A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF EVENT PLANNERS' PERSONALITY TRAITS,

SOFT SKILLS COMPETENCY, AND SELF-LEADERSHIP

by

Chareen Wan-Gould

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Management in Organizational Leadership

UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX

January 2011

UMI Number: 3452423

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ABSTRACT

The over-reliance on technical and management (hard) skills in the event management industry can no longer be the sole means of developing the skill sets needed to deal with the diversity found in a global work environment. The quest for excellent interpersonal or soft skills is becoming more evident in any project-based or relationship-based industries. This quantitative explanatory study examined 3204 male and female certified event planners' perceptions and the interrelationships among personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership in the states of Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, and California. Three online test instruments (the 40-Adjectives Unipolar Mini-Markers, the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment, and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire) collected data from three paired-set variables. The results from 288 completed responses revealed correlations at a 0.01 confidence level and confirmed all the hypotheses. Agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability were fundamental personality traits that led to event planners' soft skills competency. Openness and conscientiousness showed the strongest overall correlation with the three strategies (behavior-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought pattern) in self-leadership. The positive correlation between event planners' soft skills competency and self-leadership indicated as an individual's self-leadership ability increases, his soft skills competency level heightens. Similarly, an individual who is less proficient in soft skills has a lower self-leadership capacity.

DEDICATION

The past four years was a journey I will never forget. Each small victory was a humbling experience, every frustration was an awakening, and every disappointment affirmed my commitment to succeed. I would not have able to come this far without the unending support and encouragement my family gave me. For this, I dedicated this dissertation to my husband Ray, my parents Mr. & Mrs. Yau-Yat Wan, my mother-in-law Skye Patrick, and my brother, sisters, nephew, and nieces.

Ray, you are my strength. You sacrificed a lot to help me fulfill this dream. You believed in me when I doubted myself. You comforted me when I felt defeated. You celebrated every milestone with me and cheered me on with laughter and surprises. You were always available when I needed you and knew to give me space when I needed privacy. I am forever indebted to your unconditional love and devotion.

Dad and Mom, you instilled the values of hard work, endurance, and self-discipline. You taught me never to settle for less and always to reach for the highest goal. Once you said, "Education is your dowry and knowledge gives you the freedom and the wings to fly". I did not fully understand the meaning of it until now. I became who I am because of you and I honor you with this achievement.

Mama Skye, you have always treated me like a daughter from the day I wed Ray. Over the years your love and friendship has made me realized how fortunate I am to have such a wonderful mother-in-law. Your kind words and your genuine care have not gone unnoticed and I thank you.

To my brother Felix and my sisters Theo, Sherman, and Bronica, you have been

my inspiration and my role models. I learned the true meaning of selflessness, the magical power of family bonds, and the humble ways to honor and respect our parents. I am proud to be your sister.

To my nephew Bryan and nieces Rita, Claudia, Anson, and Zoe, You are my pride and joy. I pray you will follow your heart and be the best you can in life. Most importantly, I ask you to enjoy the journey of life and embrace all the wonderful miracles and adventures along the way.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

At last, I reach my final destination on this amazing journey. The dream has become a reality and it would not have been possible without the generous help, support, and guidance from many special people along the way. First, I would like to express my gratitude to all the faculty and staff members at the University of Phoenix. The commitment to high standards of scholarship and to life long learning gives working adults an alternative to our pursuit for higher education. I achieved my goal and proudly, I claim, "I am a Phoenix."

I owe my deepest appreciation to my dissertation committee. Dr. Joshua Fischer, my mentor, who patiently walked me through every step along the way, provided me gentle guidance, and steered me back to the right direction when I was off course. I will always remember the advice you gave me; "be true to your work". I further extend my sincere acknowledgment to my committee members, Dr. Kelley Conrad and Dr. Leslie Kille. Your encouragement and prayers have kept me sane and your constructive feedback and recommendations helped challenge my critical thinking skills and reminded me of the importance of attention to details and quality in scholastic work. I cannot thank my committee enough for taking me on as a challenge and for providing me the help I needed throughout the process.

A special thank you to Dr. Hillary Liberty, who helped guide me through the statistical analysis process and who tirelessly, helped me learn to understand the identification and interpretation of statistical significance. Dr. Joseph Avella, thank you for agreeing to assist me with proofreading and editing. Dr. Gerald Saucier and Dr. Jeffrey Houghton, I appreciate your generosity for granting permission to use your test

instruments, the 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire. Without the support of these instruments, this study would not have been possible.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Novell Burkett, Robert Gibbs, Ken and Tammy Knight for the support and encouragement you gave me throughout the past four years. And, a special thank you for the individuals I met in this journey including Mary Foley-Manning, Ken Proper, Marisol Craig, and Dennis Green. Your friendship has enriched my life in abundance and I will always hold you close to my heart.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The event management profession has grown to be a multibillion dollar industry. According to the 2004 economic impact study conducted by the Convention Industry Council (CIC), the direct spending revenue generated from this rapidly expanding industry exceeded $ 122.31 billion or one percent of the approximately $11 trillion US gross national product. The event management industry ranked twenty-ninth among the largest domestic economic contributors and provided nearly 1.7 million jobs.

In the United States and Canada, there are approximately 90,000 event planners (A. Ashurst, personal communication, January 21, 2009). Occasional planners and strategic event professionals make up 73% and 1% of the total planner population, respectively. The remaining 26% (23,400) represents the group of active planners who most likely belong to professional associations and participate in continuing education and certification (The Convention Industry Council 2007 Certified Meeting Professional Report, August 22, 2008).

Background of the Problem

Event management, like any project-based industry, works within the boundaries of a predetermined budget, custom-designed specifications, and scheduled deadlines (Cheng, Dainty, & Moore, 2005b; Zwikael, 2008). Each project progresses through five stages: definition, planning, implementation, control, and closure (Gehring, 2007). Event management is both an art and a science; successful event planners apply social skills and knowledge from a broad base of disciplines to maintain a balanced client relationship (Pillai, 2006). Individual competencies and social effectiveness, the two major components among a range of soft skills, determine how an event planner

responds and reacts within an organizational context and predict an individual's work effectiveness and satisfaction (Dreyfus, 2008; Semadar, Robins, & Ferris, 2006).

Some researchers suggest self-efficacy, responsiveness to social cues, sensitivity to others' emotional needs, and cognizance of diversity are dimensions of soft skills. Others consider soft skills to include ego resiliency, collaboration, commitment to standards for excellence, communications, emotional intelligence, and relationship building (Fisher, Schulter, & Yoleti, 2005; Gabel, Dolan, & Cerdin, 2005; Halfhill & Nielson, 2007; Muzio, Fisher, Thomas, & Peters, 2007). Managers who lack the soft skill competencies often cannot detect, prevent, and address human issues in a timely and effective manner, which contribute to some of the leading causes of project failures (Jha & Iyer, 2006; Srica, 2008; Turner, Muller, & Dulewicz, 2009).

A study presented by Dainty, Cheng, and Moore (2006) at the 2nd Specialty Conference on Leadership and Management in Construction revealed successful project managers shared 12 common competencies. These managers usually exhibited a strong desire to learn and were more sensitive to customers' needs and wants. They exercised influences and assertiveness, yet were flexible with new ideas, and adapted to change. Successful project managers also encouraged to develop conceptual skills and analytical thinking to instill a drive for excellence. They maintained composure and promoted team collaboration to enhance overall individual competency and organizational effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

Identifying diverse skill sets is becoming necessary in differentiating high potential and non-high potential in the 21st century workplace (Dries & Pepermans,

2007). Cognitive intelligence (CI), emotional intelligence (EI), and social intelligence (SI) represent some of the many clusters of human competencies. Cognitive intelligence is a learned ability to think, reason, analyze, and prioritize information and decisions. Emotional intelligence and social intelligence are personality traits and abilities to recognize and understand emotional information in oneself and others (Boyatzis, 2008; Boyatzis & Saatcioglu, 2008; Hoffman & Frost, 2006).

Emotional intelligence and social intelligence are soft skill competencies. Soft skills directly affect work performance (Boyatzis, 2006; Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008; Park, 2005). Managers who display soft skills proficiency have a positive effect on employees' job satisfaction (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005, McEnrue & Groves, 2006; Turner & Lloyd-Walker, 2008). Studies also found a positive correlation between soft skills competency and leadership effectiveness (Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, & Boyle, 2006; Riggio & Reichard, 2008; Suliman & Al-Shaikh, 2007; Wood & Vilkinas, 2005). Hence, soft skills or human skills enhance leadership effectiveness and success in project coordination and management (Crawford & Cabanis-Brewin, 2005; Sunindiijo, Hadikusumo, & Ogunlana, 2007).

The general problem is a failure to recognize the importance of soft skills in the event management industry. The professional certification programs and training place greater emphasis on identifying and applying a broad base of technical skills, sometimes referred to as the "hard skills" in the project management profession. The design of these programs aims to help event planners perfect skills in six broad categories: education, financial management, services, logistics, programs, and event management related conditions (Convention Industry Council [CIC], 2008). The over reliance on

technical and management skills underestimates human skills even though soft skills prove to be critical to success in project management (Muzio et al., 2007; Pant & Baroudi, 2008; Zielinski, 2005).

The specific problem addressed in this study is event planners are more task oriented and less relationship driven. Event planners typically exert a significant time and energy in designing the program, attending to the details, and monitoring the execution. As a result, they neglect to address emotional issues in a timely fashion, and sometimes create unnecessary stress and unhealthy working relationships with their clients. That soft skill training is not part of the industry requirement creates a disconnect. While there are constant debates whether soft skills are personality traits (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2007) or learned abilities (Crosbie, 2005), multiple studies have suggested that soft skills can compensate for the lack of technical knowledge and cognitive intelligence (Bailey & Mitchell, 2006/2007; Cote & Miners, 2006). If these claims are true, this information could change the nature of event management or any project team-based profession as well as define new dimensions of skills training and employment assessment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this correlational study was four-fold. First, it described the common personality traits found in event planners. Second, it identified event planners' soft skill competencies. Third, it examined the self-leadership capacity in event planners. Finally, it identified the interrelationships among planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership capacity.

The study involved three components: The 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers by Saucier (1994) inventoried event planners' personality traits. The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA), a tool custom designed for this study, measured participants' soft skills competency. The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) by Houghton and Neck (2002) studied participants' self-leadership ability.

 The target population of this study included the 3204 certified event planners in the five primary states of Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, and California. Collectively, planners in these five states comprise 43% of the total 7508 planner population in the United States.   The participants of the study were active full-time, part-time, or third-party independent certified event planners representing corporate, association, and conventions sectors of the industry.

Significance of the Problem

A research study identifies issues and problems, addresses new areas of interest and significance, or extends knowledge and potential applications (Creswell, 2005). Research is systematic and scientific. The purpose of a research is to identify what is known, unfold what needs to be known, and isolates what is worth knowing.

From an individual development standpoint, this study will provide a valuable information base for event planners to understand their areas of strengths and weakness. By identifying missing skills, an event planner may increase his or her desire to pursue personal goals and establish a stronger sense of entrepreneurship and self-leadership (D'Intino, Goldsby, Houghton, & Neck, 2007). Planners may also learn new interpersonal skills to create and strengthen relationships with customers and suppliers. As Wellington (2005) asserted, successful people possess both exceptional technical and

soft skills and they work well with everyone, displaying proficiency in self-monitoring and relationship building.

In terms of organizational development, managers who will apply the identified soft skills learn to detect and recognize symptoms of workplace emotions. These managers may become more insightful in identifying the emotional and social needs of employees and customers, and more proficient in formulating solutions and validating effectiveness and individual satisfaction (Milivojevich, 2006; Momeni, 2009). This study will provide a good reference for managers to evaluate if employees are consistently exerting their full potential and capability in meeting job demands and future requirements. The information will help guide managers in designing programs that lead to skills enhancements, enrich career-training opportunities, and contribute to team leadership development. In addition, the soft skills can be valuable performance indicators for reflecting an organizational manager's leadership effectiveness, sensitivity toward other people's emotional needs, and responsiveness to change.

In education and research, this study will bring awareness of soft skills to any project-based or relationship-based industry and help define new dimensions of skills training and employment selection. The results of the study may also extend the interest of cognitive and noncognitive intelligence study. The idea of emotional and social intelligence can also provide a framework to support future soft skill studies in other professions beyond the event management industry.

Learning the skill competencies within the field of project-based industry is both necessary and beneficial (Bailey & Mitchell, 2006/2007; Dainty, Cheng, & Moore, 2004). Successfully identifying a specific set of soft skills can help project planners

maximize performance, produce positive results, and enhance customer satisfaction

(Cote & Miners, 2006; Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005). Moreover, personality assessment

may help create and understand planners' leadership skills and potential (Turner, Muller,

& Dulewicz, 2009). The results of this study will contribute to a further understanding

of the linkage between soft skill competency and personality traits, as well as soft skills

competency and self-leadership.

Nature of the Study

Overview of the Research Method

This study applied a quantitative, explanatory research design to examine the

interrelationships among event planners' personalities, soft skill competencies, and self-

leadership capacities. The tools for the three online assessments included the 40-

Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers, the Event Planner Soft Skill Assessment (EPSSA),

and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ). Chapter 3 discussed each

instrument in detail.

Overview of the Design Appropriateness

The design of a quantitative explanatory research is to measure the extent of

association between or among two or more variables and to determine if changes in one

variable lead to variation in the others (Creswell, 2005). The objective of this study was

not to find or predict any cause-and-effect but to gain an understanding whether there

are relationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competencies, and

self-leadership. The study targeted certified event planners as a homogeneous group and

collected data at one given time, making an explanatory design appropriate.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The objective of this study was to explore the interrelationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership strengths and potential. The general question asked, "What are the relationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency and self-leadership capacities?" Three specific subquestions guided the study:

I.   What is the relationship between event planners' personality traits and soft skills competency?

II. What is the relationship between event planners' soft skills competency and self-leadership?

III. What is the relationship between event planners' personality traits and self-leadership?

These questions led to the following hypotheses:

H10: There is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

H1A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

H20: There is no relationship between an event planner's soft skills competency and self-leadership.

H2A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's soft skills competency and self-leadership.

H30: There is no relationship between event planners' personality traits and self-leadership.

H3A: There is a positive relationship between event planners' personality traits and

self-leadership.

Theoretical Framework

The five-factor model (FFM), Goleman's trait model of the emotional

intelligence theory, and the self-leadership theory are underlying theoretical constructs

of this study. Costa and MaCrae (1992) identified neuroticism, extraversion,

agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience as the five personality

traits that described personality functioning and predicted behaviors and attitudes. This

trait model described the interrelationship between personal characteristics and

individual competencies.

The self-leadership theory depicts self-leadership as a discipline composed of

self-influence and self-motivation. The design of behavior-focused strategies, natural

reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies aim to promote an

individual's ability to self-regulate, encourage desirable behaviors, and enhance positive

thinking (Houghton, Bonham, Neck, & Singh, 2004). These theories provided a

framework for studying the significance in event planners' personality traits and skills

competency. Chapter 2 discussed these theories in detail.

The goal of an explanatory research is to measure the covariance and the extent

to which a change in one variable leads to a variation in another (Creswell, 2005). For

example, the rise of an event planner's conscientiousness might affect self-goal setting

or an event planner with a higher degree of agreeableness might be more (or less)

receptive to new ideas. A high correlation indicates a strong association and a strong

association signifies a positive relationship between variables.

This research applied an inductive approach to examine any suggestion of possible inference such as whether an event planner's agreeableness increases openness to new ideas. The intention of this explanatory study was to find the degree, the pattern, and the breadth of the association and not to predict an outcome or forecast a performance. This study treated the subject participants as a single group, at one time, and interpreted findings from the statistical data and formulated conclusions that reflect the strength of the association. The study results did not consider past or future information and there was neither intervention nor comparison between different groups as might occur in an experimental design study (Creswell, 2005).

<div align="center">**Definition of Terms**</div>

Soft skills measured in this study are self-efficacy, drive for excellence, sensitivity to others' needs, and promotion of team collaboration. Soft skill competencies such as emotional intelligence and social intelligence are an aggregation of personal and social capabilities enabling one to compose emotional impulses and modulate relationships with others. There are four domains within the categories of personal and social competence; Self-awareness and self-management are part of personal competence whereas social awareness and relationship management are attributes of social competence (Goleman, Boyatzis, & Mckee, 2002).

The five-factor model of personality traits, according to Costa and MaCrae (1992), is useful for measuring individual differences in personality. The factor markers include neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. Neuroticism represents the extent of emotional stability. Agreeableness defines one's willingness to engage, comfort level around others, and skill in handling

social situations. Extraversion is the likelihood of being sociable, affectionate,

adventurous, and energetic. Conscientiousness describes the tendencies to self-

discipline, ambition, perseverance, and accomplishment. Openness to experience refers

to the receptiveness to new experiences and the desire for innovative learning.

Self-leadership involves self-regulation and self-influence toward personal

effectiveness (Manz & Neck, 2004; D'Intino et al., 2007). Self-leadership comprises a

combination of behavioral and cognitive disciplines including intrinsic motivation,

constructive thinking, and positive perception for individual success. The three general

self-leadership strategies consist of behavior-focused self-regulation and awareness,

seeking out naturally enjoyable and rewarding work, and creating constructive thinking

through positive mental imagery and self-talk. Self-talk is a powerful way of enabling

one to change the way one thinks and feels and to take charge of one's own emotions

and actions (Bradberry & Greaves, 2005).

This study used the terms "quantitative explanatory research design" and

"correlational research design" interchangeably. Correlational research design is a

procedure in quantitative study in which researchers apply one or multiple statistical

techniques to examine and explain the degree of association between or among

variables. The three variables of this study were personality traits, soft skills

competencies, and self-leadership.

Assumptions

There were four assumptions in this study. The first assumption was the study

received support and cooperation from the targeted planners who agreed to complete the

assessments. The second assumption was the choice of measurement tools fit the nature

of the study and adequately addressed the research questions and hypotheses. The third assumption was all participants understood the general definitions of soft skills and social competency, personality traits, and self-leadership. The last assumption was participants were interested in the topic and would answer the self-report questionnaires honestly, accurately, timely, and to the best of their ability.

Scope and Limitations

There are potential limitations in this study. The participants of this study were active planners from the five states with the highest numbers of certified event planner population in the United States. The homogeneity of this selected group may or may not fully represent the overall population in different segments within the field of event management, both nationally and internationally. The sample excluded noncertified planners, occasional planners, or inactive planners who chose not to renew certification status, and administrators who involved only in event strategic planning. The results of the study may pose certain restrictions on generalization. Furthermore, this study used a generic term to describe the group of professional planners to avoid any trademark infringement and legality. The inability to describe fully the nature and professional status of the participants may suppress the validity of the study results.

The idea of using soft skills for development is new to the project-based event management profession. The definitions of soft skills remain debatable and are susceptible to individual interpretations. The terms "emotional and social intelligence," "personality traits," and "self-leadership" can be ambiguous and may hinder event planners' understanding and comfort level in completing the study instruments honestly and accurately. For example, participants may interpret personality traits as personality

types, limit self-leadership to self-control, and restrict emotional and social intelligence to a narrow definition of maintaining one's own emotional stability and composure. The inability to understand the terms used in the survey questions may deter participants from choosing the most reflective answers.

The willingness of participation from the group of event planners and the timeliness of their responses could contribute to the third limitation. The three-part study (personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership) requires full cooperation and commitment from the event planners. The success rate and the validity and reliability of the study depend on the numbers of responses from the participants. If the surveys do not generate enough responses, the results of the study may not be valid and the conclusions can be misleading.

Since the random selection of event planners in this study will produce variations in age, maturity, year of experience, and area of expertise, the results may pose threats to internal validity. The scores from mature and seasoned event planners collected from the Event Planner Soft Skill Assessment (EPSSA) may differ from the scores of younger and less experienced planners. The findings may present high variations in scores in certain areas and there may be difficulties in finding common characteristics and in generalizing results to different project-based groups. Chapter 3 further discussed the instruments of this study.

Delimitations

An individual's cluster of competencies, according to Boyatzis (2008), consists of two broad categories: cognitive and noncognitive. Cognitive intelligence is an ability to process and analyze information. Emotional intelligence and social intelligence

competencies are noncognitive competencies. The intent of the research was to learn about noncognitive soft skills; therefore, cognitive intelligence is nonrelevant and is not a criterion of measure in this study. The research studied participants' noncognitive soft skills by assessing individual's self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) were the primary instruments for soft skills competency and self-leadership and the personality assessment relied on the validity of Mini-Markers.

The success of this study rested upon participants' willingness to complete the three-part survey. Each survey provided the data to analyze the relationships among individuals' personality traits, soft skill competencies, and self-leadership.

The difficulty of obtaining consent for using the industry recognized trademark for the group of designated event planners posed a concern. To avoid any infringement of trademark rights and legal responsibilities, the research used a generic term to describe the group of participants. The possible drawbacks include the inability to approach eligible participants on a larger scale through various industry networks and associations. Approaching participants on an individual basis also decreases participants' ability to understand and identify with the scale and relevance of the study.

Summary

Event management is by nature a project-based, relationship-focused industry that operates within five stages: research, design, planning, coordination, and evaluation (Goldblatt, 2008). In the past, the event management industry placed emphasis on technical and managerial skills training, commonly known as hard skills. Event

planners and other project management professionals perceive emotional and social intelligence (soft skills) to be less important. In fact, studies previously identified the main reason for project failure was the inability to detect, prevent, and address human issues (Jha & Iyer, 2006; Srica, 2008). The ability to identify, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as recognizing the emotions in others is more important than ever in this global marketplace (Ferres & Connell. 2004).

Chapter 1 introduced the nature and appropriateness of this designed study, presented the general and specific questions driving this research, and outlined the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations associated with it. Chapter 2 extended the focus to explore the current literature and research on the subjects of personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. Chapter 3 discussed the methodology for the study and detail plans for implementation. Chapter 4 presented the data findings and Chapter 5 discussed the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The event management industry has grown to be a multi-billion dollar global industry, contributing over $122 billion to the U.S. economy and providing 1.7 million jobs in 2004 (Goldblatt, 2008). Event management has gained in recognition as a profession in the past two decades. The industry generates new career interests from a diverse population, including but not limited to young college graduates, homemakers, and retirees who prefer to stay active and independent. Hundreds of institutions are now offering classes, certifications, and degree programs in event-related studies. Event management training enters the mainstream of higher education, however, there are still debates and skepticism as to whether event management is a profession, a technical skill, or both.

Event management shares a great similarity with project management. They are, by nature, temporary endeavors (Flannes & Levin, 2005; Gehring, 2007) within the criteria of time, cost, and quality, known as the "Iron Triangle" (Chan & Chan, 2004; Lam, Chan, & Chan, 2007; Okiako, Johnansen, & Greenwood, 2008). Event planners and project managers exert strenuous efforts toward a specific objective or a set of goals. The three common denominators among the skills found in project managers are technical expertise, interpersonal skills, and proficiency in problem solving and decision-making (Roper & Phillips, 2007). The success of a project manager often depends upon the individual's motivation and contributions (Gehring, 2007) as well as the effectiveness of self-managed work teams (Roper & Phillips, 2007).

Socio-technical system theory emphasizes social organization of work groups (Scott & Davis, 2007) in increasing organizational effectiveness. A joint optimization of

an organization's technological and social systems, according to Jones (2004), creates a culture that promotes individual well-being, social support, and group cohesiveness while maximizing the quality of task performance. Cheng et al. (2005a) proposed a hybrid approach of incorporating the job (micro competencies), the person (macro competencies), and the role in managing performance.

Common Characteristics of Effective Project Managers

Effective project managers share many common characteristics or personality traits. They have high achievement orientations and share a high standard of excellence. They are information seekers who are skilled in conceptual and analytical thinking, are assertive and action-focused, have a desire to take the initiative, and are willing to make decisions. Effective project managers are sensitive to customers' needs and are flexible and adaptive to changes. These managers usually maintain a good balance of self-control and emotional maturity in interpersonal relationships, teamwork, and leadership (Balaji & Somashekar, 2009; Cheng et al., 2005; Dainty et al., 2004, 2006; Grawal & Salovey, 2005; Langhorn, 2004; Leung & Bozionelos, 2004; Salovey & Grewal, 2005).

A study by Jha and Iyer (2006) discovered positive and negative attributes that critically affected project success or failure. Success factors included a project manager's competency, effectiveness of interacting with project participants, skills in monitoring and responding to feedback, and support from top management. Factors contributing to project failures were faulty conceptualization of project uniqueness, lack of cooperation from project participants, and project managers' ignorance and inexperience. The study results clearly pointed to the project manager's competence as most critical to achieving quality performance ratings.

People interpret project successes differently (Chan & Chan, 2004) but there is no denial that human factors are important in a project's success and they affect an individuals and an organization's performance and competitiveness (Clark, 2006; Updegraff, 2004; Voola, Carlson, & West, 2004; Zielinski, 2005). Effective leaders acquire and possess interpersonal skills and political skills (Leban & Zulauf, 2004; Sunindijo et al., 2007; Turner & Lloyd-Walker, 2008; Wood & Vilkinas, 2005). Despite the fact that human skills, sometimes known as the soft skills, prove to be instrumental in project management, academic and field training remain focused on technical or hard skills development (Pant & Baroudi, 2008; Singh, 2005; Songer, Chinowsky, & Butler, 2006).

The common measure of a project or an event success concentrates more on efficiency, and less on effectiveness. Effectiveness measures how well the task meets the short-term goals and objectives, and the long-term organizational successes. Efficiency metrics are tangible measures, but effectiveness is intangible, especially in the areas of relationships and satisfaction of stakeholders and sponsors (Jugdev & Moller, 2005; Zwikael, 2008).

Hard Skills versus Soft Skills

Hard skills or technical skills are cognitive competencies and people acquire these skills through education and training (Litecky, Arnett, & Prabhakar, 2004). Some people refer to soft skills or social skills as people management skills (Riggio & Reichard, 2008) and communication-based skills (Litecky et al., 2004). Others define soft skills as micro-social skills (Kendra & Taplin, 2004; Muzio et al., 2007) and interpersonal competencies or social effectiveness constructs (Halfhill & Nielson, 2007;

Muir, 2004). Soft skills are key differentiators of an individual's strengths as a leader

and soft skills provide an individual or an organization a competitive advantage (Verma

& Bedi, 2008).

Gabel et al., (2005) suggested there are four success indicators of project-based

international assignment (IA) of managers. Successful managers receive higher ratings

in "cross-cultural adjustments, performance evaluations, life satisfaction, and they

usually complete full terms of their assignment" (p. 377). Emotional intelligence, social

competence, impulse control, networking skills, responsiveness to social and

interpersonal cues, ego resiliency, leadership self-efficacy, and political skill (Ferris et

al., 2005; Perrewe et al., 2004) are components or traits of social effectiveness (Semadar

et al., 2006).

Emotional skills are associated with an individual's abilities to express, perceive,

and comprehend emotions. Social skills represent the quality of social intelligence.

Riggio and Reichard (2008) proposed that emotional and social skills are learned skills.

These trainable competencies enable individuals to read expressions, recognize and

decode messages from others, and regulate and control communication behaviors.

The ability to manage emotional dynamics effectively, according to Lopes et al.

(2004), associated with one's desires, motivations, expectations, and the quality of one's

social interactions and adjustments. People with emotional and social skills interact

more effectively with others and have higher quality social ties and broader support

systems (Gabel et al., 2005; Roper & Phillips, 2007). Those who are deficient in social

and emotional skills have difficulty regulating their emotions and maintaining a healthy

relationship with others at work and at home (Côté, 2005). In some severe cases, people

lacking emotional and social skills can exhibit certain psychosocial illnesses such as mood disorders, depression, or schizophrenia (Perez, Riggio, & Kopelowicz, 2007).

More and more researches acknowledge diverse skill sets and the idea of combining technical, business, and social skills is increasingly popular in the 21st century (Bailey & Mitchell, 2006/2007). The accelerating pace of business, the market competitions and globalizations, and the complexity of the information superhighway have created a matrix in organizational structures (Sy & Côté, 2004). The constant changes in the organizational landscape require leaders not only to be technically proficient, but also to demonstrate their interpersonal abilities in motivation, decision-making, and self-leadership authenticity (Bunker & Wakefield, 2004; D'Intino et al., 2007; Ferris & Connell, 2004; Peterson, 2007).

Motivation creates a culture and climate that inspires and stimulates an individual's creativity and intrinsic desire to succeed (Momeni, 2009). Motivation fosters both individual and collective efforts toward team success while nurturing a greater conviction of ownership and self-leadership (Flannes & Levin, 2005; Rego, Sousa, Cunha, Correia, & Saur-Amaral, 2007). Results of social exchanges underlie one's interactive abilities, motivational desires, and personality traits (Lopes et al., 2004). Theories such as Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, and McClelland's achievement motivation provide just a glimpse of the important roles motivation plays in an organization's performance and effectiveness.

Regardless of the different approaches, the ultimate goal of motivation is to help an individual attain and internalize goals and break down human and system resistance

to change (Courtney, Navarro, & O'Hare, 2007; LaRue, Child, & Larson, 2006; Peterson, 2007). Leaders must play a versatile role in leading, managing, facilitating, and mentoring (Flannes & Levin, 2005). Organizational behavioral measures such as the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), Keirsey Temperament Sorter, and Goldberg's Unipolar Big-Five Markers are a few of the many useful tools to identify an individual's personal style and source of motivation.

Goleman (1995), in particular, defines soft skills as emotional intelligence (EI). He asserted that soft skill competencies determine the ultimate success or failure of an individual as a person, and an organization as a whole (Crosbie, 2005). Multiple studies recognize soft skills are critical in facilitating organizational changes, individual performance, team efficiency, competitive advantage, and profitability (Bancino & Zevalkink, 2007; Côté & Miners, 2006; Koman & Wolff, 2008; Milivojevich, 2006; Muzio et al., 2007; Turner & Muller, 2005). Project managers with higher EI, according to Leban and Zulauf (2004) and Rego et al. (2007) are more proficient in leading successful projects and that EI ability subsequently contributes to work performance and competitiveness.

Emotional and Social Intelligence

The birth of emotional intelligence dates from the earlier works of Thorndike (1920) and Gardner (1983). Thorndike advocated that intelligence is a three-part construct of abstract intelligence, mechanical intelligence, and social intelligence (Carmeli & Josman, 2006). Social intelligence is the ability to act wisely in human relations. Gardner proposed the ideas of interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence. He aligned intrapersonal or personal intelligence with five skill domains:

self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and handling

relationships (Johnson, 2005). Thorndike and Gardner's theories mark the beginning of

recognizing an individual's ability to access emotions as well as having the ability to be

sensitive to other people's emotional states of mind and desires.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) espoused the ideas and defined emotional intelligence

as the ability to "monitor one's own and others' emotions and to discriminate the

positive and negative effects of emotions" (p. 189). People use emotional intelligence to

guide their thoughts and actions, and to determine their psychological well-being

(Carmeli, Yitzhak-Halevy, & Weisberg, 2009; Dijkstra, van Dierendonck, Evers, & De

Dreu, 2005). Later, Mayer, and Salovey (1997) proposed the four-branch model of

emotional intelligence to address the different abilities individuals have in response to

emotion.

The four interrelated and hierarchically arranged abilities (branches) are

perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions.

These abilities help individuals recognize emotion, access emotional competence, and

develop interpersonal effectiveness (Grewal & Salovey, 2005; Kunnanatt, 2004; Mayer,

Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Salovey & Grewal, 2005). This model creates the initial

ability-based theory of emotional intelligence, which is described as the ability to

perceive and express emotion; the ability to acknowledge feelings; the ability to

understand emotion, and the ability to regulate one's emotions (Mayer, Caruso, &

Salovey, 1999).

The theory of EI gains its momentum and popularity after Daniel Goleman

(1995, 1998) published his book *Emotional Intelligence*. Goleman extended Mayer and

Salovey's theory and claimed that EI is a composite of emotional processing abilities and characteristics. Goleman's theory incorporated the motivation theory of McClelland (1987). The need for achievement, the desire for affiliation, and the drive for power are fundamental forces behind emotional intelligence. The five areas of emotional competencies - self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills - are key attributes of positive social behaviors (Songer et al., 2006). Self-awareness is fundamental in EI development; people who master the skills of self-understanding learn to judge social dynamics and manage social relationships more successfully (Diggins, 2004).

Bar-On is another influential figure in advancing the construct of emotional intelligence. Bar-On (1997) proposed that EI is an array of noncognitive interrelated capabilities of emotional, personal, and social competencies that affect one's ability to cope with daily demands and environmental pressures. Bar-On designed the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) test as a self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire measures 15 factors within the five composite scales of EI: intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management, and general moods. The subscales include self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence, and self-actualization. Other factors are empathy, social responsibility, interpersonal relationships, reality testing, flexibility, problem solving, stress tolerance, impulse control, optimism, and happiness.

Since its inception, the study of emotional intelligence continues to capture a growing interest from both the academic arena and the field of organizational development. Ashkanasy, Hartel, and Daus (2002) gave emotional intelligence both a

narrow and a broad definition. The narrow definition of emotional intelligence represents the abilities of perceiving, identifying, understanding, and monitoring emotions. From a broader perspective, emotional intelligence includes the skills of empathy, team collaboration, time management, problem solving, and decision- making.

Lam and Kirby (2002) commented that emotional intelligence has three key components, which allow one to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions. Pellitteri (2002) offered a similar notion that emotion intelligence is a combined effort of emotion perception, emotional knowledge, and emotional regulation. Chrusciel (2006) asserted that emotional intelligence reaches beyond knowledge, skills, and abilities, known as the KSAs, and extends itself to include emotions, the soft skills.

Some theorists conceptualize emotional intelligence as a competency while others see it as ability to link emotion to cognition (Christie, Jordan, Troth, & Lawrence, 2007). Most recently, Waterhouse (2006) argued that EI is nothing more than a combined quality of personality and IQ and asserted cognitive neuroscience does not support the notion of a unitary EI. Therefore, the success of EI is invalid and schools should not include EI study in their curriculum.

Waterhouse's theory elicited both controversy and support. Stankov (2000) suggested there were two traditional types of general intelligence: crystallized and fluid. Crystallized intelligence entails the ability to seek, organize, understand, and retain information. Fluid intelligence refers to inductive and deductive reasoning, and to information processing. Meta-analytic reviews supported the notion that general intelligence is perhaps the strongest predictor of individual differences in job

performance, training proficiency (Schmidt & Hunter, 2004), academic success, and work drive (Ridgell & Lounsbury, 2004).

The study by Pellitteri (2002) confirmed there was a correlation between cognitive intelligence and emotional intelligence. Mandell and Pherwani (2003) supported a similar idea and claimed that real intelligence consists of cognitive abilities as well as emotional and social abilities. Cherniss, Extein, Goleman, and Weissberg (2006) commented that Waterhouse chose to ignore studies that differentiate EI from personality traits or cognitive abilities.

Results from academic and field research suggested there is a positive link between EI, work performance, change management, decision making, problem solving, team effectiveness, and leadership quality on an individual, a group, and on organizational levels (Bawany, 2008; Dulewicz, Young, & Dulewicz, 2005; Jordan & Troth, 2004; Lam & Kirby, 2002; Langhorn, 2004; Salovey & Grewal, 2005). Nevertheless, some skeptics still believe that emotional intelligence is elusive and invalid because a clear distinction between the ability and dispositional aspects of emotional intelligence is missing (Arsenio, 2003, Locke, 2005). The search for a unified definition of the term emotional intelligence will continue to generate curiosity and support, and will fuel new research opportunities and dedication. As Pinos, Twigg, Parayitam, and Olson (2006) depicted, a unified definition of emotional intelligence will help establish any new model designs or extensions on the existing ones.

Emotional Intelligence Models

Over the intervening decades, there had been a myriad of emerging definitions of emotional intelligence. EI is subject to the arguments to whether EI is an intellectual

ability, a personality trait, or a combination of acquired skills and competences (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2007; Brown, Bryant, & Reilly, 2006; Capaldo, Iandoli, & Zollo, 2006; Chiva & Alegre, 2008). Common criticisms of the ideas of emotional intelligence involve the problems of assessment, the lacking evidence of validity, and the possible cultural generalizations (Lopes et al., 2004). Therefore, EI remains subject to multiple meanings, interpretations, and measures (Ferris & Connell, 2004).

Emotional intelligence is a young theory, and extensive research and hypothesis testing of EI is still scarce (Cherniss et al., 2006). However, two distinctly different yet related EI models generate robust discussions and investigations into organizational behavior and human relations research (Brown et al. 2006; Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2004; Emmerling & Goleman, 2003; Morehouse, 2006; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004). The ability model focuses on aptitude (Barbuto & Burbach, 2006) and combines emotion with intelligence. By this definition, emotional intelligence is a unique set of measurable cognitive abilities. EI helps individuals recognize affective information, regulate emotions, enhance problem solving and decision-making skills, and modify behaviors to better adjust to the environmental demands and cultural expectations. The mixed or trait model embraces EI as a multiple construct, combining personality traits, social behaviors, and individual competencies (Brown et al., 2006; Chiva & Alegre, 2008).

Emotional Intelligence – Ability Model

The ability model, which combines emotions with intelligence, evolves largely from the original definition of emotional intelligence (Brown et al., 2006). Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined EI as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings, to

discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action" (p. 189). Mayer and Salovey (1997) maintained that EI is a subset of social intelligence. EI is an intelligence that must show mental performance, describe related abilities, develop with age and maturity, and be subject to consistency in performance tests (Mayer et al., 2004).

Emotional intelligence consists of four progressive development skills: (a) perceiving emotions, (b) using emotions, (c) understanding emotions, and (d) managing emotions. These skills enable one to detect and decipher emotions in oneself and others and to exploit emotions in facilitating cognitive activities such as reasoning, analysis, problem solving, and decision-making. The abilities to comprehend and efficiently translate emotional language and cues help process and regulate positive and negative emotional responses (Brackett, Rivers, Shiffman, Lerner, & Salovey, 2006; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999).

The ability-based model places an emphasis on processing emotional information through well-defined cognitive abilities (Zeidner et al., 2004) and using scenarios in evaluating participants' thinking and emotional responses (Chiva & Alegre, 2008; Fambrough & Hart, 2008). The early design of Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) and the revised version of the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) are tools for performance measure. The MSCEIT consists of eight categories of measure in which every two categories evaluate a branch of emotional intelligence. The success in identifying emotions through faces and pictures of designs and landscapes reflects the proficiency of perceiving emotions.

The effectiveness of using emotions (or emotional integration) underlines one's ability to compare emotions to sensations and match emotions that facilitate certain thoughts.

Understanding emotions involves a measure of one's ability to recognize circumstances that initiate emotional state changes and emotions needed in a complex affective context. Managing emotions applies hypothetical scenarios and questions to find out how one maintains or changes feelings to create a desired state of emotional outcome (Mayer et al., 2004). People with higher emotional intelligence scores are socially adaptable and display more affection and empathy among friends and families (Brackett, Mayer, & Warner, 2004; Lopes, Salovey, & Straus, 2003). Other popular performance measures of emotional intelligence include O'Sullivan-Guilford Social Intelligence (OGSI), and Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale (LEAS).

Emotional Intelligence – Mixed Model or Trait Model

The mixed or trait model reflects a proliferation of various emotional constructs: perceived emotional abilities, competencies, and personality traits (Goleman, 1995, 1998) or personality, motivation, and empathy (Whitman, Van Rooy, Viswesvaran, & Alonso, 2008). These constructs point to a conglomerate of different clusters of interrelated competencies such as the cognitive, emotional, and social competencies (Boyatzis, 2008; Boyatzis & Saatcioglu, 2008) or the self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Goleman, 1998).

Competency entails the dimensions of behavior, personal attributes, knowledge, and skills that determine how one perceives, feels, and acts. Over the decades, different identifications of competency constructs include ego resiliency, self-monitoring,

networking skills, political skills, social astuteness, responsiveness to social and interpersonal cues, and many more (Ferris et al., 2005; Perrewe et al., 2004).

Cognitive intelligence competencies represent the ability of learning, system thinking, and application of knowledge. Emotional intelligence competencies and social intelligence competencies determine the proficiency of one's intra-and-inter personal relationship skills. Emotional awareness, self-confidence, leadership inspiration, influence, motivation, empathy team identity, conflict resolution, and change initiative are emotional and social competencies (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008; Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008; Hughes & Terrell, 2008). Emotionally and socially competent individuals display effective performance, constructive leadership, career development, and exemplary human relationships (Dainty et al., 2006; Dulewicz, Young, & Dulewicz, 2005; Politis, 2006; Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2004; Wong, Law, & Wong, 2004). Individuals' personal values, traits, and intrinsic motivations, as Boyatzis (2006), Boyatzis and Saatcioglu (2008), and Semadar, et al. (2006) argued, are drivers of performance and social effectiveness.

Trait theory assumes personal characteristics and individual competencies. The self-in-group model, based on Jungian theory of persona, ego, and inner personality, suggested there are an overt self, a shadow self, and an inner observer in a person. Overt self represents the conscious part of personal characteristics one uses to define oneself and to unveil to others in social interactions. Shadow self is the unconscious or hidden part of one's psyche. When triggered by emotional reactivity or alienation, shadow self responds in one or a combination of the six forms: projection, association, threat, verbal abuse, frustration, and guilt. Inner observer is responsible for monitoring and

maintaining the balance between the overt and shadow selves through inner-awareness or self-awareness, a key competence in emotional intelligence (Hede, 2007).

Trait theory extrapolates that consistent personality traits underlie the qualities distinguishing one person from another (Lakshmi, 2008) and determine the levels of potential success in social adaptations. As Furnham, Dissou, Sloan, and Charmorro-Premuzic (2007) depicted, personality traits and personality types are predictors of intelligence. Measuring one's personality and cognitive ability will give a more comprehensive reading of competence as well as potential. Self-monitoring is one of the traits that receives much attention. People who demonstrate higher degree of self-monitoring behaviors are more sensitive to social cues and more willing to compromise and adapt their behavior to meet socially desirable expectations. People who rated low in this trait engage in pursuit of personal goals and self-interests (Noël, Michaels, & Levas, 2003).

In a study on how emotional intelligence and personality traits affect individual attitudes towards organizational change. Vakola et al. (2004) hypothesized that attitudes towards organizational change associated positively with the five factors of personality, namely neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. They also focused on finding out if the uses of emotional intelligence play a significant influence on attitudes toward organizational change.

The 137 participants were professionals representing various public and private organizatons in Athens, Greece. These organizations were survivors of some degree of organizational changes such as mergers, culture modification, or reframing. Participants received a self-report questionnaire pack consisting of three questionnaires:

the attitude to change questionnaire (ACQ), designed specifically for the study; the

emotional intelligence questionnaire (EIQ), and the trait personality questionnaire 5

(TPQue5). The results of the study suggested that personality traits and emotional

intelligence demonstrated a significant relationship to organizational change. Effective

use of emotions led one to develop the right attitudes towards changes and enhance

ones' ability to adapt and endure the possible hardships and adjustments.

Lopes et al. (2004) examined if emotional intelligence and Big Five personality

traits are predictors of social interaction and adaptation. The study focused on the

relationship between emotional intelligence competencies and quality of social

interaction. The subjects of the first study involved 118 students (92 females and 29

males between the age of 17 and 24) from the University of New Hampshire. To

examine the generalizability of the results from the first study, a second study took place

in Germany. A group of 103 undergraduate students (86 % were females) from the

Chemnitz University of Technology participated in the second study. MSCEIT (version

2.0, Mayer et al., 2002) and NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992) were key assessment

tools used to measure the emotional intelligence competencies and the levels of

neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

The results of the studies found that both emotional intelligence and personality traits

associated consistently with a higher quality of social relationship and better social

adaptation.

Researchers use the Five Factor Model (FFM), also known as the Big Five

(Goldberg, 1993) as a mechanism to describe personality functioning and to predict

attitudes and behaviors. The five factors of personality traits are neuroticism,

extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. Neuroticism or emotional instability is the tendency to experience unpleasant feelings such as anger, anxiety, fear, and depression. Extraversion or surgency is the inclination to seek social stimulations and companionship.

Agreeableness refers to compassion and a willingness to participate, conform, and cooperate with others. Consciousness represents sensitivity, trustworthy, determination, dependability, organization, and self-discipline. Openness to experience associates with receptivity and eagerness to new learning and experiences. These personality traits, as suggested by Barchard and Hakstian (2004), predicted emotional stability, job performance, and work satisfaction as well as job commitment and turnover. However, researchers question if self-report noncognitive measures were subject to possible "fakability" and this concern spurs further debate and investigation (Whitman et al., 2008).

Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is another approach personality theorists use to measure personality types within the four scales of Extroversion-Introversion, Sensing-Intuition, Thinking-Feeling, and Judging-Perceiving. Combining these eight basic preferences constitutes 16 personality types that align with particular strengths, weaknesses, potentials, and opportunities. Some studies have suggested there is an overlap between personality types and personality traits. Theorists believed that these two dimensions play a significant role in predicting one's cognitive ability, therefore, measuring both personality dimensions and intelligence are important in understanding a person's competence and sense of identity (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2004;

Furnham & Christoforou, 2007; Furnham et al., 2007; Loundsbury, Levy, Leong, & Gibson, 2007).

Mixed models, according to Zeidner et al. (2004), conceptualize emotional intelligence as a set of diverse competencies such as self-awareness, self-management, empathy, and social skills. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2008) pointed out there are three mainstream schools of thought. Bar On (1997) addressed emotional intelligence as noncognitive capabilities in dealing with environmental demands and pressures. The five dimensions representing emotional intelligence are intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, stress management, adaptability, and general mood.

Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), the most extensively used and validated self-report assessment tool (Van Rooy, Viswesvaran, & Pluta, 2005), measures the five dimensions and the 15 subscales of emotional intelligence. EQ-i, according to Brackett and Mayer (2003), overlapped with the Big Five personality traits. Bar-On (2003) claimed that EI may be more akin to social intelligence and EI may be a representation of social skills. This claim produced a divided definition of emotional intelligence.

Goleman (1998b) defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to rein in emotional impulses, to read another's innermost feelings, and to handle relationships and conflict smoothly" (p. 36). Goleman suggested EI consists of dispositional qualities as well as trainable qualities in a person. People acquire and develop these qualities through learning and experiencing. Initiative and empathy are dispositional traits whereas adaptability and persuasiveness are learnable skills (Douglas, Frink, & Ferris,

2004). The four overarching clusters of emotional intelligence include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

Self-awareness and self-management are dimensions of personal competence, which consist of emotional self-awareness, self-assessment, self-confidence, initiative, adaptability, transparency, achievement, optimism, and self-control (Goleman et al., 2002). Social awareness and relationship management are domains within social competence. Empathy, inspiration, organizational awareness, teamwork, and conflict management are areas of focus within social competence (Roper & Phillips, 2007).

Studies found that emotionally intelligent leaders often create a culture of creativity and climate that encourages team members to perform (Rego et al., 2007). Teams with higher EI outperform the teams with lower EI levels. The developed team norms in turn foster and support the emotional competence throughout the organization (Jordan & Troth, 2004; Offerman, Bailey, Vasilopoulos, Seal, & Sass, 2004; Koman & Wolff, 2008). The Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI), the Emotional and Social Competency Inventory (ESCI), and the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal are available measurements based on Goleman's EI model.

Petrides and Furnham (2003) defined emotional intelligence as a personality trait. EI is a "constellation of emotion-related self-perceived abilities and dispositions" (p. 816) which encompasses emotional abilities, personal intelligence, and social intelligence. The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) measures EI scores that correlate to criteria such as happiness, perceived self-control, and job satisfaction.

Emotional Intelligence, Social Intelligence, and Leadership

The idea of emotional intelligence applies in both academic and field settings, despite the fact the constructs of EI remain contestable (Fambrough & Hart, 2008). Researchers actively search for a distinctive or unitary definition of EI and its applicability. Studies have found a positive relationship between EI and leadership effectiveness (D'Intino et al., 2007; Lopes, Salovey, Côté, & Beers, 2005; Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005; Rosete & Ciarrochi, 2005).

In the book of *Primal Leadership*, Golemen, Boyatis, and Mckee (2002) asserted that leaders are responsible for primordial emotional tasks. They maximize primal leadership by "driving the collective emotions in a positive direction and [by] clearing the smog created by toxic emotions" (p. 5). The positive drive is the "resonance" which points to a greater chance of leadership success and attunement of organizational performance. Conversely, the negative drive, or the "dissonance" is an inhibitor and a direct cause of emotional hijacking.

Leadership exerts influence and the practice is situational, contextual, circumstance-dependent, and affected by the nature of the group and organizational dynamics (Capaldo, et al., 2006; Rabey, 2005; Svensson & Wood, 2006). Executive leaders inspire a shared vision, enable followers to perform, foster collaboration, and model the way (Jooste, 2004). Leaders, who are emotionally sensitive, function better in social interactions (Brown et al, 2006; Rahim & Psenicka, 2005) and have greater impact on organizational behaviors and team outcomes (Moshavi, Brown, & Dodd, 2003; Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, & Buckley, 2003).

Emotional sensitivity is a skill facilitating receipt of nonverbal cues and interpretation of emotional expressions (Riggio & Reichard, 2008). Emotionally sensitive people often develop the corresponding skills of emotional expression and emotional control on both personal and social levels to navigate social interactions. Reciprocal emotion exchange between leaders and followers describes some of the characteristics found in transformational and charismatic leaders (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Groves, 2006).

Hoffman and Frost (2006) conducted a study on multiple intelligences of transformational leaders over a four-year period. They examined the cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions of intelligence corresponding to transformational leaders' intellectual stimulation behaviors, charismatic behaviors, and individualized considerations. The study participants were 86 physicians from an MBA program at a southeastern university. Before the program, the physicians completed different forms of self-report assessments such as critical thinking, psychological measure, and developmental inventory. Through the program, participants continued to engage in expert assessed simulation exercises: the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal; the California Psychological Appraisal; and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. The results indicated strong relationships between cognitive intelligence and intellectual stimulation, and social intelligence and leaders' charismatic behaviors. Individual consideration was a significant characteristic found in emotionally intelligent leaders.

Gehring (2007) suggested there are leadership challenges when it comes to project management. Because of the ad hoc and task-focused nature of projects, project managers are temporary leaders. Project managers work with diverse groups of people

across time, space, and cultures and this creates difficulties in maintaining consistent and long-term leadership development. The general misconception is project managers have the technical capabilities and leadership characteristics, skills, or competencies that enable them to motivate, influence, and control their work teams (Crawford & Cabanis-Brewin, 2005). This generated debate over the validity of trait theory in project management.

Gehring (2007) commented that different situations require different personality traits in a leader, and possessing certain personality characteristics does not guarantee effective leadership and project success. However, understanding one's personality, strengths, and opportunities provides a foundation of designing relative field training and individual development. The perceptions of leaders who manage to monitor their own moods successfully are more effective, authentic, and exhibit transformational leadership (Barbuto & Burbach, 2006, Hoffman and Frost, 2006).

Self-Leadership

Self-leadership, or inner-leadership, relates positively to entrepreneurial success, performance, and personal excellence (D'Intino et al., 2007; Gerhardt, Ashenbaum, & Newman, 2009; Neck & Manz, 2007). The two critical factors that differentiate the sustainability of a person are individual thought patterns and self-efficacy perception (Houghton, Neck, & Manz, 2003). Successful entrepreneurs demonstrate higher levels of self-management, overall emotional intelligence, and persistence (Cross & Travaglione, 2003; Rhee & White, 2007).

Self-leadership theories and research describe self-leadership as a discipline of self-evaluation, self-influence, and self-motivation (DiLiello & Houghton, 2006; Manz

& Neck, 2004).   Self-leadership portrays certain behavioral and cognitive dimensions rooted in self-regulation, self-control, self-management, and intrinsic motivation theory. The predictable outcomes of self-leadership, according to Neck and Houghton (2006), Houghton and Yoho (2005), and Renn, Allen, Fedor, and Davis (2005), consist of commitment, independence, creativity or innovation, job satisfaction, conscientiousness, self-efficacy, and psychological empowerment.

Self-leadership reflects three clusters of strategies including behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies. Behavior-focused strategies involve self-regulation through self-observation, self-goal setting, self-rewards, self-correcting feedback, and self-cueing. The design of these strategies aims to foster positive feelings, desirable competencies and suppress negative, ineffective behaviors. Natural reward strategies target activities that are inherently enjoyable by building pleasure features or shaping perceptions and directing away from the unpleasant features of a given task. Applying constructive thought pattern strategies helps reduce dysfunctional thoughts, and enhances positive self-talk, self-reflection, intrinsic motivation, and mental imagery of successful performance (DiLiello & Houghton, 2006; Houghton et al., 2004; Neck & Houghton, 2006).

Alves and associates (2006) conducted a cross-cultural study on self-leadership based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity, and long-term orientation. The results of the study indicated that leaders were more directive in cultures with higher power distance. Cultures with lower power distance had a greater potential for participatory leadership and latitude for self-leadership.

The study also found leaders were flexible and innovative in cultures with low uncertainty avoidance whereas leaders in high uncertainty avoidance cultures were more controlling and less approachable. In individualistic societies, people pursued self-interest and material rewards more than people in collective societies. Leaders in masculine cultures were usually assertive and practice self-leadership style. In contrast, leaders in feminine cultures were often intuitive and had a stake and a greater appreciation toward social relationship enhancements and quality of life. Lastly, people in long-term oriented cultures inclined to practice long-term self-leadership more so than did those in short-term oriented cultures.

D'Intino et al. (2007) studied the connections between entrepreneurial self-leadership and relative motivational and self-influence constructs. The results indicated that people who were proficient exercising self-leadership strategies were happier, optimistic, and creative. These individuals desired autonomy and they consistently aligned goals and personal value through self-control and self-influence.

Autonomous motivation, according to Gagne and Deci (2005), is intrinsic and is naturally interesting and rewarding to the person who engages in the activity. Intrinsic motivation is the driving force behind self-determination and is the source of energy that promotes work performance and individual and team satisfaction (Ellemers, De Gilder, & Haslam, 2004; Schmid and Adams, 2008). However, there is no direct study of the personalities of project managers and the impact on performance and success (Dvir, Sadeh, & Malach-Pines, 2006).

In a recent study on relationships between the big five personality traits and entrepreneurial status, Zhao and Seibert (2006) concluded that personality variables

might play a role in entrepreneurial cognition, achievement motivation, and career choice (Gill & Hodgkinson, 2007). The entrepreneurs were innovative, creative, responsive to change and opportunities. They demonstrated higher levels of conscientiousness and openness to experience and scored lower on agreeableness and neuroticism than operating managers.

Houghton et al. (2004) studied the nature of relationships between dimensions of self-leadership (behavior-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought) and personality traits (extraversion, emotional stability, and conscientiousness). A group of 381 undergraduate students from a southeastern university participated in the study. The sample consisted of 60 percent male and 40 percent female students enrolled in an introductory management course. The students received a lecture on personality and individual differences in the beginning of the class, and later students completed both the Revised Self-leadership Questionnaire (Houghton & Neck, 2002) and the 40-Adjustive Unipolar Mini-Markers Big Five Instrument (Saucier, 1994).

The results indicated that personality and self-leadership were related to one another but are distinct concepts. Extraversion and conscientiousness, in particular, related strongly to all three self-leadership strategies. Emotional stability or neuroticism, however, showed a significant relationship limited to the natural rewards. Other studies suggested that age, gender, and cultural differences might determine one's self-leadership and emotional intelligence (Bracket et al., 2006; Day & Carroll, 2004; D'Intino et al., 2007; Frye, Bennett, & Caldwell, 2006; Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008).

Event Management and Self-Leadership

Event management is primarily project-based and context-dependent. The success of an event or a project progresses through a life cycle. In the event management industry, the processes involve research, design, planning, coordination, and evaluation (Goldblatt, 2008). The cycle of project management involves "conceptualization, planning, execution, and termination" (Jugdev & Moller, 2005, p. 21).

There were an estimated 11,000 certified event planners worldwide in 2008 who held a professional designation in the industry. The number does not include noncertified planners or occasional planners such as corporate assistants, marketing coordinators, and even travel agents. According to the 2007 Certified Meeting Professional Report from CIC, there are three types of planners: occasional planners, event planners, and strategic event professionals.

Occasional planners represent 73% of the planner population, followed by active certified event planners (26%), and strategic event professionals (1%). Female planners dominate the demographics of the event management landscape although the number of their male counterparts is rapidly increasing. Third-party event planning has become a growing trend because of corporate downsizing and globalization. Independent event planners, 80% of whom are women, are now features of the industry architecture and constitute the fastest-growing segment in the industry (Toh, DeKay, & Yates, 2005). Core competence and emotional labor of event planners are significantly important in this service-oriented, project-based industry.

In times of change, organizations seek out individuals who score high on EI and display multidimensional skills in leadership (Abraham, 2006; Porterfield & Kleiner, 2005). As Clawson (2008) suggested, leadership involves managing energy of oneself and others. Effective leaders require cognitive intelligence skills, and must be emotionally sensitive and culturally tuned (Brislin, Worthley, & MacNab, 2006; Herkenhoff, 2004).

In the event and project management professions, relationship building and being emotionally intelligent determine the outcome and levels of success (Gillard, 2009). Technical expertise or hard skills can no longer suffice to withstand the changes, but combined with the right mix of soft skills, leaders gains a significant competitive advantage (Chia, 2005). Adaptive personality features and intrinsic motivation may well be the keys to connect the cognitive and noncognitive sides of intelligence. As Serio and Epperly (2006) described, emotional intelligent leaders know their strength, understand their limitations, and they take charge to correct and adjust their actions and behaviors.

Summary

The focus of Chapter 2 was to present a brief summary of the field researches. The two EI models (Ability-EI and Trait-EI) established the main framework of the literature review on soft skills competency. Each framework then outlined the supportive theories and opposing viewpoints from academicians, researchers, and field practitioners. The first part of the chapter discussed the common characteristics of effective project managers, followed by an introduction of hard and soft skills used to

validate the significance of emotional and social competency in any project-based industry that emphasizes relationship building.

The second part of the chapter provided the general history behind the birth of "emotional intelligence (EI)" and the recurring EI debates. Waterhouse (2006) brought on the most recent controversy and argued that EI was nothing more than a combined quality of personality and cognitive ability and the success of EI was invalid.   This inadvertently led to more debates in cognitive and noncognitive intelligence.

The third part of the chapter introduced the two broad models of emotional intelligence: ability (cognitive) and mixed (noncognitive). Mayer and Salovey's (1997) four-branch theory of EI dominates the ability model. The personal and social competencies model of Goleman et al. (2002) and the personality trait model of Petride and Furnham (2003) described EI in a noncognitive perspective.

The fourth part of the chapter discussed the self-leadership theory and suggested that emotional and social intelligence are important competencies that lead to effective self-leadership. The three assessment instruments (the Mini-Markers, the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment, and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire) examined the correlation among personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. Chapter 3 discussed the research method, test instruments, and introduced the research questions and hypotheses.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

The purpose of this correlational study was fourfold. First, it described the common personality traits found in event planners. Second, it identified event planners' soft skill competencies. Third, it examined the self-leadership capacity in event planners. Finally, it identified the interrelationships among planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership capacity. This chapter provided a detailed description of the study design, research instruments, research question and hypotheses, sample criteria, research population, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Research Method and Design Appropriateness

This study used a quantitative, explanatory research design in examining the relationships among the variables. Quantitative research designs are either predictive or explanatory in nature. Quantitative prediction designs aim to identify variables to predict a certain outcome, to describe and forecast a trend or a phenomenon, or to discover if there is a tendency to certain responses among individuals. Prediction design typically identifies a predictor variable to expect the outcome of cause-and-effect, which is the criterion variable (Creswell, 2005).

Quantitative explanatory research uses a correlational design to measure the degree of relationship between or among sets of variables. Explanatory research is not cause-and-effect, it gathers only information concerning the current state of a phenomenon or a situation, and results from prior studies are nonsignificant. Explanatory design studies analyze a single group of individuals at one time, explore the relationship between two or more variables, and explain the extent of association through correlational statistics. Researchers do not manipulate the data and they

interpret the findings through data analysis and draw conclusions based on the results of the correlations.

The objective of this study was to explore the extent of relationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills, and self-leadership. There was no intention to predict possible outcome or trends. Therefore, the explanatory design was appropriate to the nature of this study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The guiding question of this study was, "What are the relationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skill competencies, and self-leadership capacities?" The study focused on learning the relationships among event planners' conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, and self-leadership abilities in self-goal setting and evaluating beliefs and assumptions. The study also aimed to identify the soft skill competencies that were important in event planners' success and enhancement of self-management abilities. The study began with a self-report personality inventory of successful event planners, followed by investigation of three specific subquestions.

I.   What is the relationship between event planners' personality traits and soft skills competency?

II. What is the relationship between event planners' soft skills competency and self-leadership?

III. What is the relationship between an event planners' personality traits and self-leadership?

These questions led to the following hypotheses:

H10: There is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft

skills competency.

H1A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

H20: There is no relationship between an event planner's soft skills competency and self-leadership.

H2A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's soft skills competency and self-leadership.

H30: There is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and self-leadership.

H3A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's personality traits and self-leadership.

Population and Sampling

Participants

Participants of this study were a randomly selected group of active industry male and female certified event planners in the states of Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, and California. These five states have the highest number of certified planners in the United States and each state has more than 550 active planners enlisted in the membership directory of an industry council. Together, these five states consist of 3204 (43%) of the total population of 7208 active certified planners in the United States. These planners were full-time, part-time, and third-party independent certified event planners in corporate, association, and convention market segments in the industry.

The researcher assigned each active certified planner of the five states an identifier number to maintain anonymity, for example, VA-001 or CA-235. The

researcher then placed the identifier number cards representing each planner in a hat and randomly selected the participants for the study. This study targeted to recruit 376 (95% confidence interval) certified planners from the five states. As Creswell (2005) suggested, the larger the size of the sample, the higher the confidence level; the smaller the error variance, the better representation the results, and the more homogeneous the sample, the richer the information.

The participants of this study consisted of randomly selected newly certified and re-certified event professionals. The researcher recruited each selected individual through personal invitation and after participants gave their informed consent, they gained access to the three assessments via a web-link hosted by surveymonkey.com. The Mini-Markers inventoried participants' personality traits. The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) assessed subjects' soft skills competency and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) measured participants' self-leadership capacity.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study was strictly voluntary. Each randomly selected participant received a personalized invitation, an assigned participant identifier number, and the web-link to the three assessments. Participants could choose not to answer any question in the survey and could withdraw from the study at any time without any explanation. The researcher deleted the data associated with participants who chose to withdraw from the study or who failed to complete all three instruments.

Confidentiality

The design of participant identifier numbers was to ensure anonymity and each participant's identity remained confidential throughout the study. The researcher took

further precaution to protect the privacy of participants by storing the list matching

participants' names and locations to participants' identifier numbers in a locked file

cabinet in the researcher's home office. The researcher was the only one who had access

to the locked cabinet.

Data Collection

A letter to the state chapters of Meeting Professional International and

Professional Convention Management Association (Appendix A) introduced the purpose

of the study and solicited interest. A customized invitation of participation was then

extended to each randomly selected certified event planner in the five states (Appendix

B).   After participants reviewed the invitation, the purposes, and procedures of the

study, they made the decision to participate or withdraw from the study. Participants

gave their informed consent by clicking on the "Yes" check box or "No" to exit

(Appendix C).

Volunteered participants accessed the three test instruments - the Mini-Markers

(Appendix D), the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (Appendix E), and the Revised

Self-Leadership Questionnaire (Appendix F) via the designated URL. Dr. Gerald

Saucier and Dr. Jeffrey Houghton granted permission (Appendices G and H) to use their

designed test instruments for this study. At the end of each week, the researcher sent an

e-mail to all selected participants as a courtesy to remind them the invitation and to urge

them to complete the surveys (Appendix I). When the number of completed surveys fell

below the targeted numbers of response, the researcher randomly selected additional

subjects from the five states. Invitation and recruitment processes repeated until the

study received the expected 376 responses. E-mail was the only mode of

communication between the researcher and the participants throughout the study.

The researcher stored the data from each assessment in an electronic file and

later downloaded the data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for analysis. The

participants received an acknowledgment and a special Thank You message for

participation at the end of the three surveys. An external hard drive with firewall

protection stored all the data collected from the three assessments and it was stored in a

separate locked cabinet in the researcher's home office.

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Research Instruments

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This study employed three web-based research instruments. The first assessment

involved the personality assessment using the 40-adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers by

Saucier (1994). The second was the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA), a

custom designed questionnaire to evaluate individual planner's soft skills competency.

The third assessment examined the capacity of self-leadership by employing the Revised

Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) by Houghton and Neck (2002). Each instrument

collected responses through checkboxes and submission fields.   Participants' identities

did not appear on any of the three questionnaires and participants' personal information

was not revealed through the form of Internet submission.

The 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers

The 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers bases its design on Goldberg's 100-

item Unipolar Big-Five Markers. The Mini-Markers examines 40 personality attributes

across the Big-Five factor structure - extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness,

emotional stability, and intellect or imagination. Each subset of the Big-Five factors

consists of eight desirable and undesirable personality attributes. For instance, the adjectives of organized, disorganized, efficient, inefficient, systematic, sloppy, practical, and careless are measures of an individual's conscientiousness.

The Mini-Markers avoids the use of difficult term such as imperturbable or terms that have a negative connotation such as unkind, unsympathetic, and uncharitable. It requires less time to complete than the 100-item version, which typically results in higher response rate (Saucier, 1994; Denissen, Greenen, Selfhout, & Van Aken, 2008). This self-report assessment applies a nine-point Likert type scale to collect individuals' perceptions of their own personality traits.

The nine-point rating scale of the 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers measured each participant's personality attributes. Attributes that received the highest ratings of "very accurate" and "extremely accurate" were dominant traits of the individuals. Attributes that received lower ratings reflected a lesser degree of accuracy in describing an individual's characteristics. The assessment helped determine how event planners rate themselves in three particular areas: conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability. High ratings in all three areas suggested that successful event planners were conscientious, agreeable, and emotionally mature. In addition, these three areas were appropriate indicators for further study of the relationships between each attribute and event planners' self-leadership capacity and soft skills competency.

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA)

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) is a questionnaire designed specifically by the researcher to measure a homogeneous group of certified planners in the event management industry. The questionnaire consists of 35 questions in reference

to an individual's strengths and priorities. EPSSA places an emphasis on self-management and relationship management. The self-report inventory aims to evaluate one's awareness of his emotions and behaviors, sensitivity and acceptance of others' needs and personalities, and agreeability in rationalizing changes, problem solving, and decision making.

The first seven questions were in multiple-choice format to collect background information of the individual planner. The following 28 questions were scenarios to measure individual's aptitude and soft skills competency. A five-point Likert rating scale provided the response indicators ranging from "not at all inaccurate" and "a little accurate" to "completely accurate." The results reflected each participant's intra-and-interpersonal skills, personality, emotional maturity, and life experiences toward how they feel, how they think, and how they act as professional event planners.

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) queried the proficiency of soft skills in event planners. The purpose of this self-rating assessment was to investigate if there were any relationships between conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability and event planners' soft skills. In addition, the assessment examined if the abilities of self-goal setting, self-observation, focusing thoughts on natural rewards, and evaluating beliefs and assumptions enhance event planners' soft skills. For instance, if the scenario of "I always try to accommodate other people's needs and requests in a positive and responsive way" receives a high rating, a positive relationship may exist between event planners' agreeableness and soft skills competency. Another example is "I approach each task with careful planning and organization." If the responses show a strong inclination toward the scale of "mostly

accurate" and "completely accurate," an expected positive relationship may exist between event planners' self-goal setting and soft skills competency. The ultimate goal of this study was to explore if there was an interrelationship among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership capacity and hopefully to project a general profile of successful event planners.

The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ)

The design of the self-leadership measurements was initially based on the 90-item self-leadership archetype created by Manz and Sims (1991). The archetype initiated the construct of 50-item self-leadership measurement scales by Anderson and Prussia (1997). The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) designed by Houghton and Neck (2002) is a modified version of the existing measures based primarily on Anderson and Prussia's scale.

A five-point Likert scale measures the response to 35 questions within the eight subscales of behavior-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought pattern dimensions. Self-goal setting, self-reward, self-observation, and self-cueing are categories of measure within the behavior-focused strategies. Focusing thoughts and incorporating pleasant and enjoyable features into a given activity assess the natural reward dimension. Visualizing successful performance, engaging in self-talk and evaluating beliefs and assumptions are scales within constructive thought.

The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) appraised whether there was a relationship between each dominant personality attribute and event planners' ability of self-goal setting, and self-talk. Scenarios such as "I establish specific goals for my own performance," and "I think about the goals that I intend to achieve in the future,"

measure the degrees of association between conscientiousness and self-goal setting.

Scenarios such as "Sometimes I talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to work through

difficult situations" and "When I'm in difficult situations I will sometimes talk to myself

(out loud or in my head) to help me get through it" help gauge the degrees of

relationship between conscientiousness and an event planner's ability of self-talk. If

each attribute, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability, shows a high

tendency toward the ratings of "mostly accurate" and "completely accurate" in self-goal

setting and self-talk, a positive relationship exists between each set of variables. Hence,

the positive results of each set of measures also indicate that event planners who are

conscientious, agreeable, and emotionally mature have the self-leadership capability

through the skills of self-goal setting and self-talk. The higher the correlation between

each set of variable, the more independent the event planners.

These three instruments collected responses using checkboxes and a combination

of selected scales of measurement. Interval scales, such as the Likert scale, evaluated

subjects' continuous response to questions. The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment

(EPSSA) incorporated demographic questions about the participants' background and

professional experiences. Participants of the study accessed all three measurements

online by means of surveymokey.com. The researcher downloaded the collected

responses of each assessment into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for correlational

statistical analysis.

Validity and Reliability

Both the 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers by Saucier and the Revised Self-

Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) by Houghton had been tested and re-tested in

different studies. The journal articles of Mini-Markers: A brief version of Goldberg's

Unipolar Big-Five Markers (Saucier, 1994) and the Revised Self-Leadership

Questionnaire (Houghton & Neck, 2002) discussed the validity and reliability of each

instrument.

The 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers

Based on the results of self-rating 320 college students and the descriptions of

their peers by 316 college students with the same sex and approximate age, the alpha

coefficient of the Mini-Markers was lower by .05 to .10 in comparison with Goldberg's

Unipolar Big-Five Markers. The mean interitem correlations of the Mini-Markers were

higher than Goldberg's full set of Markers by .05 to .10 (Saucier, 1994).

Table 1

Internal Consistency of the Mini-Markers Scale

Sample	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional Stability	Intellect/ Openness	Mean
			Mean interitem correlation			
Self-Rating						
Raw Data	.38	.36	.38	.31	.32	.35
z-scored Data	.37	.29	.36	.28	.27	.31
Like-Peer Rating						
Raw Data	.41	.43	.43	.28	.31	.37
Z-scored Data	.38	.33	.40	.27	.22	.32

Sample	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional Stability	Intellect/ Openness	Mean
			Coefficient Alpha			
Self-Rating						
Raw data	.83	.81	.83	.78	.78	.81
z-scored Data	.83	.75	.81	.75	.74	.78
Like-Peer Rating						
Raw Data	.85	.85	.86	.76	.78	.82
z-scored Data	.83	.79	.84	.74	.69	.78

Note. Adapted from Saucier (1994, p. 513). Self-rating sample, *N*=320. Like-Peer sample, *N*=316.

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA)

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) is a new construct. The researcher based this instrument design on the clusters of soft skills competency found in effective project managers such as conscientious of customers' need, flexibility, and team cooperation. The study aimed to establish the internal consistency and accuracy of this instrument. Chapter 5 discussed the validity and reliability of this test instrument in the sections of limitations and conclusions, implications, and recommendation.

The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ)

The design of the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) assesses one's self-leadership capacity through a nine-factor structure. The nine factors consist of visualizing successful performance, self-goal setting, self-talk, self-reward, evaluating

beliefs and assumptions, self-punishment (or self-corrective), self-observation, focusing on natural rewards, and self-cueing. Two to five corresponding questions within each subset measure the effectiveness of each factor.

Table 2

Scale Internal Consistencies (Alpha) of Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire

Scale	Alpha
Factor 1: Visualizing successful performance	0.85
Factor 2: Self-goal setting	0.84
Factor 3: Self-talk	0.92
Factor 4: Self-reward	0.93
Factor 5: Evaluating beliefs and assumptions	0.78
Factor 6: Self-punishment	0.86
Factor 7: Self-observation	0.82
Factor 8: Focusing on natural rewards	0.74
Factor 9: Self-cueing	0.91

Note. Adapted from Houghton and Neck (2002, pp. 682-683). Self-rating sample, N=442.

Research Procedures

The subjects of this study were randomly selected group of industry certified event planners in the states of Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, and California. There were a series of administered procedures designed to guide the study and to safeguard the consistency, standardization, and ethical practice. Data collection, according to

Creswell (2005), involves recruiting participants, obtaining subjects' consent of participation, identifying the data to collect, and lastly, executing the data collection with predetermined research instruments. This study employed the following approaches:

a) A letter to the local chapters of Meeting Professional International (MPI) and Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) in the states of Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, and California to promote interest and participation (See Appendix A).

b) A personal invitation electronically sent to selected event planners and the names and e-mail addresses drawn randomly from the member directory of an industry council (See Appendix B).

c) A designated web link to the three-part assessment: the Mini-Markers (See Appendix D), the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (See Appendix E), and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (See Appendix F).

Each procedure provided a corresponding set of instructions. The instructions outlined the purpose of the study, the areas of research, the research instruments, the data collection, and potential applications of the study findings. Subjects who agreed to participate voluntarily in the study confirmed their Informed Consent (Appendix C) prior to access the test instruments. The Informed Consent sought subjects' agreement as voluntary participants of the study; they were within the legal age of giving consent, held an active industry designation in event management, and gave the researcher the permission to use the information for the study.

Data Collection

Upon confirming the informed consent at the beginning of the survey, participants accessed the three test instruments (the Mini-Markers, the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment, and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire). At the end of each week, the researcher sent a follow up e-mail as a courtesy to remind the participants to complete the surveys (See Appendix I). When the completed surveys fell below the targeted number of responses, the researcher approached additional randomly selected participants from the five states. The invitation and recruitment process repeated until the study received the targeted number of 376 completed responses. E-mail was the only communication between the researcher and the participants throughout the study.

The researcher stored data from each assessment in an electronic file and later downloaded into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for analysis. The participants received an acknowledgment at the time of data submission and a special Thank You at the end of the three surveys. To safeguard the anonymity and confidentiality, the researcher kept participants' names and e-mail addresses in a locked cabinet in her home office. The researcher also kept the separate hard drive with firewall protection, which stored all the data collected from the three assessment in a different locked cabinet in her home office. In addition, the researcher generated a hard copy as a backup copy.

Data Analysis

After data collection was completed, a descriptive statistical analysis took place immediately. Descriptive statistics provided information about responses to each research question and described the central tendency, and variability of the data. The

means summarized the distribution of scores within data sets. The standard deviations and range of scores describe the degree of dispersal of responses from each test instrument (American Psychological Association, 2010). The score and percentage rank describe the relationship between one set of score and a group of scores (Creswell, 2005). This study used correlation to measure the degree of overall score of each variable (personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership) as well as the individual score of each subset. Examples of subset included extraversion or conscientiousness in personality traits, sensitivity to others' needs or awareness of self-emotion in soft skills competency, and self-talk or self-goal setting in self-leadership capacity. Correlations range indicated the strength of association; the higher the correlation range, the stronger the association, and the better representation of the results.

Summary

Chapter 3 described the framework and the methodology of the study. The chapter discussed the appropriateness of using explanatory research design as opposed to predictive research design. The objective of this study was to show that event planners' personality reflected a certain soft skills competency and soft skills competency suggested one's self-leadership capability. The research questions aimed to examine the degree of association between each set of variables and to conclude if there was a relationship among the three variables.

The participants of the study represented a group of certified planners in the event management industry from the five states (VA, IL, FL, TX, and CA), which together represented 43% of the total population of 7208 active certified planners in the

United States. The study followed outlined procedures with the guarantee and the

promise of anonymity and confidentiality. The study employed three separate

instruments – the 40-Adjectives Unipolar Mini-Markers, the Event Planner Soft Skills

Assessment (EPSSA), and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) and

discussed the validity and reliability of each instrument. Participants accessed the tests

administered online. Chapter 4 presented the test results and Chapter 5, the conclusions,

limitations, and recommendations.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Over the past two decades, event management has become a recognized profession within the project-based industries. In the United States and Canada, there are at least 90,000 industry certified and non-certified event planners. Successful event planners understand the importance of maintaining a balanced client relationship through technical expertise, interpersonal skills, and a demonstrated proficiency in problem solving and decision-making (Roper & Phillips, 2007).

Individual competencies and social effectiveness are two major components of soft skills or human skills (Dreyfus, 2008). Many associate soft skills with self-efficacy, emotional sensitivity, and cognizance of diversity. Others relate soft skills to collaboration, communication, and relationship building (Fisher, Schulter, & Yoleti, 2005; Halfhill & Nielson, 2007). Regardless of the variations in interpretation, the general acknowledgement is soft skills affect work performance, job satisfaction, and leadership effectiveness (Boyatzis, 2006; Turner & Lloyd-Walker, 2008; Riggio & Reichard, 2008).

The current event management training and professional certification programs focus more on developing individual planner's technical and management skills and place little emphasis on soft skills enhancement. Therefore, event planners in general tend to be more task-oriented and less relationship driven even though multiple studies have proven soft skills can compensate for the lack of technical knowledge and cognitive intelligence in project management (Bailey & Mitchell, 2007; Cote & Miners, 2006).

The purposes of the study were to: (a) describe event planners' personality traits, (b) identify their soft skills competency, (c) examine their self-leadership capacity, and (d) identify the interrelationships among the three components in event planners. The following section discussed the application of the three test instruments used for this study and presented the study findings.

The first part of chapter 4 discussed the data collection procedures including the pilot study. The second part of the chapter presented the descriptive statistics of the participants' profile. The third part of the chapter presented the results of the statistical analyses using the Pearson correlation. The last part of the chapter gave an overall summary of the study results.

Data Collection Procedures

This quantitative correlational study investigated an interrelationship that potentially existed among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competencies, and self-leadership. Three test instruments examined each of the above-mentioned predictor variables. The 40-Adjectives Unipolar Mini-Markers by Saucier collected responses of event planners' personality traits. The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA), an instrument designed for this study, measured individual's soft skill competencies. The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) by Houghton studied individual's self-leadership capacity. Both Saucier and Houghton graciously granted permission to use their designed instruments in this study.

Pilot Study

The construct of the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) began in April, 2009. Over the next 14 months, the questionnaire went through 13 revisions

including changes in word choice, question length, and question order. The final version of the EPSSA consisted of 35 questions, reduced from the original 40-question design. To provide a better transition from the personality traits inventory, the EPSSA began with seven questions pertaining to participants' demographic information in multiple-choice format.

The design of the EPSSA placed emphasis on two broad areas: self-management and relationship management. Self-management questions queried event planner's emotional stability, conscientiousness of behaviors, and self-motivation. Assessment of relationship management examined event planners' sensitivity to other people's needs and personality differences as well as the agreeability and adaptability in rationalizing changes, problem solving, and decision-making.

Twenty industry-certified event planners, randomly selected from the states of Alabama, Arizona, Tennessee, and Utah, received an invitation to participate in the pilot study. Potential participants were informed that participation was strictly voluntary, that the estimated time for completing each questionnaire was 5 to7 minutes, and that information provided would be kept confidential. Participants were asked to answer 28 questions in a Likert-type scale, a short version of EPSSA excluding the demographic information collectors. Participants evaluated the questionnaire and provided feedback in reference to the clarity of the questions and the appropriateness of the scale of measurement.

The pilot study received seven completed responses. Six out of the 20 invitations were non-deliverable. Four people declined the invitation to participate, and the other three did not respond. Based on the feedback and recommendations from the

participants, the EPSSA underwent minor modifications one last time in preparation for the formal study.

The three-part study of Event Planner's Personality Traits, Soft Skills Competency, and Self-leadership

The targeted sample of 3204 active industry certified event planners in the states of Virginia (589), Illinois (595), Florida (601), Texas (604) and California (815), received invitations to participate in the study via e-mail (Appendix B). This selected group of certified event planners consisted of full-time, part-time, and independent planners who engaged in event management within the corporate, association, convention, and social market segments and who specialized in destination management and strategic planning. The selected participants assessed the three-part study (the 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers, the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment, and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire) through the web-host SurveyMonkey.

An activity log kept track of completed responses, partial responses, no responses, and participants' requests for removal from the invitation list. Participants who did not respond received two courtesy reminders on the 7th and the 14th day after the initial e-mailed invitation. Over the period of two months, from July 27 to September 27, 2010, the study received 288 completed surveys, 8.99% of the 3204 sample group, and 76.60% of the targeted 376 responses.

Eighty six (2.68%) participants declined the invitations to participate in the study. Thirty five (1.09%) participants initially accessed the survey yet did not respond. Eleven participants (0.34%) completed only the first of the three-part survey.

Twenty-three (7.18%) participants completed the first and second parts of the survey (see Table 3). Discarding the 155 (4.83%) incomplete surveys was necessary because the study aimed to examine the correlations among the three elements – personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. Using any incomplete responses would risk distorting the accuracy of the study results. Table 3 summarized the responses by state.

Table 3

Types of Response by State

State	Sample Size	Completed Surveys	Rejection	No Response	1st Survey	1st & 2nd Surveys
VA	589	45	13	3	2	5
IL	595	48	18	5	2	4
FL	601	61	18	7	1	4
TX	604	58	15	7	3	3
CA	815	76	22	13	3	7
Total	3204	288	86	35	11	23

The study results were based on the 288 completed surveys, an 8.99% response rate of the 3204 sample group. The margin of error according to the sample size of 288 was 5.51%, which was acceptable for the minimally acceptable confidence interval in a correlational research study design (Creswell, 2005).

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 16 was the selected statistical tool to examine the data and the Pearson correlation coefficient

examined the level of significance on ordinal data sets reflected in a Likert-type scale survey. Descriptive statistical analysis provided the central tendency, variability, and relative standing of the data in relation to the hypotheses from the research questions and the results of the analysis provided a general profile of the study population.

Sample Demographics

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) included seven demographic questions including field of expertise, gender, age, years of experience, number of organized events per year, average group size, and number of supervised employees. Each question contributed to the establishing characteristics of the industry certified event planners of this study. Tables 4 to 10 illustrated the results from each demographic collector.

Table 4

Survey Participants by Field of Expertise

State	Corporate	Association	Convention	Destination Management	Strategic Planning	Social Events
VA	8	28	4	0	2	3
IL	14	25	5	0	2	2
FL	21	16	16	1	1	6
TX	28	11	9	1	4	5
CA	41	18	7	3	1	6
Total	112	98	41	5	10	22
Percent	39.0	34.0	14.2	1.7	3.5	7.6

A total of 251 participants (87.16%) reported their job responsibilities involved active engagement in corporate or association event planning and convention management. Twenty-two participants (7.63%) specialized in other event planning such as social activity and cultural festivity. Ten participants (3.47%) employed in strategic planning, and the remaining five participants (1.74%) were experts in areas of destination management such as transportations, program logistics, and housing arrangements.

Table 5

Survey Participants by Gender

Gender	State					Frequency	Percent
	VA	IL	FL	TX	CA		
Male	9	5	7	9	20	50	17.4
Female	37	44	53	48	56	238	82.6
Total	46	49	60	57	76	288	100.0

Fifty participants (17.36%) were male and the other 238 participants (82.64%) were female. The ratio of male and female event planners included in the analysis sample was nearly 1:5. The gender result suggested event management is a female-dominated industry. This finding coincided with the 2006 Meetings Market Report conducted by Meetings and Conventions Magazine, women accounts for approximately three-quarters of the planner population (The Convention Industry Council 2007, Certified Meeting Professional Report).

Table 6

Survey Participants by Age

State	Age					Frequency	Percent
	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	over 60		
VA	1	18	13	8	4	44	15.3
IL	1	21	10	13	3	48	16.7
FL	2	21	20	17	0	60	20.8
TX	0	12	29	12	6	59	20.5
CA	0	24	30	15	8	77	26.7
Total	4	96	102	65	21	288	100.0
Percent	1.4	33.3	35.4	22.6	7.3		

One hundred and two participants (35.42%) were in the 41-50 age group category. Ninety six participants (33.33%) were between 31 and 40 years of age and 65 participants (22.57%) fell within the 51-60 age range. As indicated in Table 6, the majority of active event planners were between the age of 31 and 60.

Table 7

Survey Participants by Years of Experience

State	Years of Experience						Frequency	Percent
	Less than 1	1-5	6-10	10-15	16-20	Over 20		
VA	0	23	15	4	1	2	45	15.6
IL	1	12	17	12	3	3	48	16.7
FL	0	30	15	9	4	3	61	21.2
TX	0	24	16	13	4	1	58	20.1
CA	0	26	27	14	3	6	76	26.4
Total	1	115	90	52	15	15	288	100.0
Percent	0.3	39.9	31.3	18.1	5.2	5.2		

One hundred and sixteen participants (40.28%) reported having less than five years of experience in the profession. Ninety participants (31.25%) indicated their years of experience in the industry were between 6 and 10 and 52 participants (18.06%) had more than 11 to 15 years of field engagement. The majority of the participants had varying years of field experience within the range of 1-15 years across the five selected states.

Table 8

Survey Participants by Number of Organized Events

Number of events Per Year	State					Frequency	Percent
	VA	IL	FL	TX	CA		
Under 10	21	19	14	16	23	93	32.3
11-25	9	14	16	14	21	74	25.7
26-40	9	7	9	9	10	44	15.3
41-55	1	1	2	3	5	12	4.2
56-70	2	2	8	3	7	22	7.6
71-85	1	0	3	0	1	5	1.7
Over 85	2	5	9	13	9	38	13.2
Total	45	48	61	58	76	288	100.0

Ninety-three participants (32.29%) indicated they managed, on average, less than 10 organized events in a year. Seventy-four participants (25.7%) reported to be responsible of 11-25 events and 44 participants (15.3%) managed up to 40 events a year. Interestingly, 38 participants (13.2%) said they organized over 85 events a year. As indicated in Table 8, over 73.30% of the participants were responsible for 1 to 40 organized events per year.

Table 9

Survey Participants by Average Event Size

Number of Attendees	State					Frequency	Percent
	VA	IL	FL	TX	CA		
Under 50	4	4	7	6	8	29	10.1
51-100	7	8	9	10	18	52	18.0
101-200	4	9	13	13	16	55	19.1
201-300	3	8	11	10	13	45	15.6
301-400	6	2	5	3	7	23	8.0
401-500	4	4	6	4	4	22	7.6
501-1000	9	4	6	4	4	27	9.4
Over 1000	8	9	3	8	7	35	12.2
Total	45	48	61	58	76	288	100.0

One hundred fifty-two participants (53.31%) indicated the average service group size, in terms of event attendees, ranged from 51 to 300. A relatively high 12.15% of the event planners (35) across the five selected states managed groups of 1000 attendees or more at a time.

Table 10

Survey Participants by Number of Supervised Employees

Number of Employees	State					Frequency	Percent
	VA	IL	FL	TX	CA		
0 (Independent planner)	8	11	12	18	24	73	25.3
5 or less	32	26	39	30	35	162	56.3
6-10	4	9	7	5	10	35	12.2
11-20	1	1	3	2	2	9	3.1
21-30	0	0	0	1	2	3	1.0
More than 30	0	0	1	2	3	6	2.1
Total	45	47	62	58	76	288	100.0

One hundred ninety seven participants (68.5%) of the total analysis sample reported they supervised a team of 1 to 10 staff members within an event management company or an association. One-fourth (25.3%) of the participants were independent, self-employed planners. Participants had varied number of supervised employees and there was a relatively high percentage of independent planners in the event management profession.

Demographic Summary of Study Participants

The seven demographic collectors illustrated in Tables 3-10 provided descriptive information of the 288 study participants. Eighty-nine percent (238) of the participants were female. The majority of the participants were within 31-50 years of age and their field experience in event management ranged from 1-15 years. The dominant fields of

expertise were in corporate or association event planning and convention management. The average number of planned events was under 40 per year and the service group size varied. Finally, 74.70% of the participants were employees of an organization or an association and 25.30% were self-employed.

Findings

The study applied three different instruments to measure meeting planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. The findings of each survey illustrated the shared characteristics of this group of study participants. A brief summary of each survey results highlighted the areas of significance of each component.

Event Planners' Personality Traits

The 40-Adjectives of Unipolar Mini-Markers, developed by Saucier (1994), is a shorter factor-analytically scale derived from Goldberg's Big-Five. The Mini-Markers inventoried participants' personality traits within the dimensions of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness. Each of the five dimensions consists of eight traits, four positive traits and four negative traits.

Saucier suggested two coding methods. One is to compute a positive and a negative subscale for each dimension, then, subtract the negative score from the positive score. The other method is to reverse the negative subscale before creating a single score for each of the five dimensions (Saucier, 1994). This study chose the second coding method because it is a scale often used in other published research and by creating a single scale for each dimension, reliability estimates can be established for each dimension.

The Mini-Markers uses a nine-point Likert-type scale of measure, ranging from "extremely inaccurate" to "extremely accurate". Table 11 showed the ranking of each personality trait and Table 12, the distributions of means and standard deviations of the five dimensions in the scale.

Table 11

Survey Participants' Personality Traits

Ranking Category	Personality Traits
Extremely Inaccurate	Careless, Cold, Disorganized, Harsh, Inefficient, Jealous, Rude, Sloppy, Uncreative, Unintellectual, Unsympathic, and Withdrawn
Very Inaccurate	Bashful, Envious, Fretful, Moody, Quiet, Shy, Temperamental, and Touchy
Neither Inaccurate Nor Accurate	Philosophical
Slightly Accurate	Complex
Moderately Accurate	Bold, Deep, Relaxed, Sympathetic, and Talkative
Very Accurate Accurate	Cooperative, Creative, Efficient, Energetic, Extraverted, Imaginative, Intellectual, Kind, Organized, Practical, Systematic, Unenvious, and Warm

Table 12

Means and Standard Deviations of the Mini-Markers Scale

Dimensions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Extraversion	288	1.75	9.00	6.74	1.33142
Agreeableness	288	2.13	9.00	7.54	.95313
Conscientiousness	288	3.25	9.00	7.85	.87877
Emotional Stability	288	2.13	9.00	6.25	1.28419
Openness	288	1.75	9.00	6.93	1.00181

The Cronbach Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) is a measure of internal consistency of items computed in a scale. To establish an instrument's reliability and to be qualified as an objective scale, the Cronbach alpha coefficients must meet the minimum criteria of .70 (Simon, 2006). The results of the reliability analysis, depicted in Table 13, indicated that each of the five dimensions exceeded the .70 requirement.

Table 13

Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities of the Five-Factor Mini-Markers Scales

Trait Dimension	Cronbach Alpha	N of Items	N of Subjects
Extraversion	.840	8	288
Agreeableness	.791	8	288
Conscientiousness	.789	8	288
Emotional Stability	.763	8	288
Openness	.769	8	288

Event Planners' Soft Skills Competency

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) is a self-reporting design measuring individual participant's level of self-management and relationship management skills. Participants rated the 28 scenarios in a five point Likert-type scale. All items were summed for a single score. Not a single item, if deleted, would produce an alpha coefficient higher than the obtained .870. Each item improves the reliability the reliability estimate of the scale. Table 14 illustrated the rating of each statement. Table 15 and 16 showed the mean, standard deviation as well as the Cronbach's alpha reliability of the EPSSA. Table 17 presented the summary item correlation of EPSSA.

Table 14

Survey Participants' Soft Skills Competency

Rating Scale	Statements
Not at All accurate	(22) I am jealous whenever a team member outperforms me. (25) I am anxious and likely to lose my temper when a project does not carry out as well as I have planned.
Mostly Accurate	(8) I take initiative to reach out to others and I always volunteer my help. (9) I am sensitive to people's feeling and can often detect nonverbal responses. (10) I listen more than I talk in most social situations. (11) I respect other people's opinion and I enjoy sharing ideas and experiences. (12) I set reachable goals and base my decision on facts and logics instead of feelings. (13) I can usually maintain my composure even under stressful situations. (14) I respect individual difference and I get along with almost anyone. (15) I approach each task with careful planning and organization. (20) I accommodate other people's need and requests in a positive and responsive way. (21) Most people feel comfortable sharing their feelings and problems with me. (23) I have no problem admitting faults and taking responsibilities. (26) When in disagreement with others, I always state my opinion in a respectful way. (29) I learn about my strengths and weaknesses through routine self-reflection. (30) I am flexible and willing to adjust to changes and accommodate last minute requests. (31) I always see the positive side of other people. (33) Most people will describe me as being cheerful, relaxed, and approachable. (34) I motivate and help others see and reach their potentials. (35) I listen and ask questions for clarification before I offer my opinion and advice.
Completely Accurate	(16) I celebrate team members' success for a job well done. (17) I encourage individual creativity and I create learning opportunities for others. (18) I am passionate about my work and I stay energized to achieve my goals. (19) My team members and I always help one another in completing a project. (24) I hold myself fully responsible to the success of my work. (27) Helping other people succeed gives me pleasure and satisfaction. (28) I engage my team members in project planning and decision-making.

Table 15

Means and Standard Deviations of the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA)

	N of Subjects	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
EPSSA	288	76	131	111.10	10.339
Valid N (Listwise)	288				

Table 16

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability of the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.870	28

The .870 Cronbach's alpha found in the EPSSA documented acceptable reliability. Item analysis showed all the items in the scale were working together as planned to produce consistency of measurement. Each item improved the reliability estimate of the scale and any item deleted from the scale would lower the overall level of reliability. Table 16 provided the summary item statistics of EPSSA.

Table 17

Summary Item Statistics for Cronbach's Alpha Calculation for EPSSA

Item	Item-Total item	Cronbach's alpha if correlation deleted
EP08 I take initiative to reach out to others and I always volunteer my help.	.364	.867
EP09 I am sensitive to other people's feeling and can often detect nonverbal responses.	.494	.863
EP10 I listen more than I talk in most social situations.	.193	.875
EP11 I respect other people's opinion and I enjoy sharing ideas and expericnces.	.557	.862
EP12 I set reachable goals and base my decisions on facts and logics instead of feelings.	.306	.868
EP13 I can usually maintain my composure even under stressful situations.	.434	.865
EP14 I respect individual difference and I get along with almost anyone.	.543	.863
EP15 I approach each task with careful planning and organization.	.437	.865
EP16 I celebrate team members' success for a job well done.	.522	.863
EP17 I encourage individual creativity and I create learning opportunities for others.	.553	.862
EP18 I am passionate about my work and I stay energized to achieve my goals.	.505	.863
EP19 My team members and I always help one another in completing a project.	.378	.867
EP20 I accommodate other people's needs and requests in a positive and responsive way.	.571	.862
EP21 Most people feel comfortable sharing their feelings and problems with me.	.475	.864
EP22 I am jealous whenever a team member outperforms me.	-.156	.878
EP23 I have no problem admitting faults and taking responsibilities.	.373	.867
EP24 I hold myself fully responsible to the success of my work	.378	.866
EP25 I am anxious and likely to lose my temper when a project does not carry out as well as I have planned.	-.164	.880
EP26 When in disagreement with others, I always state my opinion in a respectful way.	.468	.864
EP27 Helping other people succeed gives me pleasure and satisfaction.	.612	.862
EP28 I engage my team members in project planning and decision making.	.556	.862
EP29 I learn about my strengths and weaknesses through routine self-reflection	.473	.864
EP30 I am flexible and willing to adjust to change and accommodate last minute requests.	.484	.864
EP31 I always see the positive side of other people.	.477	.864
EP32 I have close working relationships with my customers and team members.	.419	.866
EP33 Most people will describe me as being cheerful, relaxed, and approachable	.452	.864
EP34 I motivate and help others see and reach their potentials	.632	.860
EP35 I listen and ask questions for clarification before I offer my opinion and advice	.488	.864

Event Planners' Self-Leadership

The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) is a scenario-based measure. Participants responded to the 35 scenarios in a five-point Likert type rating scale, ranging from not at all accurate to completely accurate. Following Houghton's advice on scoring (personal communication, October 15, 2010), all four items of the self-punishment scale (RSLQ 6, 15, 24, and 30) were excluded from this analysis. The results reflected the measure of 31 items in three subscales – behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies.

Twenty nine out of 31 scenarios (93.55%) received the "mostly accurate" ratings. Scenario 9 (I use written notes to remind myself of what I need to accomplish) and Scenario 18 (I use concrete reminders eg. notes and lists to help me focus on things I need to accomplish) both received the "completely accurate" rating. Table 18 illustrated the frequency and percent of the 31 statements from the RSLQ findings. Table 19 reported the mean and standard deviation of the three subscales in RSLQ and Table 20, the Cronbach's alpha reliability.

Table 18

Survey Participants' Self-leadership Ability

Mostly Accurate Statements	Frequency	Percent
(1) I use my imagination to picture myself performing well on important tasks.	110	38.2
(2) I establish specific goals for my own performance.	131	45.5
(3) Sometimes I find I'm talking to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me deal with difficult problems I face.	93	32.3
(4) When I do an assignment especially well, I like to treat myself to some thing or activity I especially enjoy	87	30.2
(5) I think about my own beliefs and assumptions whenever I encounter a difficult situation.	153	53.1
(7) I make a point to keep track of how well I'm doing at work (school)	103	35.8
(8) I focus my thinking on the pleasant other than unpleasant aspects of my job (school) activities.	154	53.5
(10) I visualize myself successfully performing a task before I do it.	94	32.6
(11) I consciously have goals in mind for my work efforts.	118	41.0
(12) Sometimes I talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to work through difficult situations.	108	37.5
(13) When I do something well, I reward myself with a special event such as a good dinner, movie, shopping trip.	64	22.2
(14) I try to mentally evaluate the accuracy of my own beliefs about situations I am having problems with.	130	45.1
(16) I usually am aware of how well I'm doing as I perform an activity.	188	65.3
(17) I try to surround myself with objects and people that bring out my desirable behaviors.	161	55.9
(19) Sometimes I picture in my mind a successful performance before I actually do a task.	90	31.3
(20) I work toward specific goals I have set for myself.	118	41.0
(21) When I'm in difficult situations, I will sometimes talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me get through it.	103	35.8
(22) When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like	71	24.7
(23) I openly articulate and evaluate my own assumptions when I have a disagreement with someone else.	126	43.8
(25) I pay attention to how well I'm doing in my work.	149	51.7
(26) When I have a choice, I try to do my work in ways that I enjoy rather than trying to get it over with.	153	53.1
(27) I purposefully visualize myself overcoming the challenge I face.	92	31.9
(28) I think about the goals that I intend to achieve in the future.	118	41.0
(29) I think about and evaluate the beliefs and assumptions I hold.	134	46.5
(31) I keep track of my progress on projects I'm working on.	133	46.2
(32) I seek out activities in my work that I enjoy doing.	152	52.8
(33) I often mentally rehearse the way I plan to deal with a challenge before actually face the challenge.	118	41.0
(34) I write specific goals for my own performance.	88	30.6
(35) I find my own favorite ways to get things done.	152	52.8

Completely Accurate Statements	Frequency	Percent
(9) I use written notes to remind myself of what I need to accomplish	174	60.4
(18) I use concrete reminders (eg. notes and lists) to help me focus on things I need to accomplish	180	62.5

Table 19

Means and Standard Deviation of the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire Total Score and Subscores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
RSLQ – Total Score	288	61	155	114.44	18.465
RSLQ – Behavior-focused strategies	288	24	70	53.27	9.168
RSLQ – Natural reward strategies	288	9	25	19.81	2.802
RSLQ – Constructive thought pattern strategies	288	15	60	41.37	9.434
Valid N (Listwise)	288				

Table 20

Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities of the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) Scale

Scale	Alpha	N of Items	N of Subjects
RSLQ – Total Score	.926	31	288
RSLQ – Behavior-focused strategies	.882	14	288
RSLQ – Natural reward strategies	.703	5	288
RSLQ – Constructive thought pattern strategies	.887	12	288

As shown in Table 20, the total scores and all the subscores met or exceeded the

.70 criteria typically required for objective scales.

Three research questions and their corresponding hypotheses guided this research study. The first objective of this quantitative correlational study was to determine the degree of relationship between event planners' personality traits and their soft skills competency. The second objective was to examine the degree of relationship between these event planners' soft skills competency and their self-leadership capacity. The third objective was to study the degree of relationship between event planners' personality traits and their self-leadership ability.

Research Question 1, Hypothesis, and Results

R1: What is the relationship between event planners' personality traits and soft skills competency?

H10: There is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

H1A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

The null hypothesis was there is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency. The results from the Pearson correlation showed a positive relationship exists between all five-factor structure (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and intellect or imagination) and soft skills competency. Agreeableness ($r=.520$, N=288, $p=0.001$) received the highest correlational rating, followed by conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness. Extraversion received the lowest correlational rating ($r=.212$, N=288, $p=0.001$). The statistical findings illustrated in Table 21 rejected the null hypothesis and confirmed a

positive relationship existed between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

Table 21

The Relationship between Event Planners' Personality Traits and Soft Skill Competency

Dimensions of Personality Traits (Mini-Markers)	Pearson Correlation	Soft Skills Competency (EPSSA)
Extraversion	Correlation coefficient	.212**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288
Agreeableness	Correlation coefficient	.520**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288
Conscientiousness	Correlation coefficient	.467**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288
Emotional Stability	Correlation coefficient	.423**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288
Openness	Correlation coefficient	.391**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Research Question 2, Hypothesis, and Results

R2: What is the relationship between event planners' soft skills competency and self-

leadership?

H2O: There is no relationship between an event planner's soft skills competency and

self-leadership.

H2A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's soft skills

competency and self-leadership.

The null hypothesis was that no relationship existed between an event planner's

soft skills competency and self-leadership. The null hypothesis was again rejected

because the relationships between the overall score and the three sub-scores within the

self-leadership scales were found positively correlated with the soft skills competency in

participating event planners. The data indicated as an individual's self-leadership score

increased, his soft skills competency level increased as well. Table 22 summarized the

correlational significance.

Table 22

The Relationship between Event Planners' Soft Skills Competency and Self-Leadership

Total score and subscores of Self-Leadership (RSLQ)	Pearson Correlation	Soft Skills Competency (EPSSA)
RSLQ – Total Score	Correlation coefficient	.562**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288
RSLQ – Behavior-focused strategies	Correlation coefficient	.505**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288
RSLQ- Natural reward strategies	Correlation coefficient	.550**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288
RSLQ – Constructive thought pattern strategies	Correlation coefficient	.446**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.0001
	N	288

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 3, Hypothesis, and Results

R3: What is the relationship between event planners' personality traits and self-

leadership?

H30: There is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and self-

leadership.

H3A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's personality traits

and self-leadership.

The null hypothesis assumed there was no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and self-leadership. Table 23 documented various degrees of positive significant correlations between the RSLQ total score and the five dimensions of the Mini-Markers. For example, the correlational coefficient of the extraversion total score was .155 (N=288, p=0.008) showing no significance but the conscientiousness total score of .292 (N=288, p=0.0001) showed a more substantial correlation. Overall, the correlation statistics supported the hypothesis that there was a positive relationship between an event planner's personality traits and self-leadership, though less definite than the previous two hypotheses testing.

Table 23

The Relationship between the Event Planners' Personality Traits and Self-Leadership

Correlations

Self-Leadership Total Score and Subscores	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional Stability	Openness
RSLQ- Total Score					
Pearson Correlation	.155**	.213**	.292**	.184**	.308**
Significance(2-tailed)	.008	.0001	.0001	.002	.0001
N	288	288	288	288	288
RSLQ- Behavior-focused strategies					
Pearson Correlation	.154**	.180**	.310**	.130*	.229**
Significance(2-tailed)	.009	.002	.0001	.028	.0001
N	288	288	288	288	288
RSLQ- Natural reward strategies					
Pearson Correlation	.167**	.210**	.290**	.232**	.214**
Significance (2-tailed)	.004	.0001	.0001	.0001	.0001
N	288	288	288	288	288
RSLQ- Constructive thought pattern strategies					
Pearson Correlation	.104	.180**	.184**	.165**	.316**
Significance (2-tailed)	.079	.002	.002	.005	.0001
N	288	288	288	288	288

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Summary

Chapter 4 described the pilot test of the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) and presented the findings of the three hypotheses testing using the Pearson correlation statistical analysis. The Cronbach alpha (Cronbach, 1951) established the internal consistency and reliability of each scale of measure. The descriptive statistics documented the numerical representation of the data and illustrated in the form of tables. Chapter 5 described the conclusions derived from the findings, the limitations of the study, the implications and significance to leadership, and the recommendations for future research and potential applications and improvement of the survey instruments.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Identifying diverse skill sets and supporting skills training and development are important determinants of 21st century workplace performance, job satisfaction, and leadership effectiveness (Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, & Boyle, 2006; Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008; Turner & Lloyd-Walker, 2008). Technical skills and expertise are cognitive competencies acquired through education and training (Litecky, Arnett, & Prabhakar, 2004). People management skills and communication-based skills, sometimes known as soft skills, are bases of emotional and social competencies (Boyatzis & Saatciogul, 2008; Riggio & Reichard, 2008).

The event Management profession, like most project-based industries, places emphasis on technical and management skills training. The inability to recognize the importance of soft skills has made most event professionals more task effective and less relationship driven. Effectiveness of interacting with customers and responsiveness to feedback, according to the study of Jha and Lyer (2006), are two positive determinants of project success. In fact, multiple studies have suggested that soft skills can compensate for the lack of technical knowledge and cognitive intelligence (Bailey & Mitchell, 2007; Cote & Miners, 2006).

The purpose of this correlational study was to establish an understanding of the event management population through three different channels. First, the study described the common personality traits found in event planners through the inventory of the 40-Adjectives Unipolar Mini-Markers by Saucier (1994). Second, it identified event planners' soft skills competency through the test instrument of Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA). Third, it examined event planners' self-leadership capacity

by means of the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ), designed by Houghton and Neck (2002). Based on the findings from the three assessments, the study identified the interrelationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership capacity.

Chapter 5 summarized the results of the study and interpreted the findings from the data analysis presented in Chapter 4. The chapter began with the discussion of the data collection procedures, demographics analysis, data findings, and their limitations. The meaning of the study results and the significance to leadership were the next focus of the discussion. The chapter concluded with recommendations pertaining to the direct applications and future investigation.

Data Collection Procedures

This correlational research study examined the relationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. The data collection process began with individual variable assessments. The 40-Adjective Unipolar Mini-Markers inventoried participants' personality traits, the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) addressed participants' soft skills proficiency, and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) measured participants' self-management and self-motivational skills. The Mini-Markers and the RSLQ have a proven reliability and validity; the EPSSA, a specially designed instrument for this study, underwent a pilot study prior to implementation.

Pilot Study of the EPSSA

The original design of the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA) consisted of 40 scenario-based questions in measuring participants' self-awareness and

relationship management skills. After 13 revisions over 14 months, a pilot study was extended to 20 randomly selected event planners from the states of Alabama, Arizona, Tennessee, and Utah. Seven participants responded to the invitation and provided valuable suggestions and comments. After incorporating the changes, removing the ambiguous items, and rewording for clarity, the final version of the EPSSA was finalized with its content validity, verified to evaluate participants' soft skills competency.

The Three-part Study of Event Planners' Personality Traits, Soft Skills Competency, and Self-Leadership

The study targeted 3204 active certified event planners in the states of Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, and California, which collectively represented 43% of the total 7208 event planner populations in the United States. The expected number of response was 376 at a 95% confidence interval. Over a two months period, from July 27 to September 27, 2010, the study collected 288 completed surveys through the web-host SurveyMonkey.com. The survey site remained active to collect late responses until Oct 17, 2010, but no additional responses were received.

The next procedure was to study if relationships exist between paired-set variables by means of the Pearson correlation coefficient. The three hypotheses directed the study.

H10: There is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

H1A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's personality traits and soft skills competency.

H20: There is no relationship between an event planner's soft skills competency

and self-leadership.

H2A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's soft skills

competency and self-leadership.

H30: There is no relationship between an event planner's personality traits and

self-leadership.

H3A: There is a positive relationship between an event planner's personality

traits and self-leadership.

The correlational significance level of the Pearson correlation coefficient was set at the

0.01 confidence level. The hypotheses were tested and data computed using the

Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS), Version 16.

Data Analysis

The Survey Monkey data was downloaded onto the SPSS. Descriptive statistics

described the demographics collected from the seven questions in the EPSSA including

participants' field of expertise, gender, age, and years of experience, number of

organized events per year, event size, and number of staff. The Pearson correlation

coefficient calculated the association between each set of variables (personality traits

and soft skills competency, soft skills competency and self-leadership, and personality

traits and self-leadership) and determined the level of significance.

Sample Demographics

The majority of the respondents who completed the entire three-part survey were

female, and 25% were independent planners. The average age of the participants ranged

between 31 and 60, had varying years of engaging experience in corporate or association

event planning and convention management. Two-thirds of the respondents organized less than 40 events a year and the average size of the service group was between 51 to 300 attendees.

Data Findings

Three separate test instruments measured participants' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership capacity. The results of each survey contributed to the establishment of the overall event planners' profile and unique characteristics. The first part of the data findings presented the results of each survey and the second part of the findings addressed the relationships between each set of variables.

Event Planners' Personality Traits

The 40 adjectives of the Mini-Markers described five dimensions of personality traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness. The study participants rated each trait in reference to their personality in a nine-point Likert scale. Conscientiousness was the most common characteristic, followed by agreeableness, openness, and extraversion. Emotional stability was the least commonly shared personality traits among the sample event planners.

Event Planners' Soft Skills Competency

The EPSSA included 28 statements that evaluated respondents' overall soft skills competency. Each statement was designed to reflect the degree of individual's self-management or relationship management ability. Respondents rated "I motivate and help others see and reach their potential" and "Helping other people succeed gives me pleasure and satisfaction" to be the most accurate representation of their working principles. Other statements such as "I accommodate other people's needs and requests

in a positive and responsive way" and "I respect other people's opinion and I enjoy sharing ideas and experience" also received high ratings.

Statement 15 "I am jealous whenever a team member outperforms me" and statement 18 "I am anxious and likely to lose my temper when a project does not carry out as well as I have planned" received negative ratings. Respondents rated these two statements to be least accurate in their relationship with others. In addition, the Cronbach's alpha calculation of each statement indicated consistency of the measurement.

Event Planners' Self-Leadership

Behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies were the three self-leadership dimensions measured. Each dimension consisted of several subscales. For example, self-goal setting, self-observation, self-reward, and self-cueing were subscales of behavior-focused strategies. Visualizing successful performance, self-talk, and evaluating beliefs and assumptions were subscales of constructive thought pattern strategies.

Respondents rated 33 out of the 35 statements to be mostly accurate. Two statements "I use written notes to remind myself of what I need to accomplish" and "I use concrete reminders (e.g. notes and lists) to help me focus on things I need" received a completely accurate rating. The result indicated that respondents considered all three strategies (behavior-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought pattern) were important and in particular, self-cueing was the most effective skill and strategy they apply in self-leadership.

Research Question 1 and Hypothesis

Research Question 1 "What is the relationship between event planners' personality traits and soft skills competency?" sought to determine whether a positive relationship existed between event planners' personality traits and soft skills competency. The null hypothesis was rejected. There was a positive correlation between the two variables.

The results from the Pearson correlation coefficient analysis indicated all five dimensions (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness) of individual's personality traits displayed a positive correlation with soft skills competency. Agreeableness and conscientiousness had the highest correlation, followed by emotional stability and openness. Interestingly, extraversion received the lowest correlation significance of the five. The results corresponded with the theory that individuals' personality traits are drivers of social effectiveness (Boyatzis & Saatcioglu, 2008; Semadar, et al., 2006). Consistent personality traits are predictors of intelligence (Furnham, Dissou, Sloan, & Charmorro-Premuzic, 2007) and they determine the levels of success in social effectiveness and adaptation (Jha & Iyer, 2006., Lakshmi, 2008; Lopes et al., 2004).

Research Question 2 and Hypothesis

Research Question 2 "What is the relationship between event planners' soft skills competency and self-leadership?" focused on finding whether a relationship existed between soft skills competency and self-leadership among event planners. Again, the null hypothesis was rejected. There was a positive relationship between the two variables. The results indicated that as an individual's self-leadership skill increases, his

soft skills competency level heightens. Similarly, an individual who is less proficient in soft skills has a lower self-leadership capacity.

The findings supported the theory of Noël, Michaels, and Levas (2003) that people who demonstrate higher degree of self-monitoring are more sensitive to social cues and more willing to compromise and adapt their behavior to meet social desirable expectations. Intrinsic motivation, according to Diliello and Houghton (2006), is an inherited quality of self-leadership; it is naturally rewarding and is a driving force of self-influence that promotes individual and team satisfaction (Gagne and Deci, 2005).

Research Question 3 and Hypothesis

Research Question 3 "What is the relationship between event planners' personality traits and self-leadership?" sought to determine if personality traits contributed to individuals' self-leadership ability. The null hypothesis in this analysis was also rejected. There was an overall positive relationship between personality traits and self-leadership, though some pair-set variables received stronger correlation than others.

The Pearson correlation coefficient analysis indicated openness and conscientiousness received the highest total scores in relation to all three strategies in self-leadership. Openness had a strong correlation with constructive thought pattern strategies. Conscientiousness correlated positively with behavioral-focused strategies and natural reward strategies. Extraversion showed no correlation with constructive thought pattern strategies. The correlation between emotional stability and behavior-focused strategies revealed the lowest outcome in comparison with conscientiousness, openness, agreeableness, and extraversion.

Lopes et al. (2004) and Momeni (2009) shared similar findings that the ability to manage emotional dynamics associated with one's intrinsic desire to succeed and autonomous motivation were naturally rewarding (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Intrinsic motivation is the driving force of self-determination (Schmid & Adams, 2008) and it fosters a greater conviction of ownership and self-leadership (Flannes & Levin, 2005). The results also corresponded to the study of Houghton and Neck (2002) in which emotional stability showed a significant relationship limited to natural rewards. Openness and conscientiousness received the highest overall correlation in all three self-leadership categories. Openness is receptiveness to new experience and conscientiousness associates with sensitivity, determination, organization, and self-discipline. Conscientiousness and openness complement one another.

Limitations

Limitations of a study are concerned with avoidable and unavoidable problems and circumstances that affect internal and external validity in generalizing findings to other populations, reliability and scope in measurement, and selection of statistical method and tools (Cone & Foster, 2006). This study achieved the intended purpose and the findings supported each of the hypotheses. Positive relationships existed between each set of variables and there were identified interrelationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. However, there are inherent limitations that require attention and modification for improvement.

The sample size of the pilot study on the test instrument of EPSSA was small. The potential risk of having limited responses could raise issues as scales of measurement might not be appropriate, results might not be conclusive, and instrument

might not be sufficiently reliable or valid. A larger sample and a post-test of the pilot study would help lower the potential risk of poor measurement.

The surveys used forced field keys to collect responses and participants were not given the opportunity to elaborate on their responses or provide additional comments. The design limited the potential to collect valuable data and insights for future studies and a better understanding of participants' perception of relationships among personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. In addition, participants were not given the option key of "not applicable" and this might pose a potential risk to accuracy and consistency of results.

The data was collected through self-reporting measures, which might increase the likelihood of biased self-presentation and pose a certain degree of social desirability. Self-reporting quantitative studies face potential limitations in scope and depth as well as loss of richness. Using qualitative measures in follow up studies may help address this limitation and provide findings that are more conclusive.

The selected sample group of this study was limited to the states with the highest number of certified event professionals. The results may or may not be representative of the entire industry populations especially among the international planners. The difference in cultural orientation and interpretations of soft skills may affect the generalization of the results of this study. Cross-cultural study may be useful in obtaining a more holistic understanding of the topic.

The study aimed to collect 376 completed responses, yet only 288 responses were received at the end of the two-month period. Although the sample size was representative, the response rate suffered because the study did not take into account that

event professionals in the hospitality and destination management industries are "suppliers" and not "planners". The inability to detect this potential problem affected the goal of reaching the 95% confidential interval of the targeted sample.

Significance of Findings to Leadership

People who learn to apply soft skills recognize the emotional and social needs of others. They tend to be more sensitive to workplace emotions, and more proficient in self-monitoring and relationship building toward personal goals and social expectations (Cote & Miners, 2006; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). They demonstrate people management skills, are effective in formulating solutions in response to conflicts, and are more adaptive to changes (Milivojevich, 2006; Momeni, 2009, Riggio & Reichard, 2008).

The results of this study found positive self-leadership qualities in event planners. These individuals were open to experience, showed eagerness to new learning, and demonstrated creativity and constructive thinking. They were conscientious of their behavior and they enhanced this ability through self-observation, self-goal setting, self-cueing, and self-reward. They also shared common characteristics of being sympathetic, warm, kind, and cooperative, all together an integral part of agreeability. They maintained emotional balance by controlling negative emotions, changing perceptions, and focusing on intrinsic rewards.

The results indicated extraversion was the least significant quality in event planners. One general assumption is event planners have an outgoing personality since their jobs require close relationships and contacts with customers and suppliers. A possible explanation is extraversion consists of two elements: sociability and

impulsiveness. Successful event planners understand a greater emphasis should be placed on work effectiveness rather than work efficiency. Being outgoing or sociable enhances work effectiveness and is a part of role expectations. Impulsiveness, however, involves risk taking. By over stressing the importance of efficiency, the quality of work suffers and this might be the reason behind this study's findings.

The relationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency and self-leadership provided valuable insights into those qualities that contribute to effectiveness in project-based and relationship-based industry professionals. The study's findings also brought forth new areas of interest, identified gaps of knowledge, and addressed potential applications.

From an individual standpoint, identifying qualities of successful event planners in this study may have helped the participating individuals learn about their strengths and weaknesses and might promote a better sense of self-awareness. Those who apply the new knowledge and skills will have a better chance of increasing their proficiency in self-management and relationship building (Wellington, 2005). Understanding the significance of soft skills and their effect on work performance and employee satisfaction will provide planners the knowledge and skills to detect symptoms of workplace emotions, formulate solutions, and promote empowerment through motivation and rewards. In addition, the results of this study will help define new dimensions of individual development and identify leadership role and skills needed in any customer-based industries.

Recommendations

The study results indicated an overarching relationship among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. The identification of common personality traits provides a framework of distinguishing productive and counterproductive qualities in any project or relationship-based professionals. The examination of soft skills and self-leadership advances the understanding of a behavioral approach to measurable competencies, performance, and leadership practices. The perspectives gained from the study will enable the researcher to assess the knowledge gap in the field of event management and to share suggestions with practitioners and other researchers in terms of practice, theory, and research.

Recommendations in Practice

Most companies are now recognizing individual's technical and interpersonal competencies have effects on an organization's functional performance and financial success. Learning to identify individual's qualities and potentials will provide an organization better criteria and references for employee selection, training, development, and performance evaluation. By strengthening the initial screening process, companies will be more equipped to make better employment choices. Matching the right talent to the organization's needs and culture will also enhance employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and maximize profitability and employee investment.

Event planning or any project-based profession progresses through four fundamental stages - initiation, planning, implementation, and closing. Each stage requires effective planners to demonstrate certain personal attributes, exercise various skills in communication, leadership, negotiation, decision-making, and general

management (Skulmoski & Hartman, 2010). Identifying the soft skills competency set will enable individuals and companies to be more conscientious of individual differences and be more adaptive to group dynamics, organizational politics, and cultural diversity. This study hopes to extend the awareness of why soft skills are vital to project success and to support the claim that project or event management needs to incorporate soft skills training to the existing theory-focused and technical skill-based practice.

Recommendations in Theory

This study supported the importance of competency research and reflected the complexity in theories of competence. Traditional problem-based learning and discipline-specific technical skills training no longer suffice the changing demands of project and relationship-based industries. The growing challenges event or project managers face include defining skills sets required for different project types, project phases, and targeted project participants and end users. Creating a list of temporal competencies will provide a platform for discussion and examining the different perspectives of competencies will encourage and extend other areas of cognitive and noncognitive empirical research.

Establishing a universal definition of competency is essential to building a holistic approach to project-based event or project management. Incorporating the dimensions of knowledge, skills, and abilities, known as the KSAs, into competency theories or models may provide a framework for a more defined view of combined technical and human competence. Each dimension may consist of clusters of subunits. For example, contracting, marketing, mediation, and project system development can be

elements within the knowledge dimension. Verbal communication, active listening, writing, and presentations can be included as dimensions of skills whereas goal setting, self-motivation, leadership, team building may be elements for developing innate and learned abilities.

Recommendations in Research

This research study used a homogeneous group of certified event professionals in five states with the largest planner population in the U.S. The response rate suffered because of the failed acknowledgement that event professionals in the hospitality and destination management industries are suppliers and not planners according to the event industry definition. One recommendation would be to conduct a new study applying the same three instruments among the suppliers population to see if it brings similar results and indications. Another avenue of interest worth exploring is to compare the results from the planners' point of view with the new study on perception stemming from suppliers.

The Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA), though proved a reliable measurement in this study, requires modifications for improvement. Rewording statements with negative connotation or using reverse coding may increase the clarity and establish better consistency of the questionnaire design. For example, the statement of "I am jealous whenever a team member outperforms me" could be changed to "I am not jealous of my team member who outperforms me." Similarly, "I am anxious and likely to lose my temper when a project does not carry out as well as I have planned" would better read as " I do not feel anxious nor do I lose my temper when a project does not carry out as well as I have planned". Adding a comment field to each survey and

encouraging participants to share their comments and suggestions may also provide beneficial insights and richer information.

The design of the EPSSA test instrument did not include participants' education and training background as one of the demographic variables. Individuals' soft skills competency and level of cultural sensitivity determine their ability to manage a culturally dispersed team, foster motivation, and build trusting relationship. The ability to balance technical (hard) and interpersonal relationship (soft) skills should be the focus of any project management training and education initiative. Extending the human skills development aspects should be emphasized and incorporated into the educational curriculum (Pant & Baroudi, 2008). Understanding event planners' educational background would provide insights to identify needs for future project-based technical and academic trainings.

During the data collection process, several participants commented that they perceived a great deal of content similarity between the EPSSA and the RSLQ though each assessment tool was intended to measure a different variable. Correlation inflation is a possibility due to perceived item overlap. Dimensionalizing the EPSSA questionnaire and establishing subscales may help establish a better distinction between the two instruments. The new design of EPSSA subscales may focus on identifying factors that contribute to soft skills competency and to establishing scales that measure the strength and degree of competency. The instrument validation process should target a larger sample and consist of more substantial pre-tests and post-tests.

Another recommendation might be to take on a longitudinal approach to study trends in individuals' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. The

study will invite individuals who attend event management classes offered by universities or technical institutes to participate in the pre-test. A post-test will take place one year after these individuals successfully complete the industry certification exam and receive their professional designations. Studying the same group of participants over time may help identify the trends and changes in perception, beliefs, and attitudes. The results of the study could be a valuable basis of knowledge for future project-based skills training and program development.

Conclusion

This study of event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership addressed the important qualities required in successful project-based industry professionals. The results of the study confirmed all three hypotheses and supported the literature and research studies by other individuals. The event planners of this study were generally agreeable, conscientious, emotionally stable, and open to new knowledge and experience, which together contribute to one's soft skills competency. They applied strategies such as self-goal setting, self-observation, self-cueing, and self-reward to increase their self-awareness and the management of their behaviors. The extent of one's self-management capability corresponds with his soft skill proficiency, which means as one's self-management skill increases, his soft skills competency rise and when his self-management skills level decreases, his soft skills weaken.   Sharing the results and conclusions with professionals in any project-based industries and with academic leaders will help further identify gaps of knowledge and heighten awareness and recognition of soft skills competency has in performance, work satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships.

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APPENDIX A: SAMPLE LETTER TO STATE CHAPTERS OF MEETING

PROFESSIONAL INTERNATIONAL (MPI) AND PROFESSIONAL CONVENTION

MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (PCMA)

Study Title: A Correlational Study of Event Planners' Personality Traits, Soft Skills

Competency, and Self-leadership.

Date: _____, 2010

Dear Mr. or Ms. (Chapter President),

My name is Chareen Gould and I am writing to you as a fellow event planner. I am a doctoral student with the University of Phoenix and will be conducting an online research study on event planners' personality, soft skills competency, and self-leadership in the next few weeks. The purpose of this three-part study is to examine if personality traits are constructs to the success of event planners and to identify the soft skills competency and self-leadership capacity found in effective planners.

The population for this study is limited to five states with the highest numbers of certified event planners, namely Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, and California. A random sample from each state will be drawn from the most current member directory of an industry council. The selected event planners will receive a personal invitation via e-mail. Upon receipt of their informed consent, a web-link will be provided to each planner to access the three surveys - the Mini-Markers, the Event Planner Soft Skills Assessment (EPSSA), and the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ). The completion time for each assessment is approximately 5-10 minutes in duration.

This study aims to establish certain aspects of significance. From an

individual development standpoint, the study will provide a valuable information base for event planners to understand their strengths and areas of improvement. In terms of organizational development, the identified soft skills will help event planners detect workplace emotions and define emotional and social needs of employees, customers, and suppliers. Furthermore, the results of the study would broaden the scope of cognitive and noncognitive intelligence studies, add to the understanding and awareness of the importance of soft skills to any project-based or relationship-based industry trainings.

I sincerely ask your support in informing your chapter members of this study and urge them to volunteer their time to participate in the surveys. The valuable responses from each planner directly contribute to the success of this study. Thank you for your kind assistance. If there are any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Chareen Gould

Doctoral Student

University of Phoenix

Appendix B: SAMPLE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND

INVITATION TO STUDY

Study Title: A Correlational Study of Event Planners' Personality Traits, Soft Skills

Competency, and Self-leadership

Date: _____, 2010

Dear Mr. or Ms. (Participant),

My name is Chareen Gould, a doctoral student with the University of Phoenix and a certified event planner. I would like to invite you to participate in the study of Event Planners' Personality, Soft Skills Competency, and Self-leadership.

The study consists of three online assessments and each assessment requires 5-10 minutes to complete. Participation of this study is strictly voluntary and identity of participants is anonymous. When I receive your informed consent, you will access the survey via surveymonkey.com. Your responses to the surveys are confidential guaranteed.

Your expert opinion will bring valuable information to the event management industry and your voice represents many of the other dedicated event professionals in practice. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to receiving your consent in participating in this study. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Chareen Gould

Doctoral student

University of Phoenix

Appendix C – INFORMED CONSENT

Event Planners' Personality Traits, Soft Skills Competency,

and Self-Leadership Study

I understand this research study is about studying interrelationships among event planners' personality traits, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. The purpose of this study is to identify the common personality traits found in event planners and to examine their soft skills and self-leadership competency. Guided by Dr. Joshua T. Fischer, the doctoral student Chareen Gould with the University of Phoenix will conduct this study as part of the fulfillment requirement of her degree in Organizational Leadership.

I acknowledge the purpose and the procedures of this study. By choosing a "Yes" response, I agree to participate voluntarily and give consent to use my information in the study. I am a certified event planner and I am 18 years or older to give legal consent at the time of the study. I understand I will have an identifier number to protect anonymity and confidentiality and I will access the three assessments online through surveymonkey.com. The completion time for each assessment survey will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes. I am fully aware that I may choose not to answer any question in the survey and if I choose to withdraw anytime during the study, the researcher will remove all the data I have provided from the study.

The information and data generated from the study will be kept confidential and only the researcher has access to the privilege information. If the researcher decides to publish the study, participants' information will not be released and participants' rights will not be violated.

Any questions regarding the research itself, please contact the researcher,

Chareen Gould.

Please select the check box that applies:	
☐	Yes. I volunteer to participate and give permission to use the information of this study **Please click the "Next" Button**
☐	No. I choose not to participate in this study **Please click the "Close" Button**

APPENDIX D: THE 40-ADJECTIVE UNIPOLAR MINI-MARKERS

How Accurately Can You Describe Yourself?

INSTRUCTION: Please use this list of common human traits to describe yourself as accurately as you see yourself now, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as compared with other persons you know of the same sex and of roughly your same age.

Before each trait, please write a number indicating how accurately that trait describes you, using the following rating scale:

Extremely Inaccurate	Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Slightly Inaccurate	Neither Inaccurate Nor Accurate	Slightly Accurate	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate	Extremely Accurate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

____ Bashful	____ Energetic	____ Moody	____ Systematic
____ Bold	____ Envious	____ Organized	____ Talkative
____ Careless	____ Extraverted	____ Philosophical	____ Temperamental
____ Cold	____ Fretful	____ Practical	____ Touchy
____ Complex	____ Harsh	____ Quite	____ Uncreative
____ Cooperative	____ Imaginative	____ Relaxed	____ Unenvious
____ Creative	____ Inefficient	____ Rude	____ Unintellectual
____ Deep	____ Intellectual	____ Shy	____ Unsympathetic
____ Disorganized	____ Jealous	____ Sloppy	____ Warm
____ Efficient	____ Kind	____ Sympathetic	____ Withdrawn

Note. Reprinted with permission from Dr. G. Saucier.

APPENDIX E: EVENT PLANNER SOFT SKILLS ASSESSMENT (EPSSA)

Participant: <u>VA -001 (Identifier number)</u>

1. What is your PRIMARY field of expertise in event management industry?
    _____ Corporate
    _____ Association
    _____ Convention
    _____ Destination Management
    _____ Strategic Planning
    _____ Others: social events, cultural festivity…etc.

2. How many events do your plan a year?
    _____ under 10
    _____ between 11-25
    _____ between 26-40
    _____ between 41-55
    _____ between 56-60
    _____ between 61-75
    _____ over 75

3. What is the average group size of your planned events?
    _____ under 50 attendees
    _____ 51-100 attendees
    _____ 101-200 attendees
    _____ 201- 300 attendees
    _____ 301- 400 attendees
    _____ over 500 attendees
    _____ over 1000 attendees

4. How many employees do you supervise?
    _____ None. I am an independent planner.
    _____ 5 or less
    _____ 6 - 10
    _____ 11- 20
    _____ 21- 30
    _____ more than 30

5. How long have you been an industry-recognized event planner?
    _____ 1-5 years
    _____ 6-10 years
    _____ 11-15 years
    _____ 16-20 years
    _____ over 20 years

6. What is your age group?
    _____ 20-30
    _____ 31-40
    _____ 41-50
    _____ 51-60
    _____ over 60

7. What is your gender?
    _____ Male
    _____ Female

Instruction: Please read each question carefully and choose the statements that best describe you. There may be indicators that are not applicable to your current positions or indicators that you may not have sufficient information to respond. Please make every effort to provide complete and accurate answers from a professional event planner's viewpoint, using the following scale:

Not at all accurate	Somewhat accurate	A little accurate	Mostly accurate	Completely Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

8.   I take initiative to reach out to others and I always volunteer my help.

9.   I am sensitive to people's feeling and can often detect non-verbal responses.

10. I listen more than I talk in most social situations.

11. I respect other people's opinion and enjoy sharing ideas and experiences.

12. I set reachable goals and base my decisions on facts and logics instead of feelings.

13. I can usually maintain my composure even under stressful situations.

14. I respect individual difference and I get along with almost anyone.

15. I approach each task with careful planning and organization.

16. I celebrate team members' success for a job well done.

17. I encourage individual creativity and I create learning opportunities for others.

18. I am passionate about my work and I stay energized to achieve my goals.

19. My team members and I always help one another in completing a project.

20. I accommodate other people's needs and requests in a positive and responsive way.

21. Most people feel comfortable sharing their feelings and problems with me.

22. I am jealous whenever a team member outperforms me.

23. I have no problem admitting faults and taking responsibilities.

24. I hold myself fully responsible to the success of my work.

25. I am anxious and likely to lose my temper when a project does not carry out as well as I have planned.

26. When in disagreement with others, I always state my opinion in a respectful way.

27. Helping other people succeed gives me pleasure and satisfaction.

28. I engage my team members in project planning and decision-making.

29. I learn about my strengths and weaknesses through routine self-reflection.

30. I am flexible and willing to adjust to changes and accommodate last minute requests.

31. I always see the positive side of other people.

32. I have close working relationships with my customers and team members.

33. Most people will describe me as being cheerful, relaxed, and approachable.

34. I motivate and help others see and reach their potential.

35. I listen and ask questions for clarification before I offer my opinion and advice.

APPENDIX F: REVISED SELF-LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE (RSLQ)

Instruction: Please read each of the following items carefully and try to decide how true the statement is in describing you.

Not at all accurate 1	*Somewhat accurate* 2	*A little accurate* 3	*Mostly accurate* 4	*Completely accurate* 5

(1) I use my imagination to picture myself performing well on important tasks.

(2) I establish specific goals for my own performance.

(3) Sometimes I find I'm talking to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me deal with difficult problems I face.

(4) When I do an assignment especially well, I like to treat myself to some thing or activity I especially enjoy.

(5) I think about my own beliefs and assumptions whenever I encounter a difficult situation.

(6) I tend to get down on myself in my mind when I have performed poorly.

(7) I make a point to keep track of how well I'm doing at work (school).

(8) I focus my thinking on the pleasant rather than the unpleasant aspects of my job (school) activities.

(9) I use written notes to remind myself of what I need to accomplish.

(10) I visualize myself successfully performing a task before I do it.

(11) I consciously have goals in mind for my work efforts.

(12) Sometimes I talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to work through difficult situations.

(13) When I do something well, I reward myself with a special event such as a good dinner, movie, shopping trip, etc.

(14) I try to mentally evaluate the accuracy of my own beliefs about situations I am having problems with.

(15) I tend to be tough on myself in my thinking when I have not done well on a task.

(16) I usually am aware of how well I'm doing as I perform an activity.

(17) I try to surround myself with objects and people that bring out my desirable behaviors.

(18) I use concrete reminders (e.g., notes and lists) to help me focus on things I need to accomplish.

(19) Sometimes I picture in my mind a successful performance before I actually do a task.

(20) I work toward specific goals I have set for myself.

(21) When I'm in difficult situations I will sometimes talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me get through it.

(22) When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like.

(23) I openly articulate and evaluate my own assumptions when I have a disagreement with someone else.

(24) I feel guilt when I perform a task poorly.

(25) I pay attention to how well I'm doing in my work.

(26) When I have a choice, I try to do my work in ways that I enjoy rather than just trying to get it over with.

(27) I purposefully visualize myself overcoming the challenges I face.

(28) I think about the goals that I intend to achieve in the future.

(29) I think about and evaluate the beliefs and assumptions I hold.

(30) I sometimes openly express displeasure with myself when I have not done well.

(31) I keep track of my progress on projects I'm working on.

(32) I seek out activities in my work that I enjoy doing.

(33) I often mentally rehearse the way I plan to deal with a challenge before I actually face the challenge.

(34) I write specific goals for my own performance.

(35) I find my own favorite ways to get things done.

Note. Adapted from "The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire: testing a hierarchical factor structure for self-leadership," by J. D. Houghton and C. P. Neck, 2002, Journal of Managerial Psychology, 17, pp 690-691. Copyright 2002 by Dr. J. D. Houghton. Reprinted with permission.

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION FOR THE USE OF

THE 40-ADJECTIVES MINI-MARKERS

from   Chareen Gould

    to   gsaucier@uoregon.edu

    date   Tue, Aug 4, 2009 at 5:46 PM

    subje   Mini-Markers validity and   hide

ct   reliability   details 8/4/09

    maile

d-by   email.phoenix.edu

Dr. Saucier,

My name is Chareen Gould, a doctoral student with the University of

Phoenix. I read your 1994 article *Mini-Markers: A brief version of Goldberg's Unipolar*

Big-Five Markers and I am very interested in using your assessment design for one part

of my study. The topic my study pertain to the correlation of professional event

planners' personality, soft skills competency, and self-leadership. I would like to

respectfully seek your permission and to also ask your help to provide me with the

validity and reliability information for reference.

Thank you for your time and your attention.

Chareen Gould

Doctoral Student

University of Phoenix

08/05/2009 – E-mail reply from Dr. Saucier

rom	Gerard Saucier <gsaucier@uoregon.edu>	
to	Chareen Gould	
date	Wed, Aug 5, 2009 at 3:07 PM	hide
subject	Re: Mini-Markers validity and reliability	details 8/5/09
mailed-by	uoregon.edu	

Dear Ms. Gould,

This is a public-domain instrument so permission is not really required before using it. In addition to the validity and reliability data in the 1994 publication, you could find additional by doing a lit search using mini-markers as a search term.

I think there is a validity limitation to all Big Five measures because a six-dimensional structure appears incrementally superior. I refer to this other structure in a couple of recent publications

http://www.uoregon.edu/~gsaucier/Recurrent%2520Personality%2520Dimensions.html

and

http://www.uoregon.edu/~gsaucier/Saucier_2008_Measures.pdf

and there is information there about how to measure the six dimensions with adjectives. Ashton and Lee have a relevant questionnaire that may be useable for free for research purposes. I have not put a public-domain measure of these dimensions on my website, yet.

All the best,

Gerard Saucier

        - Show quoted text -

Please note my new e-mail address: gsaucier@uoregon.edu

Gerard Saucier, Ph.D.
Associate Editor, JPSP:PPID
Professor
Department of Psychology
1227 University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-1227
tel. 541 346 4927
fax 541 346 4911 (include my name)
http://www.uoregon.edu/~gsaucier/

APPENDIX H: PERMISSION FOR USE OF

THE REVISED SELF-LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE (RSLQ)

07/27/2009 –   E-mail to Dr. Houghton

from Chareen Gould to jeff.houghton@mail.wvu.edu
cc Hilary Liberty <Liberty@ndri.org>
bcc drflash@email.phoenix.edu
date Mon, Jul 27, 2009 at 12:51 Am subject Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) mailed-by email.phoenix.edu

Dr. Houghton,
       Good evening. My name is Chareen Gould, I am a doctoral student with the University of Phoenix. I have been working with Dr. Hilary Liberty on my dissertation. I found a copy of the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire from one of your articles, "The revised self-leadership questionnaire: Testing a hierarchical factor structure for self-leadership." My research topic is "Event planners' personality type, soft skills competency, and self-leadership capacity" and the RSLQ is exactly what I am looking for. I would like to inquire about obtaining permission to use the RSLQ as an assessment tool. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time.

Chareen Gould

 7/27/200

9

       fr
                    Jeff Houghton <Jeff.Houghton@mail.wvu.edu>
om

       to   Chareen Gould   hide

       date   Mon, Jul 27, 2009 at 9:54 PM   details 7/27/09

                                       Re: Revised Self-Leadership
       subject
                                       Questionnaire (RSLQ)

       mailed-by   mail.wvu.edu

Hi Chareen!

Thanks for your interest in self-leadership! Your research topic sounds

very interesting and you are certainly welcome to use the Revised

Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) in your study. We ask only that

you cite our work appropriately and share your results, especially any

scale reliability data. Just in case you don't have a clean copy, I

have attached a .pdf file containing a copy of the JMP article you

mentioned (Houghton & Neck, 2002) in which we published the RSLQ. The

entire scale is included in an appendix, but I have also attached an MS

Word document containing the scale for your convenience. As you will

see from the paper, you can calculate a score for each of the SL

strategy dimensions (behavior focused, natural reward and constructive

thought) or an overall score for self-leadership. There's no magic

scoring formula...you can just use the items the best way they fit

within your research design. I usually just total all of the items when

I want to get an overall score for self-leadership. But it's a large

number...somewhere in the 70 to 140 range. You can also divide by the

total number of items to convert the overall SL score back to a 5-point

scale.

One final piece of advice…you might want to consider excluding the

self-punishment items from the scale (items 6, 15, 24 & 30). Although

the concept of self-punishment in moderation was included in the

original conceptualization of self-leadership, it can often be

detrimental to one's self-leadership, especially when used

excessively. In fact, Manz & Sims (2001) have reconceptualized this

dimension as "self-correcting feedback." Anyhow, I usually suggest

that people either omit these items or reverse scale them.

I have also attached a file containing an updated list of

self-leadership references that may be helpful to you. Please let me

know if you have any questions about the RSLQ or self-leadership in

general. I wish you all the best with your research endeavors.

Cordially,

Jeff Houghton

Jeffery D. Houghton, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Director

MSIR Program

West Virginia University

College of Business and Economics

PO Box 6025

Morgantown, WV 26506-6025

304.293.7933

  jeff.houghton@mail.wvu.edu

APPENDIX I: E-MAIL REMINDER

Subject: Event Planner's Personality Traits, Soft Skills Competency, and Self-leadership study

Date: _____

Dear participants,

Greetings.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study of Event Planners' Personality Traits, Soft Skills Competency, and Self-leadership. If you have already completed the three assessments in the past weeks, please disregard this e-mail. If you have not yet been able to complete the assessments, this serves as a gentle reminder.

The web link to the assessments is _____. Your participation is important and the results depend largely on the intensity and accuracy of your professional experiences and reflection.

Thank you for your time and effort in supporting this study.

With warmest regards,

Chareen Gould

Doctoral Student

University of Phoenix