IRB Synopsis of Proposal

An Examination of Individual Competencies among Students Matriculating through an Undergraduate Healthcare Administration Program

1. The subjects for this study will be Texas State University-San Marcos undergraduate students who took the Bachelor of Health Administration comprehensive exit examination during the following academic semesters: Fall 2009, Spring 2010, and Fall 2010.

The data for this study will come from multiple sources:

* 1. An MRInterview survey will be administered to these students to assess their personality characteristics (personality type) using the NEO-FFI inventory (60 Likert-scale questions). Additionally, two questions related to early careerist healthcare administrators will be asked.
  2. Academic records and demographic information on file with the University registrar’s office will be requested for each student participating in the study and combined with their MRInterview survey data for further analysis.

Characteristics of this proposed sample include the following:

1. Anticipated sample size: 115.
2. Age: it is assumed that several traditional university students will be included in this sample, therefore having an estimated age range between 19 – 22 years old. Otherwise, the exact age range of the proposed sample is unknown.
3. Sex, ethnic background, and state of health: exact characteristics unknown. It is assumed that these three semesters of BHA senior classes closely resembles previous BHA senior class characteristics.

All students within these three academic semesters will be asked to participate in the survey. Any BHA students who do not meet the sample criteria (did not take the BHA comprehensive examination during these three specific semesters) will not be asked to participate. Students who may possibly take the survey that are not part of this criterion sample will be excluded from the study. Only the Fall 2009, Spring 2010, and Fall 2010 senior BHA classes are being asked to participate in this study because their comprehensive BHA program exit examination meets the methodology requirement for the study, whereas seniors in previous BHA semesters (prior to the Fall 2009 semester) were administered a completely different version of the BHA comprehensive exit examination.

1. Undergraduate BHA students whose comprehensive exit examination was issued during the Fall 2009, Spring 2010, and Fall 2010 semesters will be recruited to participate in this study via email. Consent will be obtained electronically, as the email will contain a secure link to the university’s MRInterview server, allowing the student access to the survey. The first page of the survey will be the “Consent Form” including the requirements of a consent form set forth by the IRB website. All information concerning the study itself will be introduced to the participant in the initial Consent Form page of the MRInterview survey application. If the participant does not check “Yes” to consent to the survey, the survey will immediately end. A copy of this Consent Form to be utilized in the MRInterview application is attached to this IRB research application.
2. The study’s methodology will consist of several descriptive quantitative analyses, exploratory in nature. A bivariate correlation and regression analysis will be performed to determine if any significant relationships exist between undergraduate BHA student personality type and competencies in healthcare administration (as measured by overall each student’s GPA, course grades in the BHA program, as well as performance on the BHA comprehensive exit examination). The NEO-FFI Five-Factor Inventory will be utilized to assess individual student personality type. Demographic information, individual student GPA, individual student health administration course grades, as well as individual student performance on the comprehensive exit examination will be obtained from both the School of Health Administration, as well as the University Registrar if necessary. Additionally, further descriptive analysis of the BHA program’s comprehensive exit examination scores will be assessed to determine if any specific competency scores changed between the Fall 2009, Spring 2010, and Fall 2010 competency exit examinations. The psychometric properties of each comprehensive exit examination will also be assessed to help further test validity. Furthermore, a logistic regression method will be utilized to attempt to predict the successful completion of the comprehensive exit examination based on the following independent variables: gender, age, ethnicity, prior healthcare experience status, and the presence (or absence) of a healthcare administration mentor.

A copy of the questions in the survey instrument to be administered online through the MRInterview application is attached in PDF format (NEO-FFI, proprietary).

1. Potential risk for this study include the breach of confidentiality for the survey participants. This includes the confidentiality of their academic information (GPA, BHA program grades, and performance on the comprehensive exit examination), as well as their personal demographic information collected: age, gender, ethnicity, prior healthcare experience status, presence (or absence) of a healthcare administration mentor, as well as their inherent personality type scores. The only alternative method for collecting the proposed sample’s personality type and demographic information considered was the administration of a paper survey, which would be difficult to administer, as most BHA alumni email addresses are much more accurate than their addresses on file with the university and School of Health Administration.
2. All surveys will be administered through the university’s secure MRInterview server. Data is password protected and only the researcher and members of the dissertation committee will have access to the survey data. All documents and printed materials to perform quantitative analysis on the data will remain locked inside a file cabinet, in a secure, private office at Texas State University-San Marcos (Cristian Lieneck’s office in the School of Health Administration, Health Professions Building 272).
3. The subjects will be offered the survey results upon completion of the study. This includes the results of their responses on the NEO-FFI personality inventory (their personality type scores), as well as the overall significant findings from the study itself. The Texas State University-San Marcos School of Health Administration, as well as the field of healthcare administration education will benefit from this exploratory study, as it will provide preliminary, baseline data regarding the significant relationships among BHA student personality type and their competency in healthcare administration. Additionally, the School of Health Administration will be provided with further knowledge regarding the demographic characteristics of students passing the BHA comprehensive exit examination, as well as psychometric analysis of the three exit examinations for further test validation efforts. Finally, the relationship between personality type and competency in healthcare administration will be investigated to serve as a platform for future research regarding inherent personality traits and success in the field of healthcare administration, which has yet to be researched.
4. There will be no compensation or extra credit offered or provided to any survey participants.
5. Due to the exploratory nature of the study and the intended benefits to both the School of Health Administration and the field of healthcare administration, the anticipated benefits of this research is expected to significantly outweigh any risk to the subjects and society.
6. Continued guidance from my dissertation committee at Texas State University-San Marcos will continue throughout the study. Further collaboration with the School of Health Administration and the University Registrar will be necessary to ensure all demographic data is accurately obtained. A copy of this dissertation proposal approval letter is attached to this application.

Dissertation committee members:

Larry Price, PhD (chair)

Eileen Morrison, EdD

Robert Reardon, PhD

Gail Ryser, PhD

1. I am a PhD student in the Texas State University-San Marcos Department of Education. My major is Adult, Professional, and Community Education (APCE). Additionally, I am an Assistant Professor of Health Administration in the School of Health Professions at Texas State University-San Marcos. I am very interested in investigating the potential relationship(s) of undergraduate healthcare administration competency and student personality type to a) establish a solid framework for future research regarding this topic, and b) further investigate the types of students matriculating though the Health Administration program (with regard to personality type). Furthermore, this knowledge may assist with future andragogic methods. My supervising professor is Dr. Larry Price, PhD (dissertation chair).
2. This dissertation proposal was successfully defended on 10/19/2010 and evidence supporting this defense is attached (committee approval letter).
3. This research proposal has not been reviewed/approved by another IRB.
4. The following individuals will have access to the results of this study, either during or after completion:
   1. Cristian Lieneck (PhD doctoral candidate).
   2. The dissertation committee.
   3. Michael Nowicki, EdD (School of Health Administration Director).
   4. Once the research is completed, publication of results with applicable health administration and health administration education journals is intended.
   5. Any study participant that requested the results of the study.

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