment may be important. Followers’ generalized beliefs about leadership (Romance of Leadership, RoL) and followers’ sympathy towards the leader served as covariates. Results of our experimental study indicated that strong enactment has a significant positive effect on perceived leader authenticity. This relationship holds, even while controlling for RoL and the followers’ sympathy towards the leader. Perceived leader authenticity then significantly affects both followers’ trust in the leader and perceived leader effectiveness. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

2 An article based on this chapter is currently under review. Coauthor is Jürgen Weibler.
3.1 Introduction

In recent years, leadership research has tended towards examining integrity, moral standards, honesty, and sincerity (Brown et al., 2005; Greenleaf, 2002). Authentic leadership in particular has been widely discussed, serving as a root construct underlying all positive forms of leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 316; Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). We have learned from leadership research that leaders who are perceived as being true to themselves, and who show consistency among their beliefs, words, and actions, could be described as “authentic” leaders (Avolio et al., 2004, pp. 802f, Gardner et al., 2005). We have also learned that authentic leaders have a positive impact on various organizational outcomes (Jensen & Luthans, 2006a; Walumbwa et al., 2008). But we have not learned much yet about the antecedents of being perceived as an authentic leader (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2011). This is not a trivial consideration, because interior states are not directly evident to observers (Pittinsky & Tyson, 2005). Knowing that authenticity has to be ascribed by followers before becoming influential (Fields, 2007), we have to understand better how leaders are able to form followers’ perceptions in this regard. In the following, we will show that the leader's enactment style in particular influences followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity.

Follower-centered perspectives on leadership (Bligh & Schyns, 2007; Shamir, Pillai, & Bligh, 2007; de Vries & Van Gelder, 2005) clarified that leadership is a two-sided engagement between leaders and followers, which is defined as “the process of being perceived by others as a leader” (Lord & Maher, 1993, p. 11). In this regard, Meindl’s social constructionist approach (1995) can be seen as a framework for analyzing the inputs, mechanisms, and outcomes of follower constructions of leadership. The social construction of leadership is dependent upon the subjective experiences of followers, as well as on the context in which they are embedded. Followers are actually heavily and actively responsible for
creating the leadership relationship by giving power to the leaders, influencing their behavior, and determining the outcomes (Howell & Shamir, 2005). It is therefore important to understand when followers perceive leadership, and under what conditions, and how these perceptions affect the leadership process (Bligh et al., 2011).

Followers’ perceptions of leadership are influenced to a great extent by observations of the leader’s behavior (Fields, 2007, p. 200; Hansen et al., 2007, p. 551). Ladkin and Taylor (2010) recently highlighted the importance of bodily behaviors to perceptions of leader authenticity. Therefore, they build on basic theatre theory (Stanislavski, 1996). They argued that the leader’s enactment may enhance followers’ ascriptions of authenticity. “Enactment” refers to the setting and public display of a creation or a case. In a narrower sense, this pertains to the performing arts, whereby, in a wider sense, every exposure or embodiment can be called an enactment (Schicha & Ontrup, 1999, p. 7; Willems, 2009, p. 80). Thus, leader enactment seeks ways in which a leader’s “performance” may be experienced as authentic by followers. Therefore, the somatic sense of the “true self” of the leader contributes to the felt sense of authenticity (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 64). Followers perceive this consistency, which then affects their perception of the leader’s authenticity.

In addition to the leader enactment, followers’ cognitive prototypes and attributes have been identified as accounting for the variance in their leadership perceptions (Lord et al., 1984; Lord & Maher, 1993). Here, followers’ generalized beliefs about leadership in particular - referred to as the “Romance of Leadership” (RoL; Meindl, 1990) - were found to bias leadership perceptions (Bligh et al., 2011). For example, RoL was investigated on perceptions of charisma (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999, p. 353), but up to now there is no research on how perceptions of the leader’s authenticity are influenced by RoL. In addition to these generalized beliefs, followers’ perceptions of leadership may be influenced by first
impressions (Rule et al., 2011). In this case, followers’ sympathy towards the leader (Olivola & Todorov, 2010) may in particular bias perceptions of the leader’s authenticity (Harvey et al., 2006, p. 3).

Despite this great interest in followers’ perceptions and the prerequisites for these perceptions, up to now there has been almost no research on perceptions of the leader’s authenticity (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1129). In addition, most of the studies on authentic leadership concentrate on examining the consequences of perceived leader authenticity (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2008), without focusing on the antecedents of authentic leadership. As a result, our paper is among the first to concentrate on individual factors that influence followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Accordingly, the present study proceeded with four key objectives in mind: (1) to introduce leader enactment as an antecedent to followers’ perception of the leader’s authenticity, (2) to investigate the effects of leader enactment on perceived leader authenticity, (3) to examine the effects of generalized beliefs about leadership (i.e. RoL), and of sympathy towards the leader on perceptions of leadership, and (4) to investigate the effects of perceived leader authenticity on perceptions of trust and effectiveness of the leader.

3.2 Theory and Hypotheses

3.2.1 Perceived Leader Authenticity

In the recent past, authentic leadership has grown to be an important field in leadership research (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2011; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Based on positive psychology (Snyder & Lopez, 2002), authenticity has been defined as accepting all personal experiences, such as thoughts, emotions, needs or preferences (Harter, 2002, p. 382). Moreover,
authenticity implies acting in accordance with the true self. Authentic leaders are true to themselves by showing an ongoing consistency among their beliefs, values, convictions, and actions. In this regard, Gardner and colleagues (2005) stated that “followers authenticate the leader when they see consistency between who they are and what they do” (p. 348). Previously, research mainly focused on the part of self-perceptions of the leader, but did not intend to explain and operationalize the processes of follower perceptions that lead to ascribed authenticity. According to a self-constructionist view of leadership (Meindl, 1995), authenticity ascriptions presuppose corresponding perceptions of followers. As a result, in order to be an authentic leader, it is not sufficient that leaders are true to themselves, but that they are also judged to be true to themselves by followers. Thus, to be influential, authenticity has to be perceived by followers (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Fields, 2007, p. 198). In line with the prevalent theory, followers’ authenticity perceptions then result in a sustainable and veritable performance (Jensen & Luthans, 2006a; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

As a result, the question arises: “How do followers decide about the authenticity of the leader?” (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 408). Following the proposed definition, authentic leaders show high consistency among their beliefs, values, convictions, and actions (Gardner et al., 2005). Here, the information that followers receive about the true self of their leader is of principal importance. Following drama theory (Goffman, 1959), and researchers like Hansen, Ropo, and Sauer (2007), and Ladkin and Taylor (2010), we assume that the enactment style of the leaders transport a rich mine of information about the inner state of the respective person, and therefore accounts partially for the amount of authenticity that is ascribed to them.
3.2.2 Leader Enactment

Authenticity constructions may vary systematically with the information that followers receive while observing the leader’s behavior (Hansen et al., 2007, p. 551), because followers base their assessment of the leader’s authenticity mainly on direct observation and interactions with the leader (Fields, 2007, p. 200). As a result of these thoughts, followers’ judgment of the leader’s authenticity relies to some extent on the enactment of the leader in a given situation. Enactment is thereby characterized through the leader’s “physical action” (Stanislavski, 1996).

These considerations follow the dramaturgical perspective (Goffman, 1959). The idea that “all the world’s a stage” (Shakespeare, As You Like It, Act II, Scene 7) has been a frequent speculation of thinkers and dramatists. Thus, the notion that human life is fundamentally dramatic is central to western philosophy and literature (Brissett & Edgley, 2005). Throughout the second half of the 20th century there were several approaches that influenced and promoted the use of theatre metaphors in the social sciences (Burke, 1969; Combs & Mansfield, 1976). The dramaturgical perspective draws heavily on the work of Erving Goffman (1959), who understands reality as socially constructed. For our purpose of understanding the enactment of a leader’s authenticity, the approach of Constantin Sergeyevich Stanislavski (1863-1938), actor, director, and reformer of theater theory is of main interest. He builds on the idea that actors who are perceived as acting authentically have to somatically express the emotions and feelings they really feel (Stanislavski, 1996). The root of his concept, the physical action, is the understanding that there is a psychophysical interplay between the body and the soul, between the inside and the outside. In this regard, moods, desires, feelings, intentions, and ambitions are expressed through simple physical actions (Moore, 1984, p. 12).
In the context of authentic leadership, Ladkin and Taylor (2010) recently concluded that although authentic leadership may be rooted in the notion of a true self, it is through the embodiment of that true self that leaders are perceived as authentic or not. Thus, in assessing a leader’s level of authenticity, followers will first of all scrutinize the leader’s bodily signals (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 66).

In order to simplify the understanding of enactment, we assume that a leader’s enactment style has a bipolar specification. Following charismatic leadership research on the delivery of a message (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Holladay & Coombs, 1993), we expect the enactment to be varied on two levels: strong versus weak. Strong enactment thereby refers to the physical action claimed by Stanislavski, which means displaying consistency between the inside and the outside. Perceiving this consistency, followers will be willing to ascribe higher levels of authenticity to the leader. Weak enactment lacks the ability to express the feelings and emotions the leader really feels on a somatic level. Accordingly, we predict that leaders exhibiting a “strong” style of enactment, characterized by gestures, mimic and facial expressions that are in line with the leader’s statements and emotions, will elicit higher levels of perceived leader authenticity than those portraying a “weak” style of enactment.

**Hypothesis 1**: Strong as opposed to weak enactment will enhance followers’ authenticity perceptions of their leaders.

### 3.2.3 Romance of Leadership and Sympathy towards the Leader

In addition to the leader enactment, inter-individual follower differences have been identified to account for variances in their leadership perceptions (Lord & Maher, 1993). Therefore, we expect these differences to influence followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity as well.
In particular, Meindl’s “Romance of Leadership” (RoL) perspective (1990; 1985) has gained increased attention in investigating followers’ social perception of different leadership styles (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999). RoL refers to the generalized beliefs that individuals have regarding the significance of leadership for organizations. The construct can be defined as the tendency to view leadership as the most important factor for the success or failure of organizations (Meindl et al., 1985). Consequently, individuals tend to overemphasize the influence of leadership, whereas they de-emphasize the influence of other factors (Felfe & Petersen, 2007, p. 4). In fact, RoL is considered as a stable characteristic of individuals. Thus, some persons may be particularly susceptible to romanticize leadership (Schyns et al., 2007) and ascribe organizational outcomes to leadership across situations.

As a result, followers’ addiction to romanticizing leadership (Schyns et al., 2007) could make them more susceptible to their leader displaying a certain leadership style. Awamleh and Gardner (1999) investigated this assumption for perceptions of charismatic leadership, but research on authentic leadership is still limited. Meindl and Ehrlich (1988) developed the Romance of Leadership Scale (RLS) to measure followers’ dispositional tendency to romanticize leadership. Persons with high scores on this scale are more inclined than those with low scores to ascribe organizational outcomes to leaders, and thus to perceive leaders as more influential and authentic (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999).

**Hypothesis 2**: Persons scoring high as opposed to low on Romance of Leadership (RoL) will ascribe higher levels of authenticity to their leaders.

Besides these follower attributes, follower perceptions are influenced largely by first impressions of the leader (Rule et al., 2011). It has often been demonstrated that the attributes a person presents, for example, the physical appearance, play an
important role in determining our first impression of this person (Olivola & Todorov, 2010). Many experiments have already proved that the ability of person perception and impression formation is dependent upon static factors, for example, gender, age or physical appearance (Bateman & Mawby, 2004; Rule et al., 2011). In this regard, researchers examined judgments based on first impressions, and their ability to predict real-world outcomes, as well as their relation to objective, external criteria (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993). Olivola and Todorov (2010, p. 322) concluded that appearances are overrated in judgments and that they can have detrimental effects on accuracy. In this regard, the “physical attractiveness stereotype” showed that high physical attractiveness causes people to judge traits, behaviors and characteristics as more positive than they are objectively (Benassi, 1982, p. 48).

Based on these first impressions, people develop sympathy or rejection towards the observed person, which itself has huge impact on the observers’ decision-processes (Olivola & Todorov, 2010). Sympathy or rejection may be considered as perceptual biases, which result in problems of organizing one’s perception (Fischer & Wiswede, 2009, pp. 231ff). For example, one central characteristic, such as the leader's physical attractiveness, may outshine possible mistakes (“halo effect”; Thorndike, 1920). As a result, people have a tendency to value persons more positively, who they have experienced as sympathetic. Again, sympathy towards or rejection of the leader will outshine followers’ whole evaluation of that leader. Applying these thoughts to our study, we assume that higher levels of sympathy towards the leader positively influence their perceptions of the leader’s authenticity.

**Hypothesis 3:** Persons scoring high as opposed to low on sympathy towards the leader will ascribe higher levels of authenticity to that leader.
3.2.4 Organizational Outcomes

Followers’ authenticity perceptions following the leader enactment finally lead to enhanced organizational outcomes, as we assume. Based on the existing literature (e.g. Norman et al., 2010; Walumbwa et al., 2011), we chose to include the following two outcome variables in our study: trust in the leader and perceived leader effectiveness.

Trust has gained considerable research attention in the last decade (Jones & George, 1998; Shamir & Lapidot, 2003). Rousseau and colleagues (1998) defined trust as the “psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (p. 395). In recent years, very broad and systematic research has been carried out by Mayer and Gavin (2005) into the perception of the leader’s character and behavior, and the way in which these may influence follower’s trust. In understanding why a person will have greater or lesser trust, one has to consider the attributes of the trustee (the leader). Crucial for the development of trust here are three characteristics in particular: competence, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995). The inferences that the trustors (the followers) draw about the trustee’s characteristics have consequences for the trustor's work attitudes and behaviors (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). In regard to authentic leadership, Avolio et al. (2004) showed that authentic leaders “build benevolence and integrity with their followers by encouraging totally open communication, engaging their followers, sharing critical information, and sharing their perceptions and feelings about the people with whom they work” (p. 810). As authentic leaders exemplify high moral standards, integrity, and honesty, they foster positive expectations among followers that enhance their trust and willingness to cooperate with the leader (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 347).

**Hypothesis 4**: The ascription of authenticity to the leader has a positive relationship to followers’ trust in the leader.
The second organizational outcome that we assume to be enhanced through perceived authenticity is the followers’ subjective rating of the leader’s effectiveness (Meindl, 1995, p. 6). Therefore, we let participants rate the extra effort, effectiveness of the leader, and satisfaction with the leader. *Extra effort* refers to the readiness of the subordinate to invest more time and energy than expected (Harter, 2002, p. 269). The concept is very similar to the follower *engagement* term used by Gardner et al. (2005, p. 365). We have learned that authentic leaders show strong consistency among their actions, beliefs and values. It should be mentioned in this context that Sosik (2005) noticed that followers responded to higher levels of perceived agreement between the leader’s behaviors and motives with extra effort and higher levels of organizational citizenship behavior. *Effectiveness* emphasizes whether the leader is successful in reaching personal and organizational goals. Norman et al. (2010) discovered that the level of positive psychological capital that is possessed by authentic leaders (Luthans et al., 2007) is positively related to followers’ overall rating of the leader’s effectiveness. And finally, *satisfaction* deals with the emotional quality of the relationship between leader and followers. Satisfaction, or “workplace well-being” (Gardner et al., 2005, pp. 366f) is promoted through followers’ enhanced engagement. In particular, authentic leaders help followers to become self-concordant and engaged, which contributes to their satisfaction. These positive effects expand through social contagion processes and promote a strengths-based and positive climate (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 385).

**Hypothesis 5**: The ascription of authenticity to the leader has a positive relationship to perceived leader effectiveness.
3.3 Method

The following research design and methodology is employed in an attempt to adequately explore the relationship between leader enactment, perceived leader authenticity, sympathy, and RoL, as well as perceptions of trust and leader effectiveness. In leadership research, the failsafe way to generate causal evidence is the randomized experiment (Antonakis et al., 2010, p. 1086). Therefore, we implemented a true experimental unifactorial between-group design resulting in two conditions (weak enactment/strong enactment). Figure 3.1 gives an overview of the study design.

![Figure 3.1: Study Design](image)

All participants were randomly assigned to one of the two treatment conditions. Inter-individual differences between the participants were thus distributed randomly to the individual conditions.
3.3.1 Study Sample and Sampling Plan

An *a priori* power analysis was applied to estimate the desired sample size for obtaining effects. With an effect size (f) of about .30 for each condition, a type I error rate (α) of .05 and a type II error rate (β) of .20, it was estimated that a total sample size of 90 was needed to produce the desired effects. Thus, 45 participants per cell were needed.

The study was conducted in Germany. Participants were asked to participate in the proposed study via e-mail. The e-mail included a personalized hyper-link to a website where participants were presented randomly with one of the two experimental conditions as discussed below. In total, 229 participants received an e-mail invitation for the experiment; 132 clicked the hyper-link and started to answer the questions. After the responses were examined for completeness and accuracy, 105 participants remained and the analyses were conducted on these responses. The distribution per condition was 56 participants for scenario one and 49 participants for scenario two. As we can see, we in fact exceeded the anticipated 90 participants that the *a priori* power analysis indicated.

The descriptive statistics of the study participants (N = 105) are shown in Table 3.1. In the overall sample, participants were split between males (57%) and females (33%). Most were young working adults up to the age of 30 (45%), or between 31 and 40 years old (35%). Over 75% of the participants had had higher education. 63% of the participants stated that they had been in their current position for up to 3 years. 17% had been in their current job for over 10 years. 36% of the participants reported that they had never had leadership experience, whereby the ones with leadership experience reported that this experience had been for up to four years (29%).
Drama and Authenticity: An Experimental Study on Leader Enactment and Perceived Leader Authenticity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Frequency*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60 (57.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 30</td>
<td>47 (44.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 60</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>59 (56.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University entrance Diploma (German Abitur)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational University entrance Diploma (German Fachabitur)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Certificate of Secondary Education (German „mittlere Reife“)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Secondary Education (German Hauptschulabschluss)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in Position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 3 years</td>
<td>66 (62.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6 years</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 10 years</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Experience in years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>38 (36.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Some total do not add up due to missing data points

Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Participants

3.3.2 Procedure and Manipulations

To operationalize the enactment conditions, two speeches by a professional actor were videotaped in which enactment (strong/weak) was manipulated. The actor played the role of a 50-year old CEO.

Each of the two experimental groups received the same background information on a company, context, and leader that was intended to help frame a realistic organizational setting. The fictitious setting of the experiment leaned to some extent towards an existing German listed retail company. The former CEO of that
company - now chairman of the board - recently published his autobiography, but he is relatively unknown to the German public. The background information, as well as the text of the video broadcast speeches, was developed with the help of some information contained in the published autobiography. Names, places and dates were changed. The fictitious situation of the experiment was the delivery of a message from the CEO to his executives and managers, in which he informs them about the changing demands of leadership nowadays and their implications. We chose a situation of change, as leadership is known to be especially important in conditions of transition (Bass & Bass, 2008). The content of the speech remains identical in both experimental conditions.

The participants were then randomly assigned to the two experimental conditions. Enactment was thereby manipulated by creating two contrasting enactment styles: strong and weak. In order to operationalize this enactment style, we consulted a theatre professional, who has studied and implemented Stanislavski’s method on stage successfully. He trained the actor during a few sessions before the actual shooting of the experiment and was present during the whole shooting, whereby he instructed the actor consistently. In the strong enactment treatment, the actor was trained - amongst others - to fit his mimic and gestures to his statements, match his facial expressions to his emotions and show a real smile. In the weak enactment treatment the actor was instructed to engage in awkward body movements, speak monotonously and blink remarkably often. The theatre director also provided input on correctly cutting the filmed material in order to obtain the two independent videos. Both videos were constructed as close to organizational reality as possible. The resulting videos were both approximately 5 minutes long, in accordance with other leadership research (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999, p. 354; Gardner, 2003, p. 509) and practical examples of corporate video messages.

After the manipulation sequences via video, all participants had to fill out the same questionnaires. Participants were asked to provide some additional
information on-line, including measures of the leader’s authenticity, their sympathy towards that leader, RoL, their trust in this leader and perceived leader effectiveness. Other manipulation checks and control variables had to be filled out as well.

3.3.3 Measures

3.3.3.1 Enactment

The measure for enactment operated as a manipulation check. We operationalized strong and weak enactment with the help of 12 items. These items were developed based on Stanislavski’s theory of physical action in order to transport genuineness and a consistency between words and actions. Sample items for strong enactment are “displays gestures that fit his statements”, or “displays facial expressions that match his emotions”. Sample items for weak enactment are “blinks remarkably often” or “uses too much pressure in his voice”. In order to verify these items, a group of coders who are familiar with leadership research, but were unaware of the purpose of this experiment, controlled for the existence of the manipulation, and in that way served as external validation. In detail, they rated their perception of the enactment style of the observed leader. The coders’ inter-rater reliability was assumed to be sufficient, as all of them originated from the same department (Norman et al., 2010, pp. 353f). Following Antonakis, Fenley, and Liechti (2011, pp. 385f), these 10 coders coded for the presence or absence of the enactment techniques. All coders independently coded both experimental conditions with a binary measure (1, 2), whereby the two conditions were presented to the coders a few days apart. Once all 12 items for each leader’s speech were coded, we created a composite index, indicating the percentage of the items the leader demonstrated on a scale from zero (0%) to one hundred (100%). A composite index is suitable for this measure, as all of the items are expected to “form” the weak or strong
enactment style (Antonakis et al., 2011, p. 386). Results supported the coder’s ability to differentiate between the two scenarios based on the enactment.

### 3.3.3.2 Perceived Leader Authenticity

This study used the recently developed and validated Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, ALQ (Walumbwa et al., 2008). The ALQ contains 16 items, measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). A sample item is “demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with actions”. Initial research evidence for both convergent and discriminant validity was provided by Walumbwa et al. (2008). The ALQ is an instrument that measures authentic leadership as a second-order factor comprised of the four first-order factors transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and self-awareness, which are not independent (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 101). Because of the relatively new nature of the ALQ, especially in Germany, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 20 maximum likelihood procedure, where each item was loaded to their corresponding factor. Each of the four factors were then fitted to an overall second-order factor that comprised the multidimensional authentic leadership latent variable. Good fitting models should have a comparative fit index (CFI) of .95 or greater, a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) equal to or less than .08 (N < 250), and a standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) less than .11 (Bühner, 2006). For our model we receive fit indices of CFI = .894, RMSEA = .085, and SRMR = .065. Following Hu and Bentler’s rule (1999) that two of the three indices should meet minimum cutoffs, the authentic leadership scale showed acceptable factor-analytic fit, despite the less than ideal sample size for the CFA. The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .87$.

Permission for the use of the ALQ instrument in this research has been granted by the author, Bruce Avolio. A copy of this letter of authority is included Appendix B.
In order to be applied in our study, the ALQ was translated into German. To establish translation equivalence, the original English instrument was translated into German by a bilingual person and back-translated to the original language by another bilingual person (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Any discrepancies indicate problems with translation equivalence (Lord et al., 1984) and were resolved before proceeding. Therefore, a professional translator and English native speaker carefully checked for differences between the translations. He refined some of the wording in the German version to avoid ambiguities and misunderstanding. The wording was also slightly changed and adapted to the experiment. The same procedure was conducted for the trust and the sympathy measure. All following scales are measured on 5-point Likert-scales ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

3.3.3.3 Romance of Leadership
RoL was measured with the help of the Romance of Leadership Scale (RLS; Meindl & Ehrlich, 1988). The German version of the scale was developed and validated by Felfe and Petersen (2007) based on Schyns, Meindl and Croon (2007). We used a short version of the original 32-item scale, which was based on the core factor representing relevance of leaders (“influence of leader”). This first factor consists originally of 17 items. We further decided to eliminate items that loaded on different factors in different samples (Schyns et al., 2007), as well as items that were formulated too extremely (“life and death decisions”; Felfe & Petersen, 2007, p. 12), so that the final shortened Romance of Leadership Scale applied in this study consists of 14 items. An example item is “a company is only as good or as bad as its leaders”. The reliability of the scale was α = .78.

3.3.3.4 Sympathy towards the Leader
Sympathy towards the leader was measured by drawing on Rubin (1970) and his loving and liking scale. Several studies found evidence that the scale has
discriminant validity (Amelang & Pielke, 1992; Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986). In the experimental study, a short version of the liking scale was applied. For the German translation of the items we drew largely on the work of Forgas (1995, pp. 228f), whereby the wording of some of the items was adapted to the study’s purpose. The final scale consists of 8 items; a sample item is “is the sort of person whom I myself would like to be”. The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .84$.

### 3.3.3.5 Trust

Trust was measured with the help of the short form of the Organizational Trust Inventory, OTI-SF (Cummings & Bromiley, 1996). Besides measuring organizational trust, the instrument could also be used to evaluate trust regarding, for example, colleagues, managers or clients. Originally, the OTI includes 62 items. We utilized a 12-item short version (Norman et al., 2010). An example item is “I feel that the leader will keep his word”. The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .91$.

### 3.3.3.6 Perceived Leader Effectiveness

Followers’ perceived leader effectiveness was tested with questions from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X, Bass & Avolio, 2000) concerning extra effort (EEF, 3 items), effectiveness of leader’s behavior (EFF, 4 items), and satisfaction (SAT, 2 items). A German version of the MLQ was validated by Felfe and Goihl (2002). In the experiment, the fourth item of the EFF scale was deleted, as it asked about the higher authority of the leader, and our fictitious leader is considered to be the CEO. The resulting 8-item scale has a high reliability ($\alpha = .93$). A sample item is “leads a group that is effective”.

In addition to the measures mentioned above, the study also gathers potential control variables. General demographic controls (age, gender), as well as the participants’ education, tenure in current position, and leadership experience were
measured. The relationships between these controls and the focal variables were all not significant, and therefore the controls were not included in the subsequent analyses.

Table 3.2 summarizes the means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations (Spearman) among the dependent variables, covariates, and the manipulation check measure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Authenticity</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>(.87)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Trust</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>(.91)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leader Effectiveness</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>(.93)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Romance of Leadership</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sympathy</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.70**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>(.84)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Enactment Manipulation Check</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>(.71)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Reliability alpha (α) coefficients are reported in diagonal in parentheses

**p < .01 (two-tailed test)**

Perceived leader authenticity was significantly correlated with the outcome variables trust ($r = .64$, $p < .01$) and leader effectiveness ($r = .74$, $p < .01$). The two outcome variables were significantly correlated as well ($r = .65$, $p < .01$). Sympathy showed significant correlations to authenticity ($r = .65$, $p < .01$), trust ($r = .4$, $p < .01$), and leader effectiveness ($r = .70$, $p < .01$). Enactment was significantly correlated with perceived leader authenticity ($r = .65$, $p < .01$), as well with the outcomes ($r \geq .51$, $p < .01$) and sympathy ($r = .62$, $p < .01$). RoL was not significantly correlated with either of the variables.
3.4 Results

Before the results were analyzed, tests for missing data and data normality were carried out. Because of some missing data points, we employed standardized data imputation techniques (Newman, 2009) to account for missing values. A multiple missing data analysis showed that our missing data were missing completely at random (MCAR; Little’s MCAR test, $\chi^2 (1418)=1390.86, p=.69$; Little & Rubin, 1987). We imputed the missing data points using the expectation maximization (EM) variation of the maximum likelihood technique (Enders, 2001). All descriptive statistics and computations that follow are based on the EM algorithm. Regarding data normality, all variables were found to be well within acceptable values between +1 and -1 for both skewness and kurtosis. Next, since for experimental studies the homogeneity of variance assumption in particular is critical (Keppel & Wickens, 2004; Norman et al., 2010, p. 48), the data were examined for possible violation of that assumption. Levene’s homogeneity of variance test was non-significant for each analysis at $p < .05$, indicating that the assumption was met.

3.4.1 Manipulation Check

We conducted a manipulation check to verify that our manipulation produced the desired effect. Directly after watching the video, the participants had to answer the 12 manipulation check items. First, based on item characteristics, four of the 12 items were deleted from the analysis (the corrected item-total correlation fell below .3). These items also had difficulties in differentiating between the two scenarios. The remaining eight items showed acceptable results and supported the manipulation’s effectiveness, as the Phi values ($\phi$) showed results on a significance level between .05 and .001.
To further assess the construct validity of the enactment scale, we conducted CFAs with AMOS 20. Using the main sample with 105 participants, we first compared the fit of the 12-item structure ($\chi^2 = 94.636, df = 54, p < .001$; $CFI = .735$, $RMSEA = .085$, $SRMR = .089$) with that the reduced 8-item structure, in which all 8 items were indicative of one larger enactment factor ($\chi^2 = 40.122, df = 20, p < .01$; $CFI = .843$, $RMSEA = .098$, $SRMR = .078$). The latter yielded the best model fit (model comparison with $\chi^2$-difference test was not applicable due to non-nested models). The one factor 8-item enactment scale showed acceptable results and supported the manipulations’ effectiveness ($\alpha = .71$).

In order to further test these results, we conducted a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the manipulation check as the dependent variable, and the two conditions as fixed factors. Examining the mean differences across cells showed that there were significant main effects for leader enactment ($F(1, 208) = 19.87, p < .001, \eta^2 = .17$).

In total, our results seem to support the hypothesis that our manipulation of enactment did in fact produce the desired effect.

### 3.4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

Given that the instruments demonstrated adequate psychometric properties, and the experimental conditions resulted in a successful manipulation, we continued to test the study’s hypotheses. General linear modeling (GLM) was used to test hypotheses, as this is common in experimental research (Norman et al., 2010), except in cases with all continuous variables, where regression was applied. First, we conducted an ANOVA to determine the main effect of leader enactment on perceived leader authenticity. There were significant effects across the full model ($F(1, 103) = 18.91, p < .001, \eta^2 = .16$). Thus, there are mean differences across the two conditions to explore further.
For perceived leader authenticity as the dependent variable, the mean for the strong enactment condition (M = 3.38, SD = .67) was significantly higher than in the weak enactment condition (M = 2.83, SD = .63). The results showed that leader enactment explains 16% of the variance of perceived leader authenticity (Cohen, 1973). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Table 3.3 presents the means and standard deviations for the main effect of leader enactment on perceived leader authenticity, as well as the results of the covariate analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Leader Enactment</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>η²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANOVA</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>18.91***</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANCOVA controlled for Romance</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>18.46***</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Leadership</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathy towards the Leader</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>11.65**</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covariate Analysis</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romance of Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathy towards the Leader</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.96***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 3.3: General ANCOVA Model: Effect of Leader Enactment on Perceived Leader Authenticity

Analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) were applied for RoL and sympathy towards the leader. The covariate analysis revealed that RoL was not significantly related to perceived leader authenticity (F(1, 103) = 1.15, p = .31), thus rejecting Hypothesis 2. Sympathy towards the leader was positively related to perceived leader authenticity (F(1, 103) = 3.96, p < .001), supporting Hypothesis 3.
Importantly, when RoL was included as a covariate in the analysis, the influence of enactment on perceived leader authenticity did not change significantly \((F(1, 103) = 18.46, p < .001, \eta^2 = .15)\). When sympathy was added to the model, the influence of enactment on perceived leader authenticity was reduced \((F(1, 103) = 11.65, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10)\), but remained significantly positive. Thus, sympathy is another important influence factor for perceiving a leader as authentic or not, while most of the variance in followers’ perceptions is still explained by the enactment of the leader.

Given that Hypotheses 4 and 5 were all continuous variables, regression based analyses were considered more appropriate (Avey et al., 2011, p. 292). Regression analyses with perceived leader authenticity predicting both trust in the leader and perceived leader effectiveness were conducted while controlling for age, gender, education, tenure in position, and leadership experience. The results of the regressions are found in Table 3.4.

For the controls, we used dummy coded variables instead of the categorical variables utilized in the study’s questionnaire. Descriptive statistics told us that 30 to 40 years was the median in our study, therefore a dummy variable was coded for participants up to 40 years. Education was coded for people having a university degree or not. Tenure in position was dummy coded for up to three years, because this was the median in our study.
Perceived leader authenticity was positively related to followers’ trust in the leader (β = .67, p < .001) and perceived leader effectiveness (β = .77, p < .001). In total, perceived leader authenticity accounted for 46% of the variance accounted for in trust, and 62% of the variance accounted for in leader effectiveness (R²). Thus, Hypotheses 4 and 5 are supported. Perceived leader authenticity does have a significant positive effect on the organizational outcomes trust in the leader and perceived leader effectiveness.
3.5 Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to examine how a leader’s enactment style influenced participants’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Despite the growing emphasis on authenticity in leadership research, followers’ social perceptions of the leader’s authenticity, as well as possible antecedents to these perceptions, have received relatively little attention. Our results substantiate the hypothesis that a strong enactment style exhibited by the leader, in contrast to a weak one, positively influenced the authenticity that participants ascribed to the leader. In addition, follower attributes (RoL) and their sympathy towards the leader did not influence the path of that relationship. Sympathy towards the leader did have a significant positive effect on perceived leader authenticity. RoL was not significantly related to leadership perceptions. Hence, Meindl’s (1990) assertion that generalized leadership beliefs account for variance in perceptions of leadership was not supported. As a result of higher levels of perceived leader authenticity, participants rated higher levels of trust towards the leader, and perceived higher leader effectiveness.

The between-group experimental design set up initial equivalence across study participants based on random assignment to the two experimental conditions. Both conditions were administered in parallel using the same procedure, and all of the background information and context given to study participants was the same for the conditions. For all variables tested, the random assignment appeared to be successful in attaining initial equivalence. Analyses indicated that the manipulation had the intended effect.

The operationalization of strong versus weak leader enactment that we developed with the help of Stanislavski’s physical action (1996) could be proved to be valid for manipulating behavior. Although experimental studies have previously proved the importance of communication skills for followers’ perceptions (Awamleh
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& Gardner, 1999; Gardner, 2003), research on perceptions of leader authenticity is limited. As a result, one important empirical finding not reported in earlier research is the effectiveness of the enactment manipulation. Therefore, the possibility of “enacting the ‘true self’” as postulated by Ladkin and Taylor (2010, p. 64), was affirmed by our study for the first time. Of course, the relative power of the enactment must be tested against other potential variables that could influence authenticity ascriptions as well, for example, content of the message (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999) or context (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003).

Our study offers more insights into the construct of authentic leadership by adding RoL and sympathy towards the leader as covariates. We thereby follow the call of researchers to investigate the influence of inter-individual differences in follower preferences on perceptions of leader authenticity (Woolley et al., 2011). There is no other research - that we know of - that follows these steps. We thereby reinforced the importance of the authenticity construct to the leadership literature, as it offers a unique explanation of followers’ perceptions. In addition, researchers have yet to discover how followers’ different personality traits (Judge et al., 2002), or their implicit leadership theories (Schyns & Schilling, 2011), influence their authenticity ascriptions and their preferences for certain leader types.

There is a possible “dark side” of authentic leadership that may result from manipulating a performance in order to be perceived as authentic. Behavior that lacks a moral foundation and legitimate values could be designated “pseudo-authentic”, following the “pseudo-transformational” leadership understanding of Bass and Steidlmeier (1999). However, Goffman (1959) has already discussed the dialectic between morality and manipulation, where performers grapple with the “amoral issue of engineering a convincing impression” (p. 243). Goffman’s dramaturgy widens authentic leadership research with the insight that leaders' authentic expressions will be mediated through the logic of Impression
Management (Sinha, 2010, p. 199). Our study affirmed that leaders can engage in some specific non-verbal cues and “performances” in order to be perceived as authentic by their followers. However, limitations and turning points of this behavior with respect to the true inner state have not been developed yet. Importantly, we only consider perceived authenticity here. We do not claim that we know how to be an authentic leader. We examined theoretically derived behavior that helps leaders to foster authenticity ascriptions on the part of followers.

3.5.1 Practical Implications

The findings have several important implications for practitioners. In line with charismatic leadership research (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999, p. 365), our study shows that an actor can be trained to elicit followers’ perceptions of a leader’s authenticity. Thus, it becomes clear that we can likewise train leaders to be perceived as more authentic. Training leaders is a common and well accepted procedure (Clark & Greatbatch, 2011), but the notion that a leader’s authenticity may be trainable as well has not been formulated before.

We also suggest that leadership enactment itself has various implications for leadership development programs. There is now a growing industry that uses a dramaturgical approach for leadership development (Halpern & Lubar, 2003). Up to now, most of the practical approaches in general lack both a well-developed theoretical basis (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 72) and empirical evidence. Our work could be a useful step towards developing a theoretical understanding and empirical proof that could be used to operationalize strong leader enactment and in this way help to construct theatrical leadership development programs.
3.5.2 Limitations

Though the innovative experimental design offers benefits to the research process used, there are also some limitations. First, and most importantly, participants were asked to rate a fictitious leader on a relatively limited amount of information provided in the study. As a result, the current findings may not be generalized to more typical situations, where followers have a lot of interaction and a personal history with the leader. The lack of generalizability also originates from the fact that our experiment was conducted online. Perhaps participants would respond differently if the study were conducted face-to-face in a laboratory or field setting, where they could actually interact with the leader (Norman et al., 2010, p. 360). In addition, the participants are not the leader’s actual followers, and thus they do not fear any real consequences of the leader’s actions (Norman et al., 2010, p. 360). However, in business practice as well, images about others derive from a single, not even personal contact, especially with respect to top management, and may have equally important impacts.

Second, the person in our experiment is an actor playing a fictitious leader. The question could therefore arise of how authentic a person can be when acting as someone else? Here, dramaturgical literature, and especially Stanislavski, offered the explanation of capable actors, who are not acting by pretending to be something or someone they are not, but who are acting by producing real, authentic behavior on stage (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 67). This is central to Stanislavski’s acting theory and to producing authenticity (Stanislavski, 1996). And this is what we expected of our actor.

Third, our study was cross-sectional. Therefore, we cannot determine causality in the relationship between the study variables. As in many other empirical studies, our interpretations of causality are based only on the evidence of co-variation and our confidence in the proposed theoretical connections (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2010, p. 911). In addition, because the perceived authenticity,
trust and effectiveness measures were collected simultaneously, the measurement procedures may have produced a common method variance problem, thereby inflating the correlations among the measures (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, this design problem is valid for both experimental situations (strong and weak enactment), and therefore could not have influenced the relative assessment, but only the absolute values of this assessment. With respect to the amount of difference between the two experimental settings, and incorporating the fact that the effects were theoretically expected, we do not see a huge problem here.

In conclusion, this study offers for the first time empirical evidence of the importance of leaders showing a strong versus a weak enactment in order to be perceived as authentic by their followers. Inter-individual follower differences (RoL) and followers’ sympathy towards the leader did not change that relationship. In addition, the results provide added support for the value of leaders being perceived as more authentic, because followers who perceive their leaders to be authentic seem to trust them and judge them to be effective in leading them.
Authenticity has become a profound word in the scientific leadership discourse. Using the thesis that authenticity has to be perceived by followers in order to have an influence, we explore the requirements and consequences of these ascription processes for followers. Combining theoretical approaches from narratives and theater dramaturgy enables us to identify more precisely such drivers for followers’ authenticity perceptions. Using an online experimental design, we examined how a leader’s life storytelling and enactment influence followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. The results of our study indicate that life storytelling and leader enactment have significant positive effects on perceived leader authenticity, the effect of enactment outperforming that of life storytelling. Structural equation modeling (SEM) demonstrated that perceived leader authenticity, therefore, significantly affects organizational outcomes. Implications for research and practice are discussed.

3 An article based on this chapter is currently under review. Coauthor is Jürgen Weibler.
4.1 Introduction

Among various prevailing leadership theories that tend toward integrity, morality, and honesty (Brown et al., 2005; Greenleaf, 2002; Treviño et al., 2000), authentic leadership has played a dominant role over the last decade (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). The roots of the concept of authenticity lie in an aphorism derived from Greek philosophy and expounded by Shakespeare’s Polonius: “To thine own self be true” (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act I, scene III, lines 78-80). Consequently, Gardner and colleagues (2005) defined authentic leaders as people who, because they are true to themselves, are consistent in their beliefs, words, and actions. If leaders are to be perceived as authentic, the followers must be able to judge them as acting true to themselves (Fields, 2007, p. 198). Only because of such judgments can leaders have a positive impact on various organizational outcomes (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Thus, an important question arises: “How do followers decide about the authenticity of the leader?” (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 408). Understanding the relationship between followers’ authenticity perceptions and leaders’ behaviors will enrich the existing authentic leadership literature and will give further insights into the complex ontological nature of the authentic leadership construct (Cooper et al., 2005).

We understand leadership, essentially, as a “process of being perceived by others as a leader” (Lord & Maher, 1993, p. 11). Follower-centric approaches to leadership have for some time been widely promoted (Bligh & Schyns, 2007; Shamir, Pillai, & Bligh, 2007; de Vries & Van Gelder, 2005). They explore the inputs, mechanisms, and outcomes of follower constructions of leadership based on Meindl’s social constructionist approach (1995). Meindl (1995) states that leadership emerges “when followers interpret their relationship as having a leadership-followership dimension” (p. 332). In this regard, the important role of followers in the leadership relationship appears when they give power to their leaders, influencing the leaders’ behavior, and determining the outcomes (Howell...
Thus, it is important to understand when, and under what conditions, followers perceive leadership and how these perceptions affect the leadership process (Bligh et al., 2011). These social constructions of leadership based on leadership impressions have been investigated widely (e.g., charismatic leadership (Gardner & Avolio, 1998) or transformational leadership (Hater & Bass, 1988)). To date, however, no research has explicitly linked followers’ social perceptions of leadership to the personal characteristics of an authentic leader (Avolio et al., 2009, pp. 427f).

Therefore, our paper focuses on the antecedents to followers’ authenticity perceptions, in particular those that may reveal the “true self” of the leader, and therefore may help followers to construct the person as an authentic leader. Being “true to oneself” - as the basis of authentic leadership - is manifested in great consistency among a leader’s values, beliefs, words, and actions (Gardner et al., 2005). Following narrative research, we first analyze life storytelling as an important medium for transmitting information about the leader’s authenticity to followers. Leaders’ life stories have already been theoretically identified by Gardner and colleagues (2005) as an important antecedent to the leader’s authenticity. It allows followers continuously to compare the consistency between leaders’ behaviors in the past and their present behavior, values, and beliefs (Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

Second, leadership perceptions are influenced by followers’ observations of the leader’s behavior (Fields, 2007, p. 200; Hansen et al., 2007, p. 551). Following a dramaturgical perspective, we analyze the influence of leader enactment - i.e., every exposure or embodiment (Schicha & Ontrup, 1999, p. 7; Willems, 2009, p. 80) - on followers’ perceptions. Ladkin and Taylor (2010) recently highlighted the importance of bodily behaviors to perceptions of leader authenticity. Enactment seeks ways in which a leader “performance” may be experienced as authentic by followers. Therefore, the somatic sense of the true self of the leader
will contribute to the felt sense of authenticity (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 64). Followers perceive this consistency, which then affects their perception of the leader’s authenticity.

Despite the recent call to investigate more thoroughly these followers’ perceptions (Fields, 2007, p. 198) as well as the antecedents of authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1140), this work has received relatively little attention. Until now, most studies have concentrated on examining the consequences of authentic leadership (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2010). Therefore, our paper is one of the first to analyze individual factors that may encourage followers to judge their leaders as being authentic. Our paper therefore makes three major contributions: first, we enrich the current authentic leadership discussion by theoretically exploring possible antecedents to the leader’s authenticity - as expressed through life storytelling and leader enactment. By uniquely combining these antecedents, our research clarifies how a leader’s true self may become recognizable to followers. Second, because of our experimental design, our paper is among the first to examine how a leader’s life story and enactment affect participants’ authenticity perceptions. Third, our paper analyzes how these authenticity perceptions function with respect to important consequences of leadership, such as trust, followers’ positive emotions, and job performance. We conclude with a general discussion of our findings, study limitations, directions for future research, and practical implications.

4.2 Theoretical Foundation

The authentic leadership construct has grown to be an important field of research (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). It draws heavily on social psychology - including Deci and Ryan’s theory of self-determination (2002), Kerni’s authenticity design (2003), and positive psychology
(Seligman, 2002; Snyder & Lopez, 2002) - as well as positive organizational behavior (Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Avolio, 2009). Authentic leaders benefit from the positive psychological states accompanying optimal self-esteem (Kernis, 2003) and from positive psychological capital - for example, confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience (Luthans et al., 2007). Avolio et al. (2004) showed that authentic leaders are deeply aware of themselves. They display their true selves because they base their actions on their values and convictions. Most important, they show an ongoing consistency among their beliefs, words, and actions (Gardner et al., 2005). According to a self-constructionist view of leadership (Meindl, 1995), authenticity ascriptions presuppose perceptions of followers. As a result, for leaders to be influential, it is necessary that followers perceive authenticity (Fields, 2007, p. 198).

In the following, we present two different antecedents that help followers to perceive consistency among a leader’s beliefs, values, convictions, and actions. In that way, followers will be able to judge their leaders’ behaviors as authentic and thus authenticate them (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 408f). As followers base their assessment of authenticity mainly on their direct observations of their leaders (Fields, 2007, p. 200), their authenticity constructions may vary systematically with the information they receive (Hansen et al., 2007, p. 551). We assume, first, that information about leaders’ life stories will reveal their true selves to followers (Shamir & Eilam, 2005), and second, that leaders’ actual enactment toward their followers is also revelatory (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010).

### 4.2.1 Perceived Leader Authenticity and Life Storytelling

The first antecedent upon which followers base their perceptions of leaders’ authenticity is their narrated life stories. Therefore, life storytelling fulfills two purposes: First, the development of a life story is an important element in the construction of the true self of the leader, and, hence, authenticity. Second, the
narrative itself is a fundamental source of information for followers on which to base their judgment of the leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 402).

Boje (1995) defined the term story as “an oral or written performance involving two or more people interpreting past or anticipated experience” (p. 1000). Storytelling in general has been an integral part of human experience for centuries, as it deals with themes like identity, group membership, past and future incidents, as well as good and evil (Edwards & Sienkewicz, 1991). In the organizational context, storytelling is used as a tool for knowledge management (Kleiner & Roth, 1998) and communication (Forster et al., 1999, p. 12). In addition, storytelling is employed to influence others (Simmons, 2006).

In a leadership context, scholars have found that leaders perceived as charismatic use stories and anecdotes as verbal tactics (Frese, Beimel, & Schoenborn, 2003) to make their message understandable and easy to remember (Antonakis et al., 2011, p. 376; Bower, 1976). In particular, the leaders’ life narratives have been identified as very important stories (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005). The term life story has sometimes been replaced with life narrative or life history (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Ligon et al., 2008). It is a written or oral account of a life, or a segment of a life, told by the individual concerned (Gergen & Gergen, 1986; McAdams, 2001; Sparrowe, 2005). Life storytelling refers here to sharing one’s life story with others (Miller, 1994). With regard to leadership, life storytelling focuses on the leaders, who tell relevant life events (e.g., personal or job-related stories) to their followers (Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

In constructing their authentic self, leaders choose which of their experiences they want to include in the life story. Therefore, they inventively interpret the past and the present to construct stories that impart a certain sense to both themselves and their listeners. The experiences are chosen based on personal goals, other interests (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000), and the emotional and motivational significance that aligns the information to the self (Josselson & Lieblich, 1993;
“To Thine Own Self Be True”: The Effects of Life Storytelling and Enactment on Perceived Leader Authenticity

Stein, Wade, & Liwang, 1997). As a result, a life story can be defined as a selective summary of one's life experiences (Anderson & Conway, 1993). One's own life story serves as an explanatory social construction for defining one's personal identity, and thus the self-concept: “autobiographical stories reflect who we are, and they also reflect the world in which we live” (McAdams, 2001, p. 117). In addition, leaders achieve legitimacy in their followers' eyes through telling their life stories. In this way, leaders are able to execute a highly effective leadership process (Denning, 2011; George & Sims, 2007; Ligon et al., 2008), because their authenticity becomes recognizable to followers (Fields, 2007, p. 196).

Shamir and Eilam (2005) have presented an explanation of these processes, proposing reasons why life storytelling may help followers to judge leaders as authentic. First, the life story itself should provide coherence and credibility, which followers then ascribe to the leader's personality. Second, a life story can be seen as being more legitimate and convincing than if the leader declares his or her traits, values, and convictions directly. Explicit statements about the leader's own values could be problematic, because followers may interpret this behavior negatively if they use an expanded set of values for comparison and judgment (Cha & Edmondson, 2006). In the absence of explicit statements, followers focus on the leader's actions and infer values from these actions (Fields, 2007, p. 200), in this case from the life story. Most important, followers are continuously comparing the life story with the leader's actions, thus monitoring the consistency of the leaders' beliefs, values, and convictions, and their actions. Such comparisons make it easier for followers to judge their leader's authentic nature (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 409).

Consequentially, through telling the life story, the leader may reveal a consistency between his or her present behavior and the past behavior, or between current
behavior and beliefs, values, and convictions. As a result, followers may judge the leader’s behavior as consistent and then perceive the leader as authentic.

**Hypothesis 1a.** Leaders’ life stories will enhance followers’ authenticity perceptions of their leaders.

Additionally, the content of the life story is especially important for (1) strengthening the leader’s self-awareness (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 347), and (2) provoking emotions and sympathy on the part of the listeners (Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982; Kermode, 2000). These content elements are the so-called “authenticity markers” (Pittinsky & Tyson, 2005). Shamir and Eilam (2005, p. 408) have already emphasized that these are especially important for followers’ authentication of the leader. Following basic narrative research (McAdams, 2001) as well as research on storytelling and authentic leadership (Avolio & Luthans, 2006), an emotionally intense moment in one's life that marks a turning point or break in the previously normal pattern provokes more emotions and sympathy from listeners and readers than do moments having less emotional intensity (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247). By definition, these moments are called “trigger events” (May et al., 2003, p. 251). They can be either negative - for example, the loss of a family member or financial problems - or positive - for example, a promotion at work (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 348).

Concerning the leader’s self-awareness, trigger events help to develop self-concept clarity (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 402f). In particular, negative trigger events are able to cause self-awareness (Avolio & Luthans, 2006, Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247), because they initiate a distinctive reflection about past failures. Regarding the effect of the life story’s content on followers, events that mark a turning point or break in the previously normal pattern especially provoke more emotions and sympathy from listeners and readers (Luthans & Avolio, 2003,
p. 247). By sharing sensitive personal information through telling their life stories, leaders show transparency, vulnerability, and weakness (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 410f). This transparent behavior may cause followers to enhance trust in their leaders and to identify with them more closely (Lapidot et al., 2007). Following these thoughts, we assume that sharing negative intense moments in one’s life, such as telling about a failure at work, or about the death of a family member, displays more vulnerability than telling about an extremely positive event.

Among the many different types of life events that may be used for constructing a person’s life story (McAdams, 2001; Pillemer, 2000), the turning point seems to be the strongest and generally known trigger event (Ligon et al., 2008; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Turner & Mavin, 2008). Turning points delineate precise episodes that are perceived as abruptly redirecting a life plan. We understand them as going beyond the mere incident of the trigger event itself, because they convey a strong sense of causality, as “the initial episode is tied mentally to life choices that followed” (Pillemer, 2001, p. 127). Since a discussion of all possible trigger events would exceed the scope of this paper, we concentrate on the ones presumed to be most effective, namely negative turning points. It is important to note that we thereby understand a negative incident as that which (a) triggered an abrupt redirection and turn of the life plan, which (b) then ultimately led to something positive. We expect the strongest reaction from followers to these stories. They expose the highest vulnerability and weakness of the leader (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, pp. 410f), are memorable and plausible to most of the listeners, and evoke distinctive reflections about the leader (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247).

**Hypothesis 1b.** The telling of negative turning points in the leaders’ life stories will elicit higher levels of perceived leader authenticity.
4.2.2 Perceived Leader Authenticity and Leader Enactment

The second important antecedent for followers’ judgment of the leader’s authenticity is the leader enactment. “Enactment” here refers to the setting and public display of a creation or a case. We understand every exposure or embodiment as enactment and do not limit our understanding to the performing arts (Schicha & Ontrup, 1999, p. 7; Willems, 2009, p. 80). We have seen before that followers judge their leader as authentic by perceiving high levels of consistency among the leader’s actions, values, and beliefs, in that way recognizing the leader’s true self. In addition to the information that the leader provides through telling the life story, the way this information is “performed” or “enacted” is another important factor for perceiving the leader’s authenticity.

These thoughts follow the dramaturgical perspective (Goffman, 1959). The dramaturgical approach (Burke, 1969; Combs & Mansfield, 1976) involves an image of organizational life as a creative and artistic affair (Sinha, 2010, pp. 187f). According to Mangham and Overington (2005), dramatism is a method of examining and analyzing social action and people’s explanations of these social actions. Hence, the central focus of dramaturgy can be seen as how people express themselves to others and in conjunction with other people to create meaning and influence (Gardner & Avolio, 1998, p. 33).

In the past few decades, leadership scholars have frequently discussed the importance of dramaturgy for leadership behaviors (Gardner, 1992; Gardner & Avolio, 1998). For our purpose of understanding the enactment of a leader’s authenticity, the approach of Constantin Sergeyevich Stanislavski (1863-1938), actor, director, and reformer of theater theory is of main interest. The root of Stanislavski’s concept is the understanding that a psychophysical interplay does exist between the body and the soul, between the inside and the outside, which he calls “physical action” (Stanislavski, 1996). Moore (1984) described the importance of physical actions by saying that “every nuance of emotion is
connected with a particular physical action” (p. 19). Accordingly, Stanislavski’s ideas are based on a natural relationship between bodily behaviors and psychic dispositions.

In the context of authentic leadership, Ladkin and Taylor (2010) have recently argued that although authentic leadership may be rooted in the notion of a true self, it is through the embodiment of that true self that leaders are perceived as authentic or not. Based on these bodily signals, followers are able to draw conclusions about the leader’s motives, values, and beliefs (Ladkin, 2008, p. 38). According to Ladkin and Taylor (2010, p. 64), the somatic sense of the true self of the leader contributes to the felt sense of authenticity. Followers perceive this consistency, which then influences their perception of the leader’s authenticity. Thus, followers are able to draw conclusions about the leader’s motives, values, and beliefs based on aspects of his or her bodily signals, and thus to judge the leader as authentic or not (Ladkin, 2008, p. 38).

Consequently, followers will assess leaders’ authenticity through observing their enactment in various situations (Fields, 2007, p. 200). In order to simplify the understanding of enactment, we assume that a leader’s enactment style has a bipolar specification. Following charismatic leadership research on the delivery of a message (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Holladay & Coombs, 1993), we expect the enactment to vary between two opposites: strong versus weak. Strong enactment thereby refers to the physical action alluded to by Stanislavski, which means that persons display consistency between the inside and the outside. Perceiving this consistency, followers will be willing to ascribe higher levels of authenticity to the leader. Weak enactment means that the leader lacks the ability to express the feelings and emotions felt on a somatic level. Accordingly, we predict that leaders exhibiting a “strong” style of enactment, characterized by gestures, imitation, and facial expressions that are in line with the leader’s
statements and emotions, will elicit higher levels of perceived leader authenticity than those portraying a “weak” style of enactment.

**Hypothesis 2.** Strong as opposed to weak enactment will enhance followers’ authenticity perceptions of their leaders.

We expect interdependencies and overlays between leaders’ telling of their life stories and their enactment of those stories. Followers will continuously compare the content of leaders’ life stories to their enactment (Warstat, 2010). In that way, they are able to notice if leaders’ words and actions are consistent and, thus, to judge their authenticity (Gardner et al., 2005). Charismatic leadership research has already discovered a great interplay between the content of a message and its delivery (Holladay & Coombs, 1994). The highest levels of perceived leader charisma and effectiveness were found for the combination of strong delivery with visionary speech content (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999). Applying these thoughts to followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity, we expect that leaders who are viewed as being better in both life storytelling and leader enactment would be rated more favorably than leaders in any other condition.

**Hypothesis 3.** Leaders’ strong enactment and their telling of life stories, including negative turning points, will elicit higher levels of perceived leader authenticity than any other combination of enactment and life storytelling.
4.2.3 Perceived Leader Authenticity and Organizational Outcomes

A large number of outcomes have been connected theoretically to authentic leadership (Erickson, 1995b; Ilies et al., 2005), and perceived authenticity has already proven to affect organizational outcomes positively (Avey et al., 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008). In our study, we chose three outcome variables that have seemed to dominate leadership research recently. In addition, we differentiated between subjective organizational outcomes that depend on the perception of the followers, such as trust and positive emotions, and quasi-objective organizational outcomes that represent a tougher measure of the effects of perceived authenticity, like job performance.

Starting with the influence on subjective organizational outcomes, followers’ trust in their leaders has been discussed widely in recent years (Shamir & Lapidot, 2003). Trust has been defined as the “psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). With regard to leadership, the best way to understand why followers will have greater or lesser trust in their leader is to consider the attributes of the trustee, which means the leader (Mayer et al., 1995). The trustors, here the followers, draw inferences about the trustee’s characteristics, and these inferences have consequences for their work attitudes and behaviors (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

Three characteristics of the leader have been identified here as being crucial for the development of followers’ trust: namely, competence, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995). As part of authentic leadership theory, Avolio et al. (2004) stated that authentic leaders “build benevolence and integrity with their followers by encouraging totally open communication, engaging their followers, sharing critical information, and sharing their perceptions and feelings about the
people with whom they work” (p. 810). Moreover, authentic leaders exemplify high moral standards, integrity, and honesty and, in this way, foster positive expectations among followers that enhance their trust and willingness to cooperate with the leader. In addition, authentic leaders show more competence than inauthentic leaders by displaying higher levels of positivity (Norman et al., 2010, p. 351). Because followers perceive the leader as more competent, their trust in the leader is enhanced.

**Hypothesis 4a.** Perceived leader authenticity is positively related to followers’ trust in the leader.

Emotions are defined as conscious or unconscious multi-component response tendencies that evolve and manifest over relatively short periods of time (Fredrickson, 2001). Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) posits that “affective events” account for the troubles and uplifts that employees experience at work. Leaders are seen to be a major source of these troubles and uplifts (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2003). The emotional reactions that employees experience from their troubles and uplifts determine their direct behaviors, as well as their attitudes. Authentic leadership has always been associated with various positive psychological states, such as confidence, hopefulness, and optimism (Avolio et al., 2004, Gardner et al., 2005). If authentic leaders feel and display these positive psychological states, they are likely to promote positive follower emotions, which can be transferred to other followers through emotional contagion (Barsade, 2002). Hence, they are associated with arousing positive follower emotions and avoiding negative emotions (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2005, p. 286).

As a result, followers who perceive their leaders as authentic are expected to feel more positive affective states than followers of less authentic leaders (Ilies et al.,
2005, p. 384). The positive emotions evoked by authentic leaders tend to be “high in arousal.” This means that they trigger intense emotional reaction and motivate a drive to act (Hmieleski et al., 2011, p. 6; Tangney et al., 2007). In addition, authentic leaders try to offset their negative emotional experiences with positive ones (Michie & Gooty, 2005, p. 447).

**Hypothesis 4b.** Perceived leader authenticity is positively related to followers’ positive emotions.

Job performance was included as a more objective performance measure than the subjective measures of trust and positive emotions. Researchers often call for effectiveness to be measured using more objective than perceptive data (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, & de Hoogh, 2011, p. 66). With regard to authentic leadership, a relationship between the leadership style and some kind of performance measure has frequently been discussed theoretically and empirically (Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

A leader’s consistency in actions, values, and beliefs, which we outlined as being seminal for perceived leader authenticity, is assumed to lead to higher levels of follower performance. Sosik's (2005) analysis was that followers responded to higher levels of perceived agreement between the leader’s behaviors and motives with extra effort and higher levels of organizational citizenship behavior. The term *extra effort* is very similar to the term *engagement* that is used in authentic leadership literature (Gardner et al., 2005, pp. 365f). Engagement “refers to individuals’ involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002, p. 269). In this regard, May et al. (2003) also proposed that authentic leadership, coupled with psychological safety and meaningful work, may result in higher levels of engagement among followers. In this regard, it is expected that leaders perceived as authentic facilitate the
experience of engagement among their followers by helping them discover their talents, giving them an appropriate position, and providing enriched work (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 366).

In addition, followers show higher levels of workplace well-being or satisfaction through the enhanced engagement that follows the leader’s authenticity, and higher levels of engagement result in enhanced follower performance (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 366). Furthermore, leaders perceived as authentic are found to be more successful in terms of sustaining higher levels of follower performance (Zhu et al., 2011, p. 807). As we have shown above, authentic leaders arouse more positive emotions than do less authentic leaders (Ilies et al., 2005), and, in this context, followers who are generally more positive may be better performers than less positive followers (Avey et al., 2011, p. 284).

**Hypothesis 4c.** Perceived leader authenticity is positively related to followers’ job performance.

### 4.3 Method

In leadership research, the fail-safe way to generate causal evidence is the randomized experiment (Antonakis et al., 2010, p. 1086). Thus, we decided to use a 3 x 2 between-group experimental design, whereby the first factor, life storytelling, was manipulated three times (low/moderate/high) and the second factor, leader enactment, was manipulated twice (weak/strong). Figure 4.1 gives an overview of the study design.
The manipulations resulted in six cells representing different leadership scenario conditions: (1) a leader exercising weak enactment and low life storytelling; (2) a leader exercising strong enactment and low life storytelling; (3) a leader exercising weak enactment and moderate life storytelling; (4) a leader exercising strong enactment and moderate life storytelling; (5) a leader exercising weak enactment and high life storytelling; and (6) a leader exercising strong enactment and high life storytelling.
4.3.1 Study Sample and Sampling Plan

The experiment was conducted in Germany. Most of the participants in the online experiment were working adults. Contacts of the researchers were asked to participate in the survey via e-mail, which was then forwarded by direct contacts of the researchers to their contacts (i.e., the snowball approach). Included in the e-mail was an invitation to join a research project and a hyperlink to a website where participants were presented randomly with one of the six experimental conditions.

An \textit{a priori} power analysis was applied to estimate the desired sample size for obtaining effects. With an effect size (f) of about .25 for each condition, a type I error rate (α) of .05 and a type II error rate (β) of .05 (Cohen, 1988), it was estimated that a total sample size of 324 was needed to produce the desired effects. Thus, approximately 56 participants per cell were needed. In total, 526 participants clicked on the hyperlink and started to fill out the questionnaire. After the responses were examined for completeness and accuracy, 334 participants remained and the analyses were conducted on these responses. The average subject distribution per condition is 56; see Figure 4.1 for the exact distribution. We therefore conformed to the sample size that the \textit{a priori} power analysis indicated.

Descriptive statistics of study participants are shown in Table 4.1.
### Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Frequency*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>173 (51.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 30 years</td>
<td>107 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50 years</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>51-60 years</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 60 years</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>190 (56.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University entrance Diploma (German Abitur)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational University entrance Diploma (German Fachabitur)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Certificate of Secondary Education (German „mittlere Reife“)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Secondary Education (German Hauptschulabschluss)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tenure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 2 years</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 4 years</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 6 years</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 8 years</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10 years</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>163 (48.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry Sector</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing Commerce</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Sector</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Services</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Social Services</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services Sector</td>
<td>76 (22.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Industry</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profession</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources and Organizational Development</td>
<td>76 (22.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Distribution</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Management and Controlling</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Management</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing and Production</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** N=334; * = Some total do not add up due to missing data points
In the overall sample, the participants were split between females (47%) and males (51.8%). About 32% were young working adults up to the age of 30, 30.5% were between 31 and 40, 20.4% were between 41 and 50, 13.2% were between 51 and 60, and 12% were over 60 years of age. Most of the participants in the study had a higher education (80%) and most of them have working experience of over 10 years (48.8%). Participants came from a variety of industry sectors, with the majority working in the services sector (22.8%), followed by manufacturing (13.2%), transportation (9.6%), and financial services (7.5%). In addition, the participants were in many different professions. The largest number worked in human resources and organizational development (22.8%), consulting (11.1%), marketing and distribution (9.6%), or commercial management and controlling (8.4%).

4.3.2 Pilot Work

Several phases of pilot work preceded the final experimental study. Concerning the life storytelling manipulation, we relied on the fact that manipulating written information in order to analyze participants’ perceptions of a specific leadership style has been used in experimental research before (Cronshaw & Lord, 1987; Norman et al., 2010). Leader enactment, however, has never been theoretically or empirically operationalized before. Therefore, our pilot work focused explicitly on operationalizing strong and weak enactment and testing if this manipulation has its intended effect on followers’ perceptions. We consulted a theater professional, who has studied and implemented Stanislavski’s method on stage successfully, to operationalize both enactment styles. He trained a professional actor during a few sessions before the actual shooting of the experiment and consistently instructed him during the shooting. Finally, the theater director provided input on editing the filmed material correctly in order to obtain the independent video conditions. We were confident of this procedure, as leadership
research has used trained actors to display a specific leadership style before (Antonakis et al., 2011; Gardner, 2003, p. 511).

In order to assess further the effectiveness of the enactment manipulation, we implemented a preliminary study with a different sample (Gardner, 2003, p. 512). This study was also intended to pilot the applied questionnaires. 105 German participants, mostly young working adults with a higher education, were randomly assigned to one of the two enactment conditions (strong/weak). We chose to apply the high life storytelling condition only, as we expected the strongest reaction from the participants to this condition. Directly after watching the video, the participants coded for the presence or absence of the enactment manipulation items using a binary measure (1, 2) (Antonakis et al., 2011, pp. 385f). These items for the enactment measure were developed based on Stanislavski’s theory of physical action in order to transmit genuineness and a consistency between words and actions. Sample items for strong enactment are “displays gestures that fit his statements” or “displays facial expressions that match his emotions.” Sample items for weak enactment are “blinks remarkably often” or “uses too much pressure in his voice”. Based on the results, we created a composite index, indicating the percentage of the items the leader demonstrated on a scale from zero (0%) to one hundred (100%). Following Podsakoff et al. (2003) a composite index was chosen, because we expected the items to “form” the measure of enactment (Antonakis et al., 2011, p. 386).

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS 20 maximum likelihood procedure confirmed a one-factor 8-item enactment scale as being the best fitting-model ($\chi^2 = 40.12$, df = 20, $p < .01$; CFI = .84, RMSEA = .098, SRMR = .078) for leader enactment. Hu and Bentler (1999) and Bühner (2006) argued that models with a good fit should have a comparative fit index (CFI) of .95 or greater, a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) equal to or less than .08, and a standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) of less than .11. Of course, these
cut-offs should be considered only as “rules of thumb” (Hu & Bentler, 1999, p. 4). It is important to note that the 8-item enactment scale supported the manipulations’ effectiveness ($\alpha = .71$). A univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted in order to examine the mean differences across cells, which showed that there were significant main effects for leader enactment ($F(1, 103) = 26.37, p < .001, \eta^2 = .20$). The pilot study also affirmed that strong enactment, as operationalized in our paper, led to higher levels of perceived leader authenticity (weak enactment $M = 2.83, SD = .62$, strong enactment $M = 3.37, SD = .67$; $F(1, 103) = 18.67, p < .001, \eta^2 = .15$). This process demonstrated that participants rated their levels of trust in the leader higher ($\beta = .62, p < .001$) and perceived higher leader effectiveness ($\beta = .50, p < .001$).

The functionality of the online data collection process was tested and verified in this preliminary study. In addition, the wording of the questionnaires was tested and verified because some of them were translated into German. To establish translation equivalence, the original English instruments were translated into German by a bilingual person and back-translated to the original language by another bilingual person (Mullen, 1995). Any discrepancies that indicated problems with translation equivalence (Berry, 1980) were resolved before proceeding. Therefore, a professional translator and English native speaker carefully checked for differences between the translations. The translator refined some of the wording in the German version to avoid ambiguities and misunderstanding. The wording was also slightly changed and adapted to the experiment. After these successful results, we proceeded to the experiment itself.

4.3.3 Procedure and Manipulations

To operationalize the experimental conditions, six speeches by a professional actor were videotaped in which life storytelling (low/moderate/high) and enactment (strong/weak) were manipulated. The actor played the role of a 50-year
old CEO. All six videos portraying the six conditions were designed to approximate organizational reality as closely as possible. The resulting videos, all approximately 5 minutes long, were based on prior leadership research using videos (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999, p. 354; Gardner, 2003, p. 509) and practical examples of corporate video messages.

At the beginning of the experiment, each of the six experimental groups received uniform background information on a company, context, and leader by way of helping to establish a realistic organizational setting. We chose a fictitious organization that was somewhat modeled on an existing listed German retail company. The former CEO of the company (now chairman of the board) recently published his autobiography, but he is relatively unknown to the public in Germany. The background information and the content of the video broadcast speeches were developed with the help of some information contained in the published autobiography. We changed the names, places, and dates. The fictitious situation consisted of the delivery of a video message from the CEO to his executives and managers, in which he informed them about today's changes in leadership requirements, and what they involve. As leadership is known to be especially important in conditions of transition, we chose a scenario involving change (Bass & Bass, 2008).

The participants were then randomly assigned to the six experimental conditions. Life storytelling was manipulated through differing content in the speeches. In the high life storytelling condition, the leader tells about his life, including trigger events - in this case, two negative turning points - in his life narrative. In the moderate life storytelling condition, the leader also tells about his life, but without including negative turning points. In detail, he introduces two episodes from his professional life. Finally, in the low life storytelling condition, he tells about organizational details only and the demands of leadership, but without revealing anything personal from his life. It was important to ensure that all three narrated
stories had an approximately equal word count. In this way, we avoided having to measure the effects of the quantity of information provided and manipulated only the quality of information. The speech of the high life storytelling condition had 495 words, and 55% (269 words) of the text was about life storytelling including negative turning points. The moderate life storytelling condition had 478 words and 49% (239 words) was about the life story of the speaker. The low life storytelling condition consisted of 480 words with 0% life storytelling. On average, the three different texts were composed of around 484 words. Thus, around 47% of the content of all three speeches was equal. This approach allowed us to examine only the effects of the relevant content variables.

Enactment was manipulated by creating two contrasting enactment styles: strong and weak. In the strong enactment treatment, part of the actor’s training included fitting his mimic and gestures to his statements, matching his facial expressions to his emotions, and showing a real smile. In the weak enactment treatment, the actor was instructed to engage in awkward body movements, to speak monotonously, and to blink remarkably often.

After the manipulation sequences via video, all participants were asked to complete several online survey measures, described below.

4.3.4 Measures of the Independent Variables

The measures for the independent variables life storytelling and leader enactment both operated as manipulation checks. Participants’ perceptions of the leader’s life storytelling were measured with two items that asked the participants if the leader (1) told stories about his life, and (2) told about special negative turning points in his life. Participants rated these two items with the help of a binary measure (1, 2). The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .73$. Both items were capable of differentiating between the three life storytelling scenarios (Cramer’s V was highly significant).
Participants’ perceptions of the leader’s enactment were also measured with a binary measure (1, 2) rating the eight enactment items, all identified in our pilot work. Application of the enactment scale to the main study meant that two of the eight items were excluded from the analysis based on item characteristics (“He blinks remarkably often” and “Occasionally he speaks too monotonously”). To further assess the construct validity of the enactment scale, we conducted CFAs. The 8-item structure ($\chi^2 = 54.622$, df = 20, $p < .001$; CFI = .917, RMSEA = .072, SRMR = .054) was outperformed by the reduced 6-item structure ($\chi^2 = 30.076$, df = 9, $p < .001$; CFI = .945, RMSEA = .084, SRMR = .048). The remaining six items for the manipulation of enactment showed acceptable results and supported the manipulations’ effectiveness ($\alpha = .71$).

4.3.5 Measures of the Dependent Variables

4.3.5.1 Perceived Leader Authenticity

This study used the recently developed and validated Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ; Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2008). The ALQ comprises 16 items and measures authentic leadership as a second-order factor comprising the four first-order factors - transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing and self-awareness - which are not independent (Bollen, 1989; Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 101). In our study, the average correlation among the four measures was $r = .56$ ($p < .01$). In addition, the internal consistency alphas (Cronbach’s alpha) for each of the measures were all at acceptable levels: transparency $\alpha = .78$, moral $\alpha = .69$, balanced processing $\alpha = .75$, and self-awareness $\alpha = .82$. A CFA confirmed the higher-order factor structure of the ALQ in our study ($\chi^2 = 353.19$, df = 100, $p < .001$; CFI = .883, RMSEA = .087, SRMR = .064). Following Hu and Bentler’s rule (1999) that two of the three fit indices should meet minimum cutoffs, the authentic leadership
scale showed acceptable factor-analytic fit. Therefore, the subsequent computations are based upon the authenticity index, measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). A sample item is “demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with actions”. The reliability of the authenticity index was satisfactory (α = .84).

4.3.5.2 Trust

Trust was measured with the help of the short form of the Organizational Trust Inventory (OTI-SF; Cummings & Bromiley, 1996, p. 303). The instrument could also be used to evaluate trust regarding colleagues, managers, or clients, for example, besides analyzing organizational trust. The original OTI included 62 items measured on a 7-point Likert-scale. Following other research on authentic leadership, we used a 12-item short version (Norman et al., 2010). We further reduced the scale to a 5-point Likert scale in order to adjust it to the rest of the study questionnaire. In this regard, Preston and Colman (2000) proved that the number of scale points, from a 5-point to a 9-point scale, does not perturb reliability or criterion validity. An example item is “I feel that the leader will keep his word”. The reliability of the scale was α = .93.

4.3.5.3 Emotions

The positive affective states and emotions of the participants were measured with the help of selected scales from the German version of the Modified Differential Emotions Scale (M-DAS, Renaud & Unz, 2006). The M-DAS enables the multi-dimensional evaluation of subjective emotional sensitivities. It is based on Izard's Differential Emotions Theory (1977), which classified the individual emotional experiences into emotional categories that can be qualitatively distinguished from each other. These emotional categories represent the entire scope of human emotions, such as interest, enjoyment, surprise, distress, anger, disgust, contempt, fear, shame/shyness, and guilt. Each of these 10 basic emotions has a subscale that
is represented by three adjectives. According to Renaud and Unz (2006, p. 71), subjective emotional experiences can be communicated by verbal self-descriptions, which makes collecting and analyzing concrete emotions relatively easy. The authors implemented additional scales of positive emotions, based on Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001): love, cheerfulness, contentment, enchantment, pleasure, and joy.

In our study, only these positive emotions of the modified version of the M-DAS are applied, as the perception of a leader’s authenticity should lead to more positive as opposed to negative emotions (Ilies et al., 2005; Michie & Gooty, 2005). Subjects are asked to rate the intensity of each of their emotions on a 5-point Likert scale. All subscales received sufficient reliabilities ($\alpha \geq .72$), as well as the overall positive emotions scale ($\alpha = .90$).

### 4.3.5.4 Job Performance

Job performance was obtained using three items adapted from Mott’s (1972) organizational effectiveness questionnaire; the chosen items are designed to measure the quantity, quality, and efficiency of work. A sample item is “How good would you say is the quality of your performance?” The adapted measure has demonstrated good psychometric properties (Schriesheim, Castro, Zhou, & DeChurch, 2006; Schriesheim, Neider, & Scandura, 1998). Following Palanski and Yammarino (2011), this measure was applied in order to receive a quasi-objective performance measure, as previous research showed its correlation with objective performance measures (Chun, Yammarino, Dionne, Sosik, & Moon, 2009; Fulk & Wendler, 1982). The scale was adapted to the purpose of the experiment, as the participants were asked to measure the performance of the followers of the fictitious leader on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree). Scale reliability was satisfactory ($\alpha = .78$).
In addition to the measures mentioned above, the study also gathered control variables. First, subjects’ age and gender were examined for possible differences as general demographic controls. Controls were also implemented for subjects’ education.

The descriptive statistics and correlations of all study variables are shown in Table 4.2. The correlations (Spearman) between all study variables showed that authenticity was significantly correlated with the outcome variables trust ($r = .64$, $p < .01$), positive emotions ($r = .64$, $p < .01$), and job performance ($r = .76$, $p < .01$). The three outcome variables are all correlated among each other: trust and positive emotions ($r = .44$, $p < .01$), trust and performance ($r = .48$, $p < .01$), and positive emotions and performance ($r = .28$, $p < .01$). Perceived authenticity was correlated with both manipulation check scales for life storytelling ($r = .24$, $p < .01$) and enactment ($r = .58$, $p < .01$), as were both scales with the three outcome variables ($r \geq .22$, $p < .01$). Only performance had no correlation with life storytelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Authenticity</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>(.84)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Trust</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.76**</td>
<td>(.92)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive Emotions</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>(.90)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Performance</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Life Story (Manipulation Check)</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>(.73)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Enactment (Manipulation Check)</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>(.71)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N = 334, Reliability alpha (α) coefficients are reported in diagonal in parentheses
**p < .01 (two-tailed test)*

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations
4.4 Results

Before the results were analyzed, tests for missing data and normality were carried out and item characteristics were analyzed. Because of some missing data points, we employed standardized data imputation techniques (Newman, 2009) to account for missing values. A multiple missing data analysis (Little & Rubin, 1987) showed that our absent data were missing completely at random (Little’s MCAR test, $\chi^2(9256) = 8896.70, p = .996$). We imputed the missing data points using the expectation maximization (EM) variation of the maximum likelihood technique (Enders, 2001). All descriptive statistics and computations that follow are based on the EM algorithm. Normality was assessed by analyzing skewness and kurtosis values for each variable examined in the experiment (Hopkins & Weeks, 1990). Most of the outcome variables were found to be well within acceptable values between +1 and -1 for both skewness and kurtosis. Item characteristics were developed by computing the corrected item-total-correlation as well as the item difficulty. The index of the item difficulty is acceptable for values between .2 and .8 (Bortz & Döring, 2005, pp. 219f), and the corrected item-total-correlation should not fall below .2 (Everitt, 2002).

For experimental studies, the homogeneity of variance assumption in particular is critical (Keppel & Wickens, 2004; Norman et al., 2010, p. 48). Therefore, Levene’s homogeneity of variance test was applied for every analysis. The majority of the tests were non-significant at $p < .05$. In fact, for both manipulation check scales - life storytelling and enactment - the homogeneity of variance was violated. Therefore, we compensated for the probability of unequal variances across samples by applying the Welch F-ratios in these cases (Maxwell & Delaney, 2004, p. 506).
4.4.1 Manipulation Check

Before testing the study’s hypotheses, we determined whether both manipulations had the intended effect in our study. We conducted a series of ANOVAs for the overall model with the dependent variable, perceived leader authenticity, entered at once with the six conditions as fixed (independent) factors (i.e. cell1, cell2, cell3, cell4, cell5, cell6). We found that there were significant mean differences resulting from the ANOVA for the full model test ($F(5, 328) = 9.49, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$). Another ANOVA was then conducted to examine the main effect for both manipulation check variables with the dependent variable described above entered. Again, results indicated a significant main effect for the manipulations ($F(1, 332) = 5.97, p < .001, \eta^2 = .41$). The interaction effect of the independent variables was not significant ($F(1, 332) = 1.51, p = .12, \eta^2 = .06$). Thus, we proceeded to interpret the main effects for both conditions with follow-up univariate analyses.

Entering the manipulation check for enactment as the dependent variable, we found significant main effects for leader enactment ($F(1, 327.96) = 32.04, p < .001$). In addition, there were significant main effects for the life storytelling manipulation, when we examined a leader's life storytelling manipulation check as the dependent variable ($F(2, 202.29) = 224.22, p < .001$). As the Levene’s homogeneity of variance test revealed the possibility of heterogeneous variances between groups for both manipulation check scales ($p < .05$), the Welch F ratios were reported above (Field, 2009; Welch, 1947).

In total, our results seem to support the hypothesis that our manipulations of life storytelling and enactment did in fact produce the desired effect.
4.4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

First, general linear modeling (GLM) was used to test the effects of the experimental conditions on the leader’s perceived authenticity, as doing so is common in experimental research (Avey et al., 2011; Norman et al., 2010). Second, path analysis in structural equation modeling (SEM) software (AMOS 20 maximum likelihood procedure) was used to test all hypotheses, including relationships with outcome variables.

First, we conducted a univariate ANOVA to determine the main effect of life storytelling and leader enactment on perceived leader authenticity. There were significant effects across the full model (F(5, 328) = 9.49, p < .001, η² = .13). Thus, there are mean differences across all six conditions to explore further. The interaction effect was not significant (F(1, 331) = 1.41, p = .25, η² = .01); therefore, the main effects were interpreted for both life storytelling and leader enactment.

ANOVAs were then conducted for the life storytelling manipulation in order to examine simple effects, which yielded an insignificant effect for perceived leader authenticity (F(2, 331) = 1.81, p = .17, η² = .01). An ANOVA conducted for the enactment manipulation yielded a significant effect for perceived leader authenticity (F(1, 332) = 41.10, p < .001, η² = .11). We next examined the results of testing for simple effects for each manipulated variable. These results are shown in Table 4.3.
“To Thine Own Self Be True”: The Effects of Life Storytelling and Enactment on Perceived Leader Authenticity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Conditions</th>
<th>Life Storytelling</th>
<th>Enactment</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>η²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Life Storytelling</td>
<td>2.72 (.71)</td>
<td>3.01 (.66)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Life Storytelling</td>
<td>2.73 (.64)</td>
<td>3.19 (.55)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Life Storytelling</td>
<td>2.73 (.68)</td>
<td>3.32 (.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Enactment</td>
<td>2.72 (.71)</td>
<td>2.73 (.64)</td>
<td>2.73 (.67)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Enactment</td>
<td>3.02 (.66)</td>
<td>3.19 (.6)</td>
<td>3.31 (.61)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n.s. = not significant

Table 4.3: ANOVA Means, Standard Deviations, and F Values for Experimental Conditions on Perceived Leader Authenticity

Even though the main effect of life storytelling was not significant across both enactment manipulations, this result can be misleading when perceived leader authenticity is examined since examining individual conditions, in fact, yielded significant results in parts. In the strong enactment condition, the effect of life storytelling had a significant effect on perceived leader authenticity (F(2, 163) = 3.44, p < .05, η² = .04). In the weak enactment condition, however, the differences between cells were not significant anymore (F(2, 165) = 0, p = 1.00, η² = 0). Thus, life storytelling had no effect on perceived leader authenticity in the low enactment condition, and neither did high life storytelling as compared to moderate life storytelling. Important, however, in the strong enactment condition, were the significant differences between the moderate and high life storytelling cell (F(1, 110) = 3.44, p < .05, η² = .04), a result that lends support for Hypothesis 1b. Including trigger events in the life story led to higher means than not including them, at least in the strong enactment condition.
The main effect of the enactment was significant and descriptive across all three life storytelling conditions, with perceived leader authenticity as the dependent variable. The main effect was highly significant (p < .001), as were the cell differences between moderate (F(1, 117) = 18.22, p < .001, η² = .14) and high life storytelling (F(1, 101) = 21.72, p < .001, η² = .18). The cell difference between the low life storytelling conditions was significant as well (F(1, 110) = 5.19, p < .001, η² = .05). Thus, the significance of the main effect was reproduced across all three conditions.

To prove our hypotheses further, we conducted a series of ANCOVAs to determine whether the hypothesized control variables (age, gender, education) had an effect on perceived leader authenticity. None of the control variables had serious effects on the results obtained in the analysis above, which increased confidence in our results.

Summarizing the results of our hypotheses tests so far, we found full support for Hypothesis 2, but only partial support for Hypothesis 1, a and b; in the end, we found support for Hypothesis 3 as well. The cell with the leader who was high in life storytelling and showed strong enactment (Cell 6) had a higher perceived leader authenticity rating than any other cell. Here, life storytelling and enactment explained 18% of the variance of perceived leader authenticity (Cohen, 1973).

Path analysis in structural equation modeling (SEM) software (AMOS 20) was used to test the hypothesized directional relationships. It is considered more efficient than typical stepwise regression techniques, because all mediation paths are measured simultaneously rather than step by step (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009, p. 235). Besides, SEM provides the best balance of Type I error rates and statistical power (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002; Walumbwa et al., 2011, p. 16). Variables were arranged according to the hypothesized model with life storytelling and leader enactment as antecedents, and trust, positive emotions, and performance as outcomes of perceived leader authenticity.
authenticity. We included the covariates age, gender, and education in the path model, using dummy coded variables instead of the categorical variables age and education in the study’s questionnaire. Because descriptive statistics told us that 40 years was the median in our study, a dummy variable was coded for participants up to 40 years. Education was coded for possession of a university degree or not. Age had a significant effect on perceived leader authenticity. Participants up to 40 years of age perceived the leader as marginally more authentic than did participants over 40 ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$, $t$-value 2.2). The other covariates had no significant effect on perceived leader authenticity.

The data demonstrates a strong fit with the model ($\chi^2 = 41.563$, df = 19, $p < .01$; CFI = .963, RMSEA = .060, SRMR = .039). The model with standardized regression weights is displayed in Figure 4.2.

![Path Model with Beta Weights](image)

**Note**: Standardized regression weights (incl. significance values)

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

*Figure 4.2: Path Model with Beta Weights*
Regression weights for all paths were significant (all $p < .05$). Life storytelling and leader enactment were confirmed as antecedents of perceived leader authenticity. As postulated in both parts of Hypothesis 1, life storytelling significantly predicted perceived leader authenticity ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$, t-value 2.11). Leader enactment was a significant predictor of perceived leader authenticity as well ($\beta = .33$, $p < .001$, t-value 6.56), as postulated in Hypothesis 2. Thus, results of the ANOVAs were confirmed.

Turning to the hypothesized effects of perceived leader authenticity on organizational outcomes, all parts of Hypothesis 4 were confirmed. As predicted in Hypothesis 4a, perceived leader authenticity positively affected followers’ trust in the leader ($\beta = .79$, $p < .001$), as well as followers’ positive emotions ($\beta = .53$, $p < .001$), as predicted in Hypothesis 4b. Finally, Hypothesis 4c was supported as well, since perceived leader authenticity positively affected followers’ job performance ($\beta = .52$, $p < .001$).

### 4.5 Discussion

This study was motivated by a desire to identify individual leader behavior that may enhance followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Despite the growing emphasis on authenticity in leadership research, followers’ social perceptions of the leader’s authenticity, as well as possible antecedents to these perceptions, have received relatively little attention. Our study contributes to the existing authentic leadership literature by introducing life storytelling and leader enactment as antecedents to followers’ perception of the leader’s authenticity. Our paper is thereby one of the first to introduce a perception-based theory for understanding authentic leadership.

Our empirical study confirmed the hypothesis that a leader’s life storytelling - especially if it includes negative turning points - could help followers to perceive
the leader’s true self and thus ascribe authenticity to him or her. However, the effect holds only if the leader displays a strong enactment. Second, our results substantiate the hypothesis that if a leader’s enactment style is strong as opposed to weak, followers ascribe greater authenticity to the leader. Because they perceived the leader as more authentic, participants rated their level of trust in the leader as higher, showed more positive emotions, and perceived higher job performance. Thus, additional empirical support was found for the proposed framework from Gardner et al. (2005) - namely, that a leader’s authenticity is positively related to subjective and quasi-objective organizational outcomes.

The between-group experimental design represents a particularly promising approach for analyzing perceived leader authenticity because of the high level of control and internal validity it provides (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1141; Neuman, 2011). The experiment sets up initial equivalence across study participants based on random assignments to the six experimental conditions. These conditions were all administered in parallel by means of the same procedure, whereby the background information and context given to those participating in the study was the same for each condition. With regard to all the tested variables, the random assignment appeared to be successful in attaining initial equivalence. Our analyses showed that both manipulations had the intended effect. In total, the study results contribute evidence of the important role that the leader’s life storytelling and enactment play in perceived leader authenticity, whereby ascribed authenticity enhances followers’ trust, positive emotions, and job performance. In the following, we discuss the limitations of our research, as well as the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of our findings.

4.5.1 Study Limitations

As with any study, our investigation has limitations. First, we asked participants to rate a fictitious leader on a relatively limited amount of information provided in
the study (some background information and a 5-minute video). Consequently, the perceptions of participants across all six leadership scenarios may be based on first impressions. Hence, our findings may not be generalized to more typical situations, where followers interact with their leaders and have a personal history with them. Owing to the artificiality of our experiment (Gardner, 2003, p. 523), the participants are not the leader’s actual followers; therefore, they do not fear any real consequences of the leader’s actions (Norman et al., 2010, p. 360). The fact that our experiment was conducted online also led to a lack of generalizability. Participants might have responded differently if the study had been conducted face-to-face in a laboratory or field setting, where interaction with the leader was possible (Norman et al., 2010, p. 360). However, more and more interactions between leaders and followers are happening virtually (Avolio, Kahai, & Dodge, 2000; Zaccaro & Bader, 2003). In addition, in business practice, images of others are often based on a single contact that is not even personal, especially where top management is concerned, and may have effects that are equally important.

Following these thoughts, in our experiment an actor plays a fictitious leader. It might therefore be asked just how authentic a person can be when acting as someone else. Theater literature, and Stanislavski in particular, offered the explanation that skilled actors do not act by seeming to be something or someone they are not, but by producing real, genuine behavior on stage (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 67). This is the core of method acting and of producing authenticity (Stanislavski, 1996), and it is what we expected of our actor.

Second, the videotape presentation of the leader was limited to a single speech and did not display additional leader behaviors. In spite of this, the use of videotape stimuli is consistent with other research into leadership (Howell & Frost, 1989). Quite obviously, a leader’s authenticity involves more than making speeches. As Holladay and Coombs (1993) suggested, leader behaviors need to be
researched because leaders are required to act in a variety of organizational contexts, including discussions, decision-making, and performance appraisals. However, we should always remember that for most employees in medium-sized and large organizations, a speech by a leader is the sole source of direct information. Hence, CEOs use video messages or blogs to interact with employees.

Third, our study was cross-sectional. For this reason, we were unable to determine causality in the relationship between perceptions of a leader’s authenticity and followers’ trust in the leader, positive emotions, and job performance. As with many other empirical studies, we based our interpretations of causality solely on evidence shown by co-variation and on our confidence in the suggested theoretical links (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2010, p. 911). In addition, because we collected the perceived authenticity and organizational outcome variables simultaneously, the measurement methods may have produced a common method variance problem, thus inflating the correlations among the measure values (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, this design problem applies for all six experimental conditions; thus, it could not have influenced the relative assessment, but only the absolute values of this assessment. With regard to the scope of the difference between the six experimental settings, and including the fact that the effects were expected in theory, we do not regard this as a major problem. We should also remember that the main challenge for this study was not demonstrating the effects of authenticity but examining life storytelling and enactment treatments.

4.5.2 Theoretical Implications and Future Research

Our study provides several important implications for future theory and research. First, concerning the manipulations, the leader’s life storytelling and its effect have to be deepened both in theory and empirically. Some studies have already
analyzed different story content (McAdams, 2001; Pillemer, 2000), and research exists that analyzes the influence of stories on the authentic self of the leader (Shamir et al., 2005; Turner & Mavin, 2008). However, our study is the first to investigate a life story’s influence on followers’ perceived leader authenticity. In addition to the negative turning point discussed, the influence of other trigger events needs further research (for example, originating events). It might also be interesting to examine if there is an optimal amount of storytelling for affecting followers’ authenticity perceptions, as some information may simply be overloaded (Lord & Maher, 1993, p. 68).

Regarding the second manipulated variable, leader enactment, our operationalization of strong versus weak enactment could be proved as valid for manipulating behavior. As a result, our study affirmed the possibility of “enacting the ‘true self’” as claimed by Ladkin and Taylor (2010, p. 64). We have seen that a weak enactment can overpower other information - in our study, life storytelling - in influencing followers’ perceptions. Therefore, it would be interesting to investigate if life storytelling would have a greater impact on perceived leader authenticity if it were the only information provided. Consequently, in further research, the content of the speech could be delivered in written form, without a video (e.g., Norman et al., 2010, p. 360). In addition, other information - for example, the context - should be manipulated in subsequent research to test whether contextual variables have an impact on the analyzed relationships (Antonakis et al., 2003).

Second, our study captures data points at one point in time only. Future directions should take a longitudinal approach in studying perceived leader authenticity (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1140). If more data points were analyzed in a given time frame, it would be possible to understand better how followers are influenced by the leader’s life storytelling and enactment. Because followers’ authentication of a leader is understood to be a continuous process (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 409), it
would be valuable to analyze the long-term effects of leaders’ behaviors. For example, we assume that, in the long run, “pseudo-authentic” behavior (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999) through falsely manipulating a life story and enactment would be difficult, as followers constantly compare the consistency between the leader’s life story and his or her actions, values, and beliefs. As soon as a leader’s actions no longer coincide with the fabricated life story, followers will judge the leader as inauthentic (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 409). Longitudinal studies could clarify this aspect. In addition, a developmental intervention would give further evidence on the impact of perceived leader authenticity on building trust, positive emotions, and performance (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009, p. 238).

Third, it could be very valuable to analyze differential effects of life storytelling and enactment on perceived leader authenticity according to individual follower differences (Woolley et al., 2011). For example, subsequent research could highlight the influence of followers' different personality traits (Judge et al., 2002), how they personally identify with the leader (Avey et al., 2011, p. 292), or their implicit leadership theories (Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Schyns & Schilling, 2011). Research has proven that followers’ traits, emotions, and attitudes influence their perceptions of leaders and their preferences for certain leader types (Bligh & Schyns, 2007; Kark et al., 2003; Lord et al., 1984). However, up to now these differences have not been discussed in the context of authentic leadership.

Our study affirms that leaders are able to tell certain stories and that they can engage in some specific non-verbal cues and “performances” to enhance followers’ authenticity perceptions. However, checks on this behavior with regard to the true inner state have not yet been developed. As we considered only perceived authenticity in our study, we do not claim to offer certain knowledge of how to be an authentic leader. What we can say, however, is that training leaders in what they tell followers and in how they “perform” can, in principle, foster authenticity ascriptions on the followers’ side.
4.5.3 Practical Implications and Conclusion

Our findings have several important implications for practitioners. Possibilities for learning and teaching authenticity are widely discussed but have not yet been completely clarified (Cooper et al., 2005; Endrissat et al., 2007). We have shown that an actor could be trained to elicit followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity; hence, leaders could be trained to be perceived as more authentic. It is widely known and acknowledge that leaders may be trained (Clark & Greatbatch, 2011; Frese et al., 2003), especially for charismatic leadership (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999, p. 365), but it has not yet been suggested that it may be possible to train a leader’s authenticity.

With regard to life storytelling, the enacted life stories approach could be a useful step towards a practical application of advancing authenticity in further education. In leadership development programs, a guided process of reflection about one’s own life could help leaders gain an understanding about their identity or self-concept (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Turner & Mavin, 2008). Leaders could be motivated to write diaries or autobiographies, and special training could help them to identify important turning points in their lives and write about them.

In line with research showing that delivery is important for charismatic leadership (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999, p. 365) and that charisma can be influenced to some extent (Conger & Kanungo, 1988), we have demonstrated that these assertions also apply to perceived authenticity. By operationalizing the “seemingly invisible mechanism” (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 65) that helps to convey authenticity to others, we opened the door for special leadership development programs that focus on the expressive behavior of enactment. There is already a growing industry that uses a theatrical approach to developing leadership (Halpern & Lubar, 2003). However, most practical approaches to date have generally lacked both a well-developed theoretical basis (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 72) and empirical evidence. Our work could be a useful step towards the development of
theoretical understanding and empirical proof in terms of operationalizing strong leader enactment; in this way, it may help to construct theatrical leadership development programs.

Overall, for the first time, this study offers empirical evidence of the importance of telling a life story, including negative turning points, and of strong leader enactment for the establishment of a leader’s perceived authenticity. In addition, the results provide additional support for the value of perceiving a leader as authentic, because followers show more trust, more positive emotions, and better job performance. Thereby, our research directly follows that of Antonakis, Fenley, and Lichti (2011, p. 392), who argued for practical leadership interventions that do, in fact, work and that are not detrimental to leader outcomes.
Up to now, we have started to answer the research question “How do followers decide about the authenticity of the leader?” (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 408). Therefore, we identified leader’s life storytelling as well as leader enactment as important antecedents for followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Still, important questions remain especially with regard to the authentic leadership construct. This dissertation is based on Gardner and colleagues (2005) model of authentic leadership and the four components identified by Walumbwa and colleagues (2008): transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and self-awareness. A closer look at the measurement of authentic leadership, the four components, and their relative importance for followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity is needed (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1140). Therefore, the first part of this chapter will discuss the measurement of authentic leadership and focus on the four subscales of authentic leadership. In addition, the importance of the authentic leadership construct is addressed in the second part of this chapter, where perceived leader authenticity is discussed in relation to charismatic and transformational leadership. The additional analyses presented here are based on the sample introduced in Chapter 4 (N = 334).
5.1 Measuring Authentic Leadership

This dissertation employed in both empirical studies the recently developed and validated Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ). Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, and Peterson (2008) addressed the construct development and measurement validation while assimilating research from social psychology, moral and ethical philosophy. Through a thorough review of theoretical contributions encompassing multiple disciplines, the authors were able to operationalize authentic leadership. In detail, after a deductive and inductive content analysis process, sixteen items were generated for being included in the ALQ (Walumbwa et al., 2008, pp. 96ff). These 16 items were subdivided into four authentic leadership factors: relational transparency (5 items), internalized moral perspective (4 items), balanced processing (3 items), and self-awareness (4 items), reflecting the components of authentic leadership as explained in the introduction of this dissertation (see Chapter 1.1.1). Sample items are: “Says exactly what he or she wants” for relational transparency; “Demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with actions” for internalized moral perspective; “Listens carefully to different points of view before coming to conclusions” for balanced processing; and “Seeks feedback to improve actions with others” for self-awareness (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 121). All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The ALQ measures authentic leadership as a second-order factor comprised of the four first-order factors transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing and self-awareness, which are not independent (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 101). A second-order model is mathematically equivalent to a first-order factor model, where items were allowed to load onto their respective factors and the factors were allowed to correlate with each other (Bollen, 1989). Initial research evidence for both convergent and discriminant validity with respect to transformational and ethical leadership was provided by the authors. In addition, internal consistency alphas (Cronbach’s
alpha) for each of the ALQ subscales were at acceptable levels (α = .76 to α = .92; Walumbwa et al., 2008, pp. 98ff).

Subsequently, the second-order factor structure of the ALQ was validated in studies by Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang and Avey (2009), and by Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, and Avolio (2010).

In both of the experimental studies of this dissertation (Chapters 3 and 4), the second-order factor structure of the ALQ was confirmed with the help of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) using AMOS 20 maximum likelihood procedures. Results showed that all four authentic leadership dimensions were positively correlated in both data sets, with an average correlation coefficient ($r$) of .63 (Chapter 3) or .56 (Chapter 4), thus further suggesting a core common factor. The internal consistency alphas (Cronbach’s alpha) for all subscales were satisfactory in both studies (α = .69 to α = .82). The reliability of the overall scale was α = .87 (Chapter 3) or α = .84 (Chapter 4) respectively. The correlations and reliabilities for the subscales are exemplified for the study of Chapter 4 in Table 5.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Transparency</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Moral</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Balanced Processing</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Self-Awareness</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.63**</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 334, Reliability alpha (α) coefficients are reported in diagonal in parentheses
**p < .01 (two-tailed test)

*Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Transparency, Internalized Moral Persepctive, Balanced Processing and Self-Awareness*

In order to receive a better understanding of the single subscales, we also investigated the influence of life storytelling and leader enactment on the four
authentic leadership factors individually. This was done with the data of Chapter 4 by general linear modeling (GLM). First, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to test the main effects of life storytelling, leader enactment, and interactions. With all four ratings of transparency, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and self-awareness entered as the dependent variables and with the two main conditions entered as the independent variable, there was a significant effects across the full model (F(5, 328) = 10.34, p < .001, η² = .14). Thus, there are mean differences across all six conditions to explore further.

Next, with all ratings of the four authentic leadership factors entered simultaneously as dependent variables, and the main effects for life storytelling and enactment entered separately as the independent variable, a MANOVA yielded a statistically significant main effect for life storytelling (F(5, 328) = 5.33, p < .001, η² = .14) and leader enactment (F(5, 328) = 5.33, p < .001, η² = .14). The interaction effect was not significant (F(1, 331) = 1.41, p = .25, η² = .01), therefore the main effects were interpreted separately for both life storytelling and leader enactment.

MANOVAs were then conducted for the life storytelling manipulation in order to examine simple effects, which yielded a significant effect for transparency (F(2, 331) = 5.45, p < .05, η² = .03), but insignificant results for internalized moral perspective (F(2, 331) = 2.35, p = .10, η² = .01), balanced processing (F(2, 331) = .37, p = .69, η² = .00) and self-awareness (F(2, 331) = 1.99, p = .14, η² = .01). MANOVAs were also conducted for the enactment manipulation and this yielded significant effects for all subscales of perceived leader authenticity: transparency (F(1, 332) = 36.49, p < .001, η² = .10), internalized moral perspective (F(1, 332) = 6.40, p < .01, η² = .02), balanced processing (F(1, 332) = 33.09, p < .001, η² = .09), and self-awareness (F(1, 332) = 38.89, p < .001, η² = .11).
We next examined the results of testing for simple effects for each manipulated variable. These are shown in Table 5.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Conditions</th>
<th>Life Storytelling</th>
<th>Enactment</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>η²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Life Storytelling</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>2.55 (.84)</td>
<td>2.87 (.78)</td>
<td>F(1,110) = 4.54</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral Perspective</td>
<td>3.11 (.79)</td>
<td>3.32 (.71)</td>
<td>F(1,110) = .55</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Processing</td>
<td>2.69 (.81)</td>
<td>3.12 (.81)</td>
<td>F(1,110) = 7.71</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>2.53 (.92)</td>
<td>2.85 (.79)</td>
<td>F(1,110) = 3.91</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Life Storytelling</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>2.63 (.77)</td>
<td>3.15 (.72)</td>
<td>F(1,117) = 14.55</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral Perspective</td>
<td>3.29 (.83)</td>
<td>3.46 (.56)</td>
<td>F(1,117) = 1.66</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Processing</td>
<td>2.56 (.77)</td>
<td>3.14 (.80)</td>
<td>F(1,117) = 16.46</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>2.43 (.77)</td>
<td>3.03 (.79)</td>
<td>F(1,117) = 17.52</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Life Storytelling</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>2.71 (.80)</td>
<td>3.39 (.82)</td>
<td>F(1,101) = 21.50</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral Perspective</td>
<td>3.05 (.85)</td>
<td>3.41 (.65)</td>
<td>F(1,101) = 5.84</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Processing</td>
<td>2.65 (.93)</td>
<td>3.21 (.92)</td>
<td>F(1,101) = 9.44</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>2.51 (.78)</td>
<td>3.25 (.79)</td>
<td>F(1,101) = 22.66</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Enactment</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>2.55 (.84)</td>
<td>2.63 (.77)</td>
<td>2.71 (.80)</td>
<td>F(2,165) =.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral Perspective</td>
<td>3.11 (.79)</td>
<td>3.29 (.83)</td>
<td>3.05 (.85)</td>
<td>F(2,165) = 1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Processing</td>
<td>2.69 (.81)</td>
<td>2.56 (.77)</td>
<td>2.65 (.93)</td>
<td>F(2,165) = 3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>2.53 (.92)</td>
<td>2.43 (.77)</td>
<td>2.51 (.78)</td>
<td>F(2,165) = .27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Enactment</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>2.87 (.78)</td>
<td>3.15 (.72)</td>
<td>3.39 (.70)</td>
<td>F(2,163) = 6.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral Perspective</td>
<td>3.22 (.71)</td>
<td>3.46 (.56)</td>
<td>3.41 (.65)</td>
<td>F(2,163) = 2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Processing</td>
<td>3.12 (.81)</td>
<td>3.14 (.80)</td>
<td>3.21 (.92)</td>
<td>F(2,163) = .18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>2.85 (.79)</td>
<td>3.03 (.79)</td>
<td>3.25 (.79)</td>
<td>F(2,163) = 3.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* n.s. = not significant

Table 5.2: ANOVA Means, Standard Deviations and F Values for Experimental Conditions on Transparency, Internalized Moral Perspective, Balanced Processing and Self-Awareness

As we can see, in the weak enactment condition, the differences between cells were not significant for all four factors, thereby replicating the results of the effect of life storytelling on perceived leader authenticity (F(2, 165) = 0, p = 1.00, η² = 0). Interestingly, in the strong enactment condition, the effect of life storytelling had a highly significant effect on transparency (F(2, 163) = 6.85, p < .001, η² = .08) and a significant effect on self-awareness (F(2, 163) = 3.53, p < .05, η² = .04), but the effect on internalized moral perspective (F(2, 163) = 2.14, p = .12, η² = .03) and balanced processing (F(2, 163) = .18, p = .83, η² = .00) was insignificant.
To remember, the effect of life storytelling on the perceived leader authenticity factor was significant in the strong enactment condition ($F(2, 163) = 3.44, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$).

To conclude, the leader’s life story seems to especially address the relational transparency and the self-awareness component of perceived leader authenticity. Transparency is understood as a behavior that involves openly sharing information and expressing one’s true thoughts and feelings (see Chapter 1.1.1.1, Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95). Thus, telling the life story is a means of presenting one’s authentic self to the followers, which shows disclosure and thus vulnerability. Self-awareness refers to presenting an understanding of one’s strengths and weaknesses, which involves gaining insight into the self through exposure to others (see Chapter 1.1.1.4, Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95). Thus, telling about success and failures in the life story should give followers more insight into the true self of the leader. The results provide support for the importance of telling the life story in order to be perceived as a transparent and self-aware leader by the followers, at least in the strong enactment condition. In the weak enactment condition, again the bad performance seems to outshine the information from telling the life story.

The main effect of the enactment was significant and descriptive across all three life storytelling conditions, with transparency, balanced processing, and self-awareness as the dependent variables. The cell differences in the low life storytelling condition were all significant (transparency: $F(1, 110) = 4.54, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$; balanced processing: $F(1, 110) = 7.71, p < .01, \eta^2 = .07$; self-awareness: $F(1, 110) = 3.91, p < .05, \eta^2 = .13$). The same applies for the cell differences in the moderate life storytelling condition (transparency: $F(1, 117) = 14.55, p < .001, \eta^2 = .11$; balanced processing: $F(1, 117) = 16.46, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12$; self-awareness: $F(1, 117) = 17.57, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$), and in the high life storytelling condition (transparency: $F(1, 101) = 21.50, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18$; balanced processing: $F(1,$
101) = 9.44, \( p < .01, \eta^2 = .09 \); self-awareness: \( F(1, 101) = 22.66, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18 \). Thus, the significance of the main effect of enactment was reproduced across all three life storytelling conditions for transparency, balanced processing, and self-awareness.

It is interesting to note that the effect of leader enactment on the internalized moral perspective is only significant in the high life storytelling condition (\( F(1, 101) = 9.44, p < .05, \eta^2 = .06 \)), all other conditions show insignificant results. As a result, we may conclude that followers’ perception of the moral component of the leader’s authenticity is only activated through a strong enactment of the leader and listening to negative turning points of the leader’s life story. Perceptions of the moral component do not respond to any other condition of the experiment. The results may indicate that especially the internalized moral perspective of leaders is very difficult to be perceived by followers, in any case if perceived authenticity is manipulated through life storytelling and leader enactment.

Again, similar to the results presented in Chapter 4, the cell with the leader who was high in life storytelling and showed strong enactment (Cell 6) had higher perceived ratings than any other cell concerning transparency, internalized moral perspective, and self-awareness. Only balanced processing had marginal higher ratings in the moderate life storytelling and strong enactment cell (Cell 4).
5.2 Authentic Leadership and Related Leadership Styles

5.2.1 Theory and Hypothesis

Authentic leadership is considered to be the “root construct” that forms the basis of other positive leadership constructs, such as transformational and charismatic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 316). As a result, the importance of authentic leadership can be best explained by differentiating it from related concepts. We will demonstrate this by adding alternative measures of similar constructs (transformational leadership and charismatic leadership) to our research model, and then presenting the unique influence of perceived leader authenticity on organizational relevant outcomes.

In comparison to transformational leadership, both concepts describe the leader as being optimistic, hopeful, developmentally oriented and of high moral character (Bass, 1999; Burns, 1978). Thus, to be transformational, a leader must be authentic. But, importantly, being an authentic leader does not automatically imply being transformational. In detail, authentic leaders must not be actively focused on developing followers into leaders (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 329). Authentic leaders focus on follower development toward achieving authenticity, but that may or may not involve the follower ultimately serving in a leadership role (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 104). Another key distinction is that authentic leaders are anchored by their own deep sense of self. Transformational leaders may also have this deep sense of self, but most importantly they are characterized by idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, pp. 329f).

Charismatic leadership, as a component of transformational leadership, is one of the most researched contemporary leadership theories (Lowe & Gardner, 2000). The charisma dimension of transformational leadership refers to creating a vision,
the creation of a sense of mission, the instillation of price, and the ability to gain the respect and trust of followers (Bass, 1998). In contrast to authentic leaders, the attention to leader and follower self-awareness and self-regulation is missing from the behavioral theory of charismatic leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). Also the self-concept based theory of charismatic leadership did not explore this process fully, although it paid attention to the followers’ self-concepts (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 330). According to the theory, charismatic leaders employ inspirational appeals and dramatic presentations to influence and mobilize followers. Authentic leaders influence followers based on their individual character, personal example and dedication (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 330). As we showed in the chapters before, authentic leaders may also apply certain dramaturgical devices to embody their authenticity to followers (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010).

Because of these conceptual overlaps and differences, we anticipate that the relationship between perceived leader authenticity and organizational outcomes is mediated by followers’ perceptions of charismatic and transformational leadership. Both charismatic and transformational leadership have been shown to be related to a number of organizationally relevant outcomes, including trust (Brown et al., 2005), leader effectiveness or job performance (Bass, 1999; Higgins & Sorrentino, 1990; Meindl, 1995; Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Hofmann, 2011; Shamir et al., 1993), and positive emotions (Avey et al., 2011; Rowold & Rohmann, 2009, p. 49). Still, we assume that the mediation won’t be a full mediation, as the effect of perceived leader authenticity on trust, positive emotions and job performance cannot be explained fully through charismatic and transformational leadership.

In sum, because leaders who are perceived as authentic use both aspects of charismatic and transformational leadership, as well as unique behaviors such as relational transparency and balanced processing (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 106),
we expect the leader’s authenticity to account for variance in trust, followers’ positive emotions and followers’ job performance beyond that explained by transformational or charismatic leadership. Based on this reasoning, we assume the following:

**Additional Hypothesis:** The positive relationship between perceived leader authenticity and trust, positive emotions and job performance will be partially mediated by (a) charismatic and (b) transformational leadership, but still provide unique explanations beyond what charismatic or transformational leadership offer.

### 5.2.2 Method

In order to analyze these relationships, we make use of the same sample that we used in Chapter 4 (N = 334). In addition to the scales of perceived leader authenticity, trust, positive emotions, and job performance, we have asked the participants to rate perceived charismatic and transformational leadership.

#### 5.2.2.1 Measures

Charismatic leadership has been understood as being part of the transformational leadership construct, as explained before. There is even research that treats charismatic leadership as equivalent to transformational leadership (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Yukl, 1999). Recent work has contributed to further understanding the similarities and differences between charismatic and transformational leadership. In this regard Rowold and Heinitz (1995) found that both constructs share a high amount of variance, but have a different impact on profit. As well as for transformational leadership, the most used method to measure charismatic leadership is the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass & Avolio, 2000), probably the best validated neo-charismatic leadership instrument (Antonakis et al., 2003). Charisma is surveyed with the help
of the scales for “idealized influence attributed” (IIa), “idealized influence behavior” (IIb) (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), and sometimes additionally with the scale “inspirational motivation” (IM) (Antonakis et al., 2003, p. 273; Howell & Shamir, 2005). In our study, charismatic leadership was measured with items from the German translated and revised version of the MLQ-5X of Felfe and Goihl (2002). We only used the four items that represent “idealized influence attributed” (IIa) following Antonakis, Fenley, and Liechti (2011, p. 380). A sample item is “goes beyond self-interest for the good of the group”. All items are measured on a 5-point Likert-scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree) and the internal reliabilities were satisfactory for the scale (α = .88).

With regard to transformational leadership, the most established measurement instrument is the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X; Bass & Avolio, 2000), consisting of 36 items that are broken down into nine scales with four items measuring each scale. The validity of the instrument is strongly supported (Antonakis et al., 2003; Nahrgang et al., 2011), but still the factor structure is doubted by many authors because of high intercorrelations between the scales (Meindl, 1995). These problems motivated Podsakoff et al. (1990; 1996) to develop an alternative instrument to measure transformational leadership - the Transformational Leadership Inventory (TLI). Based on current literature, the authors identified six central behaviors of transformational leaders and subsumed them into six scales: Identifying and Articulating a Vision (TLI-AV), Providing an Appropriate Model (TLI-PAM), Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals (FAG), High Performance Expectations (TLI-HPE), Providing Individualized Support (TLI-IS), and Intellectual Stimulation (TLI-ISN). Moreover the instrument captures transactional leadership (Contingent Reward, TLI-CR). The scale consists of 23 transformational items and three transactional items. The authors validated the factor structure of the model, confirmed significant reliabilities (α ≥ 0.82) and proved criterion validity. The advantage of the TLI as opposed to the MLQ is that it is built on theoretical thoughts of many
different authors and in that way its content is based on a number of empirical results. The German translation is based on Heinitz and Rowold (1995). We applied a short version of the original 26-item measure. In detail, we utilized the item with the highest factor loading of each of the six transformational leadership dimensions. In that way, we received six items in total to measure transformational leadership. A sample item is “develops a group identity and team spirit”. The participants were asked to rate the transformational leadership behavior on a 5-point Likert-scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree). The reliability was satisfactory (α = .84).

Table 5.3 shows the descriptive statistics and correlations for all scales including charismatic and transformational leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Authenticity</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Trust</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.76**</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive Emotions</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Performance</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Life Story (Manipulation Check)</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Enactment (Manipulation Check)</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Charismatic Leadership</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.75**</td>
<td>.76**</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>(.88)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Transformational Leadership</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.77**</td>
<td>.71**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.77**</td>
<td>(.84)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 334. Reliability alpha (α) coefficients are reported in diagonal in parentheses. **p < .01 (two-tailed test); * p < .05

Table 5.3: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations including Charismatic and Transformational Leadership

5.2.2.2 Results

In order to analyze the role of charismatic and transformational leadership as a mediator, we follow the approach of Walumbwa et al. (2011, pp. 16f) who based
their work on the ideas of Kenny, Kashy and Bolger (1998, pp. 259f). In order to justify the role of any mediator (here: charismatic and transformational leadership) in the perceived authentic leadership - organizational outcome relationship, the following four conditions have to be met: (1) perceived leader authenticity (X) is related to the outcome variables trust, positive emotions, and performance (Y), (2) perceived leader authenticity is related to charismatic or transformational leadership (M), (3) charismatic or transformational leadership is related to the organizational outcome variables, and (4) the strength of the relationship between perceived leader authenticity and the outcome variables is reduced when charismatic or transformational leadership is added to the model as a mediator. M would completely mediate the X - Y relationship, if the effect of X on Y when controlling for M were zero.

In order to the hypothesized relationships, we conducted path analyses modeled in AMOS 20 maximum likelihood procedure. We tested partial and full mediation of the effect of perceived leader authenticity on the three outcome variables by charismatic or transformational leadership. To remember, the model without charismatic or transformational leadership as a mediator was developed in Chapter 4 and demonstrated strong a fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 41.563$, df = 19, $p < .01$; CFI = .963, RMSEA = .060, SRMR = .039; see Figure 4.2). In the partial mediation model, all paths were allowed to load freely. In the full mediation models, all direct paths from perceived leader authenticity to the outcome variables were deleted successively.

Adding charismatic leadership as a mediator in the path model, the data demonstrated a strong fit with the model ($\chi^2 = 47.281$, df = 24, $p < .01$; CFI = .977, RMSEA = .054, SRMR = .039), again including the covariates gender, age, and education. The path model is presented in Figure 5.1.
Regression weights for all paths were significant (all $p < .05$). As we see in Figure 5.1, all four conditions of Kenny, Kashy, and Bolger (1998, pp. 259f) as described above are met: (1) perceived leader authenticity is related to trust, positive emotions, and performance, (2) perceived leader authenticity is related to charismatic leadership, and (3) charismatic leadership is related to trust, positive emotions, and performance. Importantly, (4) the strength of the relationship between perceived leader authenticity and trust, positive emotions and performance is significantly lower in magnitude compared to the model without charismatic leadership as a mediator (see Figure 4.2).

We further compared the fit of our hypothesized model in Figure 5.1 (partial mediation) against four alternate completely mediated nested models. In these alternative models, we successively deleted the direct paths from perceived leader authenticity to the three outcome variables. In the first alternative model, we
deleted the path from perceived leader authenticity to trust. The fit of that model was worse ($\chi^2 = 111.991$, df = 25, $p < .001$; CFI = .897, RMSEA = .102, SRMR = .053), with the difference in fit highly significant ($\Delta \chi^2 = 64.716$, $\Delta$df = 1, $p < .001$). In the second alternative model, the direct path from perceived leader authenticity to positive emotions was deleted, which resulted in a substantially worse fit of the data ($\chi^2 = 55.758$, df = 25, $p < .001$; CFI = .964, RMSEA = .061, SRMR = .0419; $\Delta \chi^2 = 8.48$, $\Delta$df = 1, $p < .01$). The third alternative model, where the direct path from perceived leader authenticity to performance was deleted, also resulted in a worse fit of the data ($\chi^2 = 56.325$, df = 25, $p < .001$; CFI = .963, RMSEA = .061, SRMR = .044). The difference in fit was significant ($\Delta \chi^2 = 9.044$, $\Delta$df = 1, $p < .01$). In the fourth alternative model, all paths from perceived leader authenticity to the three outcome variables were deleted simultaneously. This resulted in a substantially worse fit of our data with the difference in fit highly significant ($\chi^2 = 169.824$, df = 27, $p < .001$; CFI = .856, RMSEA = .126, SRMR = .059; $\Delta \chi^2 = 122.54$, $\Delta$df = 3, $p < .001$).

The same procedure was applied for transformational leadership as a mediating variable. Adding transformational leadership as a variable of partial mediation (Figure 5.2) resulted in a strong fit of the data ($\chi^2 = 44.425$, df = 24, $p < .01$; CFI = .980, RMSEA = .051, SRMR = .037). Regression weights for all paths were significant (all $p < .05$). Again, all conditions of Kenny, Kashy, and Bolger (1998, pp. 259f) were met, thus suggesting partial mediation.
In order to test for complete mediation, the alternate completely mediated nested models were established as described above. The first alternative model, where the direct path from perceived leader authenticity to trust was deleted, resulted in a substantially worse fit of the data ($\chi^2 = 124.798$, $df = 25$, $p < .001$; $CFI = .901$, $RMSEA = .109$, $SRMR = .050$). The difference in fit was highly significant ($\Delta \chi^2 = 80.373$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$). In the second alternative model, the path from perceived leader authenticity to positive emotions was deleted. The fit of that model was significantly worse ($\chi^2 = 53.908$, $df = 25$, $p < .01$; $CFI = .971$, $RMSEA = .059$, $SRMR = .038$; $\Delta \chi^2 = 9.555$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .01$). The third alternative model, where the path from perceived leader authenticity to performance was deleted, showed a substantially worse fit of the data as well ($\chi^2 = 59.051$, $df = 25$, $p < .001$; $CFI = .966$, $RMSEA = .064$, $SRMR = .041$; $\Delta \chi^2 = 14.626$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$). In the fourth and last alternative model, all direct paths from perceived leader authenticity to the three outcome variables where deleted. This resulted again in a
worse fit of the data ($\chi^2 = 148.906$, df = 27, p < .001; \text{CFI} = .880, \text{RMSEA} = .116, \text{SRMR} = .053), with the difference in fit highly significant ($\Delta\chi^2 = 104.481$, $\Delta$df = 3, p < .001).

### 5.2.3 Conclusion

To conclude, with charismatic or transformational leadership in the path model, perceived leader authenticity remained a significant predictor of all organizational outcome variables suggesting partial, but not complete mediation. Thus, overall we observed full support of both parts of our additional hypothesis. Charismatic and transformational leadership partially mediated the relationships between perceived leader authenticity and the organizational outcomes, but complete mediation can be rejected. In that way, the importance of perceived leader authenticity on trust, positive emotions, and performance could be further substantiated.
6 GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present dissertation examines perceptions of authentic leader behaviors, its antecedents and consequences. Therefore, a theoretical paper as well as two empirical studies on authentic leadership are presented here. The dissertation investigates possible antecedents to followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity as well as organizational consequences of perceived leader authenticity. The tested hypotheses in both experimental studies are based on the Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity, which is developed in the theoretical paper, presented in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Chapter 3 introduces a “preliminary study” on the research model, whereby Chapter 4 investigates the assumed relationships with the help of a larger scale study, which is subsequently referred to as the “main study”. Chapter 5 describes the basic concept of authentic leadership by discussing the measurement of authentic leadership, the four subscales of authentic leadership, and its linkages with other leadership styles. In this chapter, the results of all research chapters are combined and summarized. The general strengths and weaknesses of the research presented in this dissertation together with recommendations for future research will be described. Finally, some practical recommendations will be presented.
6.1 Potential Limitations and Focus of Future Research

This dissertation was motivated by a desire to identify possible antecedents to followers’ authenticity perceptions of the leader. Despite the growing emphasis on authenticity in leadership research, followers’ social perceptions of the leader’s authenticity as well as possible antecedents to these perceptions have received relatively little attention. Building on a perception-based theory for understanding authentic leadership, the Model of Narrated and Enacted Leader Authenticity as introduced in Chapter 2 generated a promising theoretical contribution for understanding judgments of authenticity to leaders. Therefore, we combined existing research on authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003) with the literature on life storytelling (McAdams, 2001; Shamir & Eilam, 2005) and enactment (Gardner, 2003; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Stanislavski, 1996). The results of both empirical studies (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4) substantiate the hypothesis that a strong as opposed to a weak enactment style exhibited by the leader positively influenced the authenticity that followers ascribed to the leader. Additionally, Chapter 3 found out that follower attributes (Romance of Leadership, RoL) and their sympathy towards the leader did not influence this path. Sympathy towards the leader did have a significant positive effect on perceived leader authenticity, whereby RoL was not significantly related to leadership perceptions. Furthermore, Chapter 4 confirmed the hypothesis that a leader’s life storytelling - especially if it includes negative turning points - could help followers to perceive the leader’s authenticity. However, these effects only hold if the leader displays a strong enactment. As a result of perceiving a leader as more authentic, participants rated higher levels of trust towards the leader, showed more positive emotions, and perceived higher leader effectiveness and job performance.

Both empirical studies in Chapter 3 and 4 used between-group experimental designs, which are considered as particularly promising for analyzing perceived
leader authenticity due to the high level of control and internal validity they provide (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1141; Neuman, 2011). Based on randomization both experiments set up initial equivalence across study participants. In addition, analyses indicated that the manipulations of life storytelling and enactment had the intended effect. Besides, several important covariates were used in the studies to determine the extent to which the experimental conditions affected the dependent variables above and beyond the covariates. None of the control variables impacted the pattern of results.

Despite the innovative experimental design applied, there are also some limitations. Both empirical studies are based on cross-sectional questionnaire data. As a result, the causality in the relationship between the dependent variables cannot be determined. Our interpretations of causality between perceived leader authenticity and the outcomes variables are based solely on the evidence of co-variation and our confidence in the proposed theoretical connections. This limitation is common in empirical research (Clapp-Smith et al., 2009, p. 238; Walumbwa et al., 2010, p. 911). In addition, because perceived leader authenticity was measured simultaneously with the outcome variables trust, effectiveness, positive emotions, or follower performance, the measurement procedures may have produced a common method variance problem, thereby inflating the correlations among the measures (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, this design problem was valid for all experimental conditions in both studies. Therefore, it could not have influenced the relative assessments, but only the absolute value of the assessments. With respect to the scope of the difference between the experimental conditions, and incorporating the fact that the effects were theoretically expected, the design was not regarded as a major problem.

Longitudinal research is clearly needed to assess issues of causality as well as the strength and duration of the followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity, antecedents to these perceptions, and organizational outcomes. Both of the
empirical studies in this dissertation captured data points at one point in time only. In contrast, by analyzing more data points throughout a given time frame, a better understanding of how followers’ perceptions are influenced by the leader’s life storytelling and enactment could be developed. In addition, the ability of an organization to achieve sustained, veritable performance (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 366) and the impact of the leader on that performance could be better assessed via longitudinal methods. For example, a design in which outcomes are measured some time apart from the leadership rating might prove interesting. The effects of perceived leader authenticity may be more visible over a longer time period. As a matter of fact, we echo the call for more longitudinal studies in authentic leadership research recently formulated by Gardner and associates (2011, p. 1140).

Generalizability should also be discussed. Both empirical studies used an online experimental design. Participants might have responded differently if the study had been conducted face-to-face in a laboratory or field setting, where interaction with the leader would have been possible (Norman et al., 2010, p. 360). Consequently, our findings cannot be generalized to more typical situations, where followers interact with the leaders and have a personal history with them. The artificiality of experimental designs has already been discussed by Gardner (2003, p. 523), who pointed out that the control provided by experimental treatments were gained at the expense of some realism. In this regard, participants were asked to rate a fictitious leader on a relatively limited amount of information provided in the study (context information and a single videotape stimuli). In addition, the participants are not the leader’s actual followers, and thus they do not fear any real consequences from the leader’s actions (Norman et al., 2010, p. 360). However, corporate CEO video messages or BLOGs are used in practice more and more. This may be due to the fact that more and more interactions between leaders and followers are happening virtually (Avolio et al., 2000; Zaccaro & Bader, 2003). Thus, especially in medium-sized and large
corporations, a single speech by the CEO is the sole direct information that followers get.

Concerning the generalizability of the data, participants represented many different industry sectors and professions in Germany, as well as different levels of hierarchy within organizations. Still, the data collection for both studies has taken place in Germany, and therefore is not automatically generalizable to other countries.

The results presented in this dissertation provide several important implications for future theory and research. Regarding the proposed antecedents, first the leader’s life storytelling should be developed further both in theory and empirically. The enacted life stories approach developed in Chapter 2 is one of the first to propose a life story’s influence on followers’ perceived leader authenticity, and the main study in Chapter 4 is the first empirical study to investigate this relationship. However, regarding the content, this dissertation only investigates the influence of negative turning points in the life story. Thus, further research concerning the influence of other trigger events is needed, as for example originating or anchoring events (McAdams, 2001; Pillemer, 2000). Additionally, it would be interesting to analyze if there is an optimal amount of storytelling. Maybe, followers might be overloaded by the leader’s information or maybe some information might be just too personal. The second discussed antecedent in this dissertation, leader enactment, was affirmed in both empirical studies to account for variances in followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. Our operationalization of strong versus weak enactment as developed in Chapter 2 could thus be valid for manipulating behavior. Chapter 4 told us that leader enactment even has the power to “outshine” other information provided - in that case the leader’s life storytelling. Further research should definitely investigate the relative influence of both antecedents further. Maybe, life storytelling would
have an even bigger impact on perceived leader authenticity if it was the only information provided.

Furthermore, besides the manipulation of life storytelling and leader enactment, other information, for example the context, should be manipulated in subsequent research. In that way it would be able to test whether contextual variables have an impact on the analyzed relationships (Antonakis et al., 2003). Avolio and his colleagues (2004, p. 815) were the first to realize that contextual factors may influence the authentic leadership process. They showed that relevant contextual factors may include organizational power and politics, organizational structure, gender, and organizational culture and climate. In this regard, Avolio and Gardner (2005, p. 327) proposed that environments which provide open access to information, resources, support, and equal opportunity for everyone to learn and develop will empower and enable leaders to accomplish their work more effectively. In regard to authentic leadership development, they stated that leaders must promote an inclusive organizational climate that enables themselves and followers to continually learn and grow in order to be effective (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). In particular, transparency in the culture is a core facilitating condition for such learning and growth (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 367).

Future research should in addition focus on more differential effects of leader’s authenticity perceptions based on inter-individual follower differences (Woolley et al., 2011). First attempts were made by Chapter 3, where RoL and sympathy towards the leader served as covariates in the experimental study. In that way, the dissertation was able to reinforce the importance of the authentic leadership construct as it offers unique explanations of followers’ perceptions. However, more research is needed on how followers’ different personality traits (Judge et al., 2002), or their implicit leadership theories (Schyns & Schilling, 2011), influence their authenticity ascriptions and their preferences for certain leader types. Beyond that, the extent to which followers personally identify with the
leader could be crucial for their authenticity perceptions (Avey et al., 2011, p. 292).

More empirical research is also needed to assess the relationships between perceived leader authenticity and other related leadership constructs. The dissertation made a first step in this direction by showing that perceived leader authenticity contributes to the outcome variables trust, positive emotions, and follower performance beyond charismatic and transformational leadership (Chapter 5). Still, more research on the relationship between these leadership constructs and perceived leader authenticity as well as investigations on other positive forms of leadership like for example servant leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Greenleaf, 2002) or leader-member exchange would be valuable.

Future research should also add to this dissertation by further exploring the relationships of the specific components of perceived leader authenticity (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1140). Although we have learned that authentic leadership is a multi-component construct, research that examines the separate relationships between the components and outcome variables is rare (Spitzmuller & Ilies, 2010). Chapter 5 of this dissertation was able to provide first evidence as to which of the four components was activated mostly by the proposed antecedents - life storytelling and leader enactment. For example, perceptions of the relational transparency and the self-awareness components were especially addressed by the leader’s life story. In addition, researchers should clarify what components are most important in certain situations and relationships, and as well they should analyze the dynamic interplay between the components. In that way, a deeper understanding between antecedents, perceived leader authenticity and follower behavior could be developed (Gardner et al., 2011, pp. 1140f).
6.2 Practical Implications

There is a growing volume of populist management literature that discusses the importance of authenticity in leadership and organizational contexts. Among these are field reports by former managers, guidebooks and practical directories. In particular Bill George, former CEO of Medtronic appealed to leaders to apply authentic leadership as a new genuine and value-based leadership (George, 2004; George & Sims, 2007). His book *Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to creating Lasting Value* is directed towards leaders to be inspired and instructed with regard to being an authentic leader. Five characteristics are introduced that should be continuously developed by authentic leaders: purpose, values, relationships, self-discipline and heart (George, 2004, p. 18). In this regard, Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electrics, and his wife Suzy call to leaders to just be authentic (Welch & Welch, 2005). In addition, there are more and more seminars and workshops provided to learn how to be an authentic leader. However, practical leadership interventions on how leaders may be perceived as authentic have received relatively little attention.

There are several practical implications from this dissertation’s findings. Most importantly, this dissertation has shown that leader authenticity can be taught in some way. This thought is in line with charismatic leadership research that proves that charisma is trainable (Antonakis et al., 2011; Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Authentic leadership research has discussed possibilities for learning and teaching authenticity, but these possibilities have not been completely clarified up to now (Cooper et al., 2005; Endrissat et al., 2007). Both empirical studies presented in this dissertation showed that an actor could be trained to enhance followers’ perceptions of the leader’s authenticity. And thus, it could be possible to conclude that it is likewise possible to train leaders to be perceived as more authentic. Training leaders is an established and acknowledged process (Clark & Greatbatch,
Concerning the first antecedent - life storytelling - leader’s self-awareness could be trained through implementing storytelling in leadership development programs. For example, a guided process of reflection about one’s own life could help leaders to gain an understanding about one’s self-concept (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Turner & Mavin, 2008). In detail, leaders could be motivated to write diaries or autobiographies. In addition, regarding the importance of negative turning points, leaders could be trained to identify important moments in their lives and write about them. In this regard, Stephen Denning, a former manager of the World Bank, published different books on storytelling and established himself as a mentor for organizational storytelling. He especially noticed that storytelling acts as a strategic management method. In his books like *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling: Mastering the Art and Discipline of Business Narrative* (2011) or *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action Through Narrative* (2007) he provides managers with concrete activity recommendations to use storytelling in everyday practice. Importantly, Denning (2006) demonstrated explicitly that there is no single right way to tell stories. Storytelling implies a great number of tools, each suitable for different company purposes. In his books he advises leaders on how to choose the right narrative, how to motivate followers and implement new ideas with the help of stories or how to utilize stories in order to transport knowledge and understanding (Denning, 2011). With regard to the importance of negative turning points, he showed that leaders have to reveal the limits of their knowledge and admit mistakes, in order to get attention (Denning, 2007, p. 157).

Concerning the second antecedent discussed - leader enactment - this dissertation suggests that enactment has various implications for leadership development programs. The theatrical approach itself is utilized more and more for leadership
development and there is a growing industry that builds on these relationships (Halpern & Lubar, 2003; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 72). Drama based training is applied increasingly in economic life. For example, the MIT offers a class called “Leadership as Acting”, which leads students through an abridged production of Shakespeare’s Henry V, to challenge them both mentally and physically (http://mitsloan.mit.edu/newsroom/spotlight-category.php?c=leadership). In this regard, Nick Morgan (2009) gives advice in his book Trust me. Four Steps to Authenticity and Charisma of how leaders can be effective speakers. Therefore, the author calls for training one’s body language to be in line with the message, right in line with the enactment theory discussed in this dissertation (Morgan, 2009, pp. 170ff). Importantly, as noticed already by Ladkin and Taylor (2010, p. 72) most of the theatrical development programs lack a well-developed theoretical as well as empirical evidence. This dissertation is therefore a useful step towards the development of a theoretical understanding to operationalize a certain leader enactment, which can enhance followers’ authenticity perceptions and empirically proofs this relationship. On the basis of these, theatrical leadership development programs may be constructed.

As a result, the findings suggest that leadership training programs that are focused on leading followers successfully may benefit from incorporating life storytelling and enactment. The resulting authenticity perceptions of the followers in turn lead to enhanced trust, positive emotions and follower performance. In that way, training leaders to be perceived as more authentic may provide positive returns on that investment.

Although the appeal of training leaders to be perceived as more authentic is obvious, the dangers with the “dark side” of authentic leadership make us proceed with caution. Followers’ perceptions through observing the leader’s behavior - the life storytelling and leader enactment - leaves room for manipulation and abuse (Howell & Shamir, 2005, p. 108). Leaders may fabricate certain life stories and
enact a certain way only to be perceived as authentic. Such a “pseudo-authentic” leadership behavior, following the “pseudo-transformational” leadership understanding of Bass and Steidlmeier (1999), is characterized through the lack of a moral foundation and legitimate values. We have learned before that the authentic leadership conceptualization of Gardner, Walumbwa and colleagues (Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) accepts the “internalized moral perspective” as one of the components constituting authentic leadership, and thus, as very important for the development of the leader’s authenticity (Avolio et al., 2004). Importantly, this dissertation only considered perceived leader authenticity. The studies examined theoretically derived behavior that could help leaders to foster authenticity ascriptions. Training leaders in the sense of what they tell followers and how they enact can principally enhance followers’ perceptions of the leaders’ authenticity. As a result, this dissertation does not claim to know how to be an authentic leader. Limitations to the proposed behaviors with regard to the true inner states of the leader have not been developed yet. Future research should clarify these aspects.

To conclude, the present research has increased our understanding regarding perceived leader authenticity, antecedents of perceiving a leader as authentic and organizational outcomes. However, more research is needed to further improve our understanding of the authentic leadership process and the antecedents that stimulate followers’ authenticity perceptions. So far, studies show that leaders perceived as authentic are likely to positively affect employee’s trust, positive emotions and performance. Hopefully, these results will stimulate organizations to foster authentic leader behaviors.
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A. Background Context, Instructions, and Manipulations of the Experimental Designs

<Before each scenario was presented, all participants were introduced to some generic background that provided the context for their subsequent responses.>

Ablauf der Übung:

Im Folgenden erhalten Sie Hintergrundinformationen zu dem Unternehmen RETAIL HOLDING AG sowie dessen Vorstandsvorsitzenden Dominik Breuer. Die Beschreibung umfasst eine Skizzierung der aktuellen Situation des Unternehmens.


Beantworten Sie danach möglichst alle Fragen, die Sie durch das Anklicken des "weiter"-Buttons auf der nächsten Seite erhalten. Dieser Button führt Sie dann auch zu den nächsten Seiten der Befragung.
Hintergrundinformationen:


Dominik Breuer bestimmt in seiner Funktion als Vorstandsvorsitzender die strategische und kulturelle Ausrichtung der RETAIL HOLDING AG wesentlich mit. Vor dem Hintergrund sich verändernder Marktbedingungen und die dadurch weiter gestiegenen Anforderungen an die Führungskräfte der RETAIL-Gruppe hat sich Dominik Breuer entschlossen, sein Verständnis einer erfolgreichen Führung via Videobotschaft im Intranet darzulegen.
Participants will then be randomly assigned to one of the following conditions/scenarios for the manipulations.

**Scenario 1**: Scenario one will show the leader exercising *weak* authentic enactment in a video message regarding his view of the changing demands of leadership nowadays, where he executes low life storytelling (no life storytelling at all). The wording of message can be found below.

**Scenario 2**: Scenario two will show the leader exercising *strong* authentic enactment in a video message regarding his view of the changing demands of leadership nowadays, where he executes low life storytelling (no life storytelling at all). The wording of this message can be found below.

**Scenario 3**: Scenario three will show the leader exercising *weak* authentic enactment regarding his view of the changing demands of leadership nowadays, where he executes moderate life storytelling (no trigger events). The wording of this message can be found below.

**Scenario 4**: Scenario four will show the leader exercising *strong* authentic enactment in a video message regarding his view of the changing demands of leadership nowadays, where he executes moderate life storytelling (no trigger events). The wording of this message can be found below.

**Scenario 5**: Scenario five will show the leader exercising *weak* authentic enactment regarding his view of the changing demands of leadership nowadays, where he executes high life storytelling (including trigger events). The wording of this message can be found below.

**Scenario 6**: Scenario six will show the leader exercising *strong* authentic enactment in a video message regarding his view of the changing demands of leadership nowadays, where he executes high life storytelling (including trigger events). The wording of this message can be found below.
<All six scenarios were presented in the main study (Chapter 4); the preliminary study (Chapter 3) only examined scenarios 5 and 6.>

<After having watched the videos, the participants responded to different questionnaires:

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, ALQ (Walumbwa et al., 2008); liking scale (Rubin, 1970); Romance of Leadership Scale, RLS Short Form (Felfe & Petersen, 2007); Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, MLQ-5X (Felfe & Goihl, 2002); Organizational Trust Inventory, OTI Short Form (Cummings & Bromiley, 1996); Modified Differential Emotions Scale, M-DAS (Renaud & Unz, 2006); organizational effectiveness questionnaire (Mott, 1972)

Participants also answered manipulation check items as well as control variables.>
Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

mein Name ist Dominik Breuer. Ich bin Vorstandsvorsitzender der RETAIL HOLDING AG und möchte Ihnen heute mein Verständnis von Führung näher bringen. Warum?


Unsere Unternehmensgruppe ist im Einzelhandel tätig. Das dürfen Sie nie vergessen. (NUR IN SZENARIO 1, 2, 3 UND 4).


Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit.

Ihr

Dominik Breuer
B. Letter of Authority by Bruce Avolio

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www.mindgarden.com

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material:

Instrument: Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ)

Authors: Bruce J. Avolio, William L. Gardner, and Fred O. Walumbwa

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for his/her thesis research.

Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Yvicki Jaimez
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Hagen, den 27. Februar 2012

Anna Weischer