CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLE PREFERENCES

AND PERSONALITY TRAITS OF UNIT LEADERS

WITHIN RECREATION, PARKS,

AND LEISURE STUDIES

By

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"We are not free, separate, and independent entities, but like links in a chain, and we could not by any means be what we are without those who went before us and showed us the way."

Thomas Mann

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Roula and Dimitri. You were always there for me, checking my progress, celebrating the wins, and lifting my spirits when things got tough. My two sisters, Sonia and Nana, generously listened to me and offered sound advice. Each of you has inspired me in a different way to achieve this goal. My aunt Io and uncle George understood the magnitude of my endeavor and encouraged me to keep going. Thank you! My uncle Nick, who inspired me to take more chances in my life. Thank you for teaching me (or at least tried to) how to say NO (very important lesson in academia). My cousins Nick and Dafni, for knowing that they were always there for me. You were just a phone call or an email away! I also dedicate this dissertation to my maternal grandparents Savva and Athanasia ~you have been with me in spirit all the way, guiding me on my journey from dream to achieving the goal! Your sacrifices and encouragement for as long as I was able to be around you are precious moments that I treasure. I dedicate this dissertation to my extended family that believed in me. May God keep safe my big Greek family!

Pursuing a doctoral degree has a common link with the sentiments expressed in Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken". As a traveler, I decided to take the doctoral path which is less traveled – and, just as it is stated in the poem, "that has made all the difference". Honoring a Greek poet, Constantine Kavafy, the journey to academia can be described as my "Ithaca":

"Always keep Ithaca in your mind. To arrive there is your final destination. But do not hurry the voyage at all. It is better for it to last many years, and when old to rest in the island, rich with all you have gained on the way, not expecting Ithaca to offer you wealth. Ithaca has given you the beautiful journey. Without her you would not have set out on the road. Nothing more has she got to give you. And if you find her threadbare, Ithaca has not deceived you. Wise as you have become, with so much experience, you must already have understood what Ithacas mean".

Constantine Kavafy (1911)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure   Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Colleges and universities are complex organizations that are very difficult to manage by traditional models of management in contrast to business corporations, which are created to provide goods and services for profit (Birnbaum, 1988). Collegiate institutions are made of different schools with highly specialized academic units, loosely coupled, and relatively discrete; those units are based on distinct academic disciplines or fields, each with its own sense of work process, interactions, and expected products (Birnbaum, 1988). An important unit or division, which is considered as the most critical base unit in higher education, is the academic department (Trow, 1977, Klein, 1985, Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, Volkwein & Carbone, 1994, Willcoxson & Walter, 1995); and is crucial to all the core functions of a college or university, such as teaching, research, and service (Seagren, Creswell, & Wheeler, 1993; Gmelch & Miskin, 1995).

A literature review about university governance stresses the importance of the view of the department as a community of scholars responsible for instruction and research within a specialized field of knowledge, and thus as the basic administrative unit of the higher education institution. For Bennett (1983), it "…is at the departmental level that the real institutional business gets conducted…it is here that teachers and learners can make contact, that researchers find encouragement and direction, and that many of the ways to contribute to the larger community are identified and explored" (p. 1), whereas Patton (1961) places emphasis on those chairing the departments as playing the largest part in helping shape the character of institutions in higher education.

Individuals who administer or chair academic units are usually designated as program chairs, academic chairs, department heads (Gmelch & Miskin, 1995), course coordinators (Yielder & Codling, 2004), or program coordinators. The terms "academic chair" and "academic head" are often used interchangeably (Tucker, 1992). For some, the definition "chair" is associated with faculty members who are appointed/chosen by faculty, although chairs are usually appointed by a dean. A "head," is usually appointed by the dean (Smith, 2005), although deans often get faculty input for their choices. Other times, chairs are chosen from within departments and department heads are recruited mutually by the dean and faculty. For others, the most appropriate term is that of a department chairperson; a faculty who is selected or elected by peers to administer an academic department (Mobley, 1971). According to Mobley, the department chairperson "…is the pivot or middle man [sic] at the point where administration most directly contacts faculty" (1971, p. 231).

As a position, the department chair can be considered a relatively new position. It was the turn of the nineteenth century when colleges such as Harvard became large enough or

specialized enough, to warrant separate units for different academic specialties. This issue was managed by department faculty, who would elect one of their own to represent them to other academic units and the administration, to represent and protect the faculty's interests. Department chair was considered "first among equals". Throughout the twentieth century the role of the department chair has changed dramatically; it is considered to be the most common entry point into the hierarchy of academic administration (McDade, 1987).

It is estimated that approximately 80% of all university decisions are made at the departmental level (Roach, 1976) and department chairs make up possibly the largest administrative group in American colleges and universities (Norton, 1980). As administrators responsible for evaluating and rewarding staff, chairs have multiple roles; they promote or inhibit the advancement of individual careers, they serve as communication representatives and advocates for faculty, they implement and carry out institutional policies. For others, the designated chairperson is responsible for the viability of the department, the welfare of the faculty and support personnel, and the progress of the students (Cohen, Brawer, & Associates, 1994). Lists that have been generated with regard to department chairs' tasks, roles and responsibilities range from 24 tasks (Gmelch & Miskin, 1995) to 40 (Moses & Roe, 1990), even to 97 (Creswell, Wheeler, Seagren, Egly, & Beyer, 1990). Their roles and responsibilities are considered of such importance that their administrative position has been analyzed like no other position (Norton, 1980; Jennerich, 1981; Tucker, 1992; Moses & Roe, 1990; Seagren & Filan, 1992, Gmelch & Burns, 1993, Gmelch & Miskin, 1993, Miller & Seagren, 1997). As Lucas noted, department chairs' roles and responsibilities have been expanding over the last decade (2000).

It is also known that different types of institutions place different demands on chairs (Creswell, Wheeler, Seagren, Egly, & Beyer, 1990), which can create even more roles and responsibilities for them. Booth (1982) notes that the department chair is basically the only official on a campus who attempts to represent the department to the administration and the administration to the faculty. In this dynamic and challenging environment which is subject to rapid demographic shifts, financial uncertainty, fluctuating numbers of students' enrollments, increased expectations for accountability, and budgetary constraints, academic chairs are the ones who play a crucial role in ensuring program and institutional viability (Leaming, 1998; Wolverton, Gmelch, Wolverton & Sarros, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

The complexity of leading an academic department can be daunting. "No administrative unit within the college or university has been as important, misunderstood, and maligned as the academic department" (Anderson, 1977, p. 35). Most universities have no written job description for department chairs. Thus, many chairs define their role in accordance with their personal comfort zone, how their predecessors defined the job and, the definition of a chair's responsibilities defined by the dean of the college, how some of the most successful chairs on a campus interpret their roles, or as they learn on the job (Bensimon, Ward, & Sanders, 2000; Howard & Green, 1999). Lack of training has proven to be one of the most problematic characteristics for department chairs (Edwards, 1999), although training implies more of the managerial culture and not a collegial one (Bergquist, 1992).

Nevertheless, many universities invest in training their department chairs, but too often this training is sporadic and narrowly focused on fiscal and reporting responsibilities. In reality, individual preparation for leadership positions at the departmental level in higher

education has been widely considered to be inadequate (Bolton, 2004) or simply ignored (Keller, 1983; Tucker & Bryan, 1988; Gmelch & Miskin, 1995). Other times, it is the "technical and professional competence that often tends to be valued over competence as a supervisor and a leader," (Bass, 1990, p. 813) leading to ineffective leadership. That means that often chairs are hired for their expertise regardless of their abilities to manage and lead faculty. Adding to these identified problems are the different requirements of leadership, the different models of governance in universities, as well as the personal interests of those who chair departments (Birnbaum, 1988).

In the last three decades, a lot has been written in an effort to understand the distinctive role of the department chair and the special challenges imposed on individuals in that role. In the 1980s, several doctoral dissertations, journal articles, and books were devoted to that subject (Creswell, Wheeler, Seagren, Egly, & Beyer, 1990; Tucker, 1992). For example, Lumpkin (2004) emphasized that the position almost demands that department chairs come prepared with skills necessary to manage, assist, and resolve conflicts and differences of opinion between different parties (Bennett, 1983): between administration and faculty, faculty and students, and among faculty. In general, conflict management styles can have a pervasive effect on organizational work life by impacting the degree to which individuals experience ongoing conflict (Friedman, Tidd, Currall, & Tsai, 2000). Furthermore, higher education institutions are vulnerable to potential conflict due to their many levels, rules and regulations, specialized disciplines, segmented rewards, autonomy, and high interdependence. Due to these competing interests, the chair position is often depicted as one of conflict and ambiguity (Gmelch & Miskin, 1995).

Therefore, the task of managing conflict is considered as an essential task for leaders in all types of higher education institutions on all levels (Brown, Martinez & Daniel, 2002; Green, 1984; Haas, 1999; Harmon, 2002; Marion, 1995; Pepin, 2005). Furthermore, individuals respond uniquely to conflict situations, and this is not only a result of group norms (Jehn, 1995) or latent conflicts (Pondy, 1967), but also individual variations in approaches when dealing with these situations.

Peoples' attitudes are influenced by personality traits. Personality traits are generally viewed as broad dimensions of individual differences between people, providing a rough outline of human individuality (McAdams & Pals, 2006). Personality attributes are found to be linked to leadership ability (Bass, 1990; Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994), although a literature review has yielded inconsistent results using personality traits as predictors of attitudes (Lester, Hadley, & Lucas, 1990).

Literature on the conflict management styles and personality traits of department chairs has been sparse (Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch & Carroll, 1991). Furthermore, although literature is replete with information and studies about how to recognize and resolve conflict in a variety of settings (Carmichael & Malague, 1996; Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch & Carroll, 1991) and fewer publications on how conflict is managed at the departmental level (Findlen, 2000; Gmelch, 1991a; Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch & Carroll, 1991; Hickson & McCroskey, 1991; Trombly, Comer, & Villamil, 2002), no publication about the relationship between conflict management styles and the personality traits of department chairs exists. The investigation of research study wanted to shed light into this situation, and define the characteristics of those who "chair" the programs within it.

Purpose of the Study

As stated above, there have been no studies conducted on management styles and personality traits of academic chairs within the discipline encompassing recreation, parks, and leisure studies. This study examined the relationship between the personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, as well as Conscientiousness) and conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Avoiding, Compromising, and Dominating) in combination with demographics (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) of a specific population. Specifically, this study addressed seven objectives:

- Described the demographics of the population.

- Described the personality traits of the population.

- Described the conflict management style preferences of the population.

- Investigated the relationship between the demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) and preferred conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) as measured by ROCI-II Form C.

- Investigated the relationship between the demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) and

personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion[1], Openness to Experience,

Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S.

- Examined whether or not the demographic variables of unit leaders/department chairs (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) and their personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness), as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S were related to the preferences in conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising).

- Examined the relationship between the conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising), as measured by ROCI-II Form C, and personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness), as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S.

The research questions were developed to provide a snapshot of personality traits and conflict management styles preferences of mid-level academic leaders in higher education in recreation, parks, and leisure studies.

Significance of Study

This study provided a view into participants' conflict management styles and personality traits. Therefore, it broadened the knowledge base of studies examining conflict management

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[1] Wilt and Revelle (2009) argue that in psychological research, the preferred term that describes the extent to which individuals are gregarious, assertive, with a preference for large groups and social gatherings is known as "Extraversion" rather than "extroversion" (as cited in Wilt & Hoyle, 2009).

styles and personality traits, and may serve as a reference point for future research on developing frameworks regarding assessing employees' behavior in workplaces. As a result of this research, subsequent analysis of data and recommendations may initiate further research of these two concepts and may expand the knowledge base. In the long term, identification and better understanding of personality traits and conflict management styles preferences may help administrators who are responsible for the hiring of individuals for the specific position, to make the best possible decision for their institutions and programs. Knowing the dynamics among their faculty, those responsible for hiring will have a preference on a particular conflict management style that the prospective candidate should have when chairing meetings with the rest of the faculty in the particular department. Additionally, institutions with leadership preparatory programs could incorporate the understanding of conflict management style into their curriculum that would enhance the utilization of all appropriate styles by their unit leaders.

The investigator decided to develop research questions after researching literature on conflict management style preferences and personality traits rather than hypotheses because she was reluctant to postulate hypotheses based on a lack of literature. Following are the research questions that were used for the purpose of this study.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship, if any, between the demographic variables (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) and the preferred conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) of unit leaders/department chairs, as measured by ROCI-II Form C?

2. What is the relationship, if any, between the demographic variables (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree) and personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) of unit leaders/department chairs, as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S?

3. Are demographic variables of unit leaders/department chairs (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree) and their personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness), as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S related with their preference in conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising), as measured by ROCI-II Form C?

4. What is the relationship, if any, between the conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) as measured by ROCI-II Form C, and personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) of unit leaders/department chairs, as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S?

Assumptions

For the purpose of conducting this study, the following assumptions were accepted:

- The investigator assumed that all respondents were honest and truthful in completing the research instrument provided to them.

- The investigator assumed that the individuals who completed the research instrument were the intended participants for the study.

- The investigator assumed that personality traits and conflict management styles preferences were adequately represented on the NEO-FFI Form S and ROCI-II Form C survey instruments.

- The database created for the purpose of this study included all the baccalaureate programs within the field of recreation, parks and leisure services curricula in the US.

Limitations and delimitations of Methodology

The investigator accepted the following limitations and resulting delimitations:

1. The investigator accepted the delimitation that this inquiry into personality traits and conflict management styles only addressed mid-level administrators within the field of recreation, park resources, and leisure services curricula. Therefore, this study's findings are not generalized to other areas of education or other administration positions within or outside of the institutions studied.

2. The investigator delimited the study to the unit leaders/department chairs who resided and worked in the United States. Therefore, this study's findings were not generalized to other geographical areas outside United States.

3. The investigator delimited this study to unit leaders/department chairs whose job titles were department chair, department head, program director, program coordinator, course coordinator, and similar titles.

4. With an alpha level of .05, a 5% margin of error and a population of 260 prospective participants, the appropriate response size for the findings to have a strong effect was found to be 155 responses (59.6%). The investigator accepted the delimitation that collecting so many responses might be challenging.

5. The investigator accepted the delimitation that the data collection and intent of the study were limited to baccalaureate universities and colleges offering bachelor-level degrees within the target discipline. Furthermore, this study's findings were not interpreted to represent the views of other department chairs in non-baccalaureate universities and colleges.

6. The investigator accepted the limitation that only predefined conflict management styles and personality traits were measured by the survey instruments.

7. The investigator accepted the delimitation that data collection took place during the fall of 2010. Therefore, this study's findings were indicative of the time period of study and not reflective of different chronological periods.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to the abbreviations used in this study:

- NEO-FFI: NEO Five-Factor Inventory

- NRPA: National Recreation and Park Association

- ROCI II: Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II

Organization of the Dissertation

This study is divided into five chapters; each of them with a particular focus. Chapter 1 presents an overview of this study. Included in Chapter 1 is the statement of the problem, significance and purpose of study, research questions, limitations and delimitations, as well as the organization of this study. A review of relevant theoretical and research literature is presented in Chapter 2. The conceptual framework that guided this investigation is also presented in the second chapter. In Chapter 3, ethics and the philosophy that will guide this study are presented along with the theoretical perspective, methodology, instruments, and the prospective participants. Additionally, the data collection procedure and data analysis are included in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 contains the findings, whereas in Chapter 5, the conclusions of this study and the implications and recommendations for research are presented.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to examine the conflict management styles as well as the personality traits of academic chairpersons in higher education, a thorough discussion of related aspects was necessary. This chapter provides an overview of the existing body of literature on the following areas and subareas.

The first area of emphasis in this literature review included the definition of conflict, and a theoretical framework of conflict management along with the different conflict management styles.

The second area of concern was focused on personality traits, along with the theoretical framework of the personality trait theory. Furthermore, different personality traits were identified.

The third area of concern highlighted the special characteristics found in academic leadership, particularly in department chairs. Furthermore, emphasis was placed on department chairs who served within the field of recreation, park resources and leisure services.

The fourth area of emphasis included the research instruments that were used in this study.

Defining Conflict

Conflict is inevitable. In organizational settings, conflict has been researched for more than 70 years and has been summarized in numerous papers and books (Deutsch, 1990; Fink, 1968; Pondy, 1967; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Putman & Poole, 1987; Thomas, 1976, Tjosvold, 1991, Rahim, Garrett, & Buntzman, 1992). Although for Kozan (1997), conflict has such a broad perspective that is not possible to be defined, researchers have tried to define it by describing the settings within which it occurs, how it occurs, the impact that it has to people, and when it occurs (Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Jehn, 1995). Many empirical studies include statements such as "conflict occurs/exists when…" that provide a description of the conditions under which conflict is generated. For other researchers, conflict is associated with different characteristics. For example, conflict is viewed as disagreement (Dahrendorf, 1958; Moore, 1998), as interfering behavior (Alper, Tjosvold & Law, 2000), or a combination of negative emotions like anxiety, frustration, jealousy, and anger (Jehn, 1994; Bodtker & Jameson, 2001). Jehn and Mannix (2001) defined conflict as "awareness on the part of the parties involved in discrepancies, incompatible wishes, or irreconcilable desires" (p. 238).

Conflict has been generally seen as a dynamic process that occurs between individuals in interdependent relationships (Wilmot & Hocker, 2001). And it is more likely to occur within a variety of settings and when specific situational (e.g. scarce resources) or personal conditions (previous history of conflict) are in place (Fink, 1968; Pondy, 1967; Thomas, 1992a; Wall & Callister, 1995, Jameson, 1999). Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn defined conflicts as "disagreements in a social situation over issues of substance or whenever emotional antagonisms create frictions between individuals or groups" (2003, p. 378). For Rahim (1983a), conflict is an "interactive state manifested in compatibility, disagreement, or difference within or between social entities, (i.e., individual, group, organization, etc)" (p. 386). For the purpose of this study, Rahim's definition of conflict will be followed, as he conceptualized conflict as an interactive process, which is consistent with the views of others (Baron, 1990). According to Rahim, in order for conflict to exist it needs to be recognized by all the parties involved in it.

Specific circumstances need to be in place for conflict to occur. It can occur whenever individuals (a) engage in an activity that is incongruent with their interests; (b) clash over differences in attitudes, skills, values, or goals; (c) have incompatible preferences that affect their behavioral preferences; and (d) disagree over desirable resources (Rahim, 1983a). Furthermore, Rahim classified conflict on the basis of the antecedent conditions that lead to conflict such as tasks, values, and goals. Following is a brief description of this classification in chronological order:

1. Affective conflict occurs when two interacting social entities become aware that their feelings and emotions are incompatible (Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954).

2. Substantive conflict occurs when a member of a group disagrees on his/her task or content issues (Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954).

3. Conflict of interest occurs when two or more social entities compete over scarce resources. That is, it can be defined as a "discrepancy between them in preferences for outcomes of decisions on the distribution of a scarce resource" (Druckman & Zechmeister, 1973, p. 449).

4. Conflict in cognitive values occurs when two social entities differ in their values or ideologies on certain issues (Cosier & Rose, 1977).

5. Cognitive conflict occurs when two interacting social entities become aware that their thought processes or perceptions are incongruent (Cosier & Rose, 1977).

6. Goal conflict occurs when a preferred outcome or an end state of two social entities is inconsistent (Cosier & Rose, 1977).

7. Relationship conflict involves personal and affective elements, such as tension, dislike, disagreements about values, personal taste, and interpersonal styles (Jehn, 1994).

8. "Conflict is an emotionally defined and driven process, and that recognizing this fundamental alters one's approach to conflict management" (Bodtker & Jameson, 2001, p. 263).

Theoretical Framework of Conflict Management

A number of scholars have developed different typologies of conflict styles based on different conceptual frameworks. Mary P. Follett (1940) was the first one to argue that conflict could be dealt with in different ways. Her analyses were focused on the leadership aspect of an organization; a crucial skill for leaders was the way they could

deal with conflict. Furthermore, Follett viewed leadership not as manipulation of people (destructive of trust), but as a science and an art. She believed that the qualities of leadership could be analyzed and, at least in part, learned. Among the topics she analyzed was conflict handling styles. The ways to deal with conflict were identified as domination, compromise, and integration; Follett identified avoidance and suppression as secondary ways to deal with conflict.

Following Follett's argument was Deustch's dichotomy for classifying conflict; it involved only two aspects: cooperation or competition (1949). According to Deutsch, conflict was an incompatible interaction between two individuals, where one was interfering, obstructing, or in other ways making the behavior of another less effective. Furthermore, he argued that the dynamics and outcomes of conflict depended upon whether the conflict was handled cooperatively or competitively.

Doubts were raised over the ability of Deutsch's (1949) dichotomy to reflect the complexity of an individual's perceptions of conflict behavior (Ruble & Thomas, 1976; Smith, 1987). Blake and Mouton (1964) were the first to conceptualize that conflict was better described with a dual-dichotomy scheme. They presented a model called the Managerial Grid that contained five (5) styles for handling interpersonal conflicts: forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, Compromising, and confrontation. In the grid, they classified the five modes of handling conflict along two dimensions related to the attitudes of the manager: concern for production and concern for people. Blake and Mouton's scheme was later adopted by Thomas (1976) and reinterpreted to meet his model. For Thomas, individuals' intentions (i.e., cooperativeness in attempting to satisfy the other party's concerns or assertiveness in satisfying one's own concerns) were

important in classifying the styles of handling conflict. Therefore, he classified the ways individuals dealt with conflict into: Avoiding, competing, accommodating, collaborating, and Compromising. In general, this two-dimensional model has been used to study conflict in a variety of organizational settings (Burke, 1970; Jamieson & Thomas, 1974; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Thomas & Kilmann, 1978).

Another dual-concern model (concern for self and concern for others) was proposed by Pruitt (1983). In contrast to the five styles of handling conflict, he identified only four: yielding, problem solving, inaction, and contending, leaving out the Compromising style of handling conflict. Using a conceptualization similar to Blake and Mouton's (1964) Managerial Grid, Thomas' model (1976), and Pruitt's model (1983), Rahim and Bonoma (1979) differentiated the styles of handling interpersonal conflict along two basic dimensions: concern for self and concern for others. Concern for self, as a dimension, explains the degree (high or low) to which individuals attempt to satisfy their own concerns, whereas the second dimension, concern for others, explains the degree (high or low) to which individuals want to satisfy the concerns of others. These dimensions have also been found to portray the motivational orientations of a given individual during conflict (Rubin & Brown, 1975). Following is a brief description of the major dual-dichotomy schemes.

Blake and Mouton's Theory of Conflict Management

Blake and Mouton (1964) developed their theory based on different behaviors managers would exhibit and how they would deal with conflict. They tried to explain that conflict behaviors derived from concern for the production of results and concern for people. However, wanting to broaden the application of their theory, they claimed that

19

the concerns and resulting styles of conflict management could also apply to people other than managers and to social conflicts in addition to managerial conflicts. Furthermore, they identified "good" and "bad" ways to end a dispute (Blake & Mouton, 1964; 1970). Using problem solving (elicited by high concern for both one's own and opponent's results) was depicted as the most constructive mode of managing social discontent whereas using forcing ways (elicited by high concern for one's own results and low concern for the opponent's results) was regarded as a clearly disruptive mode of conflict handling.

In developing their theory, Blake and Mouton created a grid by dividing its 9-point dimensions starting from one (1), which represented the least concern, and ranging to nine (9), which represented maximum concern. The grid was a two-dimensional model which demonstrated the interaction between the horizontal axis – representing concern for production and the vertical axis – representing concern for people. Blake and Mouton (1964) focused on the five points at each of the four corners of the grid and at the midpoint of the grid. Thus, the upper left-hand corner represented by (1, 9), reflected a maximum concern for people and a minimum concern for production (smoothing), whereas the lower left-hand corner (1, 1) reflected a minimum concern both for people and production (withdrawal). Furthermore, individuals at point (5, 5) exhibited intermediate levels of concern both for people and production (Compromising). The point (9, 1) was interpreted as maximum concern for production and least concern for people (forcing), whereas the (9, 9) represented maximum concern both for people and production (confronting). Figure 2.1 shows the managerial grid by Blake and Mouton.
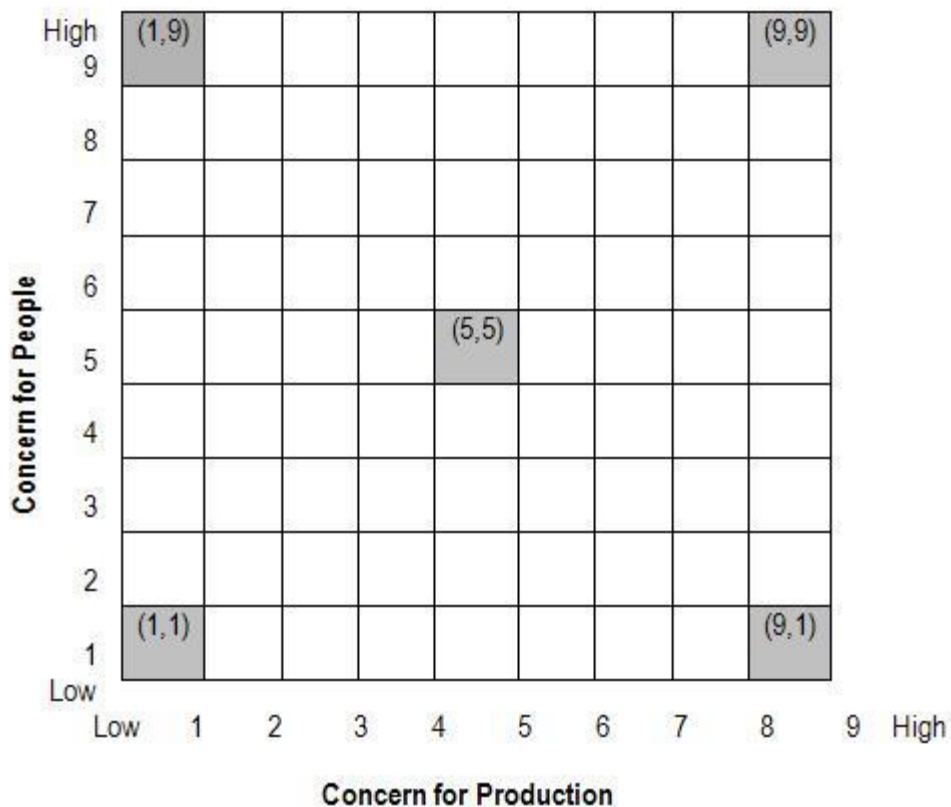
Figure 1 Managerial Grid

In this way, Blake and Mouton were able to classify individuals into the five styles on the basis of the five two-dimensional locations on the grid they occupied psychologically. However, they did not interpret the styles as simple additive combinations of people and production dimensions; instead, they viewed each style as a distinctly different compound resulting from an interaction of the two underlying dimensions. In this notion, the two dimensions composing any given style cannot be separated (Blake & Mouton, 1981). Therefore, their theory was based on the premise that individuals are usually influenced by a variety of factors, which leads them in choices. They may choose to think or act in a given way simply because they want to or feel a

need to do so. For example, whenever individuals are confronted by differences or conflicts with another person, they are free to react and change the mind of the latter on the basis of new evidence and to give or withhold cooperation in keeping with personal desires.

Thomas' Model of Conflict Behavior

Based on the work of Blake and Mouton (1964), Thomas presented a two-dimensional model of conflict behavior that can be considered an extension of the former one (1976). Similarly, Thomas' model identifies two conceptually independent dimensions of interpersonal behavior, those of assertiveness – defined as behavior intended to satisfy one's own concerns, and cooperativeness – defined as behavior intended to satisfy another's concerns. As these two dimensions were combined, Thomas identified five conflict handling modes; Avoiding (unassertive, uncooperative), Competing (assertive, uncooperative), Accommodating (unassertive, cooperative), Collaborating (assertive, cooperative), and Compromising (intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness). This two-dimensional model provided some major advantages to conflict researchers (Cosier & Ruble, 1981), as it presented a comprehensive way in which conflict behavior is perceived by parties in conflict; additionally, it identified a variety of alternatives to competition, including collaboration.

Thomas (1976) viewed collaboration as an approach to conflict that transcended zero-sum assumptions; thus, he recommended a means of resolving conflict through problem solving rather than through power struggles (as cited in Filley, 1978). In 1974, Thomas and Kilmann designed an instrument to assess an individual's behavior in conflict situations. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI), named after

22

its creators, assessed individuals' behaviors when dealing with situations in which the concerns of two people appeared to be incompatible. Behavior was described along two basic dimensions: (a) assertiveness, the extent to which individuals attempted to satisfy their own concerns, and (b) cooperativeness, the extent to which individuals attempted to satisfy the other person's concerns. Their instrument was composed of a series of 30 pairs of statements and used in a research study that involved 339 practicing managers at middle and upper levels of business and government organizations. They reported reliability and concurrent test validity with the average test-retest reliability at .64 and the average alpha coefficient at .60.

Rahim's Model of Conflict Management

As stated previously, Rahim (1983b) defined conflict as an "interactive state manifested in compatibility, disagreement, or difference within or between social entities, (i.e., individual, group, organization, etc.)" (p. 386). He developed the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROCI) to build on the theoretical framework that was developed by earlier researchers (1983c). However, the approach of treating conflict styles as individual dispositions that were stable over time and across situations was criticized by some researchers. Knapp, Putman, and Davis (1988) argued that approaches to conflict are strategies. For others, peoples' intentions were the factors responsible for driving conflict styles (Thomas, 1979); thus, the circumstances should not be treated as stable. In this notion, individuals who were dominating when facing conflicts with subordinates would not use the same approach when they were facing conflicts with supervisors.

Rahim (1983d) developed three versions of his scale, one of which assesses the

conflict management styles individuals prefer when dealing with conflict situations with

subordinates, with peers, and with supervisors. The rationale is that people exhibit

different conflict management styles when dealing with individuals who possess less,

equal, or more power than they do. According to Schneer and Chanin (1987), and

Thomas (1992a), when managers are confronted with interpersonal conflicts, they put

significant thought into considering whether and how best to respond to each situation.

Upon deciding to confront a dispute they will be willing to weigh all potential resolution

strategies in an effort to choose the best suitable solution (Lewicki & Shepherd, 1985;

Sheppard, 1984).

Rahim developed the ROCI-I and ROCI-II in 1983. Both instruments are scales for

measuring interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup conflict (1983c; 1983d). The ROCI-I

is an instrument of 21 items selected on the basis of repeated factor analysis of data

collected from three successive samples of MBA and undergraduate students. The ROCI-

I was developed to recognize interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup organizational

conflict. The ROCI-II was developed to assess a leader's conflict handling strategies by

measuring the degree of interpersonal conflict with superiors, subordinates, or peers.

According to the author (Rahim, 1992), for ROCI-I, adequate test-retest was performed

(ranging between .74 and .85) and internal consistency (ranging between .79 and .88)

reliabilities and Kristoff's unbiased estimate of reliability were estimated (ranging

between .78 and .83). For ROCI-II, Rahim (2004) argued that when tested:

> The retest reliabilities computed from data collected from the collegiate sample ($N = 119$) at one-week intervals, ranged between .60 and .83 ($p < .0001$). The internal

consistency reliability coefficients, which ranged between .72-.76 and between .65-
.80 for the managerial and collegiate samples, respectively, were satisfactory. (p. 43)

Rahim's two dimensional model has dimensions labeled as concern for others and concern for self. This distinction yields these five conflict management styles: (a) Integrating, a high concern for self and for others; (b) Obliging, a low concern for self and high concern for others; (c) Dominating, a high concern for self and low concern for others; (d) Avoiding, a low concern for self and for others; and (e) Compromising, an intermediate concern for self and others. Following is a brief description among the differences of these five conflict management styles.

Integrating

The Integrating style is a problem-solving style that involves collaboration between the parties and indicates a win-win solution. It represents a high concern for both self and others. This style allows the exchange of information with an examination of differences so that a solution acceptable to both parties can be achieved. Both parties collaborate in a quest for effective gains (Goodwin, 2002). Rahim, Buntzman, and White (1999) found that as a style, Integrating is associated with the highest stage of moral development. They examined a sample of 443 employed graduate students from an American southern university to assess the relationships of moral development to the styles of conflict management. In another study, Gross and Guerrero (2000) found that Integrating is positively associated with perceptions of effectiveness, relational appropriateness, and situational appropriateness for both self and partner perceptions, as well as with lower levels of task conflict (Friedman, Tidd, Currall, and Tsai, 2000). Additionally, it was found that those who exercise an Integrating conflict management style tend to practice two-way communication, which can increase the chances that the parties in conflict will

receptively exchange ideas and information (Gross & Guerrero, 2000). These studies

confirmed that the Integrating style is an appropriate way for leaders to handle conflict.

Obliging

The Obliging style is associated with a high concern of others and a low concern for

self, indicating a lose-win scenario. In choosing this style, individuals forfeit their needs

or decisions in favor of accepting another party's needs or decisions (Gross & Guerrero,

2000). Rahim (1992) argued that this style minimizes the differences between parties

while emphasizing their commonalities; thus, the main goal for those who favor it is to

maintain a cordial relationship between the conflicting parties. Additionally, "…the

Obliging style is characterized by a high concern for maintaining the relationship even at

the cost of not achieving the goal. This style is useful when a person believes that the

issue is much more important to the other party than oneself" (O'Connor, 1993, p. 84).

Generally speaking, the Obliging style is perceived to be less effective in management;

thus, it is considered as a neutral style (Gross & Guerrero, 2000). For others, this style is

considered as an advantage (Friedman, Tidd, Currall, & Tsai, 2000). For example, the

stronger a person's tendency to resolve conflicts through Obliging, the lower the

opportunity to experience relationship conflict and extensive stress.

Dominating

The Dominating style of conflict management is characterized by a high concern for

self and a low concern for others (Rahim, 1992). This includes forcing behavior to win

one's position at any cost, including ignoring the concerns of the other party. According

to Rahim, Dominating may also mean that individuals will stand up for others' rights

and/or defend positions that they believe to be correct. In circumstances that require a

quick decision, or when the outcome is known to be of less importance for the other party, this style may be effective (Rahim, 1983a). Rahim, Buntzman, and White (1999) argued that "…Dominating may resolve a matter sooner than later, but is more likely to be a one-sided, short-sided, and short-lived solution" (p. 160). Researchers have found that when exercised alone, the Dominating style is perceived to be inappropriate. Friedman, Tidd, Currall, and Tsai (2000) found that the use of the Dominating style could lead to higher levels of relationship conflict; however, when combined with the Integrating style, the Dominating style can be more effective (Gross & Guerrero, 2000).

Avoiding

Individuals who tend to use an Avoiding style seek to withdraw, postpone, or sidestep an issue; this has been identified as a lose-lose scenario for both parties. These individuals tend to have a low concern for their own interests and usually find it difficult to represent themselves. Rahim (1992) argued that this style was often characterized as an unconcerned attitude toward the issues or parties involved in conflict. Thus, having a low concern for others' interests makes those involved in conflict unable to understand and address other peoples' problems. For Rahim, "…such person may refuse to acknowledge in public that there is a conflict to be dealt with" (1992, p. 25). Furthermore, lack of interest in addressing the issues that create conflict will result in lack of knowledge needed to construct solutions to those conflicts. Rahim, Buntzman, and White (1999) argued that this style "…often serves to prolong an unsatisfactory situation, exacting a penalty on at least one of the disputants" (p. 160), an argument that was matched Gross and Guerrero's (2000) findings. For individuals with a preference for the Avoiding conflict management style, the stronger desire is to ignore disputes rather than solve

them; this entails a physical or emotional removal from the scene of the disagreement. However, depending on the conflict outcome and its importance to the parties, this style may be appropriate when addressing a conflict and its use can lead to a disruptive outcome (Goodwin, 2002; Gross & Guerrero, 2000; Rahim, 2004).

Compromising

The Compromising style of conflict management is characterized by a medium level of concern for self and others. It is often known as a no win/no-lose scenario, a give-and-take relationship in which some of one's goals are achieved while maintaining the relationship. This style is utilized by individuals when parties with equal power or influence possess opposing viewpoints and cannot be consolidated to reach an agreeable alternative (Goodwin, 2002; Gross & Guerrero, 2000). Both parties "…give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision" (Rahim, 1992, p. 25). A Compromising party concedes more needs than when a Dominating style is exercised, and gives less than when in Obliging style. When integrative situations cannot be found, it is expected that the Compromising style would be most preferred by leaders (Rahim, Buntzman, & White, 1999).

Summary of Rahim's (1983) Conflict Management Styles

Research has found that depending on the situation, all five conflict management styles can be appropriate when dealing with conflict (Rahim, 1985). The styles can have an important effect on organizational work life by impacting the degree to which individuals experience ongoing conflict (Friedman, Tidd, Currall, & Tsai, 2000). Similarly, individuals' behaviors shape their interactions in their work environment by influencing choices they make about how to proceed when dealing with specific

situations. Following is a brief definition of personality as well as a description of the theoretical framework of personality traits so that connections between the two theoretical frameworks can be established.

Defining Personality

Personality constitutes one of the most abstract words in our language (Allport, 1937). Allport listed 50 distinct meanings of personality that were derived from fields as diverse as theology, philosophy, sociology, law, and psychology. Although agreement among personality theorists about its meaning has not been accomplished, they do agree that peoples' attitudes are influenced by stable characteristics, that is, their personality traits. For McCrae and Costa (1989), personality represents a combination of enduring emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal, and motivational styles that explains behavior in different situations. For others, personality can be broken down into two different meanings, where the failure to separate those can lead to confusion (Hogan, 1991).

One part of personality refers to peoples' social reputations – how they are perceived by others. This personality is public and it comes from an observer's perspective. The other part of personality refers to the structures, dynamics, processes, and propensities that explain why people behave the way they do. According to Hogan, this aspect of personality is private and must be inferred. Funder (2001) defined personality as a characteristic pattern of thought, emotion, and behavior, in combination with the psychological mechanisms behind those patterns that individuals exhibit. Daft (2002) depicted personality as a set of characteristics and processes that established a relatively

stable combination of behaviors in reaction to ideas, objects, or people in the environment.

Others have defined personality as an individual's enduring pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving, which can be related to the environment in a consistent manner and in various social contexts (Sperry, 2006). Cattell (as cited in Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998) explained that personality can predict what a person will do in a given situation. In summary, personality can be understood as a set of qualities that differentiate individuals from each other. This set of qualities is also known as personality traits.

Theoretical Framework of the Personality Traits Theory

Personality traits are a major domain in the field of psychology. They influence different choices individuals make, are psychological in nature, and are believed to be stable. For example, a personality trait can explain which tasks and activities we engage in, how much effort we exert on those tasks, how long we persist with those tasks, and so on. These traits reflect who we are and determine our affections, behaviors, and cognition. It is the combination and interaction of various traits that form a personality which makes us so unique. Thus, individuals' responses to any kind of situation will be different because of their different personalities (Barron, 1953; Ross & Nisbett, 1992). The variety of individual personality differences can be argued to be endless; thus, researchers have been interested in identifying the basic traits that serve as the building blocks of personality and distinguish those into specific categories (Miller & Lynam, 2001).

Personality trait theory is focused on identifying and measuring individual personality characteristics. Following are the four most widely used structural models of personality. These are the PEN (Psychoticism, Extraversion, and Neuroticism) model (Eysenck, 1977), Tellegen's three-factor model known as the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (Tellegen, Bouchard, Wilcox, Segal, & Rich, 1988), McCrae and Costa's five-factor model (McCrae & Costa, 1990), and Cloninger's temperament model (Cloninger, Dragon, & Thomas, 1993). All of these models differ in terms of how they were derived. For example, the PEN model is based on biological factors. In a review of Eysenck's PEN model (as cited in Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998), it is argued that the model has a biosocial focus with the characteristic functioning of the central nervous system predisposing individuals to respond in certain ways to their environment. This distinction is further broken down into traits (based on constitutional factors such as genetic, neurological, and biochemical ones) and how those traits characterize people in varying degrees.

Eysenck's model includes three basic typological dimensions which are referred to by their first letter: P stands for the dimension psychoticism. Those who are high on psychoticism tend to have difficulty dealing with reality and may be antisocial, hostile, non-empathetic and manipulative. E stands for Extraversion; those who score high in Extraversion focus their attention outward on other people and the environment. Finally, N stands for Neuroticism. Neuroticism refers to an individual's tendency to become upset or emotional (Eysenck, 1992; Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998).

Tellegen's (1985) three factor model originally derived from analyses of mood ratings and was subsequently refined through questionnaire work; it consists of 300

items. Furthermore, this model posits three basic dimensions, each of which comprises

several subscales. The dimensions are known as known as positive emotionality (PEM),

negative emotionality (NEM), and constraint. Following his three factor model, Tellegen

proposed a four dimensional model in which the PEM is split into distinct Agentic PEM

(PEM-A) and communal PEM (PEM-C) dimensions (Tellegen & Walker, 1994). The

temperament model by Cloninger, a combination of a four-factor temperament and three-

factor character model, focuses on a biological/pharmacological viewpoint that links

underlying basic personality dimensions with underlying neurotransmitter systems

(Miller & Lynam, 2001). This model consists of the four-temperament factors known as

(a) novelty seeking, (b) harm avoidance, (c) reward dependence, and (d) persistence in

combination with three character factors distinguished as (a) self-directedness, (b)

cooperativeness, and (c) self-transcendence (Miller & Lynam, 2001).

   All the above four personality models have substantial agreement in traits that are

represented in each of them (Miller & Lynam, 2001). Differences lie in the labeling of

the dimensions and overlap of descriptive terms, such as where one model uses a single

factor for a dimension and others break the same one down into two or three factors.

Furthermore, personality traits are generally viewed as broad dimensions of individual

differences between people, providing a rough outline of human individuality (McAdams

& Pals, 2006). The core personality traits are found to be based on genetic differences

and/or early childhood experiences with limited susceptibility, especially when it comes

to social and contextual influences later in life. Surface personality traits are more

susceptible to social and environmental influences (Asendorpf & van Aken, 2003).

The Five-Factor Model of Personality (FFM)

Personality traits are systemized from narrow and particular to broad and general

traits; and researchers indicate the existence of five primary traits (or factors) of

personality (Digman & Inouye, 1986; McCrae & Costa, 1987), often referred to as the

Five-Factor Model. There is widespread agreement about the five personality dimensions

and their content. These traits or factors are known to be the most replicable (Digman,

1990; Digman & Takemoto-Chock, 1981; Tupes & Christal, 1992) as they depict an

overall personality functioning that individuals exhibit (Costa, Summerfield, & McCrae,

1996). These factors were found to be statistically independent and stable in adults

(McCrae & Costa, 1990), with only minor fluctuations over the lifespan. When tested in

non-American cultures, it is found that the model is valid; proving that the universality of

this model has also been established (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

Over the past fifty years research in personality traits has converged on five broad

factors that represent clusters of intercorrelated behaviors (John & Srivastava, 1999;

McCrae & Costa, 1999; Wiggins, 1996; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997). These factors have

emerged in empirical evidence across participants, raters, instruments, and data sources

(John & Srivastava, 1999) and offer a stable framework for descriptions of personality

(Digman & Inouye, 1986). Throughout this period of fifty years, it was also found that

the specific factors are expressive or stylistic in nature (Winter, John, Stewart, Klohnen,

& Duncan, 1998). Digman (1990) pointed out that the five-factor model is a fundamental

model for describing personality, which was believed to be originated by Allport and

Odbert (1936).

When attempting to create a complete list of personality traits for the English language, Allport and Odbert included 4,000 personality traits (as cited in Watson, 1989). However, their work was criticized by another researcher (Cattell, 1965), who reduced the number of main personality traits from 4,000 to 171, by eliminating uncommon traits and combining common characteristics. With the use of factor analysis, Cattell identified closely related terms and reduced his list to 16 key personality traits, which he argued represented the source of all human personality. Contemporary research has described the five-factor model as the best model to allow for the organization of the different personality traits into a set of personality constructs, which eventually will lead to the discovery of consistent and meaningful relationships (Zhao & Seibert, 2006), as well as outline the way individuals express themselves in a range of situations over a long period of time (McAdams & Pals, 2006).

As a result, since the early 1990s, literature has been rich in studies about the Five-Factor Model (FFM) (Mount & Barrick, 1998). This particular model suggests that the five broad factors (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness) consist of the primary variances in personality measures (Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997). As a model, it constitutes a suitable catalogue of a personality for many reasons (De Raad & Doddema-Winsemius, 1999; John & Srivastava, 1999; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997). One of those reasons is the fact that the model leads the categorization of personality characteristics into a meaningful classification; it also offers an ordinary framework for studies to be conducted. Furthermore, the Five-Factor model attempts to predict the possible ways individuals will act and which ways will be distinctive to them (McCrae & Costa, 1999). Therefore, this model is presumed to be a complete framework

for organizing personality traits (Borkenau & Ostendorf, 1990; Digman, 1990; McCrae, 1991; Montag & Levin, 1994).

Goldberg (1981) argued that the five major dimensions of rating personality could serve as a framework for many existing theories of personality, including the views of Cattell (1957), Norman (1963), Eysenck (1970), and Guilford (1975). Furthermore, Goldberg (1981) and Peabody and Goldberg (1989) demonstrated a stable existence of the five main personality factors mentioned above, with Digman (1990) arguing that the model developed by Costa and McCrae (1992) demonstrated the presence of the five-factor model in different scales such as the Eysenck's Personality Inventory, the Jackson Personality Research Form, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), and Cattell's (1965) Sixteen Personality Factor Scales (16PF). The Five-Factor Model of Personality is considered by some as the most widely accepted model of personality structure (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003).

McCrae and Costa's Five-Factor Model of Personality

The Five-Factor Model of Personality by McCrae and Costa (1997) represents the dominant conceptualization of personality structure in the current literature. This model posits that the five personality factors of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness reside at the highest level of the personality hierarchy, as well as encompassing the entire domain of more narrow personality traits that fall at lower-levels of the hierarchy. Following is a brief review of McCrae and Costa's five personality factors.

Neuroticism

Neuroticism predisposes individuals to experience life events and emotions as negative incidents (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995; Mills & Huebner, 1998), adding to this factor a heightened sensitivity to negative stimuli (Tellegen, 1985) and a tendency to experience psychological distress (Costa & McCrae, 1992). As a result, Neuroticism is known to influence behavior, cognition, mood, and enhance negative moods such as anxiety and depression (Clark, Watson, & Mineka, as cited in Gunthert, Cohen, & Armeli, 1999; Judge, Martocchio, & Thoresen, 1997). Neuroticism has also been associated with ineffective coping (McCrae & Costa, 1986), which in a work environment can have negative implications for job performance (Smillie, Yeo, Furnham, & Jackson, 2006). Neuroticism is also found to play an important role in occupational health and well-being (Grant & Langan-Fox, 2007). In one study conducted on psychology students (N=94), it was found that Neuroticism was highly associated with reactivity and stress. Those who were high in Neuroticism had greater exposure and reactivity to conflicts in contrast to those who scored low (Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995). A significant difference was also found in the way those of low and high Neuroticism chose to cope with conflict as well as their effectiveness when doing so. Neuroticism is the opposite of emotional stability; thus, individuals who score high on it tend to experience negative feelings such as embarrassment, guilt, pessimism, and low self-esteem.

Extraversion

Extraversion reflects the extent to which individuals are gregarious, assertive, and talkative, and have preference for large groups and social gatherings (Costa & McCrae,

1992). Extraversion encompasses the preference for human contact, attention, and the wish to inspire other people. Research conducted by Judge, Martocchio, and Thoresen (1997) on university employees (N=89) and a review of 21 studies (N=1,914) by Zhao and Seibert (2006) have come to the same conclusion. Individuals who score high in the dimension of Extraversion are described as gregarious, cheerful, and have excitement-seeking behavior. A review of articles about personality from an adaptive costs and benefits perspective has indicated that this dimension is related to positive emotion. Individuals high in this dimension tend to exhibit exploratory behaviors (Nettle, 2006). Extroverts like excitement and stimulation, and tend to be cheerful in disposition (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The broad groups of traits that make up this dimension include sociability, activity, and the tendency to experience positive emotion (Costa & McCrae, 1992). According to Grant and Langan-Fox (2007), this trait relates positively to health and well-being.

Openness to Experience

A third personality factor of the five-factor model is identified as Openness to Experience. Individuals who score high on this factor tend to be active in their imaginations with a willingness to accept and consider other types of options that may be presented to them, thus they usually are aware of their own feelings. As individuals, those of high Openness to Experience are portrayed as imaginative and independent (McCrae & Costa, 1986). They also prefer variety in their life, have intellectual curiosity, and make judgments independently of others (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In the same analysis of the 21 previous studies (N=1,914) which investigated the relationship between personality and entrepreneurship, those who scored high on the Openness to Experience

factor tended to work best when they experienced high levels of independence with limited constraints placed on them by their job (Zhao & Seibert, 2006). Naus, Van Iterson, and Roe (2007) indicated that having autonomy in a working environment allows individuals to have positive work outcomes and acts as a buffer to negative stressors in the work environment. Openness has also been positively correlated with intelligence and artistic creativity (Zhao & Seibert, 2006; Nettle, 2006).

Agreeableness

Agreeableness is characterized by one's tendency to help others. According to Costa and McCrae (1992) individuals who score high on this factor have altruistic behaviors, are more sympathetic to others than those who score low, are eager to help, and believe that others will reciprocate support. Agreeableness incorporates the willingness to help other people and to act in accordance with other peoples' interests. It concerns the degree to which individuals are cooperative, warm and agreeable. Individuals who score high in this factor are described as being soft-hearted, trusting, caring, forgiving, and helpful; they also tend to avoid violence and interpersonal hostility (McCrae & Costa, 1986; Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, & Hair, 1996; Nettle, 2006; Zhao & Seibert, 2006). For Nettle (2006), those who score high in Agreeableness are highly valued as friends and coalition partners, whereas in other research it was found that those who scored low in this factor could be characterized as manipulative, self-centered, suspicious, and ruthless (Zhao & Seibert, 2006). In a work environment, Agreeableness is a trait that employers might wish to reward, since agreeable people are more likely to respond positively to employers' incentives.

Conscientiousness

The fifth personality factor of the five-factor model is Conscientiousness. It has been described as individuals' tendencies to be purposeful, strong-willed, determined, scrupulous, punctual, hardworking, efficient, ambitious, and reliable (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Judge, Martocchio, & Thoresen, 1997; Zellars et al., 2006). It has also been characterized by personal competence, dutifulness, and self-discipline (Judge et al., 1997). It includes individuals' preferences for following rules and schedules, and for keeping engagements. Conscientiousness can also reflect the extent to which individuals are hardworking, organized, and dependable. In work environments, Conscientiousness is considered as a resource because it is associated with positive outcomes (Zellars, Perrewe, Hochwarter, & Anderson, 2006). Barrick and Mount (1991) and Salgado (1997, 1999) reported that Conscientiousness is positively associated with job performance across occupations. It has also been identified as a strong predictor of occupational success (Bowles, Gintis, & Osborne, 2001). According to LePine, LePine and Jackson (2004), this factor reflects both dependability and volition; those who score high in this factor tend to show organizational commitment.

Summary of the Five-Factor Model of Personality

Individuals differ in the extent to which their personality style is made up of the five personality traits such as Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Thus, individuals' personality styles will shape their interactions in their work environment. For example, those who score high on the Extraversion scale will tend to be sociable and assertive, and will prefer to work with other people. Those who score high on Openness to Experience will be prone to open-

mindedness, active imagination, preference for variety, and independence of judgment. Similarly, individuals who score high on Agreeableness will tend to be tolerant, trusting, accepting, and will value and respect other people's beliefs and conventions than those who score low on the same trait. Finally, those who score high on Conscientiousness will tend to distinguish themselves for their trustworthiness and their sense of purposefulness and of responsibility as they will tend to be strong-willed, task-focused, and achievement-oriented.

Link between conflict management styles and personality styles

Personality traits represent people's unique ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, which influence how they respond to any given situation (Caligiuri, 2000; Wilt & Hoyle, 2009). According to Weick (1969), the situations that people experience in a social setting are partially a result of their own tendencies. Furthermore, people respond uniquely to conflict situations, and this cannot be just a result of group norms (Jehn, 1995) or latent conflicts (Pondy, 1967), but also individual variations in approaches when dealing with these situations. Individuals' preferences in a conflict management style may also vary depending on a variety of factors, like the type of conflict or the type of relationship they have with the other party/parties involved; whereas other people may choose not to have varying responses to conflict regardless of varying factors or relationships.

Some researchers (Chanin & Schneer, 1984; Kilmann & Thomas, 1975) were able to demonstrate the existence of a relationship between personality traits and the five styles of handling conflict. Other researchers found just the opposite – a weak relationship between conflict management styles and personality types (Jones & Melcher, 1982); or a

weak relationship between personality styles and negotiation outcomes (Neale & Northcraft, 1991; Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; Wall & Blum, 1991). Regardless of the empirical evidence presented, the common thread that links conflict management styles and personality traits is that they both influence behavior by influencing choices individuals make about how to proceed when dealing with specific situations. Although researchers have conducted many studies that investigate one or both topics, the precise nature of the linkages between the two domains remains ambiguous. This study sought to create new knowledge about the relationship between conflict management styles and personality traits in academia, particularly in one of the most important leadership positions; that of an academic chair. Following is a brief description of the setting within which this research took place.

American Universities

Successful organizations need to have good leadership not only at the top of the management, but at all levels. This research study was focused in a particular level of leadership in higher education institutions – that of a department chair or unit leader. To understand more about this particular level, it was necessary to examine what the current literature provided in terms of the issues related to department chairs or unit leaders from the emergence of the position to the complex and multidimensional position this role had been developed.

The American university system was founded in 1636 in Massachusetts with the establishment of Harvard College at Cambridge. A century later, two state universities (North Carolina and Georgia) were added to the system, in 1795 and 1801 respectively. By 1876, a new model of university was imported from Germany and the first research

university was created; it was the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland (Perkin, 1997). As universities grew and evolved, and as faculty became more specialized and new departments were formed or grew, it became more difficult for university presidents to understand, govern, and manage the actions of individual faculty members (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). Furthermore, the larger the institution grew, the more it became inevitable that more specialization and delegation of duties was needed.

Finkelstein (1997) noted that by the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, a core of faculty replaced some of the tutors, thus establishing a professoriat. The creation of professorships established specialization, and the very first seeds of the academic disciplines were planted. This led to the development of more administrative layers, beginning with departmental administration (Auclair, 1990). It was found that department chairs could better oversee the work in their departments that top layers of administration, including the presidents of universities (Graff, 1998). Above all, it was the growth in size of universities that contributed to the creation of the department chair position. The complexity of universities and discipline specializations created the need for leaders to drive the newly organized groups of faculty.

Department Chairs

Department chairs, like deans, school heads, provosts, vice presidents, and presidents, play a key role in the organization of colleges and universities. Their role was first examined in 1958, in a survey that included department chairs from 33 private liberal art colleges (Jennerich, 1981). According to Patton, department chairs play the largest part in helping shape the character of institutions in higher education (1961).

Gmelch considers department chairs to be the "front-line leaders" in higher education (2000).

Literature provides evidence that scholars among different disciplines agree that department chairs contribute to the success of academic institutions and their work revolves around three interrelated factors: administrators, faculty, and students (Weinberg, 1984). Their roles and responsibilities are considered of such importance that their administrative position has been analyzed like no other position (Norton, 1980; Jennerich, 1981; Tucker, 1992; Moses & Roe, 1990; Seagren & Filan, 1992, Gmelch & Burns, 1993, Gmelch & Miskin, 1993, Miller & Seagren, 1997). For example, as Lucas noted, department chairs' roles and responsibilities have been expanding over the last decade (2000). Different types of institutions place different demands on their chairs (Creswell et. al., 1990), which can create even more roles and responsibilities for them.

McLaughlin, Montgomery, and Malpass (1975) found that department chairs serve in three dominant roles: those of academic, administrative, and leadership role. Wheeler (1992) indicated that they serve multiple roles, including those of a resource link, mentor, facilitator of mentor relationships, institutional authority or representative, evaluator, faculty developer, and a model of balance. Stated in a different way, Treadwell (1997) argued that department chairs have broad roles that are unique including academic and administrative leader, resource acquisition and allocation, and constituent relationships/boundary spanning. According to Higgerson, in order for department chairs to be effective in all these roles, they need to have effective communication skills (1996).

Others have identified specific orientations for department chairs (Carroll & Gmelch, 1992) such as those of leader chairs, scholar chairs, faculty developer chairs, and manager chairs. Furthermore, researchers have defined specific roles. For example, Smart and Elton (1976) reported that a department chair has four roles: faculty, researcher, instructor, and coordinator. Booth (1982) department chairs have roles that are faculty centered, externally focused, program oriented, and management centered. In contrast, Creswell and Brown (1992) defined seven separate roles: provider and enabler (sub-divided as administrative), advocate (external), and mentor, encourager, collaborator, and challenger (interpersonal). In some departments, department chairs play the role of a mentor to junior faculty and contribute to their development whereas in others, department chairs delegate this role to experienced faculty (Gmelch & Miskin, 1995).

Stepping into the role of department chairs most often occurs when faculty members are in their mid 40s or late 40s in age with the average tenure as department chair being in the position for six years before returning to faculty status (Carroll, 1991). Scott found that one in three faculty members serve in the post at some point during their career (1981). In another study about the relationship of gender, age, and academic rank, it was found that female chairs are significantly younger than their male counterparts and more likely to become chairs before receiving full professorship than males (Carroll, 1991). In a research university, the norm is for department chairs to return to a teaching and research position after three to five years; thus, they need to remain professionally active and current in the discipline during the period they serve as department chairs (Seagren, Creswell, & Wheeler, 1993).

One can say that it is inevitable for department chairs to experience great changes in their working life, considering the stresses of academic life. Changing from working in solitary life as faculty member to more social work as chairs, from dealing with focused activities to more fragmented ones, from being private to being public can be a difficult transition. Adding to these changes, chairs also change from being "just faculty members" to being conscious of public relations, from being stable within a discipline and circle of professional associations to being mobile within the university structure and among chairs at other universities and colleges, from requesting resources to being a custodian of and dispensing resources, and from practicing austerity with little control over one's resources to enjoying more control (Gmelch, 1989).

In contrast to managers in a business setting, department chairs are typically not professional administrators. That means that unless their institutions have facilitated their participation in special training programs for higher education administrators, department chairs usually learn on the job (Bensimon, Ward, & Sanders, 2000; Howard & Green, 1999). Many universities invest in training their department chairs, but too often it remains sporadic and narrowly focused on fiscal and reporting responsibilities. This transition to the position of department chair requires that faculty members are able to build and sustain relationships as well as understand the organizational nuances that come with the title (Wolverton, Gmelch, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999). Department chairs are confined to the pressures and demands of performing not only as administrators, but also as productive faculty members (Bare, 1986).

It is the difference between academic and new administration role that chairs are called to serve, which create ambiguity and role conflict (Bennett, 1982). While it is

critical to maintain higher education organizations, the difference between roles places department chairs in the difficult position of mediating between the demands of administration and faculty. As a situation, it can lead to split loyalties, mixed commitment, and heightened role conflict (Gmelch, 1995). Furthermore, higher education institutions are vulnerable to potential conflict due to their many levels, rules and regulations, specialized disciplines, segmented rewards, autonomy, and high interdependence (Bennett, 1988); therefore, it is of crucial importance that department chairs recognize inherent conflict and take action. In this notion, in order to deal with conflict, they need to understand and recognize the barriers to productive departments built into the structure of higher education, as well as realize that regardless of the causes, it is their responsibility to confront these barriers. Unfortunately for them, conflict in the university setting is an inherent component of academic life and whether they want it or not, they are expected to deal with it in an effective way.

A review of literature on department chairs and conflict finds that department chairs deal with conflict and resulting decisions on a daily basis. In a study conducted by the Center for the Study of the Department Chair (Gmelch, 1991), 40% of the 800 department chairs who responded to the survey conducted suffered excessive stress from making decisions affecting others, resolving collegial differences, and evaluating faculty performance. Overall, 60% of their dissatisfaction came from dealing with interfaculty conflict. Additionally, department chairs are in a unique position because not only do they encounter conflict from individuals they manage, but also from others to whom they report, such as a senior administrator in the position of dean. This can help explain why being a department chair is perhaps one of the most challenging positions in higher

education (Bennett & Figuli, 1990). According to Gmelch and Carroll: "As the size of the institution increases, goals become less clear, interpersonal relationships more formal, departments more specialized and the potential for conflict intensifies" (1991, p. 109). Additionally, it has been found that being able to recognize and manage conflict is a quality that most department chairs lack although it is a skill that can highly enhance their effectiveness as leaders (Gmelch, 1991a; Hickson & McCroskey, 1991; Lumpkin, 2004). Algert and Watson argued that department chairs practice conflict resolution styles learned during childhood unless they make a conscious decision to reflect and evaluate their conflict management styles (2002).

Literature on the conflict management styles of department chairs has been sparse (Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch & Carroll, 1991); this is the same case for literature about department chairs' personality traits. Furthermore, although literature is replete with information and studies on how to recognize and resolve conflict in a variety of settings (Carmichael & Malague, 1996; Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch & Carroll, 1991) and fewer publications on how conflict is managed at the departmental level (Findlen, 2000; Gmelch, 1991a; Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch & Carroll, 1991; Hickson & McCroskey, 1991; Trombly et al., 2002), no publication about the relationship between conflict management styles with the personality traits of department chairs exists. This research study is designed to shed light into this situation. Following is a brief description of the instruments that will be used in this study.

Instruments

As has been described, researchers have identified five different styles for handling conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas & Kilmann, 1974; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979), as

well as five personality traits that represent the dominant conceptualization of personality structure (Peabody & Goldberg, 1989; Goldberg, 1981; Digman, 1990; Costa & McCrae, 1992). This research study was focused on identifying the relationship among the different conflict management styles and personality traits that department chairs in the field of recreation, park resources, and leisure services exhibited in their work environment. In order to assess the particular relationship between conflict management style preferences and personality traits, the following instruments were chosen.

Conflict management style instrument

The investigator of this study chose the ROCI-II (Rahim, 1983a) to determine the conflict management style preferences of department chairs. ROCI-II was developed based on the model created by Blake and Mouton (1964), known as the Managerial Grid model, and which was further developed by Thomas and Kilmann (1974). Furthermore, this instrument was designed to overcome the limitation that individuals exhibit different conflict management styles when dealing with other individuals who possess less, equal, or more power than they do. For that reason, Rahim (1983a) developed three versions of the scale; one of which assesses the conflict management styles an individual prefers when dealing with conflict situations with subordinates, peers, or supervisors.

Department chairs are confined to pressures and demands of performing not only as administrators, but also as productive faculty members (Bare, 1986). Many chairs view themselves primarily as faculty serving a relatively short term, with the average being six years (Carroll, 1991). Additionally, they are considered to be "first among equals", a position that gives them power over others, but also equality among others (Seagren, Creswell, & Wheeler, 1993). For Berquist (1992), department chairs are peer chairs, an

opinion that reflects the idea that they will not be viewed as supervisors by the rest of the faculty, but as "peer" faculty members. Thus, the investigator believed that the instrument that would best assess the conflict management styles of the department chairs was the ROCI II Form C.

The ROCI-II Form C (Rahim, 1983d) is a self-administered, multiple choice questionnaire designed to assess individual' preferences of five conflict management styles: Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising. Individuals respond to statements presented on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The score was calculated by computing the average of the responses to specific question numbers from the ROCI-II Form C. The lower the score, the less preferable the particular conflict management styles; higher scores indicated greater preference for particular conflict management styles. Individuals' scores were calculated by computing the average of their responses to questions on the instrument. The ROCI-II Form C could be administered in 8 minutes (Rahim, 1983d).

Personality Instrument

In this study, the instrument used to assess the personality factors of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness-of department chairs in the field of recreation, park resources, and leisure services was the short version of the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R), known as NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). The advantage of this form over the longer version is the number of statements asked. The sixty (60) items (12 items per factor) consist of statements for which respondents must decide the degree they identify with the items. Respondents are given five answer choices, which range from "strongly disagree" (SD) to "strongly agree" (SA).

In between lie the options of "disagree" (D), "neutral" (N) and "agree" (A). Thus, similar to the ROCI-II (Form C), the NEO FFI utilizes a 5-point Likert-type scale (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Further information about the measurement instruments, as well as the instructions that accompany both measurement instruments is provided in Chapter III.

Chapter Summary

Review of literature about conflict management styles and personality traits/factors that examined contemporary research about the nature of those concluded that conflict is a natural outcome of human interaction; personality is also a factor that influences human interaction. It is important for department chairs to examine and identify their preference not only of conflict management styles, but of personality factors in order to improve their interpersonal relations throughout their departments, schools, and universities. Those department chairs who are aware of their strengths and limitations when dealing with conflict will be able to develop strategies that will effectively help themselves with their roles and responsibilities on a daily basis. For administrative personnel in universities who are responsible for hiring prospective academic chairs, such as deans and provosts, being able to identify personality traits as well as prospective academic chairs conflict management styles' preferences may help them find the "best fit" for the job. The focus of this research was placed on gaining a better understanding about conflict management style preferences, as well as personality traits that department chairs in the field of recreation, park resources and leisure services exhibit.

The next chapter discusses the researcher's philosophy and methodology that were utilized in this study. In addition, an analysis of the population is provided. Further

information includes the measurement instruments, the data collection and analysis

process, the researcher's ethics, and the statistical techniques that were employed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Every research project provides a link between a paradigm, epistemology, theoretical perspective, and research practice. A paradigm is identified in any school of thought – the integrated worldviews held by researchers and people in general that determine how these individuals perceive and attempt to comprehend truth (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2003). Furthermore, a paradigm includes an epistemological belief as well as an ontological belief that, when combined together, govern perceptions and choices made in the pursuit of scientific truth. In practice, individuals' epistemological beliefs determine how they think knowledge or truth can be comprehended, what problems – if any – are associated with various views of pursuing and presenting knowledge and what role researchers play in its discovery (Robson, 2002). Different epistemologies offer different views of researchers' relationships with their object of inquiry.

When it comes to ontology, it is the theory of reality or existence (Crotty, 1998). For example, researchers' ontological beliefs determine not only how they think about reality, but what exists for real and what exists only in thought. According to Crotty (1998), as a theoretical perspective is understood the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding for its logic and criteria. Methodology is the strategic approach of how to proceed in pursuit of knowledge, for researchers' initial thoughts when they want to prove their theory; thus, it draws upon concepts, terms, theories, definitions, models of literature base and discipline orientation, helping researchers generate the problem of their study, as well as the specific research questions. Furthermore, researchers, when designing their research, need to create a blueprint for getting from the beginning to the end of a study starting with a set of questions to be answered and finishing with a set of conclusions about those questions.

In the beginning of this chapter, ethical considerations about the protection of participants' rights are addressed, as well as the investigator's philosophy and methodology. This chapter also addresses issues regarding the instruments that were used, including their reliability and validity. Population characteristics are discussed. Additionally, attention is placed on the description of the measurement instruments that are utilized; a questionnaire to obtain participants' demographic profiles, the ROCI-II Form C (Rahim, 1983d), and the NEO-FFI Form S (Costa & McCrae, 1992) to assess conflict management styles and personality traits respectively. The selected procedures for collecting data, as well as the data analysis methods used during the course of this study were examined. A review of the Web-based program that was selected and procedures for completing the questionnaires were addressed as well.

Ethics

    As Bryman (2004) argued, irrespective of the philosophy and methodology chosen in a research project, all researchers are accountable for the ethical principles and practices used when conducting research. In particular, when conducting research as a student or a faculty member in a university, the research protocol that will be followed has to be approved by a committee, usually known as the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Ethical Review Board (ERB), or Independent Ethics Committee (IEC). This committee ensures that the rights of the prospective participants will be protected. This investigator complied with the guidelines set by the IRB of Oklahoma State University. Following is a brief description of the philosophical stance taken by this researcher.

Philosophy

    According to Blunt (1994), researchers approach inquiry from a particular philosophical stance or world view, which determines the purpose, design, methods used, and the interpretation of results. In the quest for knowledge and in an effort to understand the relationship between methodologies, researchers need to position themselves on existing paradigms. For example, Plano-Clark and Creswell (2008) argued that behind the paradigms of Positivism, Post-positivism, and Interpretivism lay information that can help researchers answer a number of questions including whether or not there is an absolute truth or multiple truths, which methodology suits best researchers' choice of the methods used, and so on. For example, Positivism mostly relies on a cause-and-effect relationship, whereas Post-positivism accepts that human knowledge is not based on unchallengeable and solid foundations, emphasizing the importance of multiple measures and observations.

Furthermore, a quantitative approach is often associated with a positivist approach for which the goal is to describe a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009), whereas a qualitative approach is associated with a post-positivist and interpretivist approach. This does not exclude a quantitative approach being associated with a post-positivist approach. In contrast, for a researcher who favors Interpretivism, knowledge is a matter of interpretation (Schutt, 2009) so that the quest for understanding the complex world of lived experience demands that the researcher interact with the research objects/participants to get the viewpoint. The investigator favored a post-positivist approach since she believes that human knowledge can be challenged and modified in light of further investigation. Following is a description of the methodology that was followed for this study.

Methodology

When it comes to choosing a methodology, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argued that researchers must consider many reasons such as (a) the characteristics of the design, and (b) the potential advantages and limitations of the design and how these relate to the overall purpose of the study (Dimsdale & Kutner, 2004; Trochim, 2006). Additionally, although there are clear differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches, when choosing between different approaches researchers do not necessarily act based on methodologies. Instead, their decision may be based on reasons such as their natural inclination toward numbers or the presumed objectivity that derives from a quantitative approach. For Chen (2006), those who prefer a qualitative approach are typically willing to immerse themselves in the research and be more than objective observers. Another reason for preferring one research approach over another may depend upon the nature of

the study or the type of information needed. Other times it is the availability of resources (human resources, time, and money) that dictates a researcher's approach.

Nevertheless, it is known that quantitative and qualitative approaches are based on contrasting assumptions and ideologies about social phenomena and knowledge (Grbich, 2007). A quantitative approach, from a theoretical perspective, relies on statistical data so that the phenomena can be described, providing a general picture of a situation and producing results that can be generalizable across contexts, although sometimes the reality of situations may be neglected (Schulze, 2003). Furthermore, quantitative research usually involves the use of structured questions, where the response options have been predetermined and by definition, measurement must be objective, quantitative and statistically valid. Karami, Rowley, and Analoui (2006) argued that historically, methodological approaches used in business management research favored quantitative methods. Qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things using methods of collecting information such as in-depth interviews (Gibbs, 2002). Qualitative methods are considered to be more subjective than quantitative research, which makes the results hard to generally apply (Srnka & Koeszegi, 2007; Trochim, 2006). For the reasons described above, the quantitative research design was chosen by the investigator as the most appropriate choice for this study.

Despite the fact that either a quantitative or qualitative approach is most common, many researchers also favor a mixed approach. According to Schulze (2003), the mixed approach is simply the systematic combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in research or evaluation. For example, researchers can proceed with a two-phase model,

where a quantitative phase of the study is followed by a qualitative phase or vice versa. However, it is argued that a mixed methodology model is better suited to experienced researchers with a sophisticated knowledge of both paradigms (Creswell, 2009). In many case, a mixed approach can overcome the weaknesses of a single (qualitative or quantitative) method (Sechrest & Sidani, 1995; Greene & Caracelli, 1997; Howe, 1988; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Attitude surveys in a questionnaire format are frequently used by managers to assess work-related attitudes and make critical decisions about their employees (Guest, 1999; Cully, Woodland, O'Reilly, & Dix, 2000; Ivancevich & Matteson, 2007). In academia, these are among the most important tools in the institutional research toolbox, and as such, are one of the most common activities in institutional research (Schlitz, 1988). A questionnaire is "…the most widely used technique in education and behavioral sciences for the collection of data" (Isaac & Michael, 1990, p. 128). Dillman (2007, p. 9) indicated that using survey research helps researchers "…estimate the distribution of characteristics in a population". Other researchers argue that self-completed questionnaire surveys are widely used as a data collection method in health services, education, and social science research (Schlitz, 1988; Bowling, 2002; Lister-Sharp, Chapman, Stewart-Brown, & Sowden, 1999; Scott & Usher, 1999).

For the reasons explained above, and based on her inclination toward quantitative research and the presumed objectivity that derives from a quantitative approach, the investigator chose known attitude survey instruments in a questionnaire format to conduct her study. Her choice was consistent with Dillman's (2007) statement in that the results of this present study may provide an estimation of the distribution of

characteristics related to conflict management style preferences and personality traits of

unit leaders in the field of recreation, parks and leisure services. Furthermore, the

investigator of this study anticipated that her quantitative research would generate

additional research, particularly that of a qualitative nature (Bryman & Cramer, 1996).

Additionally, the research design was identified as non-experimental since the

investigator had "control of who or what to measure, when the instrument takes place and

what to ask or observe" (Sproull, 2002, p. 153). The investigator defined the variables to

be measured and the time the study would be conducted. Following is the description of

the way this survey was conducted.

Online research

   A trend for conducting surveys with the use of questionnaires is online research.

Rather than mailing a paper survey, prospective participants are sent a hyperlink to a

Web site containing the survey, or receive the survey attached to an e-mail with a request

to send it to the researcher completed. For many, the use of Internet has increased the use

of online surveys, presenting scholars with new challenges in terms of applying

traditional survey research methods to the study of online behavior and Internet use

(Andrews, Nonnecke & Preece, 2003; Bachmann, Elfrink, & Vazzana, 1996; Stanton,

1998; Witmer, Colman, & Katzman, 1999; Yun & Trumbo, 2000). Many researchers

have studied the outcomes of online surveys. Data provided by Internet methods are of at

least as good quality as those provided by traditional paper-and-pencil methods (Gosling,

Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). In particular, within populations where Internet access

is extremely high and coverage bias is likely to be less of a concern – such as among

college students and university faculty in the USA, Canada, and Western Europe – online surveys are very common (Solomon, 2001).

In addition, high response rates have been achieved with university-based populations or small specialized populations (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002). It is likely that an online survey will be successful when there is easy accessibility to Internet and when participants feel comfortable with using the Web (Kaplowitz, Hadlock & Levine, 2004). An advantage of conducting an online survey is the opportunity of reaching out to a target population that is widely dispersed geographically – for this study, faculty members across the USA (Garton, Haythornthwaite & Wellman, 1999; Wellman, 1997; Wright, 2005), thereby helping researchers cross the boundaries of time and distance to reach target populations.

Some researchers criticize online surveys for their efficiency. For example, although in some studies on online survey methods, response rates in email surveys are equal to or better than those for traditional mailed surveys (Mehta & Sivadas, 1995; Stanton, 1998; Foster-Thompson, Surface, Martin, & Sanders, 2003). Some argue that there is little evidence in the literature that online surveys achieve higher response rates than conventional surveys (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002). In terms of efficiency, when comparing online research with the traditional mailed surveys, results tend to be mixed. Four different studies using faculty samples found that an online survey yielded response rates 18% higher in comparison to paper surveys (Cobanoglu, Warde & Moreo, 2001). Schaefer and Dillman (1998) found only 0.5% point higher. In contrast, Weible and Wallace (1998) found that online surveys yielded response rates that were 1% lower in comparison to paper surveys. Others found that online surveys yielded response rates

15% lower than traditional pencil and paper surveys (Shannon & Bradshaw, 2002). An online survey may yield either equal or even higher response rates than paper surveys. It depends on the population under study and the design of the particular survey (Porter, 2004).

Every method of conducting research has advantages and disadvantages (Ilieva, Baron, & Healey, 2002). In a survey administered via the Web, data can be collected in a user-friendly manner. Many studies found that online surveys demand far less respondent time and effort and, unlike telephone surveys, can be completed at a time and place convenient to the respondent – a fact that can reduce the data collection time (Cobanoglu, Warde & Moreo, 2001; Blessings, 2005; Upcraft & Wortman, 2000). For a mailed paper and pencil survey to be completed, it can sometimes take months, in contrast to online surveys that can take as little as three weeks (Schuh & Upcraft, 2001).

Additionally, online surveys favor special populations that regularly use the Internet, such as students or faculty members (Couper, Traugott & Lamias, 2001; Sills & Song, 2002). Faculty members have Web access and computer training (Dillman, 2007). In comparison to paper surveys that tend to be costly even when using a relatively small sample, online surveys tend to have another advantage. Usually, the cost of a questionnaire delivered in a pencil and paper format is higher than when the same questionnaire is delivered online. Being able to move to an electronic medium from a paper format has been proved to be another advantage of online surveys in terms of resources efficiency (Bachmann, Elfrink, & Vazzana, 1996; Couper, 2000; Ilieva, Baron, & Healey, 2002; Yun & Trumbo, 2000, Creswell, 2009).

Another advantage of online surveys is data management. Unlike other forms of data collection, online data can be recorded and analyzed electronically and automatically, saving time and money, and eliminating data recording errors (Colorado State University, 2010). It is the advantage of the computerized administration that allows researchers to obtain sample sizes that exceed those obtained with most traditional techniques (Garton, Haythornthwaite & Wellman, 1999; Wellman, 1997; Wright, 2005). The use of online surveys can provide anonymity and results can be collected without identifying information attached. Many of the companies that provide the tools to conduct online surveys, like SurveyMonkey and Zoomerang, offer customer support, including help with design, participant tracking, data collection, and analysis (Porter, 2004). Additionally, the majority of those companies offer a feature that includes protection against duplicate responses, meaning that software programs can process responses in a way to identify if the same person or the user of a particular IP address submits more than one survey. Furthermore, an online survey can be designed in such a way so as not to allow prospective participants to skip questions and continue the survey until a field is filled in (Solomon, 2001).

A disadvantage of online surveys is that all potential respondents may not have ready access to the Web. Further, they may not have the necessary computer-literacy skills, and all institutions may not provide computer access to the Web (Solomon, 2001). Additionally, a disadvantage may stem from the perception of anonymity, a problem that exists with other data collection methods, as well. Although online surveys can be structured to ensure anonymity of responses, researcher assurance may not convince respondents. In order to deal with this issue, researchers can use pre-notice e-mails and

61

reminder e-mails to improve response rates, which may be inconsistent and may vary from as little as 15% to as high as 80% (Solomon, 2001). Additionally, hard drives may crash, software may glitch and failures may occur, even with Web-based data collection procedures. Human errors in programming, storing data, and lack of expertise can also cause problems to researchers, but these are problems that can be faced in any method of data collection. Regardless of the disadvantages presented above, the investigator of this study believed that the prospective participants had adequate literacy skills to complete the survey, as well as Web access. Following is the description of the Web-based program selected for the completion of this study.

Web-based program

The investigator chose the Web-based program *SurveyMonkey* to host her online survey. According to the privacy policy, this particular website offers SSL encryption for survey links, survey pages, and exports during transmission to ensure secured information (SurveyMonkey, 2010). Additionally, it was also stated that this company (SurveyMonkey) would not use any client's (researcher's) data for their own use. Finally, *SurveyMonkey* offered different options regarding the response status. The investigator used the Web Link Collector; an option that allowed for collection of responses anonymously. Web Link Collector allowed respondents to leave the survey and resume it later. The system used a "cookie" – a unique ID tag placed on a computer by a website to save the response by page (not by specific question). Thus, if individuals exited the survey early, they would need to use the same computer and browser to pick up and finish the survey.

Instruments

Three survey instruments were used in this particular study. First, unit leaders/department chairs completed a brief survey developed by the investigator to provide a demographic profile. It consisted of ten items that provided information about the participants' age, sex, race and ethnicity, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered. The second survey instrument was used to obtain data to predict preferences of department chairs regarding their conflict management style. The last survey instrument was used to obtain data to measure personality scores. Previous research has indicated that testing might be better at predicting personality measurement than interviewing (Caliguiri, 2000; Salgado, 1999). The relationship between personality traits and conflict management styles, and the relationship of these two measurement instruments with the demographics of the participants were the central focus of this research. Table 1 depicts the instrument variables that were used.

Table 1. Data Collection Instruments and Variables Assessed

Instruments	Variables
Demographics Questionnaire:	*Age*
	Race
	Sex
	Years employed in academia
	Years in the position as Unit Leader
	Academic Rank
	Job title
	Type of university
	Type of highest degree offered
NEO-FFI Form C (Costa & McCrae, 1992):	
	Neuroticism
	Extraversion
	Openness
	Agreeableness
	Conscientiousness
ROCI-II Form S (Rahim, 1983d):	*Avoiding*
	Compromising
	Dominating
	Integrating
	Obliging

The demographics questionnaire

For descriptive reasons in the first part of the survey, prospective participants were asked to provide information about demographics such as: age, sex, race and ethnicity, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered. Questions pertaining to respondents' race and ethnicity were based on the 2010 U.S. Census questions seeking similar information. Academic rank included the following ranks: assistant professor, associate professor, professor, and other. As explained below, participants checked the box with the job title they possessed from the following options: department chair, department head, program director, program coordinator, course coordinator, or other. The classification of the type of university was based on the Basic Classification system by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (2005). This particular classification system is an update of the traditional classification framework developed by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1970 to support its research program, and later published in 1973 for use by researchers (The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 2005). Types of universities included doctorate-granting university, master's college/university, baccalaureate college, and tribal college. Types of highest degree offered included doctoral, masters, baccalaureate degree and other.

The ROCI-II Form C

For the purposes of this study, the investigator used the ROCI-II Form C (Rahim, 1983d), an instrument which was developed based on two instruments; the Managerial Grid (Blake & Mouton, 1964) and the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument or TKI (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974); both assess behavior with a two-dimensional approach.

Although Blake and Mouton (1964) and Thomas and Kilmann (1974) measured five conflict management styles, they approached it from different perspectives. Blake and Mouton (1964) approached conflict management from managers' perspectives (concern for employees or a concern for task completion); Thomas and Kilmann (1974) demonstrated individuals' preferences toward assertive or cooperative behavior. Blake and Mouton (1964) identified their five styles as Smoothing, Withdrawal, Compromising, Forcing, and Confronting. Thomas and Kilmann (1974) named their five styles: Avoiding, Accommodating, Compromising, and Collaborating – as forms of cooperative behavior – and Competing – as a form of aggressive behavior. Both instruments fail to include the context in which individuals operate.

Rahim (1983a) noted that "one of the indicators of validity of a scale is its ability to discriminate among known groups" (p.197). The ROCI-II instrument was designed to overcome this limitation by examining hierarchical organizational conflict between workers and their bosses, subordinates, and peers. As mentioned in Chapter II, since academic chairs are considered to be "peer" chairs (Bergquist, 1992) with power over others with equality among other faculty members (Seagren, Creswell, & Wheeler, 1993), the investigator believed that the ROCI-II Form C (which examined conflict style preferences among peers) was the appropriate form.

As an instrument, the ROCI-II Form C (Rahim, 1983d) is a self-administered, multiple choice questionnaire, which contains 28 questions. The instrument takes approximately eight minutes to be answered. In terms of measurements, those are on an categorical scale with a theoretical range from 1 to 5, thus the score will be estimated by computing the average of the responses to specific question numbers from the ROCI-II

form C. The higher the score, the greater the amount of use of a particular conflict management style; a lower score indicates the opposite. The five styles were measured by seven, six, five, six, and four statements respectively. More specifically, responses to question numbers 1, 4, 5, 12, 22, 23, and 28 corresponded to the Integrating conflict management style, whereas questions numbered 2, 10, 11, 13, 19, and 24 corresponded to the Obliging conflict management style. Similarly, responses to the Dominating conflict management style were found by answering the questions 8, 9, 18, 21, and 25. Responses to the set of questions with numbers 3, 6, 16, 17, 26, 27 and 7, 14, 15, and 20 corresponded to the Avoiding and Compromising conflict management style.

Reliability and validity of ROCI-II

Questionnaires should be reliable and valid. Reliability is the degree to which instruments measure the same way each time they are used under the same conditions with the same subjects. When calculating reliability, researchers have two options: test/retest (Pearson's correlation) and internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha). Pearson's correlation reflects the degree to which a linear relationship exists between two measures. It ranges from +1 to -1. A correlation of +1 means that there is a perfect positive linear relationship between variables, whereas negative one (closer to -1) means a perfect negative correlation. A value of 0 means that no correlation exists between the particular measures.

According to Trochim (2006), a reliable instrument is any instrument that has a test-retest correlation close to +1, in a range from -1 to +1. Pearson's test-retest correlation on the ROCI-II demonstrated scores higher than .75 for each for the four scales, except for the scale measuring Compromising. More specifically, results for each of the scales

showed coefficients of .83 for Integrating; .81 for Obliging, .76 for Dominating, .79 for

Avoiding, and, .60 for Compromising (Weider-Hatfield, 1988). In comparison to other

instruments that examine conflict management styles and for which reliability does not

exceed .68 in any scale, ROCI-II's reliability can be considered favorable (Rahim, 1986).

When estimating internal consistency, researchers can use the Cronbach's alpha

coefficients, which are considered as the most commonly used method to demonstrate the

consistency of scales or subscales in Likert-type instruments. This scale ranges between 0

and 1, where the closer the coefficient is to 1, the greater the level of consistency

demonstrated (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). In previous studies, it has been demonstrated that

Rahim instrument's subscales were in the following ranges: .77-.83 for Integrating, .72-

.81 for Obliging, .72-.76 for Dominating, .75-.79 for Avoiding, and .72-.60 for

Compromising (Rahim, 1983b). Coefficient alphas ranged from $\alpha=.72$ to $\alpha=.77$.

According to researchers, Alpha values between .7 and .8 are considered to have

acceptable internal consistency and the overall instrument is considered reliable if all

scales are greater than .6 with more than half of the scale ranges above .7 (Bland &

Altman, 1997; McKinley, Manku-Scott, Hastings, French & Baker, 1997; Simon, 2008).

The assessment of validity involves the degree to which researchers measure what

they intended to; more simply, the accuracy of their measurement. According to Cook

and Campbell (1979), there are four ways to present validity: statistical conclusion,

internal, construct, and external validity. As an instrument, the Rahim Organizational

Conflict Inventory (ROCI) has been found to be a valid measurement scale by

researchers who recommended it as a tool in studies that examine organizational conflict

(Rahim, 1983b; Rahim, 1986; Van De Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990). Following is the

description of the instrument that was used to measure the personality traits of the prospective participants.

The NEO Five-Factor Inventory Form S

As stated in Chapter II, the NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) a widely accepted measure based on the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality (Holden, Wasylkiw, Starzyk, Book, & Edwards, 2006), was used to assess the personality characteristics of the participants in this study. It was developed by Costa and McCrae (1992) as a short form to the NEO-PI. Following are the five domains of personality as measured by the NEO-FFI: Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness (O), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness (C) (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

- *Neuroticism* refers to the tendency of individuals to experience unpleasant emotional instability and to have corresponding disturbances in thoughts and actions.
- *Extraversion* refers to differences in preference for lively activity and social behavior. Extraverts are known to be sociable, gregarious, outgoing, active, and optimistic. They are known to prefer large groups of people, and to like excitement.
- *Openness* is characterized by active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, as well as consideration of inner feeling. Individuals which demonstrate high score in openness have a preference for variety, intellectual curiosity, and independence of judgment.
- *Agreeableness* involves displaying interpersonal tendencies such as eagerness to help others, altruism, sympathy, and a belief that others will be helpful in return.

69

- *Conscientiousness* can be considered individuals' ability to control impulses, plan and organize active processes, carry out tasks, and be harder-working than other people.

In contrast to the NEO-PI, which includes 240-items, the NEO-FFI is an abbreviated 60-item version (Costa & McCrae, 1992) that can be administered to individuals age 17 and older. The NEO-FFI consists of five, 12-item scales that measure each domain. Estimated time of completion is approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Items are answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from one to five: one being "strongly disagree" (SD) and five being "strongly agree" (SA). In between are the options of "disagree" (D), "do not know/neutral" (N) and "agree" (A). The sixty items (12 items per factor) consist of statements that respondents must decide to the degree to which they identify with the items. More specifically, responses to question numbers 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36, 41, 46, 51, and 56 corresponded to the personality trait of Neuroticism, whereas those to questions 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37, 42, 47, 52, and 57 corresponded to the personality trait of Extraversion. Similarly, responses to Openness to Experiences (trait) were found by answering questions 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33, 38, 43, 48, 53, and 58. Responses to the set of questions with numbers 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39, 44, 49, 54, 59 and 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, and 60 corresponded to personality traits of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.

For each of the five personality traits there will be raw scores, which will be converted into T-scores. All T-scores of 66 or higher are considered to be in the very high range, whereas those between 56 and 65 are considered of high range. Scores between 45 and 55 are considered of average range, 35 and 44 to be low range; 34 or below are

considered in the very low range for that respective personality construct (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The NEO-FFI helps researchers understand participants' basic emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal, and motivational styles. Additionally, it offers observer-rating versions of the instrument; a NEO-FFI Form R and Form S. The first one is a rater report so that researchers can take the assessment and answer questions about the subjects, whereas the latter one is a self report form, so that the subjects/prospective participants can answer the questions themselves. From the purposes of this research design, the investigator chose the NEO-FFI Form S.

Reliability and Validity of the NEO-FFI

According to Costa and McCrae (1992), when developing the short version of NEO-PI-R, known as NEO-FFI, the items that had the largest absolute loading on their corresponding factors were selected (Holden, Wasylkiw, Starzyk, Book, & Edwards, 2006). The NEO-FFI manual indicates that the instrument has nationally collected norms and has been validated statistically across various ages of adult populations (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Like the ROCI-II, this personality traits instrument has demonstrated high levels of reliability and validity (Trull & Sher, 1994). For example, Saucier and Goldberg (1998) found that the analysis of scores (internal and test-retest reliability) in their survey of an Australian adult sample was consistent with the data collected by Costa and McCrae. The NEO-FFI form S reports reliability coefficients of .77 to .92, whereas its internal consistency values range from .68-.86.; Three month test-retest reliability scores range from .75 to .83 (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Participants

Since the 1950s the Society of Park and Recreation Educators (SPRE) survey had been conducted every two years (Bialeschki, 1992) in an attempt to develop a database from which to understand the patterns and current status of recreation, parks, and leisure services curricula. When first initiated, the survey included all the programs in the field, but by the 1990s the selected schools involved in the survey represented only a small portion of the existing schools and programs – those that were accredited by the NRPA Council of Accreditation. It was the intention of the investigator to include all the programs within the field of recreation, parks, and leisure studies curricula in order to map the demographics, conflict management styles, and personality traits of those who administer or chair those programs.

For the reasons described above, the investigator constructed a database based on academic majors that fell under the broad field of recreation, parks, and leisure services and that were listed in the Book of Majors (College Board, 2009). Some programs included majors such as sport management and recreation, leisure studies, outdoor leadership and recreation, recreational and leisure facilities management, recreational therapy, tourism and many different combinations of those. For the construction of this database, NRPA's list of accredited programs was included and a thorough investigation of the World Wide Web was also conducted. This investigation yielded approximately 260 baccalaureate programs within the named disciplines.

According to Peers (1996) the size of a sample in a study can influence the detection of significant differences, relationships, or interactions. In determining an appropriate sample size, researchers have to take into consideration two important factors: the margin

of error and the alpha level (Cochran, 1977). The first one represents the risk of the error the researcher is willing to accept in the study, whereas the second represents the probability that differences revealed by statistical analyses really do not exist; this is also known as Type I error. In the social sciences, the alpha level used in determining sample size is typically either .05 or .01 (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996). In general, an alpha level of .05 is acceptable for most researchers. However, in identifying marginal relationships differences or other statistical phenomena as a precursor to further studies researchers may choose an alpha level of .10 or lower.

In determining an acceptable margin of error, researchers have to agree on the amount of error they can tolerate. In educational and social research, a 5% margin of error is considered acceptable (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). With an alpha level of .05, a 5% margin of error, and a population of 260, the appropriate response size was 155 responses. That meant that if 155 individuals responded to the survey, the investigator would be more likely to get answers that truly reflected on population. If fewer than 155 responded, that would mean that the findings did not have as much power as if the appropriate response rate had been reached.

Prospective participants involved in the data collection process for this study were those who administered or chaired programs within the field of recreation, parks, and leisure studies, and who resided in the United States. Survey participants were advised to answer the questions on their own and not in collaboration with others. Permission for this study was granted by the Institutional Research Board (IRB) of Oklahoma State University. In terms of the appropriate number of participants, when researchers deal with "small populations, there is no point in sampling" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 221);

therefore, no sampling technique was employed for the purpose of this study. Following are the data collection procedures, research questions, and the data analysis process.

Data collection procedure

Researchers tend to take as many measures as possible to ensure the success of their research. Furthermore, principles such as those of voluntary participation, informed consent, and anonymity were adopted. Voluntary participation requires that participants are not coerced into participating in the research. Thus, the prospective participants chosen for this research were sent an email asking them to participate in an upcoming Web-based survey. Details such as the investigator's credentials, the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, a confidentiality statement, the rights of the participants and the researcher's contact information were disclosed. Providing this information typically reduces the chance that a survey or e-mail would be inadvertently thrown away (Fox, Crask, & Kim, 1988).

Informed consent is closely related to the notion of voluntary participation; thus, all prospective research participants were fully informed of the procedures and risks involved in the research and relied to consent to participate. Lastly, the principle of anonymity provides the assurance that prospective participants will remain anonymous throughout the research. Prospective participants were informed that their responses would be used to derive statistically valid trends and that the information gathered would be securely stored and would be used only for the purposes of academic research. Personal information was limited to that necessary for conducting the research. Unit leaders were given the opportunity to contact the investigator to receive feedback on the results of the study.

Follow-up e-mails aid in demonstrating efficacy for increasing response rates and decreasing the number of non-responses (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000; Dillman, 2007). Therefore, a week after the first email, unit leaders/academic chairs were sent a reminder e-mail followed by another reminder email a week later. The reminder included a hyperlink to the survey Website. In total, participants were sent two reminder emails. This design method integrated elements of Dillman's Total Design Method (TDM) and recent literature on Web-based survey techniques. The investigator sent electronically the pre-notification email, the invitation to participate with the link to the questionnaire, and the two reminder emails. In contrast to Dillman's design (2007), no incentives were given to respondents.

Unit leaders/academic chairs were informed that there were no right or wrong answers to the survey; they were asked to complete the surveys to the best of their ability. When completing the online survey, respondents would click on the "submit" button on the Webpage for their responses to be submitted to the hosting online company; a thank-you for participating note was featured in their screen (*SurveyMonkey*). Following are the research questions of this study.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship, if any, between the demographic variables (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) and the preferred conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) of unit leaders/department chairs, as measured by ROCI-II Form C?

2. What is the relationship, if any, between the demographic variables (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree) and personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) of unit leaders/department chairs, as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S?

3. Are demographic variables of unit leaders/department chairs (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree) and their personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness), as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S related with their preference in conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising), as measured by ROCI-II Form C?

4. What is the relationship, if any, between the conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) as measured by ROCI-II Form C, and personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) of unit leaders/department chairs, as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S?

Data analysis

Statistical analysis was conducted using statistical software SPSS v.17.0. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondent population. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for all the categorical variables (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered). Means, minimum, maximum and standard deviations were computed for each conflict management style, as well as for each personality trait. In order to compare the means of the different conflict management styles, averages were calculated since the different styles have a different number of items.

The first research question investigated the relationship between the demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered), and the preferred conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) as measured by the ROCI-II Form C. Table 2 provides a display of variables for research question 1.

Table 2 Variables for research question 1

Independent Variables:	Demographic Variables
	Age
	Sex
	Race
	Years in position as Unit Leader
	Years employed in academia
	Academic rank
	Job title
	Type of university
	Type of highest degree offered
Dependent Variables:	Conflict Management Styles
	Integrating
	Obliging
	Dominating
	Avoiding
	Compromising

In examining the relationship between the demographic variables and the conflict management styles as measured by the ROCI-II Form C, correlation coefficients were calculated. The choice of correlation coefficients was based on the nature of the data being correlated. For example, a Pearson Correlation Coefficient (Yaffee, 1999) can be used to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between continuous variables. However, it is not recommended when those variables are not linearly related because it can underestimate the strength of their relationship. When the variables are categorical, a Kendall's Tau test can be used to describe strength and direction of the relationship between variables (Yaffee, 1999). In this study, all variables were considered categorical; thus, Kendall's Tau was chosen. Kendall's Tau test was used to examine the relationship of the different conflict management styles with the categorical demographic variables (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as Unit Leader, academic rank, job title, type of university, type of highest degree offered).

The second research question investigated the relationship between the demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) and the personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness), as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S. Table 3 provides the list of dependent and independent variables used for the second question.

Table 3 Variables for research question 2

Independent Variables:	Demographic Variables
	Age
	Sex
	Race
	Years in position as Unit Leader
	Years employed in academia
	Academic Rank
	Job title
	Type of university
	Type of highest degree offered
Dependent Variables:	Personality Traits
	Neuroticism
	Extraversion
	Openness to Experience
	Agreeableness
	Conscientiousness

In order to examine if there was a relationship between the demographic variables and personality traits as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S, correlation coefficients were calculated. More specifically, Kendall's Tau test was used to examine the relationship of the different personality traits with the categorical demographic variables (age, sex, race,

years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title, type of university, and type of highest degree offered).

The third research question examined whether or not the demographic variables of department leaders (age, sex, race, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title, type of university, and type of highest degree offered) and their personality traits (Neuroticism, extroversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness), as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S were related to unit leaders' preference in conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising), as measured by ROCI-II Form C. Table 4 provides a display of variables for research question 3.

Table 4 Variables for research question 3

Independent Variables:	Demographic Variables
	Age
	Sex
	Race
	Years in position as Unit Leader
	Years employed in academia
	Academic Rank
	Job title
	Type of university
	Type of degrees offered
	Personality Traits
	Neuroticism
	Extraversion
	Openness to Experience
	Agreeableness
	Conscientiousness
Dependent Variables:	Conflict Management Styles
	Integrating
	Obliging
	Dominating
	Avoiding
	Compromising

A stepwise multiple regression via backward elimination analysis was used to examine whether the demographic characteristics and personality traits were related to the different conflict management styles. Each independent variable was entered in sequence and its value was assessed. If adding the variable contributed to the model then it was retained, and all other variables in the model were then re-tested to see if they were still contributing to the success of the model. If they no longer contributed significantly, they were removed. Thus, this method ensured the smallest possible set of predictor variables would be included in the model.

The fourth research question examined the relationship between conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) as measured by ROCI-II Form C, and personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness), as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S. Table 5 provides a display of variables for research question 4.

Table 5 Variables for research question 4

Independent Variables:	Conflict Management Styles
	Integrating
	Obliging
	Dominating
	Avoiding
	Compromising
Dependent Variables:	Personality Traits
	Neuroticism
	Extraversion
	Openness to Experience
	Agreeableness
	Conscientiousness

In order to examine whether there was a relationship between conflict management styles as measured by the ROCI-II Form C and personality traits as measured by the NEO-FFI Form S, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was calculated.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter provides the analysis and findings from data regarding conflict management style preferences, personality traits, and personal and university-related characteristics of unit leaders of baccalaureate programs within recreation, parks, and leisure studies curricula. This chapter is divided into five sections; one section for the summary of the demographic variables and one section for each of the four research questions. Through research question #1, the investigator sought to determine if a relationship existed between demographic variables and conflict management style preferences. Through research question #2 she sought to determine if a relationship existed between demographic variables and personality traits. Through research question #3, the investigator sought to determine whether demographic variables and personality traits were related to conflict management style preferences. Through research question #4, the investigator sought to determine if a relationship existed between conflict management style preferences and personality traits.

Data were collected using 10 items requesting demographic variables, the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II Form C (ROCI-II) and the NEO-FFI Form S, as detailed in the previous chapter. The demographic items included participants' age, sex, race and ethnicity, years employed in academia, years in position as unit leader, academic rank, job title as unit leader, type of university, and type of highest degree offered. The ROCI-II Form C included 28 items that measured preference for five conflict management styles: Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising. The NEO-FFI Form S included 60 items that measured the personality traits of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Both instruments, the ROCI-II Form C and the NEO-FFI Form S, used a 5-point Likert scale ranged from 1 to 5: one being "strongly disagree" (SD) and five being "strongly agree" (SA). In between were the options of "disagree" (D), "do not know/neutral" (N) and "agree" (A). After conducting the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for determination of a normal distribution, the averaged conflict management styles and personality traits for these respondents follow a normal distribution.

Two hundred sixty unit leaders were invited to participate in this study. When uploading the database in SurveyMonkey, the email addresses for 11 unit leaders automatically were rejected in the system. The investigator can only assume that in the particular institutional email addresses, additional filters have been added which automatically excluded these email addresses from the SurveyMonkey list. After the pre-notification email was sent, two unit leaders communicated to the investigator their request of a survey link sent to them from a web-based program other than SurveyMonkey. Their request was politely denied based on the premise that it would

constitute a violation of the research protocol. Furthermore, two unit leaders communicated to the investigator that the designated amount of time for them to complete the survey was beyond their availability; thus, they declined participation. Additionally, the investigator received 10 automated response emails that the recipients of the pre-notification email were out of the office, and unavailable. The same pattern occurred with the same individuals when they were sent the invitational email with the link to the survey and the two reminder emails.

Summary of Demographic Variables

Demographic characteristics are presented in terms of personal and university-related characteristics. Two hundred sixty unit leaders were invited to participate in the study. A total of one hundred five responded to the online survey for a response rate of 40.4%. Of the respondents, 67% (n=70) were male and 33% (n=35) were female (see Table 6 on page 87). When questioned about their age, 8% of the unit leaders (n=9) responded that they were between 31 to 40 years old, whereas another 29% (n=30) responded that they were between 41 to 50 years old. The majority of the unit leaders (n=66, 63%) responded that they were older than 50 years.

No respondents reported that they were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. Of the respondents, the majority of unit leaders were White (n= 102, 97%). The balance among the respondents were African American/Black (n= 3, 3%). No other race (American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian Indian, Pacific Islander, Other Asian, or Mixed Race) was reported.

When asked about years employed in academia, unit leaders' responses varied. Eight (7%) responded that they worked in higher education less than a decade, whereas the majority (n=42, 40%) responded that they had worked between 11 and 20 years in academia. Twenty seven (26%) responded that they had worked between 21 and 30 years, whereas the remaining twenty eight (27%) unit leaders responded working between 31 and 40 years. In their current position, as unit leaders, the majority of the respondents (n=64, 64%) reported that they had been employed in the position between 1 and 6 years. Another six unit leaders (6%) reported being in the position between 7 to 10 years, whereas seventeen (16%) reported being in the position between 11 and 15 years. Only eighteen unit leaders (17%) reported being in the position more than 15 years.

Respondents' academic rank varied from Assistant Professor to Professor, with a small number of respondents indicating some "Other" academic title. The majority of them (n=60, 57%) reported the rank of Professor; followed by Associate Professors (n=30, 29%), Assistant Professors (n=12, 11%), and "other" (n=3, 3%). SurveyMonkey does not offer the option for respondents to choose a multiple choice response as well as an open-ended answer to the same question. Thus, the investigator could not estimate what "Other" meant to those who responded in that fashion. Furthermore, unit leaders' responses in terms of their job title varied. Of the respondents, only one unit leader (1%) reported having the title of an Academic Chair, whereas the majority (n=53, 50%) reported having the job title of Department Chair. Additionally, another sixteen (15%) reported been identified as Department Heads, whereas another eight (8%) of the respondents reported been named as Program Director. Program Coordinator was chosen as a job title by twenty one (20%), whereas "Other" job title was chosen by six unit

leaders (6%). For the reason described above, the investigator could not estimate what "Other" meant. For the above questions, all hundred five respondents in the sample responded (see Table 6).

Of the respondents, forty seven (45%) reported being positioned in a Doctorate-granting university; followed by 38% (n=38) positioned in a Master's college/university, and 19% (n=20) in a Baccalaureate college/university. None of the respondents reported being in a Tribal college/university, or chose not to respond to the particular question. Furthermore, twenty unit leaders (19%) reported the doctorate as the highest degree offered in their program; followed by forty seven unit leaders (45%) who reported offering a Master's degree, and thirty eight (36%) reported Bachelor's degree. Again, all unit leaders responded to this question. Table 6 shows the following personal demographic characteristics: sex, age, race, years employed in academia, years employed in current position (as Unit Leader), academic rank, and job title. Table 7 shows the university related demographic characteristics, such as type of university, and type of highest degree offered.

Table 6 Personal Demographic Characteristics (N =105)

	n	%
Sex		
Male	70	66.7
Female	35	33.3
Age		
31-40	9	8.5
41-50	30	28.6
>50	66	62.9
Race		
White	102	97.1
African American/ Black	3	2.9
Years employed in academia		
1-10	8	7.6
11-20	42	40.0
21-30	27	25.7
31-40	28	26.7
Years employed in current position (as Unit Leader)		
1-6	64	61.0
7-10	6	5.7
11-15	17	16.2
>15	18	17.1
Academic Rank		
Assistant Professor	12	11.4
Associate Professor	30	28.6
Professor	60	57.1
Other	3	2.9
Job title as Unit Leader		
Academic Chair	1	1.0
Department Chair	53	50.5
Department Head	16	15.2
Program Director	8	7.6
Program Coordinator	21	20.0
Other	6	5.7

Table 7 University-Related Demographic characteristics (N =105)

	n	%
Type of University		
Doctorate-granting University	47	44.8
Master's College/University	38	36.2
Baccalaureate College/University	20	19.0
Type of highest degree offered in your program		
Doctorate	20	19.0
Master's degree	47	44.8
Bachelor's degree	38	36.2

The ROCI-II Form C

The ROCI-II Form C examined the conflict management style preferences of unit leaders. The styles assessed by this questionnaire include the five conflict management styles of Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising. Table 8 depicts the minimum, maximum, mean, and the standard deviation for averaged Conflict Management Styles.

Table 8 Averaged Conflict Management Styles Among Respondents (N=105)

	Min	**Max**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Integrating	3.7	5.0	4.31	0.37
Obliging	2.7	4.3	3.32	0.46
Dominating	1.2	4.2	2.77	0.61
Avoiding	1.3	4.8	2.77	0.72
Compromising	1.8	5.0	3.72	0.52

Note that 5 is the maximum score and represents the strongly agree statement, whereas 1 is the lowest score that represents the strongly disagree statement.

Each conflict management style had a different number of items in the scales (Integrating = 7 items, Obliging = 6 items, Dominating = 5 items, Avoiding = 6 items, and Compromising = 4 items). Integrating was the highest self-perceived conflict management style chosen by unit leaders ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.37$). This means that unit leaders often try to find a win-win solution for both parties involved when managing conflict. The balance of the styles ranged from 2.77 ($SD = 0.61$ and 0.72) for Dominating and Avoiding, respectively. The score for Obliging was 3.32 ($SD = 0.46$) and for Compromising was 3.72 ($SD = 0.52$). In order of preference, unit leaders tend to prefer Integrating, Compromising, Obliging, Dominating and Avoiding conflict management styles. The last two styles, Dominating, and Avoiding, tied as the least preferable options for unit leaders when dealing with conflict.

The NEO-Five Factor Inventory Scale (NEO-FFI)

The NEO-five factor inventory (NEO-FFI) examined the personality traits of unit leaders. The factors assessed by the NEO-FFI scale include the five major personality domains of Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness (O), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness (C). Table 9 depicts the minimum, maximum, mean, and the standard deviation for personality traits of respondents.

Table 9 Personality Traits of Respondents (N=105)

	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Neuroticism	23	39	29.76	3.34
Extraversion	34	49	39.95	3.52
Openness	31	44	36.93	3.14
Agreeableness	29	44	35.31	3.71
Conscientiousness	36	47	41.42	2.81

Note that mean scores of 56 or higher are considered high. Scores ranging from between 45 and 55 are considered average, and scores of 44 and lower are considered low, for that respective personality construct.

As shown in Table 9, the mean scores were 29.76 (N), 39.95 (E), 36.93 (O), 35.31 (A), and 41.42 (C). The highest standard deviation was 3.52 (Extraversion) and the lowest was 2.81 (Conscientiousness). Based on the literature and established categories for scores on the NEO-FFI (see note at Table 9), unit leaders did not score high or average in any of the personality traits; instead, they scored low in all the personality traits measured by this scale.

Scoring low in the personality trait of Extraversion indicates that individuals are somewhat introverts, preferring to do things alone or with a small group of people. They also tend to be quiet and unassertive in group interactions; however, this does not mean that they lack social skills (McCrae & Costa, 1987). These individuals may function well in social situations, although they might prefer to avoid them. Furthermore, individuals who score low in Openness to Experience tend to have conventional, traditional interests. They also prefer plain, straightforward, and obvious over the complex, ambiguous, and subtle.

Individuals who score low in the personality trait of Neuroticism are less easily upset

and are less emotionally reactive than those who score high (McCrae & Costa, 1987).

They tend to be calm, emotionally stable, and free from persistent negative feelings.

However, freedom from negative feelings may not mean that low scorers experience a lot

of positive feelings either. Unit leaders who scored low in Agreeableness tend to place

self-interest above getting along with others. They may be unconcerned with others'

well-being, and are less likely to extend themselves for other people than if they had

scored high in this trait (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Unit leaders may also be skeptical of

others' motives which cause them to be suspicious, unfriendly, and uncooperative.

Individuals who score low in the personality trait of Conscientiousness show less

preference for planned behavior than those who score high (McCrae & Costa, 1987). As

a trait, it influences the way in which individuals control, regulate, and direct their

impulses. Scoring low may indicate more spontaneous behavior.

Research Question #1

The following section presents the findings and analysis of the data for research

question #1, which sought to determine if relationships existed between demographic

variables of personal and university-related characteristics of unit leaders and their

preference of conflict management styles. Correlations were determined for each of the

five conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding, and

Compromising) and each demographic variable. Table 10 depicts the minimum,

maximum, mean, and the standard deviation of the conflict management style preferences

with respect to sex, whereas Table 11 depicts the relationship between sex with conflict

management styles, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 10 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Sex (N=105)

		Male	Female
Integrating style	Mean	4.26	4.42
	Std. Deviation	0.37	0.34
	Minimum	3.70	3.70
	Maximum	5.00	5.00
Obliging style	Mean	3.31	3.35
	Std. Deviation	0.47	0.46
	Minimum	2.70	2.70
	Maximum	4.30	4.30
Dominating style	Mean	2.69	2.94
	Std. Deviation	0.55	0.70
	Minimum	1.20	1.40
	Maximum	4.00	4.20
Avoiding style	Mean	2.78	2.77
	Std. Deviation	0.77	0.59
	Minimum	1.30	1.70
	Maximum	4.80	3.70
Compromising style	Mean	3.65	3.89
	Std. Deviation	0.56	0.39
	Minimum	1.80	3.00
	Maximum	4.50	5.00

Based on the results found in Table 10, both male and female unit leaders had similar conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, male unit leaders choose the Integrating, Compromising, Obliging, Avoiding and Dominating styles. Female unit leaders preferred: Integrating, Compromising, Obliging, Dominating, and Avoiding styles. As their last option, male unit leaders prefer to dominate a conflict, whereas their female counterparts prefer to avoid it. Additionally, as shown in Table 11, among the five different conflict management styles, only Integrating and Compromising style demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with the variable sex, although that

relationship was low. Women scored higher in all styles except Avoiding; however, only in Integrating and Compromising styles the differences in scores were significant.

Table 11 Relationship between Sex (Male=1, Female=2) with Conflict Management Styles as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	0.173	Low	0.042*
Obliging	0.033	Negligible	0.694
Dominating	0.133	Low	0.114
Avoiding	0.026	Negligible	0.756
Compromising	0.186	Low	0.031*

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Table 12 shows the relationship between age and the five conflict management styles, whereas Table 13 depicts the relationship between age and conflict management styles, as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation.

Table 12 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Age (N=105)

		31-40	41-50	>50
Integrating style	Mean	4.84	4.20	4.25
	Std. Deviation	0.31	0.41	0.09
	Minimum	4.30	3.70	3.70
	Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00
Obliging style	Mean	3.39	3.42	3.27
	Std. Deviation	0.26	0.52	0.45
	Minimum	3.20	2.70	2.70
	Maximum	3.70	4.30	4.30
Dominating style	Mean	2.95	2.76	2.75
	Std. Deviation	0.52	0.46	0.67
	Minimum	2.20	1.40	1.20
	Maximum	3.60	3.60	4.20
Avoiding style	Mean	2.28	2.76	2.85
	Std. Deviation	0.28	0.63	0.78
	Minimum	2.00	2.00	1.30
	Maximum	2.70	4.00	4.80
Compromising style	Mean	3.53	3.77	3.73
	Std. Deviation	0.69	0.41	0.54
	Minimum	2.80	2.80	1.80
	Maximum	4.20	4.50	5.00

Based on the results shown in Table 12, unit leaders of all age groups shared similar conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, leaders preferred the Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging styles. However, between the ages of 31 to 40 unit leaders preferred the Dominating then Avoiding styles as their fourth and fifth options, whereas between the ages of 41 to 50, either of these two styles mattered the least (see means in Table12). Unit leaders aged over 50 years old showed a preference of Avoiding conflicts, over Dominating them as their fourth and fifth options.

Table 13 Relationship between Age with Conflict Management Styles as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	-0.218	Low	0.008*
Obliging	-0.129	Low	0.116
Dominating	-0.076	Negligible	0.352
Avoiding	0.129	Low	0.109
Compromising	0.006	Negligible	0.939

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Given the findings in Table 13, among the five conflict management styles only the Integrating style a statistically significant relationship with age. The relationship of the Integrating style and age was low. As age increased, the use of the Integrating conflict management style decreased. That means that as unit leaders aged, they relied less in a two-way communication which could increase the chances that the two parties in conflict would receptively exchange ideas and information. This may indicate that as they age, unit leaders find the particular style ineffective.

When investigating the relationship between race and conflict management style preferences, no conclusive results were drawn out of the sample, which consisted of 102 White and only 3 Black/African American unit leaders. For reasons that this researcher has no explanation, all 3 Black/African American unit leaders answered the statements posed in ROCI-II, in the same way. SPSS perceived all scores as constant omitting race

from further analysis. Table 14 shows the relationship between years of employment in academia and the five conflict management styles, whereas in Table 15, the relationship between years of employment in academia as compared with conflict management styles is shown, as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation.

Table 14 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Years of employment in academia (N=105)

		1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40
Integrating style	Mean	4.54	4.31	4.29	4.28
	Std. Deviation	0.50	0.38	0.26	0.39
	Minimum	4.00	3.70	3.90	3.70
	Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Obliging style	Mean	3.29	3.45	3.17	3.29
	Std. Deviation	0.17	0.46	0.54	0.40
	Minimum	3.20	2.70	2.70	2.80
	Maximum	3.70	4.30	4.30	4.30
Dominating style	Mean	2.87	2.76	2.97	2.57
	Std. Deviation	0.34	0.53	0.75	0.58
	Minimum	2.20	1.20	1.40	1.60
	Maximum	3.20	3.60	4.20	3.40
Avoiding style	Mean	2.60	2.86	2.73	2.74
	Std. Deviation	0.75	0.70	0.51	0.91
	Minimum	2.00	1.30	1.70	1.80
	Maximum	3.50	4.00	3.70	4.80
Compromising style	Mean	3.53	3.87	3.38	3.91
	Std. Deviation	0.57	0.42	0.59	0.37
	Minimum	3.00	3.00	1.80	3.20
	Maximum	4.20	4.50	4.50	5.00

Based on the results found in Table 14, unit leaders employed in academia for less than a decade and those who worked up to four decades shared similar conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, they chose Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging. However, when it came down to the fourth and fifth

choices, those employed less than a decade and between 21 and 30 years preferred the

Dominating over the Avoiding style, whereas the opposite occurred with those employed

11 to 20, and 31 to 40 years, respectively.

Table 15 Relationship between Years of employment in academia with Conflict Management Styles as Measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	-0.071	Negligible	0.365
Obliging	-0.114	Low	0.149
Dominating	-0.101	Low	0.196
Avoiding	-0.065	Negligible	0.398
Compromising	-0.019	Negligible	0.809

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Given the findings in Table 15, no statistically significant relationship was detected

between the years of employment in academia and conflict management styles. Table 16

presents the average score for each conflict management style with respect to the years

that unit leaders were employed in their current position. Table 17 shows the relationship

between years employed in current position (as unit leader) with conflict management

styles, as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation.

Table 16 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Years employed in current position (N=105)

		1-6	7-10	11-15	>15
Integrating style	Mean	4.37	4.28	4.11	4.30
	Std. Deviation	0.38	0.09	0.30	0.37
	Minimum	3.70	4.10	3.70	3.70
	Maximum	5.00	4.40	4.60	5.00
Obliging style	Mean	3.28	3.77	3.28	3.34
	Std. Deviation	0.51	0.32	0.37	0.29
	Minimum	2.70	3.20	2.70	2.80
	Maximum	4.30	4.20	3.70	3.70
Dominating style	Mean	2.74	2.33	3.10	2.70
	Std. Deviation	0.67	0.56	0.45	0.36
	Minimum	1.40	1.20	2.20	2.20
	Maximum	4.20	2.60	3.60	3.40
Avoiding style	Mean	2.76	2.67	2.77	2.88
	Std. Deviation	0.65	0.68	0.57	1.05
	Minimum	1.70	1.30	2.20	1.80
	Maximum	4.00	3.30	3.70	4.80
Compromising style	Mean	3.69	3.79	3.56	3.98
	Std. Deviation	0.52	0.10	0.64	0.36
	Minimum	2.80	3.80	1.80	3.20
	Maximum	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.50

Based on the results found in Table 16, unit leaders employed in current positions shared similar conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, they chose Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging styles. As their fourth and fifth options, those employed in the position between 11 to 15 years showed a preference for a Dominating style over an Avoiding style when addressing a conflict. The other respondents in the other three employment groups preferred the opposite.

Table 17 Relationship between Years employed in current position (as Unit Leader) with Conflict Management Styles as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	-0.167	Low	0.038*
Obliging	0.098	Negligible	0.223
Dominating	0.058	Negligible	0.468
Avoiding	-0.017	Negligible	0.828
Compromising	0.105	Low	0.195

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

As seen in Table 17, among the five different conflict management styles only the Integrating style had a statistically significant relationship with the years unit leaders were employed in their current position. The relationship of Integrating style and the years employed in current position was low. As years employed in current position increased, the use of the Integrating conflict management style decreased, which is similar to the relationship between Integrating style and age of unit leaders. Table 18 provides the average score for each conflict management style with respect to the academic rank of the respondents, whereas Table 19 depicts the relationship between academic rank with conflict management styles, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation. Furthermore, in Table 18, the option "Other" as academic rank has been omitted from this analysis due to the very small number of respondents in that category.

Table 18 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Academic Rank (N=105)

		Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Professor
Integrating style	Mean	4.63	4.22	4.31
	Std. Deviation	0.44	0.37	0.32
	Minimum	4.00	3.70	3.70
	Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00
Obliging style	Mean	3.26	3.08	3.45
	Std. Deviation	0.31	0.46	0.45
	Minimum	2.80	2.70	2.70
	Maximum	3.70	4.30	4.30
Dominating style	Mean	2.90	2.87	2.67
	Std. Deviation	0.45	0.69	0.59
	Minimum	2.20	1.40	1.20
	Maximum	3.60	4.20	4.00
Avoiding style	Mean	2.27	2.62	2.91
	Std. Deviation	0.24	0.53	0.80
	Minimum	2.00	2.00	1.30
	Maximum	2.50	3.50	4.80
Compromising style	Mean	3.66	3.49	3.84
	Std. Deviation	0.59	0.54	0.46
	Minimum	3.00	2.80	1.80
	Maximum	4.20	5.00	4.50

Based on the results found in Table 18, unit leaders of different academic ranks showed similar patterns in conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors used Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging conflict management styles. As their fourth and fifth options, Professors favored a Dominating over an Avoiding conflict management style. The other two groups (assistant professors and associate professors) favored the opposite.

Table 19 Relationship between Academic Rank with Conflict Management Styles as Measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	-0.100	Low	0.215
Obliging	0.217	Low	0.007*
Dominating	-0.068	Negligible	0.395
Avoiding	0.269	Low	0.001*
Compromising	0.228	Low	0.005*

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Given the results in Table 19, it was found that among the five conflict management styles only Obliging, Avoiding, and Compromising styles demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with academic rank. In all three cases, the relationships with the academic rank were low. As academic rank changed (Assistant Professor = 1, Associate Professor = 2, Professor = 3, Other = 4), the use of the conflict management styles (Obliging, Avoiding, and Compromising) increased.

Table 20 provides the average scores for each of the conflict management styles with respect to the job titles of the respondents. Table 21 shows the relationship between job title as unit leader with conflict management styles, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 20 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Job title (N=105)

		Department Chair	Department Head	Program Director	Program Coordinator	Other
Integrating style	Mean	4.33	4.13	4.37	4.25	4.64
	Std. Deviation	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.46	0.07
	Minimum	3.70	3.70	3.90	3.70	4.60
	Maximum	5.00	5.00	4.70	5.00	4.70
Obliging style	Mean	3.32	3.14	3.31	3.31	3.91
	Std. Deviation	0.46	0.45	0.41	0.40	0.45
	Minimum	2.70	2.70	3.00	2.70	3.50
	Maximum	4.30	4.20	4.20	3.80	4.30
Dominating style	Mean	2.69	2.73	2.45	3.11	2.70
	Std. Deviation	0.66	0.59	0.612	0.31	0.54
	Minimum	1.40	2.00	1.20	2.40	2.20
	Maximum	4.20	3.40	3.40	3.60	3.20
Avoiding style	Mean	2.84	2.56	2.25	2.89	3.08
	Std. Deviation	0.76	0.71	0.57	0.61	0.64
	Minimum	1.70	1.80	1.30	2.00	2.50
	Maximum	4.80	4.00	3.30	3.70	3.70
Compromising style	Mean	3.60	3.73	4.06	3.79	4.00
	Std. Deviation	0.55	0.55	0.22	0.45	0.00
	Minimum	2.80	1.80	3.80	2.80	4.00
	Maximum	5.00	4.00	4.20	4.50	4.00

Note that the research yielded only one response from a unit leader identified as Academic Chair and thus he has been omitted from this analysis.

Based on the results found in Table 20, unit leaders with different job titles shared similar conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, unit leaders used Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging conflict management styles. As their fourth and fifth options, those who occupied the job title Department Chair and Other favored an Avoiding over a Dominating style. The remaining respondents (Department Head, Program Director, and Program Coordinator) favored the opposite.

Table 21 Relationship between Job title as Unit Leader with Conflict Management Styles as Measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	-0.028	Negligible	0.717
Obliging	0.088	Negligible	0.258
Dominating	0.152	Low	0.051
Avoiding	0.012	Negligible	0.878
Compromising	0.221	Low	0.005*

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Table 21 shows that among the five different conflict management styles only the Compromising style had a statistically significant relationship with job title (as unit leader); this relationship was low. As job title (as unit leader) changed (Department Chair =2, Department Head =3, Program Director =4, Program Coordinator =5, Other =7), the use of the Compromising style increased as well.

Table 22 depicts the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each of the conflict management styles with respect to the type of university at which unit leaders worked. Table 23 depicts the relationship between type of university and conflict management styles, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 22 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Type of University (N=105)

		Doctorate-granting University	Master's College-University	Baccalaureate College-University
Integrating style	Mean	4.36	4.27	4.27
	Std. Deviation	0.39	0.35	0.35
	Minimum	3.70	3.700	4.00
	Maximum	5.00	4.900	5.00
Obliging style	Mean	3.26	3.34	3.42
	Std. Deviation	0.48	0.50	0.30
	Minimum	2.70	2.70	2.80
	Maximum	4.30	4.30	4.20
Dominating style	Mean	2.86	2.64	2.81
	Std. Deviation	0.68	0.55	0.50
	Minimum	1.40	1.20	2.20
	Maximum	4.20	3.40	3.60
Avoiding style	Mean	2.72	2.83	2.79
	Std. Deviation	0.65	0.85	0.59
	Minimum	1.70	1.30	2.00
	Maximum	4.00	4.80	3.70
Compromising style	Mean	3.70	3.77	3.70
	Std. Deviation	0.57	0.46	0.51
	Minimum	1.80	3.00	2.80
	Maximum	5.00	4.50	4.20

Based on the results found in Table 22, unit leaders who worked in different types of academic institutions showed similar patterns in conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, unit leaders used Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging conflict management styles. As their fourth and fifth options, those working in doctorate-granting universities and baccalaureate colleges/universities favored a Dominating over an Avoiding conflict management style, whereas those working in master's colleges/universities favored the opposite.

Table 23 Relationship between Type of University with Conflict Management Styles as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	R	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	-0.072	Negligible	0.372
Obliging	0.129	Low	0.108
Dominating	-0.056	Negligible	0.487
Avoiding	0.043	Negligible	0.590
Compromising	0.009	Negligible	0.908

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Given the results in Table 23, the relationships between the type of university and conflict management style references were not statistically significant. The last demographic variable to be examined in relationship with the five conflict management styles was the level of the highest degree awarded. Table 24 provides the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each of the conflict management styles with respect to the type of highest degree awarded. Table 25 depicts the relationship between type of highest degree with conflict management styles, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 24 Conflict Management Style Preferences with respect to Type of highest degree (N=105)

		Doctorate	Master's degree	Bachelor's degree
Integrating style	Mean	4.42	4.24	4.34
	Std. Deviation	0.37	0.30	0.43
	Minimum	3.90	3.70	3.70
	Maximum	5.00	4.90	5.00
Obliging style	Mean	3.42	3.18	3.44
	Std. Deviation	0.61	0.36	0.44
	Minimum	2.70	2.70	2.70
	Maximum	4.30	3.80	4.30
Dominating style	Mean	2.67	2.86	2.71
	Std. Deviation	0.56	0.68	0.52
	Minimum	1.40	1.60	1.20
	Maximum	4.00	4.20	3.60
Avoiding style	Mean	2.72	2.74	2.84
	Std. Deviation	0.71	0.51	0.92
	Minimum	1.80	1.70	1.30
	Maximum	3.80	3.70	4.80
Compromising style	Mean	3.93	3.62	3.75
	Std. Deviation	0.61	0.40	0.57
	Minimum	1.80	2.80	2.80
	Maximum	5.00	4.20	4.50

Based on the results found in Table 24, unit leaders who worked in institutions awarding different highest degrees shared similar conflict management style preferences. As found in previous Tables, in order of preference unit leaders used Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging conflict management styles. As their fourth and fifth options, those awarding doctorate and bachelor degrees as highest degrees favored an Avoiding over a Dominating conflict management style, whereas those awarding a master's favored the opposite.

Table 25 Relationship between Type of highest degree with Conflict Management Styles as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	R	Interpretation	p-value
Integrating	-0.050	Negligible	0.539
Obliging	0.119	Low	0.140
Dominating	-0.002	Negligible	0.978
Avoiding	0.014	Negligible	0.859
Compromising	-0.085	Negligible	0.301

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

As can be seen in Table 25, the relationships between the type of highest degree offered and conflict management styles were not statistically significant.

Research Question #2

The following section presents the findings and analysis of the data for research question #2, which sought to determine if relationships existed between demographic variables of personal and university-related characteristics of unit leaders and personality traits as measured. Correlations were determined for each of the five personality traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) and each demographic variable. Table 26 depicts the descriptive statistics of the five personality traits with respect to sex, whereas Table 27 depicts the relationship between sexes with the five personality traits, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 26 Personality Traits with respect to Sex (N=105)

		Male	Female
Neuroticism	Mean	30.56	28.17
	Std. Deviation	3.07	3.34
	Minimum	24.00	23.00
	Maximum	39.00	36.00
Extraversion	Mean	39.43	41.00
	Std. Deviation	3.68	2.96
	Minimum	34.00	35.00
	Maximum	49.00	46.00
Openness	Mean	37.46	35.89
	Std. Deviation	3.08	3.07
	Minimum	33.00	31.00
	Maximum	44.00	44.00
Agreeableness	Mean	35.60	34.74
	Std. Deviation	4.19	2.45
	Minimum	29.00	31.00
	Maximum	44.00	39.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	40.69	42.89
	Std. Deviation	2.78	2.28
	Minimum	36.00	38.00
	Maximum	47.00	46.00

Table 27 Relationship between Sex (Male=1, Female=2) with Personality Traits as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	-0.305	Moderate	<.001*
Extraversion	0.222	Low	0.008*
Openness to Experience	-0.197	Low	0.020*
Agreeableness	-0.088	Negligible	0.291
Conscientiousness	0.320	Moderate	<.001*

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Based on the results found in Table 26, both male and female unit leaders shared similar personality traits. In order of preference, both sexes self-rated Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism as their personality traits. Male unit leaders scored higher in Neuroticism, Openness and Agreeableness, whereas their female counterparts scored higher in Extraversion and Conscientiousness. Furthermore, it was found that all personality traits except Agreeableness had a statistically significant relationship with the variable sex (see Table 27). Women scored lower in Neuroticism and Openness to Experience than men, and higher in Extraversion and Conscientiousness than their male counterparts. However, the relationship of Neuroticism and Conscientiousness with the variable sex was moderate, whereas the relationship of Extraversion and Openness to Experience with sex was considered low.

Table 28 depicts the descriptive statistics of the five personality traits with respect to age, whereas Table 29 depicts the relationship between age with the five personality traits, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 28 Personality Traits with respect to Age (N=105)

		31-40	41-50	>50
Neuroticism	Mean	28.33	30.43	29.65
	Std. Deviation	2.00	4.18	3.01
	Minimum	26.00	24.00	23.00
	Maximum	32.00	36.00	39.00
Extraversion	Mean	40.11	39.77	40.02
	Std. Deviation	4.59	2.49	3.80
	Minimum	35.00	34.00	34.00
	Maximum	46.00	44.00	49.00
Openness to Experience	Mean	35.00	36.80	37.26
	Std. Deviation	2.35	3.55	2.99
	Minimum	33.00	33.00	31.00
	Maximum	40.00	44.00	42.00
Agreeableness	Mean	33.11	35.57	35.50
	Std. Deviation	4.20	3.27	3.79
	Minimum	29.00	31.00	29.00
	Maximum	38.00	44.00	44.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	41.89	40.70	41.68
	Std. Deviation	3.48	2.26	2.93
	Minimum	39.00	38.00	36.00
	Maximum	46.00	47.00	46.00

Based on the results found in Table 28, unit leaders of all age groups shared similar personality traits. In order of preference, all age groups self-rated Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Only Openness had a statistically significant relationship with age (see Table 29). As unit leaders aged, they

were more willing to accept and consider other types of options that might be presented to them. When investigating the relationship between race/ethnicity and the five personality traits, no conclusive results were drawn out of the sample, which consisted of 102 White and 3 Black/African American unit leaders. For reasons that this researcher has no explanation, all 3 Black/African American unit leaders answered the statements posed in NEO FFI Form in the same way. SPSS perceived all scores as constant omitting race from further analysis.

Table 29 Relationship between Age with Personality Traits as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation (N=105)

Styles	R	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	0.011	Negligible	0.896
Extraversion	0.037	Negligible	0.647
Openness to Experience	0.181	Low	0.027*
Agreeableness	0.058	Negligible	0.474
Conscientiousness	0.096	Negligible	0.240

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Table 30 depicts the descriptive statistics of the five personality traits with respect to years of employment in academia, whereas Table 31 presents the relationship between years of employment in academia with the five personality traits, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

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Table 30 Personality Traits with respect to Years of employment in academia (N=105)

		1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40
Neuroticism	Mean	31.25	30.17	29.44	29.04
	Std. Deviation	3.11	3.98	2.75	2.77
	Minimum	29.00	24.00	25.00	23.00
	Maximum	35.00	39.00	36.00	34.00
Extraversion	Mean	39.62	39.10	39.96	41.32
	Std. Deviation	2.97	3.11	2.50	4.64
	Minimum	37.00	34.00	35.00	34.00
	Maximum	43.00	46.00	44.00	49.00
Openness to Experience	Mean	34.00	37.36	35.93	38.11
	Std. Deviation	1.07	2.96	3.21	3.06
	Minimum	33.00	33.00	31.00	33.00
	Maximum	35.00	44.00	41.00	42.00
Agreeableness	Mean	31.88	36.05	35.07	35.43
	Std. Deviation	3.09	2.55	3.28	5.09
	Minimum	29.00	30.00	31.00	29.00
	Maximum	35.00	40.00	44.00	44.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	40.38	40.83	40.96	43.04
	Std. Deviation	1.77	2.95	2.12	2.89
	Minimum	39.00	37.00	36.00	36.00
	Maximum	44.00	47.00	44.00	46.00

Results in Table 30 are similar to results in Table 28. In order of preference, unit leaders rated Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism as their personality traits.

Table 31 Relationship between Years of employment in academia with Personality Traits as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	-0.129	Low	0.096
Extraversion	0.195	Low	0.012*
Openness to Experience	0.174	Low	0.026*
Agreeableness	-0.036	Negligible	0.640
Conscientiousness	0.259	Low	0.001*

Note that for r: 70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Given the findings in Table 31, all personality traits except for Neuroticism and Agreeableness had a statistically significant relationship with years of employment. In all cases, the relationships are low. As years of employment in academia increased, unit leaders showed more preference in following the rules and schedule, were more assertive and showed more preference for large group gatherings. Furthermore, they were more willing to accept and consider other types of options that might be presented to them.

Table 32 provides the average scores for each personality trait with respect to the years unit leaders were employed in their current position. Table 33 shows the relationship between years employed in current position (as unit leader) with the five personality traits, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 32 Personality Traits with respect to Years employed in current position as Unit Leader (N=105)

		1-6	7-10	11-15	>15
Neuroticism	Mean	29.33	34.00	30.41	29.28
	Std. Deviation	3.21	4.43	2.37	3.37
	Minimum	24.00	25.00	27.00	23.00
	Maximum	39.00	36.00	34.00	34.00
Extraversion	Mean	39.31	41.00	38.82	42.94
	Std. Deviation	3.12	2.00	2.63	4.40
	Minimum	34.00	37.00	36.00	34.00
	Maximum	46.00	42.00	42.00	49.00
Openness to Experience	Mean	36.17	36.00	37.29	39.61
	Std. Deviation	3.29	2.45	1.31	2.64
	Minimum	31.00	35.00	35.00	34.00
	Maximum	44.00	41.00	39.00	42.00
Agreeableness	Mean	34.63	34.67	38.12	35.33
	Std. Deviation	3.28	1.37	3.50	4.74
	Minimum	29.00	32.00	33.00	30.00
	Maximum	42.00	36.00	44.00	44.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	41.31	38.67	39.76	44.28
	Std. Deviation	2.59	1.21	2.17	2.16
	Minimum	36.00	38.00	37.00	38.00
	Maximum	47.00	41.00	44.00	46.00

Based on the results found in Table 32, unit leaders employed in current position for different amount of years favored the measured personality traits with different orders of preference. Those employed for 1 to 6 years, and over 15 years, scored higher in the personality trait of Conscientiousness, followed by the traits Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. In contrast, those employed 7 to 10 years in their current position scored higher in Extraversion, followed by Conscientiousness, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Those employed 11 to 15 years scored higher in

Conscientiousness, followed by Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, and

Neuroticism.

Table 33 Relationship between Years employed in current position (as Unit Leader) with Personality Traits as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation. (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	0.074	Negligible	0.347
Extraversion	0.218	Low	0.006*
Openness to Experience	0.356	Moderate	<.001*
Agreeableness	0.125	Low	0.114
Conscientiousness	0.124	Low	0.119

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

The relationships between years of employment in the current position (as unit leader) with personality traits were statistically significant only for Extraversion and Openness to Experience (Table 33). In the case of Extraversion, the relationship with years employed in current position was low; in the case of Openness to Experience, the relationship with years employed in current position was moderate. As years employed in current position increased, so did unit leaders' preference in the traits of Extraversion and Openness to Experience.

Table 34 provides the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each personality trait with respect to the academic rank of the respondents. Table 35 depicts the relationship between academic rank with the five personality traits, as measured by

Kendall's Tau correlation. The standard deviation in Table 34 was found to be zero, as all three respondents scored the same in all personality traits.

Table 34 Personality Traits with respect to Academic Rank (N=105)

		Assistant	Associate	Professor	Other
Neuroticism	Mean	29.75	29.17	29.80	35.00
	Std. Deviation	3.08	3.52	3.20	0.00
	Minimum	26.00	24.00	23.00	35.00
	Maximum	34.00	36.00	39.00	35.00
Extraversion	Mean	40.33	38.73	40.33	43.00
	Std. Deviation	3.65	2.95	3.70	0.00
	Minimum	37.00	34.00	34.00	43.00
	Maximum	46.00	43.00	49.00	43.00
Openness to Experience	Mean	35.50	36.67	37.45	35.00
	Std. Deviation	2.07	3.95	2.84	0.00
	Minimum	33.00	31.00	33.00	35.00
	Maximum	38.00	44.00	42.00	35.00
Agreeableness	Mean	34.50	36.00	35.15	35.00
	Std. Deviation	4.48	2.59	4.10	0.00
	Minimum	29.00	33.00	29.00	35.00
	Maximum	39.00	44.00	44.00	35.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	41.00	41.03	41.72	41.00
	Std. Deviation	3.41	2.71	2.82	0.00
	Minimum	38.00	37.00	36.00	41.00
	Maximum	46.00	47.00	46.00	41.00

Based on the results reported in Table 34, unit leaders of different academic ranks favored the personality traits with different orders of preference. All except those who identified their rank as "other" scored higher in Conscientiousness, followed by Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. "Other" unit leaders scored higher in Conscientiousness, followed by Extraversion; they scored the same in

Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Given the findings in Table 35, among the five different personality traits, only Extraversion had a statistically significant relationship with academic rank. This relationship was low and as academic rank changed (Assistant Professor = 1, Associate Professor = 2, Professor = 3, Other = 4), the preference for Extraversion increased.

Table 35 Relationship between Academic Rank with Personality Traits as Measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	R	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	0.096	Negligible	0.229
Extraversion	0.163	Low	0.041*
Openness to Experience	0.125	Low	0.121
Agreeableness	-0.077	Negligible	0.332
Conscientiousness	0.088	Negligible	0.276

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Following is Table 36, which provides the average scores for each of the five personality traits with respect to the job titles occupied by the respondents. Table 37 shows the relationship between job title (as unit leader) with the five personality traits, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 36 Personality Traits with respect to Job title as Unit Leader (N=105)

		Department Chair	Department Head	Program Director	Program Coordinator	Other
Neuroticism	Mean	30.36	29.44	26.88	30.19	28.50
	Std. Deviation	3.13	2.92	4.32	3.59	1.64
	Minimum	25.00	27.00	23.00	26.00	27.00
	Maximum	36.00	39.00	35.00	35.00	30.00
Extraversion	Mean	39.89	40.44	38.38	40.90	37.50
	Std. Deviation	4.07	2.10	1.92	3.40	1.64
	Minimum	34.00	34.00	35.00	36.00	36.00
	Maximum	49.00	42.00	41.00	46.00	39.00
Openness to Experience	Mean	36.77	37.94	39.12	36.10	36.00
	Std. Deviation	3.42	2.26	4.52	1.84	3.29
	Minimum	31.00	35.00	35.00	34.00	33.00
	Maximum	42.00	41.00	44.00	41.00	39.00
Agreeableness	Mean	35.17	35.06	36.50	36.48	32.50
	Std. Deviation	3.67	4.85	3.16	3.06	0.55
	Minimum	29.00	30.00	32.00	32.00	32.00
	Maximum	44.00	42.00	42.00	44.00	33.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	41.38	42.06	41.62	41.38	40.00
	Std. Deviation	2.78	2.43	2.97	3.50	1.10
	Minimum	37.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	39.00
	Maximum	47.00	45.00	44.00	46.00	41.00

Note that the research yielded only one response from a unit leader identified as Academic Chair and thus he has been omitted from this analysis.

Based on the results found in Table 36, unit leaders with different job titles favored the personality traits with different orders of preference. Those who identified their job title as department chair, department head, or "other" scored higher in the personality trait of Conscientiousness, followed by the traits of Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Program Directors scored higher in Conscientiousness,

followed by Openness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Program

Coordinators scored higher in Conscientiousness, followed by Extraversion,

Agreeableness, Openness, and Neuroticism.

Table 37 Relationship between Job title as Unit Leader with Personality Traits as
Measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	-0.113	Low	0.142
Extraversion	-0.038	Negligible	0.622
Openness to Experience	-0.015	Negligible	0.847
Agreeableness	0.031	Negligible	0.685
Conscientiousness	-0.014	Negligible	0.854

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Given the findings in Table 37, when investigating the relationship between the five

personality traits and the job title unit leaders occupied, no statistically significant

relationship was found. Table 38 depicts the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard

deviation for each of the five personality traits with respect to the type of university at

which unit leaders worked. Table 39 depicts the relationship between type of university at

which unit leaders worked with personality traits, as measured by Kendall's Tau

correlation.

Table 38 Personality Traits with respect to Type of University (N=105)

		Doctorate-granting University	Master's College-University	Baccalaureate College-University
Neuroticism	Mean	29.70	29.37	30.65
	Std. Deviation	3.40	3.18	3.50
	Minimum	24.00	23.00	26.00
	Maximum	39.00	36.00	35.00
Extraversion	Mean	38.81	40.00	42.55
	Std. Deviation	2.93	2.61	4.84
	Minimum	34.00	34.00	35.00
	Maximum	44.00	44.00	49.00
Openness to Experience	Mean	36.66	36.74	37.95
	Std. Deviation	3.71	2.43	2.84
	Minimum	31.00	33.00	34.00
	Maximum	44.00	41.00	42.00
Agreeableness	Mean	34.17	36.71	35.35
	Std. Deviation	3.87	3.65	2.43
	Minimum	29.00	33.00	32.00
	Maximum	44.00	44.00	40.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	40.87	41.29	42.95
	Std. Deviation	2.72	2.32	3.41
	Minimum	36.00	38.00	37.00
	Maximum	45.00	47.00	46.00

Based on the results found in Table 38, unit leaders who worked in different academic institutions rated the five personality traits in a similar way. In order of preference, all unit leaders scored higher in Conscientiousness, followed by Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism.

Table 39 Relationship between Type of University with Personality Traits as measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	R	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	0.023	Negligible	0.770
Extraversion	0.284	Low	<.001*
Openness to Experience	0.124	Low	0.123
Agreeableness	0.161	Low	0.043*
Conscientiousness	0.178	Low	0.027*

Note that for r: 70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

When investigating the relationship between the five personality traits and the type of university at which unit leaders worked, it was found that the relationships between the personality traits of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness and the type of university were statistically significant, although these relationships are weak (see Table 39). As type of university, at which unit leaders worked, changed so did their preference in the personality traits of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness; unit leaders were more assertive and talkative, were more eager and sympathetic to others, and showed a commitment and preference for following rules and schedules.

Table 40 depicts the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each of the five personality traits with respect to the type of highest degree awarded. Table 41 shows the relationship between type of university by degree level with the five personality traits, as measured by Kendall's Tau correlation.

Table 40 Personality Traits with respect to Type of highest degree offered (N=105)

		Doctorate	Master's Degree	Bachelor's Degree
Neuroticism	Mean	29.30	29.02	30.92
	Std. Deviation	3.64	2.91	3.44
	Minimum	24.00	23.00	25.00
	Maximum	39.00	34.00	36.00
Extraversion	Mean	39.70	38.94	41.34
	Std. Deviation	2.05	3.25	4.03
	Minimum	34.00	34.00	35.00
	Maximum	44.00	43.00	49.00
Openness to Experience	Mean	37.90	36.47	37.00
	Std. Deviation	3.84	2.77	3.16
	Minimum	33.00	31.00	33.00
	Maximum	44.00	41.00	42.00
Agreeableness	Mean	34.70	35.32	35.63
	Std. Deviation	3.63	3.61	3.92
	Minimum	30.00	29.00	29.00
	Maximum	42.00	44.00	44.00
Conscientiousness	Mean	42.25	41.30	41.13
	Std. Deviation	2.79	2.73	2.92
	Minimum	36.00	37.00	37.00
	Maximum	45.00	47.00	46.00

Based on the results found in Table 40, unit leaders from institutions that awarded different highest degrees scored differently in the five personality traits. In order of preference, those whose institutions awarded doctorate or master degrees scored higher in Conscientiousness, followed by Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Those unit leaders in universities that awarded bachelor degrees scored

higher in Extraversion, followed by Conscientiousness, Openness, Agreeableness, and

Neuroticism.

Table 41 Relationship between Type of highest degree with Personality Traits as
measured by Kendall's Tau Correlation (N=105)

Styles	R	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	0.167	Low	0.036*
Extraversion	0.173	Low	0.030*
Openness to Experience	-0.047	Negligible	0.557
Agreeableness	0.089	Negligible	0.261
Conscientiousness	-0.126	Low	0.116

Note that for r: 70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 =
moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05;
Significant values are identified with an *.

As seen in Table 41, when investigating the relationship between the five personality

traits and the highest degree unit leaders awarded in their programs, there was a

statistically significant relationship between the type of highest degree awarded and

personality traits only in the case of Neuroticism and Extraversion. In both cases the

relationship was low. As the type of highest degrees changed, so did unit leaders'

preference in the personality traits of Neuroticism and Extraversion.

In summary, unit leaders showed a commitment and preference for following rules

and schedules, and for keeping engagements. They also valued human contact and

attention. As administrators, they were also willing to accept and consider other types of

options that might be presented to them, giving the faculty members an opportunity to

their opinions. They were not only eager to help their faculty but were sympathetic to them. As their least favored personality trait (Neuroticism), they identified their predisposition to life events as negative incidents. In terms of moderate association of demographic variables with the five personality traits, Conscientiousness was moderately associated with the variables of sex and the years of employment in academia. Openness to Experience was moderately associated with years in the position (as unit leader). The other associations between the five personality traits and demographic variables were either low or negligible.

Research Question #3

The following section presents the findings and analysis of the data for research question #3, which sought to determine if personality traits and demographic variables explained a significant amount of variance in conflict management styles. A stepwise multiple regression analysis through backward elimination was used to examine whether the demographic characteristics and personality traits were related to different conflict management styles. Although race, as a variable, was omitted when conducting the correlational analysis with the conflict management styles and personality traits, the investigator believed that it was important to be examined in the regression analysis. The investigator presents only the results of the final fitted model, starting with the Integrating conflict management style, followed by the Obliging, the Dominating, the Avoiding and the Compromising styles, respectively.

Integrating style

With an F value of 8.863 and a p-value of less than 0.001, the final Integrating model was statistically significant. The model explained only 27.4% of the variance, however.

Thus, the predictive power of the regression was fair. The remaining 72.6% of the variance was due to unanalyzed independent variables. Tables 42, 43, and 44 display the model summary, results and coefficients of this model. The final model was:

Integrating style = 5.412 − 0.189 (Age) - 0.657 (Race) − 0.129 (Type of University) − 0.247 (Agreeableness) + 0.392 (Conscientiousness)

The standardized coefficients were -0.331, -0.296, -0.264, -0.333 and 0.390, respectively for Age, Race, Type of University, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Thus Conscientiousness made the greatest contribution to the model.

Table 42 Model Summary − Integrating Style

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
10	0.556	0.309	0.274	0.3164

Table 43 ANOVA− Integrating Style

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
10	Regression	4.435	5	0.887	8.863	<.001
	Residual	9.908	99	0.100		
	Total	14.343	104			

Predictors: (Constant), Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Race, Age, Type of University. Dependent Variable: Integrating style

Table 44 Coefficients– Integrating Style

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
10 (Constant)	5.412	0.294		18.402	<.001
Age	-0.189	0.048	-0.331	-3.926	<.001
Race	-0.657	0.224	-0.296	-2.935	.004
Type of University	-0.129	0.048	-0.264	-2.693	.008
Agreeableness	-0.247	0.064	-0.333	-3.846	<.001
Conscientiousness	0.392	0.106	0.390	3.679	<.001

Obliging Style

With an F value of 5.675 and a p-value of less than 0.001, the final model was

statistically significant. The Obliging model explained only 15.2% of the variance. Thus,

the predictive power of the regression was rather low, whereas the remaining 84.8% of

variance was due to unanalyzed independent variables. Tables 45, 46, and 47 display the

model summary, results and coefficients of this model. The final model was:

***Obliging style = 3.642 – 0.178 (Age) – 0.729 (Race) + 0.231 (Academic Rank) + 0.223
(Conscientiousness)***

The standardized coefficients were -0.250, -0.263, 0.365 and 0.178, respectively for

Age, Race, Academic Rank, and Conscientiousness. Thus, Academic Rank made the

greatest contribution to this model.

Table 45 Model Summary – Obliging style

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
11	0.430	0.185	0.152	0.4271

Table 46 ANOVA – Obliging style

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
11	Regression	4.140	4	1.035	5.675	<.001
	Residual	18.239	100	0.182		
	Total	22.379	104			

Predictors: (Constant) Conscientiousness, Academic Rank, Race, Age. Dependent Variable: Obliging style

Table 47 Coefficients – Obliging style

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
11 (Constant)	3.642	0.367		9.930	<.001
Age	-0.178	0.070	-0.250	-2.529	.013
Race	-0.729	0.274	-0.263	-2.658	.009
Academic Rank	0.231	0.062	0.365	3.708	<.001
Conscientiousness	0.223	0.123	0.178	1.813	.073*

* significant at 0.10 level. Other variables were significant at 0.05 level.

Dominating Style

With an F value of 4.497 and a p-value of 0.005, the final Dominating model was statistically significant. The model explained almost 10% of the variance. Thus the predictive power of the regression was rather low. The remaining 90% of variance was due to unanalyzed independent variables. Tables 48, 49, and 50 display the model summary, results and coefficients of this model. The final model was:

Dominating style = 2.238 + 0.302 (Sex) – 0.336 (Neuroticism) + 0.328 (Agreeableness)

The standardized coefficients were 0.234, -0.162 and 0.270, respectively for Sex, Neuroticism, and Agreeableness. Thus, Agreeableness made the greatest contribution to this model.

Table 48 Model Summary – Dominating style

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
12	0.343l	0.118	0.092	0.5822

Table 49 ANOVA – Dominating style

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
12	Regression	4.573	3	1.524	4.497	0.005
	Residual	34.233	101	0.339		
	Total	38.805	104			

Predictors: (Constant) Agreeableness, Sex, Neuroticism. Dependent Variable: Dominating style

Table 50 Coefficients – Dominating style

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
12 (Constant)	2.238	0.311		7.186	<.001
Sex	0.302	0.122	0.234	2.478	.015
Neuroticism	-0.336	0.197	-0.162	-1.705	.091*
Agreeableness	0.328	0.117	0.270	2.810	.006

* significant at 0.10 level. Other variables were significant at 0.05 level.

Avoiding Style

With an F value of 5.817 and a p-value of less than 0.001, the final model was

statistically significant. The Avoiding model explained almost 27% of the variance. Thus

the predictive power of the regression was fair. The remaining 73% of the variance was

due to unanalyzed independent variables. Tables 51, 52, and 53 display the model

summary, results and coefficients of this model. The final model was:

*Avoiding style = 2.567- 1.415(Race) +0.317(Academic Rank) +0.076(Job Title) -
0.265(Type of University)+0.323(Type of highest degree)-0.738(Extraversion) +
0.481(Openness) +0.457(Conscientiousness)*

According to the standardized coefficients, Extraversion made the greatest

contribution to the model.

Table 51 Model Summary – Avoiding style

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
7	0.571	0.326	0.270	0.6148

Table 52 ANOVA – Avoiding style

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
7	Regression	17.591	8	2.199	5.817	
	Residual	36.288	96	0.378		<0.001
	Total	53.879	104			

Predictors: (Constant) Conscientiousness, Job Title, Academic Rank, Type of highest degree, Openness, Race, Extraversion, Type of University. Dependent Variable: Avoiding style

Table 53 Coefficients – Avoiding style

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
7 (Constant)	2.567	0.693		3.704	<.001
Race	-1.415	0.435	-0.329	-3.252	.002
Academic Rank	0.317	0.093	0.324	3.404	.001
Job Title	0.076	0.044	0.160	1.715	.090*
Type of University	-0.265	0.143	-0.280	-1.848	.068*
Type of highest	0.323	0.130	0.326	2.476	.015
Extraversion	-0.738	0.208	-0.389	-3.546	.001
Openness	0.481	0.174	0.269	2.763	.007
Conscientiousness	0.457	0.234	0.235	1.955	.054

* significant at 0.10 level. Other variables were significant at 0.05 level.

Compromising style

With an F value of 4.670 and a p-value of 0.001, the final model was statistically significant. The Compromising model explained the 15% of variance. Thus the predictive power of the regression was rather low. The remaining 85% of the variance was due to unanalyzed independent variables. Tables 54, 55, and 56 display the model summary, results and coefficients of this model. The final model was:

Compromising style = 2.126 +0.220(Sex) +0.173(Academic Rank) − 0.150 (Type of University) + 0.2328(Extraversion) + 0.269 (Openness)

The standardized coefficients were 0.200, 0.245, -0.220, 0.239, and 0.208, respectively for Sex, Academic Rank, Type of University, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience. Academic Rank made the greatest contribution to this model.

132

Table 54 Model Summary – Compromising style

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
10	0.437	0.191	0.150	0.4796

Table 55 ANOVA – Compromising style

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
10	Regression	5.370	5	1.074	4.670	.001
	Residual	22.769	99	0.230		
	Total	28.139	104			

Predictors: (Constant) Academic Rank, Sex, Openness, Extraversion, Type of University. Dependent Variable: Compromising style

Table 56 Coefficients – Compromising style

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
10 (Constant)	2.126	0.361		5.891	<.001
Sex	0.220	0.103	0.200	2.132	.036
Academic Rank	0.173	0.071	0.245	2.455	.016
Type of University	-0.150	0.074	-0.220	-2.031	.045
Extraversion	0.328	0.148	0.239	2.210	.029
Openness	0.269	0.127	0.208	2.116	.037

Research Question #4

The following section presents the findings and analysis of the data for research

question #4, which sought to examine if relationships existed between conflict

management style preferences of unit leaders and their personality traits. Correlations

were determined for each of the five conflict management styles (Integrating, Obliging,

Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising) and the five personality traits (Neuroticism,

Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness). Table 57

depicts the relationships between the Integrating conflict management style and the five

personality traits, whereas Table 58 depicts the relationships between the Obliging

conflict management style and the five personality traits.

Table 57 Relationship between Integrating with Personality Traits as measured by
Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (N=105)

	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	-0.242	Low	0.013*
Extraversion	0.041	Negligible	0.678
Openness to Experience	-0.062	Negligible	0.531
Agreeableness	-0.326	Moderate	0.001*
Conscientiousness	0.162	Low	0.099

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 =
moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05;
Significant values are identified with an *.

Based on the results found in Table 57, there was a statistically significant

relationship between the Integrating style and Neuroticism; the higher the Integrating

conflict management style, the lower the Neuroticism. Unit leaders who prefer to engage

in win/win solutions with other parties in a conflict are emotionally stable and unlikely to experience negative feelings. There was also a statistically significant relationship between the Integrating conflict management style and Agreeableness. The higher the Integrating style, the lower was the Agreeableness. However, this may mean that when trying to find a win-win solution, unit leaders tend to place self-interest above getting along with others.

Table 58 Relationship between Obliging with Personality Traits as measured by Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (N=105)

	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	0.215	Low	0.028*
Extraversion	0.083	Negligible	0.399
Openness to Experience	0.146	Low	0.139
Agreeableness	-0.090	Negligible	0.364
Conscientiousness	-0.024	Negligible	0.809

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

As seen in Table 58, there was a statistically significant relationship between the Obliging style and Neuroticism. The higher the Obliging style, the higher was the trait of Neuroticism. When forfeiting their needs or decisions in favor of accepting another party's needs or decisions, unit leaders tend to experience negative feelings, such as embarrassment, guilt, pessimism, and low self-esteem. Tables 59, 60, and 61 show the relationship between the conflict management styles of Dominating, Avoiding, and Compromising and the five personality traits. Table 59 shows that there was a statistically

significant relationship between the Dominating style and Openness to Experience. As

the Dominating conflict management style increased, Openness to Experience decreased.

Thus, unit leaders who prefer to dominate in conflicts are less likely to be open to

suggestions, other opinions, and experiences. Additionally, it was found that there was a

statistically significant relationship between the Dominating style and Agreeableness.

The higher the Dominating style, the higher was the Agreeableness. Thus, unit leaders

who prefer to dominate in conflicts are more altruistic and tend not to place self-interest

above getting along with others.

Table 59 Relationship between Dominating with Personality Traits as measured by
Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (N=105)

	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	-0.098	Negligible	0.318
Extraversion	0.112	Low	0.255
Openness to Experience	-0.231	Low	0.018*
Agreeableness	0.291	Low	0.003*
Conscientiousness	0.102	Low	0.302

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 =
moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05;
Significant values are identified with an *.

In examining the relationship between the Avoiding conflict management style and

the five personality traits, it was found that there was a statistically significant

relationship between the Avoiding style and Neuroticism. The relationship was positive

and moderate. Thus, unit leaders who tend to withdraw from a conflict are more likely to

experience negative feelings of embarrassment, low self-esteem, and feel less emotional

stability than those who do not withdraw from it.

Table 60 Relationship between Avoiding with Personality Traits as measured by
Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (N=105)

	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	0.391	Moderate	<.001*
Extraversion	-0.150	Low	0.127
Openness to Experience	0.073	Negligible	0.462
Agreeableness	0.127	Low	0.197
Conscientiousness	-0.065	Negligible	0.511

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 =
moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05;
Significant values are identified with an *.

When examining the relationship between the Compromising conflict management

style and the five personality traits, it was found that there was a statistically significant

relationship between the Compromising conflict management style and Extraversion,

Openness to Experience, and Conscientiousness; all relationships were positive. Thus,

unit leaders who engage in a give-and-take relationship in which some of one's goals are

achieved while maintaining the relationship, are more likely to show preference for

human contact, attention, and the wish to inspire other people than those who do not

engage in such a relationship. Similarly, they are willing to accept and consider other

types of options that are presented to them. A statistically significant relationship was

also found between the same conflict style and the trait of Conscientiousness. The higher

the Compromising style, the higher was the Conscientiousness. Thus, unit leaders who engage in a give-and-take relationship are likely to follow rules and schedules to make that happen.

Table 61 Relationship between Compromising with Personality Traits as measured by Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (N=105)

	r	Interpretation	p-value
Neuroticism	-0.080	Negligible	0.415
Extraversion	0.249	Low	0.010*
Openness to Experience	0.203	Low	0.038*
Agreeableness	0.093	Negligible	0.344
Conscientiousness	0.198	Low	0.043*

Note that for r: .70 or higher = very strong association, .50 to .69 = substantial association, .30 to .49 = moderate association, .10 to .29 = low association, .01 to .09 = negligible association. *p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents an analysis of the findings discussed in Chapter Four and it is divided into four sections. The first section provides a summary of the complete study, whereas section two provides the limitations of this study and how those limitations affected the study. Section three summarizes the findings. In section four, the investigator offers recommendations for future research in the relevant discipline.

The focus of this study was to investigate the relationship between conflict management style preferences and personality traits, in combination with personal and university-related characteristics of middle level administrators in academia. Participants involved in this study were unit leaders/academic chairs who administered baccalaureate programs and above within the recreation, parks, and leisure studies discipline. The study involved unit leaders who rated their personality traits and their conflict management style preferences using the NEO FFI Form S and ROCI-II Form C.

Two hundred sixty unit leaders were invited to participate in this study. A total of one hundred five of them responded to the online survey for a response rate of 40.4%.

Limitations and delimitations

Like every research study, this study was prone to limitations and delimitations. The population of the study included only unit leaders/department chairs from baccalaureate programs and above within the field of recreation, parks, and leisure studies. No unit leaders/department chairs from 2-year programs were included. The investigator believes that the results might have yielded different findings if unit leaders from 2-year programs were included. Likewise, the investigator delimited the study to the unit leaders/department chairs who resided and worked in the United States. Consequently, this study's findings are not generalizable to geographical areas outside the United States. Including individuals from other geographical areas could have impacted the results of the study, as those excluded might have different personality traits and conflict management style preferences due to different cultural norms. The current study represented participants' predefined conflict management styles and personality traits as measured by the survey instruments. Therefore, results might have yielded different findings if different survey instruments had been used.

Additionally, this study was designed to be conducted over a specific time frame within the 2010 academic year, producing only a snapshot of the participants' responses. Thus, the results were delimited to the timeframe of this study which covered November of 2010. The demographic characteristics and personality traits of the unit leaders may differ during other timeframes. The current study only represented participants' self-rated evaluation of their conflict management style preferences and personality traits as

measured by the survey instruments, which can lead to errors in recall and bias (Harvey, Christensen, & McClintock, 1983). Keeping a diary could have helped unit leaders recall conflicts more accurately. Additionally, results might have yielded different findings if the investigator had not used self-rated instruments, but had rated subjects herself. It is also possible that different results would have been achieved if faculty within the academic programs and units included in this study had rated their respective unit leader.

This survey was initiated the week after a national conference that attracted many of the unit leaders. Without implying that the conference played a role in the response rate, those unit leaders who attended the conference would be probably busier after being away from their universities for a week and going through a week's electronic communication might have been challenging. Additionally, if the time needed to complete the survey was less than 25 minutes, results might have yielded a bigger response rate than the 40.4% response rate achieved. With an alpha level of .05, a 5% margin of error and a population of 260 prospective participants, the appropriate response size for the findings to have a strong effect was found to be 155 responses (59.6%). The investigator accepted the delimitation that collecting so many responses might be challenging.

The survey was distributed through a Web-Based program, and even prior to the delivery of the survey, 11 prospective participants had opted-out from participating in any survey sent from the particular Web-based program. This study might have yielded different findings if a different web-based program or the investigator's institutional website were utilized. Furthermore, the investigator created a database based on majors that fell under the broad field of recreation, parks and leisure services were included in a

listing of professionally accredited programs, and which were listed in the Book of

Majors (The College Board, 2009). Some programs included majors such as sport

management and recreation, leisure studies, outdoor leadership and recreation,

recreational and leisure facilities management, recreational therapy, tourism, and many

different combinations of those. For the construction of this database, the investigator

included NRPA's list of accredited programs and a thorough investigation of the World

Wide Web was also conducted. After the pre-notification email was sent, the investigator

received emails from individuals that informed her that they no longer served in that

particular position despite the fact that this information had not been updated on their

institutions' websites. Therefore, this study might have yielded different findings if

information on institutional websites had been updated; thus, eliminating the chance that

the pre-notification email, as well as invitational email and two reminder emails were

sent to individuals who no longer served as unit leaders.

Findings

Demographic results of this study indicated that unit leaders/department chairs were

predominantly Caucasian. The two hundred sixty unit leaders consisted of a hundred fifty

three male and a hundred seven female unit leaders. With regard to sex, 67% of the

respondents were male (46% of the male population), and 33% were female (33% of

female population). Proportionally, male unit leaders were more willing to participate in

this study, as one out of two males in comparison to one out of three female unit leaders

of the entire population responded. Unit leaders reported having experience of working in

academia of 11 to 20 years (40%), whereas 52% responded as having been employed for

more than 20 years, and to 40 years. With regard to the years employed in current

position, the majority of unit leaders (61%) reported that they had been employed for up to 6 year. Demographic results of this study indicated that Professors (57%) were employed in the job of a unit leader, followed by Associate Professors (29%) and Assistant Professors (11%).

Unit leaders had a lengthy experience in academia, were over 50 years of age (63%), and occupied the highest ranks in academia. This supports previous findings that faculty members step into the role of unit leader chairs when they are in their mid or late 40s, with the average being in the position for six years before returning to faculty status (Carroll, 1991). The investigator found similar findings as previous research (Carroll, 1991) about the relationship of gender, age, and academic rank. In this study female chairs were younger than their male counterparts and more likely to become chairs before receiving full professorship than males. Furthermore, in contrast to the previous research, neither relationship was found to be significant. This may indicate that women in this field tend to advance faster up the administration ranks, in contrast to other findings about female faculty in academia (McTighe-Musil, 2007). This may also indicate that there is a need in the field of recreation, parks and leisure services to diversify administrative ranks by advancing female faculty. Of those who responded to the survey, forty seven unit leaders worked in a doctorate-granting university (45%) followed by those working in a master's college/university (36%), and baccalaureate college/university (19%). With regard to the highest degree offered by their programs, forty seven unit leaders reported awarding a master's degree (45%) followed by a bachelor's degree (36%), and a doctorate degree (19%).

With regard to conflict management style preferences, unit leaders were found to favor styles in the following order: Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging conflict management style. The other two styles (Dominating and Avoiding) tied as the last preferred conflict management styles. This finding indicates that the unit leaders highly relied on problem-solving styles that involved collaboration between parties; it indicated a win-win solution, showing concern for both self and others. As a style, the integrating allows the exchange of information with an examination of differences so that a solution acceptable to both parties can be achieved. Effective problem solving requires that unit leaders consider all viewpoints and possible alternatives, and their objective is to minimize destructive conflict that can jeopardize the welfare of the department (Holton, 1998).

In this study, unit leaders rated the Compromising conflict management style as their second choice. This particular style is often perceived as a no win/no-lose scenario, a give-and-take relationship in which some of one's goals are achieved while maintaining the relationship. It tends to be utilized by individuals when parties with equal power or influence possess opposing viewpoints and cannot be consolidated to reach an agreeable alternative (Goodwin, 2002; Gross & Guerrero, 2000). When integrative situations cannot be found, it is expected that the Compromising style would be most preferred by leaders (Rahim, Buntzman, & White, 1999), and this situation fits the findings of this study. Thus, in a conflict scenario, unit leader would compromise in order to resolve the conflict and help the other person achieve goals while maintaining the relationship.

As their third preference for a conflict management style, unit leaders chose the Obliging style, which is associated with a high concern of others and a low concern for

self; often depicting a lose-win scenario. In choosing this style, individuals forfeit their needs or decisions in favor of accepting another party's needs or decisions (Gross & Guerrero, 2000). This style also helps individuals engaged in a conflict to minimize the differences between parties while emphasizing their commonalities; the main goal for those who favor it is to maintain a cordial relationship between the conflicting parties. As a style, it is considered a neutral one, which explains the need of unit leaders to maintain the relationship even at the cost of not achieving the goal.

As the least favored style conflict management styles, unit leaders chose the Dominating and Avoiding conflict management styles. Dominating, as a style, implies that an individual will force a behavior to win his/her position at any cost, including ignoring the concerns of the other party. However, as Rahim (1992) argues, it may also mean that individuals will stand up for others' rights and/or defend positions that they believe to be correct. When a quick decision is required, a unit leader may use this style for its effectiveness in reaching a decision. Knowing that the use of the Dominating style could lead to higher levels of relationship conflict (Friedman, Tidd, Currall, & Tsai, 2000), may explain why unit leaders did not highly prefer it. Another reason unit leaders may show less preference for the Dominating style would be its short effectiveness. As Rahim, Buntzman and White (1999) contend, this is a short-sighted and short-lived style, meaning that unit leaders who use this particular style when managing a conflict too often may win the "battle", but lose the "war".

As another least preferred conflict management style, unit leaders chose the Avoiding style. Individuals who tend to use an Avoiding style seek to withdraw, postpone, or sidestep an issue; this has been identified as a lose-lose scenario. These individuals tend

to have a low concern for their own interests and usually find it difficult to represent themselves. For individuals with a preference for such a conflict management style, the stronger desire is to ignore disputes rather than solve them; this entails a physical or emotional removal from the scene of the disagreement. Findings of this study show that unit leaders considered this approach as one of least interest; instead, they preferred to engage themselves rather than disengage.

Unit leaders self-rated their personality traits in order of preference: Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. As a personality trait, Conscientiousness can reflect the extent to which individuals are hardworking, organized, strong-willed, and dependable, as opposed to lazy, disorganized, and unreliable (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Judge, Martocchio, & Thoresen, 1997; Zellars et al., 2006). Conscientiousness has also been characterized by personal competence, dutifulness, and self-discipline (Judge, Martocchio, & Thoresen, 1997), aspects that are necessary in administrative positions. By choosing Conscientiousness, unit leaders showed their preference for following rules and schedules, and for keeping engagements.

Extraversion is a trait that reflects the extent to which individuals are gregarious, assertive, and talkative, and have preference for large groups and social gatherings (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Unit leaders come to contact with a variety of people on a daily basis and Extraversion encompasses this particular preference for human contact and attention.

As their third favorite personality trait, unit leaders chose Openness to Experience. This trait is associated with imagination, intellectual curiosity, and the ability to make

judgments independently of others (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Openness to Experience

reflects the extent to which unit leaders were willing to accept and consider other types of

options that might be presented to them, giving faculty members an opportunity to

express their opinions and make sure that those would be considered. Openness to

Experience was followed by Agreeableness, a trait that is characterized by one's

tendency to help others. This trait reflects the extent to which unit leaders were not only

open to different opinions, but they were also eager to help and be sympathetic to others.

As their least favored personality trait, unit leaders identified Neuroticism, which

predisposes individuals to experience life events and emotions as negative incidents

(Costa & McCrae, 1992; Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995; Mills & Huebner, 1998). It is

important to state that the findings indicated that unit leaders scored low in all personality

traits.

Each of these five personality traits describes the frequency or intensity of a person's

feelings, thoughts, or behaviors. Individuals possess all five of these traits to a greater or

lesser degree. This may indicate that for the position of unit leaders are preferred faculty

who are not necessarily interested in their popularity since Agreeableness, as a trait, is not

useful in situations that require tough or absolute objective decisions. Additionally, they

may be chosen for the way they control, regulate, and direct their impulses. This does not

mean that scoring low in Conscientiousness sidetracks them during projects that require

organized sequences of steps or stages; this may indicate a level of spontaneity. Scoring

low in Neuroticism may indicate that decision on which faculty are chosen as unit leaders

is based on their ability to withstand stress, to be less easily upset and less emotionally

reactive. In other words, they may be chosen because they are calm people, self-confident, and secure.

Scoring low in Openness to Experience may indicate that unit leaders are chosen for the position based on the fact that they tend to feel uncomfortable with change, thus preferring familiarity over novelty. Scoring low in Extraversion may indicate that the unit leaders have the skills to come in contact with a variety of people, yet they tend to have a greater need for privacy thus chosen to protect the privacy of issues pertaining to their departments.

Research Question #1

The correlational analysis of demographic variables and conflict management style preferences and personality traits revealed some significant findings. Both male and female unit leaders appeared to have similar conflict management style preferences. Only the Integrating and Compromising styles had a statistically significant relationship with sex, although that relationship was rather low. An interesting point is that female unit leaders scored higher in all styles except Avoiding; however, only in Integrating and Compromising styles the differences in scores were significant. Previous researchers have found similar or conflicting findings. Loden (1985) found that the predominant male conflict styles were dominating and avoidance, while the female conflict handling styles were integrating and obliging. Women had a tendency to score higher in compromising than men (Chanin & Schneer, 1984; Ruble & Schneer, 1994). However, the variable of sex did not influence choices of conflict management styles, as it was found with the studies of Shockley- Zalabak (1981) and Korabik, Baril, and Watson (1993). These two

studies found no statistically significant differences in the conflict management style preferences of male and female.

Contrary to these findings, other researchers have found that the sexes exhibit different ways of handling conflict. Males tend to use more competition, and females using more collaboration and compromise conflict management strategies (Bouckenooghe, Vanderheyden, Mestdagh, & Van Laethem, 2007; Brewer, Mitchell, & Weber, 2002; Cingoz-Ulu & Lalonde, 2007; Coates, 1986; Imler, 1980 as cited in Rahim, 1983; Kilmann & Thomas, 1977; Korabik, Baril, & Watson, 1993; Maccoby, 1966; Miller, Danaber, & Forbes, 1986; Ong, 1981; Tannen, 1990; Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, & Yee-Jung, 2001). In other studies, it was found that males use more avoidance and females use more competition (Beck, 1998; Buunk, Schaap, & Prevoo, 1990; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2000; Hojjat 2000; Mackey & O'Brien, 1998; Winstead, Valerian, & Rose, 1997). Furthermore, other researchers who have found that there are no sex differences in conflict style preference. Instead, they emphasize that psychological gender rather than biological sex may be the reason (or a better indicator) of conflict style preferences (Korabik, Baril, & Watson, 1993; Shockley-Zalabak, 1981; Sorenson, Hawkins, & Sorenson, 1995; Sportsman & Hamilton, 2007). Blackburn (2002) argues that gender differences in other conflict management styles were inconsistent.

In another research within academia, it was found that academic administrators were compromising and integrating in their approaches with faculty disputes (Cardona, 1995). Within other occupational groups, Rahim (1983a) did find significant differences in style preferences between male and female business and industrial managers. Similarly, Renwick (1977) and Shockley-Zalabak (1981) found no significant differences in male

149

and female conflict management styles when using Blake and Mouton's five statements, and Hall's Conflict Management Survey, respectively. No significant differences between gender and conflict management style scores were found when using the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict MODE Instrument either (Dillard, 2005).

With regard to age, unit leaders of all age groups shared similar conflict management style preferences. Only the Integrating style had a statistically significant relationship with age. The relationship of Integrating style and the age was negatively low, meaning that as unit leaders aged, the use of the Integrating conflict management style decreased. This may indicate that as they aged, they may be less willing to have a two-way communication and try less to reach a win/win solution for both parties in the conflict.

When investigating the relationship between choice of a conflict management style and years employed in academia, findings varied. The less experienced and most experienced unit leaders had similar preferences, whereas those in between followed a similar pattern. However, no statistically significant relationship was detected between the years of employment in academia and the conflict management styles. Unit leaders employed in current position shared similar conflict management style preferences. Only the Integrating style had a statistically significant relationship with years employed in position; this relationship was negatively low. Similarly, the more they aged and stayed longer in position, the less unit leaders relied on Integrating as a way of managing conflicts. This may indicate that unit leaders find this style ineffective based on their experience using it.

Unit leaders of different academic ranks shared similar conflict management style preferences. Only Obliging, Avoiding and Compromising style had a statistically significant relationship with Academic Rank. As academic rank changed (Assistant Professor = 1, Associate Professor = 2, Professor = 3, Other = 4), so did the use of the conflict management styles (Obliging, Avoiding and Compromising). This may indicate that experience in position, makes unit leaders be more altruistic, show more empathy toward others, and value the maintenance of the relationship with the other party in conflict more that they value the achievement of their goals.

When investigating the relationship between different job titles and unit leaders' conflict style preferences, it was found that all share almost similar conflict management style preferences. In order of preference, unit leaders used Integrating, Compromising, and Obliging styles. Their least two preferred styles varied depending on their title. However, only the Compromising style had a statistically significant relationship with job title; nevertheless, this relationship was low. As job title (as unit leader) changed (Department Chair =2, Department Head =3, Program Director =4, Program Coordinator =5, Other =7), unit leaders used more the Compromising style.

The last two demographic variables were university-related. Unit leaders that worked in different academic institutions shared almost identical conflict management style preferences with the first three style preferences; and the last two varied. However, the relationship between type of university and conflict management style preferences was not statistically significant. Lastly, unit leaders who worked in institutions that awarded different highest degrees shared similar conflict management style preferences, however,

151

the relationships between type of highest degree and conflict management styles were not statistically significant.

There was a pattern in the order of preference of conflict management styles. Unit leaders first tried to accomplish a win-win solution for the parties involved in the conflict, then preferred to engage in a give-and-take relationship, followed by their decision to forfeit their needs in favor of accepting another party's needs or decisions. Depending on the different variables, the next option would be to dominate the conflict and finally to avoid it, or the opposite. Literature review did not provide information regarding similar or conflicting findings pertaining to pattern in order of preference among academic administrators or leaders in other workplaces. Table 62 depicts the relationships between demographic variables and conflict management styles.

Table 62 Relationships between variables and Conflict Management Styles

	Sex	Age	Race	Years employed in academia	Years in position	Academic Rank	Job Title	Type of University	Type of highest degree
Integrating	L	L (-)			L (-)				
Obliging						L			
Dominating									
Avoiding						L			
Compromising	L					L	L		

Low association is marked with L

Research Question #2

Both male and female unit leaders appeared to favor the predefined personality traits in the same order of preference: Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. All personality traits, except for Agreeableness, had a statistically significant relationship with the sex of the responding unit leaders. Female unit leaders scored lower in Neuroticism, Openness to Experience and Agreeableness than their male counterparts, and higher in Extraversion and Conscientiousness. However, the relationship of the traits of Neuroticism and Conscientiousness with sex was moderate, whereas the relationship of the traits of Extraversion and Openness to Experience with the variable sex was considered low. This may indicate that female unit leaders have an ability to withstand stress, enjoy a comfort level with relationships and be more organized than their male counterparts; however, female unit leaders are less likely to compromise on their principles in order to be more popular and are less open to new ideas in comparison with their male counterparts.

Unit leaders of all age groups favored the personality traits in the above order as well. Only Openness to Experience was in a statistically significant relationship with age; this relationship was low. This may indicate that as unit leaders aged, they were willing to accept and consider other types of options that might be presented to them, giving faculty members an opportunity to express their opinions and make sure that those would be considered. Furthermore, three significant relationships were found between when personality traits were investigated with respect to the years employed in academia; the relationships between Extraversion, Openness to Experience, and Conscientiousness were low. This may indicate that experience in the position made unit leaders value more

153

human interactions, be more willing to accept and consider other types of options, and keen on following rules and schedules, and for keeping engagements. When investigating the relationship of personality traits with respect to years unit leaders were employed in current position results varied. The relationship of Extraversion with years employed in current position was low, whereas the relationship of Openness to Experience with years employed in current position was moderate. That may indicate that the more unit leaders spend in their positions, they valued more their ability to accept other opinions and be more comfortable with their relationships with others.

Personality traits were also investigated with respect to the academic rank of unit leaders. It was found that order of preference for personality traits varied; however, only Extraversion was significantly related with academic rank, although that statistical relationship was low. As academic rank changed (Assistant Professor = 1, Associate Professor = 2, Professor = 3), so did Extraversion; meaning that as unit leaders ascended in the academic ranks, they were more assertive, talkative, and had preference for large groups and social gatherings. This may indicate that the higher in academic rank a unit leader would achieve, the greater the need for making human connections and establishing relationships with other administrators from other disciplines.

Similarly, unit leaders with different job titles favored the measured personality traits with different orders of preference; however, no statistically significant relationships were found. The last two demographic variables were university-related. Unit leaders who worked in different academic institutions rated the five personality traits in a similar way. The relationships between the personality traits of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness and type of university were statistically significant, although those

relationships were low. When investigating the relationship between personality traits and highest degree unit leaders awarded in their programs, it was found that there was a statistically significant relationship between the type of highest degree and the personality traits only in the case of Neuroticism and Extraversion; both relationships were low. This may indicate that the more degrees unit leaders would award, the more communication skills would be required, and the more anxiety they would experience.

There was a pattern in the order of preference of the measured personality traits. Unit leaders showed a commitment and preference for following rules and schedules, and for keeping engagements. They also valued human contact and attention. As administrators, they were willing to accept and consider other types of options that might be presented to them. As their least favored personality trait, they identified their predisposition to life events as negative incidents.

In terms of personality traits, other researchers have found conflicting results when investigating other population groups. Teachers, for example, exhibit high scores of these five personality traits (Fenderson, 2011). Compared against the NEO-FFI normative data, "National Teacher of the Year" candidates demonstrated very high Extraversion, high Agreeableness, high Conscientiousness, average Openness, and low Neuroticism, similar to the findings among executive women (Gmelin, 2005). Results indicated that sixty two executive women who attended a leadership conference scored higher on measures of extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness, and lower on neuroticism, with agreeableness being non significant, from those of the general population of women (Gmelin, 2005). The sample population was predominantly married Caucasian women around the age of 45, highly educated and affluent, with similar demographic

155

characteristics compared to the ones found in this study of female unit leaders. However, they exhibited high levels of personality traits like emotional maturity and stability, high extraversion, openness to experiences and desire for high achievement, which are representative of leaders according to Stogdill (1948, 1974), Bass (1990), Sashkin and Sashkin (2003), and Yukl (2002). The only commonality among female unit leaders and female executives was the low score in neuroticism. Yukl (2002) theorized that a leader scoring low on the measure of neuroticism is deemed emotionally mature and better equipped to navigate the ever-changing internal and external environment that organizations face. According to Sashkin and Sashkin (2003), leaders with emotional stability also tend to be power-oriented, meaning they will seek positions of power in organizations. In addition to seeking power, these leaders are willing to share power and influence with others in their organizations in order to achieve desired goals (Sashkin, 1998).

Table 63 Relationships between variables and Personality Traits

	Sex	Age	Race	Years employed	Years in position	Academic Rank	Job Title	Type of University	Type of highest degree
Neuroticism	M(-)								L
Extraversion	L			L	L	L		L	L
Openness	L	L		L	M				
Agreeableness								L	
Conscientiousness	M			L				L	

Low association is marked with L
Moderate association is marked with M

It is important that further research investigates the discrepancies in personality scores among leaders in different workplaces.

Research Question #3

The investigator sought to determine if personality traits and demographic variables explained a significant amount of variance within preferred conflict management styles. Only a few of the 10 demographic items and five personality traits explained an amount of variance for each of the five conflict management styles. For example, only age, race, and type of university, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness explained a preference in the Integrating style. For Obliging, the variables that explained a preference for this style were age, race, academic rank, and Conscientiousness, whereas for the Dominating style, those were sex, and the traits of Neuroticism, and Agreeableness. In explaining the preference for the Avoiding style, five demographic variables and three personality traits played a significant role. Those were: race, academic rank, job title, type of university, type of highest degree, and the traits of Extraversion, Openness, and Conscientiousness. The variables that explained the preference of unit leaders in the Compromising style were found to be sex, academic rank, type of university, and the traits of Extraversion, and Openness.

For the different conflict management style preferences, different variables made the greatest contribution to the models: Conscientiousness for Integrating, academic rank for both Obliging and Compromising, Agreeableness for Dominating, and Extraversion for Avoiding. Academic Rank, as the greatest contributor for Obliging and Compromising styles, may indicate that those unit leaders without full rank may be more influenced in their decision to forfeit their needs in favor of accepting another party's decisions and

157

compromise in order to resolve the conflict and help the other person achieve goals, than those of full rank. The three models where a personality trait contributed the most to the conflict management style preference, support previous research that concluded that personality plays an important role in determining conflict behaviors (Terhune, 1970). However, in all styles, the final models were only partially explained: 27.4% for Integrating, 15.2% for Obliging, only 10% for Dominating, 27% for Avoiding, and 15% for Compromising, which means that the remaining portion of these models' variances was due to unanalyzed independent variables.

Among these unanalyzed independent variables could be one's ability to handle a conflict. This ability could come from a variety of sources, including emotional intelligence, which impacts one's preference to the extent that he/she is inexperienced empathically (Bisson, 2009). A less emotional intelligent individual is less likely to use compromise (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). The more emotionally intelligent the individual is, the more likely collaboration is used as a conflict management strategy (Morrison, 2008). The type of conflict (interpersonal, interorganizational, or international) could alter the preference in a conflict management style (Sternberg & Soriano, 1984), as well. Therefore, unit leaders could have a completely different approach when they are dealing with a conflict with a faculty member than when they are having a conflict with other leaders across academic administration.

Another variable that could influence the choice of unit leaders in conflict management style preferences could be the group size. It has been found that the larger the group (six or more members), individuals tend to use more compromise and accommodation styles, whereas in smaller groups (five or less members) individuals tend

to use more collaboration styles (Farmer & Roth, 1998; Steiner, 1972). Additionally, unit leaders' attitude toward conflict could play a role in their conflict management style preferences, as it was found that individuals with a win-lose orientation towards conflict tend to be less receptive to others' ideas and engage in less collaboration and compromise (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). Likewise, the amount of trust and openness individuals have in sharing information increases the use of collaboration and compromise styles (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). Therefore, unit leaders who trust their faculty would be more willing to collaborate with them in finding a solution, rather than if they did not.

Although marital status was not included as a demographic variable, it could affect the preference of unit leaders in conflict management styles as it was found that marital dissatisfaction has been linked to the conflict styles of Competition and Avoidance (Gottman, 1990, 1993, 1994); marital satisfaction has been linked to the conflict styles of Collaboration and Compromise (Bradbury & Karney, 1993).

Additionally, what is at "stake" in the conflict can impact individuals' actions (Jameson, 1999). Therefore, the extent to which the central issue in the conflict is of great importance to unit leaders could also affect their preference in conflict management styles. Furthermore, it is found that as "stakes" increase, conflict styles may change (Musser, 1982). Specifically, the greater importance an issue in the conflict has to individuals, the more assertive those individuals will be, while the other parties will be more cooperative (Thomas, 1977).

Furthermore, unit leaders' preference in conflict management style could be affected by the perception of fairness, or else equity, in the relationship with the other party in

conflict. Relationship fairness is the expectation that the rewards experienced by the partners should be proportionately distributed, or equitable (Hatfield, 1983; Sprecher & Schwartz, 1994). Unit leaders make a lot of decisions on a daily basis that affect different individuals in many or same group. A distinction should be made though between equity and equality. The first one is defined as "rewards in proportion to those received", whereas equality is defined as "all participants receive equal shares of good regardless of their relative contributions" (Isaacs, 1998, p. 2). Therefore, a relationship is considered equitable (fair) when the ratio of one's outcomes to their contributions is similar to that of the partner. In unfair relationships, one partner is over-benefited (receiving better outcomes than one deserves), and the other is under-benefited (receiving less than one should). Under-benefited partners become unhappy, angry, resentful, or depressed (Ramos & Wilmoth, 2003) from feeling cheated or deprived. In contrast, over-benefited partners may feel guilty.

Reciprocity could also affect unit leaders' conflict management style preferences. It is found that individuals are likely to reciprocate what is done to them (Boyle & Lawler, 1991; Eddie, 2000; Kahan, 2002; Olekalns & Smith, 2003; Patchen, 1987; Thomas & Pondy, 1977; Ward & Rajmaira, 1992), whether it is positive or negative (Kahan, 2002). Thomas and Pondy (1977, p. 1089) argue that "[Reciprocity] plays a crucial mediating role in shaping each party's reactions to the other's behavior, especially mediating hostility and retaliation". That could also explain why cooperative individuals tend to maintain stable relationships (Thomas & Pondy, 1977).

Research Question #4

Research question #4 sought to examine whether relationships existed between conflict management style preferences of unit leaders and their personality traits. The higher the Integrating conflict management style, the lower the Neuroticism. Unit leaders who tried to find a win-win solution with other parties exhibited emotional stability which is the opposite of Neuroticism. Integrating was also correlated with the personality trait of Agreeableness. The higher the Integrating style, the lower was found their personality trait of Agreeableness, which is an interesting finding. Integrating, as a style, allows for a two-way communication, which can increase the chances that the parties in conflict will receptively exchange ideas and information (Gross & Guerrero, 2000). Agreeableness explains one's tendency to help others, so those two should be positively correlated, not negatively. However, agreeable people often get their nice reputation by conforming and compromising on their principles, while non-agreeable people are more likely to stick to what they think is right even if it's unpopular (Gmelin, 2005). In this premise, when trying to achieve goals for both parties, unit leaders tend not to compromise on their principles and favor less their popularity.

Furthermore, there was a statistically significant relationship between the Obliging style and Neuroticism. The higher the Obliging style, the higher was the trait of Neuroticism. When forfeiting their needs or decisions in favor of accepting another party's needs or decisions, unit leaders tend to experience negative feelings, such as embarrassment, guilt, pessimism, and low self-esteem. It was also found that the higher the Dominating style, the lower the trait of Openness to Experience. Unit leaders who preferred to dominate in conflicts were less likely to be open to suggestions, other

opinions, and experiences. Additionally, a statistically significant relationship was found between the Dominating style and Agreeableness. The higher the Dominating style, the higher was Agreeableness. As a option, Dominating style may explain the unit leaders' tendency to stand up for others' rights and/or defend positions that they believed to be correct, which was found to be positively correlated with their tendency to help others, expressed through Agreeableness.

Additionally, a statistically significant relationship was found between the Avoiding style and Neuroticism. The relationship was positive and moderate, meaning that unit leaders who seek to withdraw, postpone, or sidestep an issue are likely to experience negative feelings of embarrassment, low self-esteem, and feel less emotional stable. Other studies have found similar findings (Hodges, 2000). While the avoiding style is neither better no worse than other styles of conflict management, the role of an individual with supervisory or leading attributes may require an individual who tends to resolve rather than avoid conflict.

Finally, the Compromising conflict management style was statistically significantly related to Extraversion. The more unit leaders would engage in a give-and-take relationship in which some of one's goals were achieved while maintaining the relationship, the more they would show preference for human contact, attention, and the wish to inspire other people. Similarly, unit leaders would be willing to accept and consider other types of options that were presented to them. A statistically significant relationship was also found between the same conflict style and Conscientiousness. The higher the Compromising style, the higher was Conscientiousness; thus, unit leaders' preferences for following rules and schedules, and for keeping engagements.

This research provides support for the positive relationship between conflict management style preference and personality traits. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Terhune (1970), Chanin and Schneer (1984), and Kilmann and Thomas (1975) that demonstrated the existence of a relationship between personality traits and the five styles of handling conflict. Table 64 depicts the relationships between conflict management styles and personality traits.

Table 64 Relationships between Conflict Management Styles and Personality Traits

	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
Integrating	0.013* (-)	0.678	0.531	0.001*(-)	0.099
Obliging	0.028*	0.399	0.139	0.364	0.809
Dominating	0.318	0.255	0.018*(-)	0.003*	0.302
Avoiding	<.001*	0.127	0.462	0.197	0.511
Compromising	0.415	0.010*	0.038*	0.344	0.043*

*p <.05; Significant values are identified with an *.

Recommendations for future research

The investigator acknowledged the delimitations of the research. To that end, the findings of the current study lead to several recommendations for future practice. At best, this study was a snapshot examination of conflict management style preferences and personality traits of one administrative group in higher education. A recommendation for future research should include seeking new sample populations from different disciplines to compare results. Researchers should also consider examining other administrative leaders across the levels of higher education institutions like presidents, deans, and school

heads. A comparison of self-rated preferences between senior-level administrators and unit leaders could broaden the base knowledge about academic administrators in general. With respect to the race of the unit leaders in this study, another recommendation for future study is to investigate why minorities were so under represented at this administrative level.

As mentioned earlier, the current study is only a snapshot of how unit leaders self-rated their conflict management style preferences and personality traits. A recommendation for future research would be to conduct a longitudinal study on these particular aspects to assess how scores would fluctuate or remain constant over an expanded period of time. Having faculty members of the same baccalaureate programs complete the same assessment tools about their unit leaders' conflict management styles and personality traits and then, comparing the results to the self-rated findings from the unit leaders would be an interesting study, as well. Furthermore, incorporating other assessment tools to measure conflict management style preferences and personality traits would probably provide a broader understanding. Future research should also be conducted through different survey delivery methods to compare the impact of procedures. The investigator used the Modified Dillman's approach which yielded a 40.4% response rate. The study findings reinforce the importance of understanding more fully the preferences of conflict management styles. It is recommended that additional research consider the use of qualitative or mixed research design, investigate the influence of different variables, and evaluate the impact of training in managing conflict that unit leaders have with respect to their departments' welfare.

The findings of this study will help the field in different ways. Institutions with leadership preparatory programs could incorporate the understanding of conflict management style into their curriculum. The ROCI II could be used as a screening tool and once the dominant style is identified, the program could incorporate teaching strategies into their programs that would enhance the utilization of all appropriate styles by their candidates. Similarly, the NEO FFI could be used to identify the personality traits of potential unit leaders, as personality traits have been linked to anxiety (Fitch, 2004) and burnout (Kim, Shin, & Swanger, 2009). Personality traits play an important role, both in the experience of job-related distress, and also in the manner in which individuals handle stressful situations; thus, these traits may aid in identifying potential leaders.

There is a need for organizations to provide leaders with the necessary tools to enhance their decision-making when handling conflict, which will provide each disputant with access to the other person's perceptions of incompatible goals (Tutzauer & Roloff, 1988). Higher education administrators need to become more knowledgeable about their behaviors toward conflict management as well as understanding of the behaviors their faculty exhibit toward conflict. Understanding how conflict can be dealt with within a group of individuals with different conflict management style preferences would provide opportunities for more effective ways of dealing with conflict and could significantly reduce the stress and dissatisfaction unit leaders face in the workplace in a daily basis.

Through effectively understanding conflict, unit leaders can combine and integrate their ideas to solve problems, gain knowledge, and learn to work collaboratively, as it was been argued in the studies of Barker, Tjosvold, and Andrews (1988), and Tjosvold

(1997). Ignored conflict can lead to mistakes as individuals lose their ability to communicate properly. Like any other organization, when conflict between faculty members continues, they may withhold information, be slow to deliver information, or not respond appropriately when needed. Furthermore, if a conflict is not addressed properly by the unit leader, it can escalate, prevent progress, and reduce productivity. Consequently, as coordination decreases, relationships become jeopardized and all parties involved become dissatisfied (Pape, 1999).

Additionally, when conflicts interrupt the flow of life, it is then that individuals must see their intelligence to readapt and even change their mode of conflict management. In this premise, unit leaders should not dogmatically use the same style when facing conflicts with other parties. Therefore, individuals should alter their conflict styles in regards to specific situations and contextual factors (Callanan, Benzing, & Perri, 2006; Drory & Ritov, 1997; Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, & Hair, 1996; Hocker & Wilmot, 1995; Jameson, 1999; Knapp, Putnam, & Davis, 1988; Musser, 1982; Pruitt, 1983; Putnam, 1988; Thomas, 1977, 1979; Thomas & Kilmann, 1974).

The literature review on the conflict management styles of department chairs has been sparse (Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch & Carroll, 1991) and literature consistently cites the need for improvement of negotiation and conflict-resolution skills (Bennett, 1983, Tucker, 1992). Being able to recognize and manage conflict is a quality that most department chairs lack (Edwards, 1999) although it is a skill that can highly enhance their effectiveness as leaders (Gmelch, 1991a; Hickson & McCroskey, 1991; Lumpkin, 2004). Thus, unit leaders would benefit from training in different styles of conflict management. In summary, although this study provided additional insight into the study of conflict

management style preferences and personality traits, future studies are needed. As stated

by Mary Parker Follett, "We can often measure our progress by watching the nature of

our conflicts" (as cited by Graham, 2003, p.72). The right choice or combination of styles

can effectively make a difference in the situations that arise in departments (Dewey,

1957).

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APPPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO USE ROCI-II

Afzal Rahim [mgt2000@aol.com]
Sent: Friday, October 08, 2010 3:17 PM
To: <u>Chalkidou, Tatiana</u>
             <u>ROCI-II-Form C & Key (5 p~1.doc (131 KB)[Open as Web Page]</u>;
Attachments:<u>ROCI-Manual 2004-FINAL.doc (281 KB)[Open as Web Page]</u>; <u>ROCI-Bibl-Revised.doc (130 KB)[Open as Web Page]</u>

Hi,
We have received your check and deposited it to our bank. Thank you very much for your order. Attached please find our camera-ready ROCI-II, Form A and its Manual. You are authorized to make 300 copies of the instrument and one copy of the Manual for your dissertation research. If you use the Survey Monkey, make sure that the instrument is viewed by only 300 respondents and the website is discontinued after a fixed period of time. Attached also is the ROCI Bibliography which should help in your research. Dr. Rahim indicated that your research can be strengthened if you add a variable on Outcome or effectiveness of the respondents.

Good luck in your research.
Mir

APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO USE NEO FFI

RE: License Agr for NEO-FFI

From: Vicky McFadden [vmark@parinc.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 13, 2010 3:25 PM
To: Chalkidou, Tatiana

Attachments: Chalkidou NEO-FFI.pdf (187 KB)[Open as Web Page]

Please find attached your fully executed License Agreement.

When you have your survey ready for administration, please
forward a print screen that displays the required PAR Credit Line
to comply with paragraph (8) of your License Agreement. You can
begin administering the NEO-FFI on November 1, 2010.

Your License Agreement will expire on November 30, 2010. Please
contact me if you need an extension for your research or any
additional administrations.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Vicki McFadden
Permissions Specialist
vmark@parinc.com

Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.
16204 N. Florida Avenue
Lutz, FL 33549
www.parinc.com
Phn: (800) 331-8378
Fax: (800) 727-9329; Intl Fax: (813) 449-4109

APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

You are kindly requested to choose the answers that best describe your personal and university-related characteristics. Please answer all items.

Sex
　　Male
　　Female
　　Choose not to respond

Age
　　20-30
　　31-40
　　41-50
　　>50
　　Choose not to respond

Race
Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
　　Yes
　　No
　　Choose not to respond

What is your race?
　　White
　　American Indian/Alaska Native
　　Black, African American
　　Asian Indian
　　Pacific Islander
　　Other Asian
　　Mixed Race
　　Choose not to respond

Years employed in academia
　　1-10
　　11-20
　　21-30
　　31-40
　　>41
　　Choose not to respond

Years employed in current position (as Unit Leader)
    1-6
    7-10
    11-15
    >15
    Choose not to respond

Academic Rank
    Assistant Professor
    Associate Professor
    Professor
    Other
    Choose not to respond

Job title as Unit Leader
    Academic Chair
    Department Chair
    Department Head
    Program Director
    Program Coordinator
    Course Coordinator
    Other
    Choose not to respond

Type of University
    Doctorate-granting University
    Master's college/University
    Baccalaureate College/University
    Tribal College/University
    Other
    Choose not to respond

Type of degrees offered in your program
    Doctorate
    Master's degree
    Bachelor's degree
    Choose not to respond

APPENDIX D: Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II Form C (Sample)

Please check the appropriate box after each statement (SD: strongly disagree; D: Disagree; N: Neither Agree or Disagree, A: Agree; SA: Strongly Agree) to indicate *how you handle your disagreement or conflict with your peers*. Try to recall as many recent conflict situations as possible in answering these statements.

1. I try to investigate an issue with my peers to find a solution acceptable to us.
2. I generally try to satisfy the needs of my peers.
3. I attempt to avoid being "put on the spot" and try to keep my conflict with my peers to myself.

APPENDIX E: NEO Five-Factor Inventory Form S (Sample)

Please check the appropriate box after each statement (SD: strongly disagree; D: Disagree; N: Neither Agree or Disagree, A: Agree; SA: Strongly Agree)

1. I am not a warrior.
2. I like to have a lot of people around me.
3. I don't like to waste my time daydreaming.
4. I try to be courteous to everyone I meet.
5. I keep my belongings neat and clean.
6. I often feel inferior to others.

DUE TO COPYRIGHT LAWS

THE READER IS ASKED TO CONTACT

PAR Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.
16204 North Florida Ave.
Lutz, FL 33549
www.parinc.com

TO EXAMINE THE ENTIRE NEO FIVE FACTOR INVENTORY FORM S

APPENDIX F: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Conflict Management Style Preferences and Personality Traits of Unit Leaders within Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies.

Investigators: Tatiana Vasileia Chalkidou (Primary Investigator) and Regents Professor, Dr. Lowell Caneday (dissertation advisor), College of Education, School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology – Leisure Studies, Oklahoma State University.

Purpose: The purpose of this research study is to gain insight into academic leadership and produce new knowledge about academic Unit Leaders in the United States.

Procedures: Participating in this study will consist of filling out 2 questionnaires and a demographic survey. It will take approximately 25 minutes to participate in this study.

Risks of Participation: There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those encountered in daily life.

Benefits: Results from this research may be beneficial to the understanding of principles such as conflict management styles in academic settings, which are common in corporate/business settings, as well as understanding how unit leaders interact with their faculty members.

Confidentiality: Your responses to the survey will be confidential and anonymous. This survey will be hosted by SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey offers SSL encryption for the survey link and survey pages during transmission. An overview of the security of SurveyMonkey's infrastructure includes physical, network, hardware and software measures. When it comes to the collection procedure, this Primary Investigator (PI) chooses the "Web Collector" which returns only anonymous responses. Participants' responses will be at no time linked to their institutional email addresses. If you wish to receive no further emails from this PI, you can unsubscribe by clicking the designated link, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list. According to SurveyMonkey, the PI is the sole owner of, and accountable for, the information created and collected using SurveyMonkey's system (http://s3.amazonaws.com/SurveyMonkeyFiles/UserManual.pdf).

The extracted data will be stored on a password drive and will be kept in a locked file cabinet by the PI of this study at Oklahoma State University in the dissertation advisor's office (Regents Professor, Dr. Lowell Caneday). The PI and the dissertation advisor will be the only individuals with access to the locked cabinet containing the password drive. It is expected that the data will be maintained approximately two (2) years from the

initiation of the study, after which time data will be erased.

Contacts: Please feel free to contact the PI and her dissertation advisor if you have questions or concerns about this research project.

Tatiana Chalkidou, 180 Colvin Center, OSU-Stillwater campus, 571-232-4099, tat.chalkidou@okstate.edu

Regents Professor, Dr. Lowell Caneday, 184 Colvin Center, OSU-Stillwater campus, 405-744-5503, Lowell.caneday@okstate.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, Dr. Shelia Kennison,   219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Participant Rights: Participation in the current research activity is entirely voluntary. No monetary incentive will be provided. You are free to decline to participate and may stop or withdraw from the activity at any time. It is assumed that those who agree to proceed have implied consent and will respond to a set of measurement scales.

By choosing to proceed it is implied that you have read and fully understand the consent form and agree to participate.

APPENDIX G: PRE-NOTIFICATION EMAIL

Dear Unit Leader,

As a Unit leader of a program within Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies, you are invited to participate in a research study titled "Conflict Management Style Preferences and Personality Traits of Unit Leaders within Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies". The purpose of this quantitative research study is to assess and document conflict management style preferences and personality traits as measured by the ROCI-II Form C and the NEO-FFI Form S respectively, for the population of Unit Leaders in baccalaureate programs within the field of Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies. Correlation between conflict management style preferences and personality traits with selected personal and university-related characteristics will be assessed. This research will provide an insight into leadership within a population providing significant academic service to an important discipline. This study will produce new knowledge about Unit Leaders in the United States. Upon the passing of two (2) working days, you will be sent an email through SurveyMonkey with the link to the survey and a password to access the research study. This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

As a doctoral candidate, I am working under the direction of Regents Professor, Dr. Lowell Caneday.

Yours sincerely,

Tatiana Chalkidou, MBA, MSc	Lowell Caneday, PhD
Doctoral Candidate, Leisure Studies	Regents Professor, Leisure Studies
Oklahoma State University	Oklahoma State University
Tat.chalkidou@okstate.edu	Lowell.caneday@okstate.edu

APPENDIX H: INVITATION TO A SURVEY AS PART OF A DISSERTATION PROJECT

Dear Unit Leader,

The purpose of this quantitative research study is to assess and document conflict management style preferences and personality traits as measured by the ROCI-II Form C and the NEO-FFI Form S respectively, for the population of Unit Leaders in baccalaureate programs within the field of Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies. Correlation between conflict management style preferences and personality traits with selected personal and university-related characteristics will be assessed. This research will provide an insight into leadership within a population providing significant academic service to an important discipline. This study will produce new knowledge about Unit Leaders in the United States.

As a doctoral candidate, I am working under the direction of Regents Professor, Dr. Lowell Caneday.

Permission letter for ROCI-II
(link)

Permission letter for NEO-FFI

(link)

This survey requires a password. The password used to access the survey is DISSERTATION.

To access the survey click here:
(link)

If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from mailing list.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

I would like to thank you in anticipation of your help and assistance. This questionnaire should take no more than 25 minutes of your time.

Yours sincerely,

Tatiana Chalkidou, MBA, MSc	Lowell Caneday, PhD
Doctoral Candidate, Leisure Studies	Regents Professor, Leisure Studies
Oklahoma State University	Oklahoma State University
Tat.chalkidou@okstate.edu	Lowell.caneday@okstate.edu

APPENDIX I: REMINDER EMAIL #1

Dear Unit Leader,

This is the first reminder of the invitation to participate in research titled "Conflict Management Style Preferences and Personality Traits of Unit Leaders within Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies". If you have not yet responded, please do so. Your response is greatly appreciated. As a doctoral candidate, I am working under the direction of Regents Professor, Dr. Lowell Caneday.

Here is a link to the survey:
(link)

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message. This survey requires a password. The password used to access the survey is DISSERTATION.

I would like to thank you in anticipation of your help and assistance. This questionnaire should take no more than 25 minutes of your time.

Please note: If you have already responded or do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

Yours sincerely,

Tatiana Chalkidou, MBA, MSc   Lowell Caneday, PhD

Doctoral Candidate, Leisure Studies   Regents Professor, Leisure
Studies

Oklahoma State University   Oklahoma State University

Tat.chalkidou@okstate.edu   Lowell.caneday@okstate.edu

APPENDIX J: REMINDER EMAIL #2

Dear Unit Leader,

This is the second reminder of the invitation to participate in research titled "Conflict Management Style Preferences and Personality Traits of Unit Leaders within Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies". If you have not yet responded, please do so. Your response is greatly appreciated. The survey will be accessible till November 30, 2010.

As a doctoral candidate, I am working under the direction of Regents Professor, Dr. Lowell Caneday.

Here is a link to the survey:
(link)

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message. The password used to access the survey is DISSERTATION.

I would like to thank you in anticipation of your help and assistance. This questionnaire should take no more than 25 minutes of your time.

Please note: If you have already responded or do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

Yours sincerely,

Tatiana Chalkidou, MBA, MSc   Lowell Caneday, PhD

Doctoral Candidate, Leisure Studies   Regents Professor, Leisure
Studies   Studies

Oklahoma State University   Oklahoma State University

Tat.chalkidou@okstate.edu   Lowell.caneday@okstate.edu

VITA

Tatiana Vasileia Chalkidou

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLE PREFERENCES AND PERSONALITY TRAITS OF UNIT LEADERS IN RECREATION, PARKS AND LEISURE STUDIES

Major Field: Health, Leisure and Human Performance

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Health, Leisure and Human Performance at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2011.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Business Administration at University of Leicester, Leicester, UK in 2006.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Human Resource Management and Development at University of Leicester, Leicester, UK in 2010.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Physical Education and Sport Science at University of Athens, Athens, Greece in 2003.

Experience: Teaching Assistant at Oklahoma State University, from January 2008 to May 2011. Staffing & Sport Information Supervisor for Team Handball, for World Special Olympics Athens 2011. Sport Information Supervisor, for Organizing Committee Summer Olympic Games Athens 2004.

Professional Memberships: National Recreation & Park Association, Oklahoma Recreation & Park Society.

Name: Tatiana Vasileia Chalkidou   Date of Degree: May, 2011

Institution: Oklahoma State University   Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLE PREFERENCES AND
               PERSONALITY TRAITS OF UNIT LEADERS IN RECREATION,
               PARKS AND LEISURE STUDIES

Pages in Study: 211   Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major Field: Health, Leisure and Human Performance

Scope and Method of Study: Investigation of conflict management style preferences and
       personality traits of unit leaders in baccalaureate programs within recreation,
       parks, and leisure studies curricula. Two hundred sixty unit leaders, which
       accounted for all the population of unit leaders, were sent the survey through
       SurveyMonkey. A demographics questionnaire, the Rahim Organizational
       Conflict Inventory II (ROCI-II) Form C and the NEO Five-Factor Inventory
       (NEO-FFI) Form S were used for the web-based survey to collect data. This
       design method integrated elements of Dillman's Total Design Method (TDM) and
       recent literature on Web-based survey techniques.

Findings and Conclusions: Data were collected yielding a total of a hundred five
       responses, giving a 40.4 % response rate. Demographics indicated that unit
       leaders are predominantly male, white, over 41 years old, with quite a long
       working experience in academia (40% worked more than 11 years up to 20 years,
       whereas another 53% worked more than two decades up to four decades. The
       majority of the respondents (63%) had been in the position of the unit leaders up
       to 6 years. Pertaining to their academic rank, the majority of the unit leaders
       (n=60, 57%) reported being a Professor; followed by Associate Professors (n=30,
       29%), Assistant Professors (n=12, 11%), and "other" (n=3, 3%). Findings of this
       study led the researcher to conclude that there is evidence to support a
       relationship between conflict management style preferences and personality traits,
       which supports previous research that concluded that personality does play an
       important role in determining conflict behaviors. Findings indicated that unit
       leaders prefer the Integrating conflict management style, followed by the
       Compromising, and Obliging conflict management style. Depending on the
       different variables, the next option would be to dominate the conflict (thus using a
       Dominating) or to avoid it (using the Avoiding style), or the opposite.
       Additionally, unit leaders self-rated possessing the following personality traits in
       order of preference: Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to Experience,
       Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. All the scores were considered to be "low"
       indicating, as mid-level managers, they possess "neutral" personalities.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Lowell Caneday