Examining the Big Five Personality Factors as Predictors of Burnout among Counselors

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ABSTRACT

Burnout is a complex syndrome primarily associated with one's personal relationship with work that has many negative consequences. Maslach (1982) defined three dimensions of burnout: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. Prior research has established counselors as being particularly susceptible to burnout, but little research has studied the role of personality in burnout among counselors. Therefore, this study used the Five-Factor Model (FFM) to investigate personality factors as predictors of burnout among counselors. Findings were consistent with the hypotheses that of the five factors, Neuroticism scores would be positively correlated with high scores on burnout, and high Extraversion scores would be negatively correlated with low levels of burnout among counselors. Other correlations were found and reviewed as well. Overall, the importance of looking at ways in which personality factors might play a role in counselor susceptibility to burnout has been indicated a potential area of future growth.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Burnout is a complex syndrome that is primarily associated with one's personal relationship with work (Lambie, 2006). This syndrome has many symptoms and many negative consequences which can affect multiple aspects of a working individual, both personally and professionally (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). What we now know about the concept of burnout is the result of a great deal of research since the mid-1970s when Freudenberger (1975) first began studying what he identified as burnout. He recognized that there were a number of volunteer workers in self-help or crisis intervention settings that appeared to be negatively affected by their work. He observed that these individuals were under enormous stress to meet excessive demands placed on them, and he described what he observed as exhaustion (Freudenberger, 1975). Within that discussion he posed many important questions in his research, one of which included "what are the different types of personality most prone to burnout in alternative self-help or crisis intervention settings?" (Freudenberger, 1975, p. 1). While this question is still being explored, some research has shown that certain personality traits can be early predictors of burnout (Lakin, Leon, & Miller, 2008). Much of the research on personality traits as predictors of burnout have focused on diverse groups of professionals within the human service field.

Among that research, there have been very few studies that look exclusively at the role personality plays in the development or existence of burnout among counselors who are believed to be particularly susceptible as helping professionals (Maslach, 1978; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Pines & Aronson, 1988). Even Freudenberger (1975) pointed out that individuals working in self-help or crisis intervention settings appeared to be facing a continuous *fighting battle* between three areas: dealing with the *ills of society*, responding to the individual needs of the person needing help, and simultaneously caring for the individual *personality needs* of the professional (p. 73).

Pines and Aronson (1988) have discussed three reasons they believe human service providers are more susceptible to burnout than other types of workers. They state that the human service provider may be at greater risk because the nature of the work is emotionally draining, the provider is expected to display empathy to the client, and the nature of the relationship between the provider and the client is focused mainly on the client and his or her needs (Pines & Aronson, 1988). Pine and Aronson (1988) suggested that certain types of individuals may be drawn to work in helping professions because they are individuals who are oriented more towards working with people than with objects. Furthermore, they suggested that people drawn to helping professions are in general, naturally more empathetic and compassionate towards others (Pines & Aronson, 1988).

On the other hand, some research has suggested that counselors may be even more susceptible to burnout because they are taught to be empathic towards clients and their individual situations, and because in the therapeutic relationship counselors are continuously exposed to the pain and emotional turmoil of their patients (Maslach et al.,

2001; Pines &Aronson, 1988). Lambie (2006) pointed out that empathy is a very important part of facilitating the development of a therapeutic relationship, which is the basis of helping a client to facilitate change. Therefore, a lack of ability to express empathy could jeopardize the therapeutic relationship and the effectiveness of treatment. Research has suggested that in some cases counselor empathy may account for at least two-thirds of the total variance in whether a client sustains changes in response to therapy (Miller & Rollnick, 2002).

Lambie (2006) suggested that the ability of a counselor to be empathic in therapy could actually put them at an increased risk of developing burnout. Because the empathic counselor has the ability to connect with the client on a more emotional level, this also means that the counselor may experience more intense negative emotions in response to their client's personal experiences (Lambie, 2006). For example, research has shown that there is an increased risk for the development of compassion fatigue or vicarious traumatization among counselors who work with trauma victims (Devilly et al., 2009; Sprang et al., 2007). Larson (1993) stated that "empathy is a double-edged sword; it is simultaneously your greatest asset and a point of real vulnerability" (p. 30).

Definitional Components of Burnout

Freudenberger's (1975) original definition of burnout was fairly simple and based on a dictionary definition which described burnout as a wearing out, or becoming exhausted, by the extreme demands on one's own physical, mental, or emotional resources. Theorists have since developed more sophisticated and scientific descriptions of burnout. Burnout is now viewed as a multidimensional theory (Maslach, 1982) with three main components: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and (reduced feelings of) Personal Accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 402- 403).

Emotional Exhaustion is known as the *stress dimension* of burnout and has been demonstrated as the most central or dominant dimension of the three components of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 403). As such, this aspect has been the most heavily researched (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Research using symptom inventories, such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996), have shown Emotional Exhaustion as the most widely reported symptom of burnout among individuals (Maslach et al., 2001). For example, when an individual reports feeling burned out in their work, it is no surprise that the individual often describes a feeling of exhaustion. It is believed that this exhaustion dimension is what leads the individual to begin distancing himself emotionally and cognitively from his work (Maslach et al., 2001) which leads to the next burnout dimension.

Depersonalization is the second component of burnout and can be described as the individual's personal response to experiencing Emotional Exhaustion. Depersonalization occurs when the individual knowingly or unknowingly distances him or herself from those that are being served (Maslach et al., 2001). When the individual begins to

depersonalize, he or she may begin to view the client as more of an object by *dehumanizing*, rather than viewing the client as a person with particular needs (Maslach, 1982, p. 32). As a result, the burned-out professional may begin ignoring their client's unique qualities and may carry negative attitudes towards them. Maslach (1982) pointed out that these individuals often become cynical and calloused towards others in their work. Research has consistently shown correlations between the Emotional Exhaustion component of burnout and the behavioral response of Depersonalizing (Maslach et al., 2001).

The third component of burnout is reduced feelings of Personal Accomplishment, also known as inefficacy. Maslach et al. (2001) explain that as feelings of exhaustion and problems with depersonalizing increase, the helping professional might feel a reduced sense of personal effectiveness in his or her job performance. This component of burnout appears to be more evident in work situations where there are high demands or increased workloads. Research has indicated that when individuals rate higher on levels of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, feelings of Personal Accomplishment decrease over time, which may indicate that an inverse relationship between these components exists (Maslach et al., 2001).

However, other research has indicated that a more parallel relationship might exist between the three components of burnout, with all three dimensions progressing simultaneously (Leiter, 1993). Some research has demonstrated that increased feelings of inefficacy in some individuals may develop at the same time that Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization do (Leiter, 1993).

The existence of a parallel relationship between increased levels of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, and decreased feelings of Personal Accomplishment; might indicate that reduced feelings of Personal Accomplishment may not necessarily be the result of increasing levels of the other two burnout components (Leiter, 1993; Maslach et al., 2001).

Symptoms and Consequences of Burnout

Kahill (1988) divided the majority of burnout symptoms into five categories: physical, behavioral, emotional, attitudinal, and interpersonal. Other researchers have helped to identify specific symptoms within each category. Some of the major physical symptoms of burnout identified are fatigue, physical exhaustion (Kahill, 1988; Maslach, 1981), sleep problems (Cherniss, 1980; Kahill, 1988; Maslach et al., 1996), headaches (Cherniss, 1980; Freudenberger, 1974), colds or influenza (Cherniss, 1980; Freudenberger, 1974), and gastrointestinal problems (Cherniss, 1980; Kahill, 1988; Paine, 1984).

Behavioral signs of burnout include frequent job turnover (Maslach, 1981), lack of productivity on the job (Kahill, 1988), absenteeism (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), tardiness, misusing work-breaks, theft (Kahill, 1988), and increased use of drugs or alcohol (Maslach, 1981). Emotional symptoms include anger (Freudenberger, 1974) and depression (Kahill, 1988). In some research, human service professionals have reported significant problems with increased anxiety, guilt, and irritability (Jackson & Maslach, 1982) and other emotional problems like poor self-esteem (Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Kahill, 1988; Maslach, 1981).

The attitudinal category of symptoms includes problems like chronic lateness to work or leaving early. The burned out professional may also take multiple breaks throughout the day or avoid contact with clients altogether (Pines & Maslach, 1978). Individuals with high levels of burnout may also suffer from interpersonal symptoms which have been shown to include engaging in inhumane practices with clients, having less personal friends, increased isolation or withdrawal from friends or family, reduced marital satisfaction, or other problematic relationships at work or at home (Cherniss, 1980; Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Jackson, 1981),

Research on the long-term consequences of burnout among counselors is greatly lacking. It has been hypothesized that, in general, burnout symptoms may decrease over time when changes occur in the professional's outlook, coping skills, job organization skills, or work setting (Cherniss, 1992). This point was demonstrated in a study that showed improvements in a group of working professionals' outlook and levels of job satisfaction after twelve years of their initial burnout assessments (Cherniss, 1992). Cherniss (1992) found that those who rated highest in early career burnout did not indicate significant levels of burnout twelve years later. There were several factors noted that appeared to have a positive effect on the reduction of burnout for each of the participants. Some of those factors included increased amounts of training on the job, more positive changes in work environments, and receiving supportive clinical supervision (Cherniss, 1992). An important contribution of Cherniss's (1992) research to the understanding of burnout was the identification of protective factors that may help individuals to overcome burnout.

Burnout and Mental Health Professionals as a Special Population

Levels of burnout have been assessed among multiple professions. Because reviewing these is beyond the scope of this research, the focus of this study will remain on mental health professionals as a specific population. Professional fields and job positions represented in reviewed research included psychiatric nursing, psychiatry, social work, occupational therapy, psychologists, professional counseling, drug and alcohol counseling, school counseling, case managing, front-line workers, and supervisor-administrative positions (Hummelvoll & Severinsson, 2001; Martin & Schinke, 1998; Onyett, Pillinger, & Muijen, 1997; Priebe, Fakhoury, Hoffmann, & Powell, 2005; Prosser et al., 1996; Prosser et al., 1999; Reid et al., 1999; Savicki & Cooley, 1987; Sprang, Clark, & Whitt-Woosley, 2007; Sorgaard, et al., 2007; Thornton, 1992). In addition to the wide variability of study among the helping professionals, a great deal of previous research has focused on finding relationships only between work-related variables; such as aspects of a professional's work environment or specific sources of stress and job satisfaction, and burnout. Whereas, those contributions have been important, there remains a general lack of understanding regarding burnout among counselors as a specific population, and how one's individual characteristics may play a role as either predisposing an individual to, or acting as a buffer against, the development of burnout (Leon, Visscher, Sugimura, & Lakin, 2008; Kahill, 1988).

A difficulty arises when studying this population of workers, in that the definition of *mental health professional* is often a catch-all term that represents multiple positions within the same line of work. This mixture of positions or roles represented means that prior research included many individuals in positions who were not operating in a

therapeutic or counseling role with a client at the time of the study. For example, an administrator would most likely not be entering into a therapeutic relationship with a client because that is generally not the administrator's role in the field. Another example of this situation involves psychiatric nurses. Although psychiatric nurses have direct contact with clients, their contact is generally limited to addressing medical needs of patients and, therefore, are not considered to be involved in a therapeutic relationship with the client.

In fact, a majority of the studies found were devoted primarily to studying the predicting factors of burnout among psychiatric nurses (Onyett et al., 1997; Priebe et al., 2005; Prosser et al., 1996, 1999; Sorgaard et al., 2007; Thompsen, Soares, Nolan, & Dallender, 1999) or were focused exclusively on only one individual group of professionals, like Marriage and Family Therapists (Rosenberg & Pace, 2006). Whereas this research is important and has contributed to our general understanding of burnout among helping professionals, generalizations from these results are limited to the general mental health counselor population. Therefore, for the purposes of this research, the term counselor will be used and will be defined by only those who serve in counseling or consulting manners with clients. and who have developed some type of therapeutic relationship with a client. This term will include all professional counselors (LAPC, LPC, LAMFT, LMFT, LMSW, and LCSW) in outpatient centers, crisis stabilization and residential settings, substance abuse/dependency counselors, licensed psychologists, and psychiatrists.

Job-Related Predictors of Burnout

Occupational stressors have been heavily researched as potential risk factors for the development of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Maslach & Leiter (2008) divided sources of stress in the workplace into six different areas: workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values. These areas of stress encapsulate many of the factors that appear to contribute to burnout such as carrying large caseloads of patients, dealing daily with excessive work demands, working within the constraints of an organization while having very little input or control over decisions made by superiors, or suffering from general work overload. These factors have been found to be significantly correlated to the Emotional Exhaustion component of burnout (Maslach et al, 2001). Research shows that professionals who are suffering from work overload or other occupational stressors may have depleted their ability to keep up with their own work demands which may lead them to experience "acute fatigue" (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). This acute fatigue has been shown to be related to Emotional Exhaustion, one of the major symptoms of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

Control refers to the need for the professional to maintain a sense of personal control over some aspects of his or her work. When there is no perceived control present, the individual may experience conflicts in their own view of the roles they play in their job (Cordes & Daugherty, 1993). Cordes and Daugherty (1993) found a significant link between role conflicts and the exhaustion component of burnout. Individuals who were able to participate in the decision making process on issues related to their own work were found to have increased feelings of autonomy and lower levels of exhaustion (Cherniss, 1980; Leiter, 1993). Reward refers to the professional's need to gain

appropriate recognition for his or her work. When there is a lack of reward, an individual may feel ineffective in his or her job, which has been shown to increase the likelihood of developing burnout (Chappell & Novak, 1992; Maslanka, 1996).

Community refers to the need for the working professional to feel a sense of support or being part of a working team in order to reduce the likelihood of burnout. Multiple types of job-related support have been identified, such as supervisor support (Leiter & Maslach, 1988), coworker support (Truchot & Deregard, 2001), and social support (Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Schnorpfeil et al., 2002). Each type of support appears to offer different, but important, contributions to feelings of work satisfaction for the mental health professional.

Fairness refers to what level work decisions are seen as being reasonable or fair. Research on this job-related factor has shown that employees feel it is more important to focus on how fair the decision making process is, versus the outcome of the decision (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). This has also been described as the "Effort-Reward Imbalance Model," (Siegrist, 1996) reflecting the imbalance that occurs when an individual's time and expertise put into the process is not equaled by the outcome or reward gained from making the decision (Siegrist, 1996). What has been shown is that a lack of fairness in job-related issues or decisions is a good predictor of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Leiter and Harvie (1997) found that when employees believed their supervisors were being supportive and were making fair decisions, they were to be less likely to develop burnout. Values within a work environment have been found to play a very important role as well. Leiter and Maslach (2005) found that when a conflict exists between the

values of the professional and the values of the organization, there also exists a high correlation with all three components of burnout.

While many of these occupational stressors have been thoroughly researched and recognized as contributors to or predictors of burnout, there still exists a lack of understanding of how personality characteristics play a role in burnout. As noted earlier, the aim of this study is to examine the increased risk of burnout that may exist across different individuals that work in similar conditions or operate in similar roles, versus comparing burnout across different types of jobs. Research has been able to identify broad personality traits that appear to be relevant which may contribute to this area of research. One of these is the Five-Factor Model of personality (McCrae & Costa, 1999).

Personality Theory and Burnout

The Big Five Factor theory of personality, also known as the Five-Factor Model (FFM), posits that there are five primary distinguishing traits that make up human personality (McCrae & Costa, 1999). These five factors are known as Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness to Experience (O), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness (C) (Tupes & Christal, 1992). The FFM emerged as a result of the efforts of earlier researchers to identify, classify, and define the terms used to describe personality. Each one of these five dimensions represents a large number of distinct and more detailed personality characteristics within them. This model indicates that each of the dimensions are the most condensed way of categorizing personality terms, but not necessarily the most comprehensive (John & Srivastava, 1999).

Costa and McCrae (1992) described each of the five dimensions as containing multiple facets. Therefore, Extraversion was correlated with the facets of "gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, positive emotions, and warmth" (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 49). Agreeableness was correlated with "trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness" (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 49). Conscientiousness was correlated with "competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline, and deliberation" (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 49). Neuroticism (versus emotional stability) was correlated with "anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability" (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 49). Lastly, Openness to Experience was correlated with "fantasy, aesthetics, actions, feelings, ideas, and values" (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 49). It is important to understand that these traits are not viewed as an individual possessing either all or none of a specific personality trait. Instead, McCrae and Costa (2010) suggest that scores on personality profiles in each of these domains be interpreted as degrees within a range from extremely low to extremely high. They point out that most individuals will tend to score within the average range ($M = 50$) on most of the five personality traits with a small number scoring at either extreme (McCrae & Costa, 2010).

Personality Types as Predictors of Burnout

Zellars, Perrewe, and Hochwarter (2000, p. 1571) raised the question: "why some individuals report being exhausted, anxious, and perceiving few accomplishments while other individuals working in similar environments report fewer or no such symptoms?" (p. 1571). One heavily researched explanation revolves around the idea that individual coping styles vary and those coping styles are a representation of individual personality

traits. These individual coping styles (whether positive or negative) might explain why some individuals appear more susceptible to burnout than others (Zellars et al., 2004). Other researchers have pointed out that burnout can be conceptualized as an interactional theory, believing that individual characteristics interact with job-related variables which may play an important role in the development of, or a buffer against, burnout (Savicki & Cooley, 1987).

Research comparing burnout to personality traits, rarely considers only the counselor population. Most of the research that compared these specific variables (personality traits and burnout dimensions), involved other types of helping professionals such as nurses, front line staff (resident aids), managers, child care workers, police officers, and even the general work population. However, this prior research has identified some consistencies in that particular personality traits have been identified as early predictors of, or buffers against, burnout among workers in these other populations (Lakin, Leon, & Miller, 2008).

The development of the FFM of personality has contributed greatly to the field of burnout research by providing a more comprehensive model; which appears to be fairly effective in identifying major personality traits (McCrae & John, 1992). With the use of the FFM to identify these predominant personality traits, researchers have begun to identify certain traits as early predictors of burnout (Lakin et al., 2008). The most consistent relationship demonstrated has been between high levels of Neuroticism and high levels of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization (Bahner & Berkel, 2007; Dreary et al., 1996; Hochwalder, 2006; Lakin et al., 2008; Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

While Neuroticism has been found to be the largest and most consistent predictor of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, high levels of Extraversion have also been found to be more negatively associated with reduced feelings of Personal Accomplishment (Bakker et al., 2006; Zellars et al., 2000; Zellars et al., 2004). More simply, individuals who score higher on Extraversion appear to report increased feelings of Personal Accomplishment. Other studies have looked at the correlation between high levels of Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Openness to Experiences (Hochwalder, 2006; Peidmont, 1993; Zellars et al., 2000; Zellars & Perrewe, 2001). These studies have shown that when individuals scored higher in these areas, they tended to score higher on feelings of Personal Accomplishment, lower on Emotional Exhaustion, and lower on Depersonalization.

Purpose and Hypothesis

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the Big-Five Personality factors and levels of burnout among counselors. As discussed earlier, individuals who scored higher on the construct of Neuroticism were found to be more emotionally unstable and prone to psychological distress (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Therefore, I hypothesize that Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization will be positively correlated with Neuroticism on measures of personality and negatively correlated with feelings of Personal Accomplishment (Table 1).

Consistent with the findings of Bahner and Berkel (2007) and Lakin et al., (2008), who predicted that higher levels of Extraversion could buffer against higher burnout levels, I also hypothesize that Extraversion will be positively correlated with increased feelings of Personal Accomplishment and, negatively correlated with Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization (Table 1). Lastly, I hypothesize that Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness will all be positively correlated with increased feelings of Personal Accomplishment on burnout scores (Table 1).

Table 1

Hypothesized Correlations Between Big-Five Personality Traits and Each Burnout Dimension

Personality Traits	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
Neuroticism	+	+	–
Extraversion	–	–	+
Agreeableness	–	–	+
Conscientiousness	–	NR	+
Openness to Experience	NR	NR	+

Note: + = Positive Relationship; – = Negative Relationship; NR = No Relationship Predicted

Chapter II

METHOD

Participants

Counselors (43 female, 17 male, mean age = 39.52, age range: 23-60 years) agreed to participate in this study. These professionals were educated and trained in the treatment of multiple types of mental, emotional, or behavioral problems. Participants represented a variety of different areas of specialty, including work in family counseling, rehabilitation counseling, substance abuse/addiction counseling, and general mental health counseling for multiple issues. To participate, counselors must have been actively engaged in therapeutic relationships with clients and must have been working full-time. Participants were recruited from a pool of Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT), Professional Counselors (LAPC; LPC; LMHC), Rehabilitation Counselors, Addiction Counselors (CAC; NCAC; CAS), Clinical Social Workers (LMSW; LCSW), School Counselors, Psychologists (PhD), and Psychiatrists (MD) and were recruited from public and private agencies throughout the southern region of Georgia. Participants represented a variety of levels of education, licensure and/or certification, and total years of experience. However, counselors were not required to be licensed in order to participate in this study. Individuals that were excluded from this study, included counselor interns,

psychiatric nurses, mental health center secretaries, mental health technicians, or any other individuals who might have contact with clients in need of mental or emotional services but do not fall within the parameters of this particular study. Participants were volunteers, and treated in accordance with the APA ethics principles (American Psychological Association, 2010).

Materials

The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) was used to assess levels of burnout among counselors. The MBI-HSS (3rd Edition) was designed for the assessment of individuals working in health care settings or human services occupations. This version of the MBI is the original, and is the most widely used and researched, measure of self-reported levels of burnout (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). The MBI-HSS is a 22-item inventory that contains three subscales, each measuring one of the three aspects of burnout: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and reduced Personal Accomplishment. Each item in the test is worded as a personal statement of feelings or attitude, and the items are answered according to how often the individual experiences those feelings (Maslach et al., 1996). Item examples include "I feel burned out from my work", and "I don't really care what happens to some recipients" (Maslach et al., 1996). The respondent rates each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from "never" to "every day."

The MBI-HSS produces three separate scores, one for each subscale, and each of these scores are rated as either, low, average/moderate, or high as the levels of burnout are indicated. Within the overall sample of the norm group, specific occupational subgroups were identified with their own range of low, moderate, and high burnout

scores. One subcategory is the Mental Health subgroup (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996) which consisted of 730 mental health workers (psychologists, psychotherapists, counselors, mental hospital staff, and psychiatrists). Because this subcategory is an accurate representation of the population presently being studied, this range of scores was used for interpretation. In general, a higher score on the Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization scales indicate higher levels of burnout. The range of scores for Emotional Exhaustion are from 0 to 27 or higher with a mean score of 16.89 in the norm group. The range of scores for Depersonalization, are from 0 to 13 or higher with a mean score of 5.72. The range of possible scores for Personal Accomplishment are from 39 or higher to as low as 0 with a mean score of 30.87. Lower scores on the Personal Accomplishment scale are indicative of higher levels of burnout (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

Internal consistency of the MBI-HSS has been shown to be fair, with correlation coefficients of .90 for the Emotional Exhaustion subscale, .79 for Depersonalization subscale, and .71 for Personal Accomplishment subscale (Maslach et al., 1996). Other reviews have demonstrated test-retest reliability for an interval of two to four weeks to be .82 for Emotional Exhaustion, .60 for Depersonalization, and .80 for Personal Accomplishment. Test-retest reliability for an interval of one year ranged from .54 to .60. MBI test validity has been demonstrated as good as well for both convergent and discriminate validity factors (Maslach et al., 1996).

The NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI 3) is a shortened, 60-item version of the NEO-Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) and was designed to measure the five major personality dimensions, comprising the Five-Factor Model; (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The five major personality traits assessed by the NEO-FFI 3 are: Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness to Experience (OE), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness (C).

Out of the three test formats available, the self-report format (Form S) was utilized in this study. Participants responded to each of the test items by rating them on a five point scale that ranges from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Norms for this test were based on a stratified sample of 1,000 participants. Reliability coefficients were found to be very good and ranged from .86 to .95. The test has been found to demonstrate strong convergent and divergent validity (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Scores are interpreted for each subscale on range from *extremely low* to *extremely high*. A T-score of 56 or higher is interpreted as high, a *T* score of 45 to 55 is interpreted as average, a *T* score of 44 or lower is interpreted as low. Five separate *T* scores are calculated for each profile, one for each of the personality factors (McCrae & Costa, 2010).

Procedure

Participants were recruited through email announcements to local mental health centers, word of mouth, and printed flyers. After expressing interest, participants were sent a questionnaire packet that included an introductory letter with instructions (Appendix A), a consent form (Appendix B), a brief demographic questionnaire (Appendix C), the MBI-HSS, and the NEO-FFI 3. The introductory letter with instructions (Appendix A) informed the participant of the purpose of the study and gave

step-by-step instructions to follow. The introductory letter also explained how the confidentiality and anonymity of each participant's responses were protected. Participants were instructed not to sign their name or place any identifying information on any of the forms. Each questionnaire packet was coded so that the experimenter could ensure that no one individual had participated in the study more than once.

The Brief Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix C) was used to gather information including age, gender, job title, credentials, type of work environment (e.g., private practice), highest level of education completed, number of years of experience, numbers of hours of work per week, and overall level of job satisfaction. The instructions of the introductory letter also gave the participant testing guidelines to follow in order to encourage honest answering and completion of all items on each test. After completion of the tests and other forms, each participant was instructed to return the packet to the experimenter for scoring and data collection in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided with the survey.

Chapter III

RESULTS

Demographics

A total of 125 surveys were distributed, and 60 were completed for a return rate of 48%. All returned questionnaires were complete and usable. Eighty-three percent of the respondents were Caucasian (n = 49), 12% were African American (n = 7), and 5% were of other races (n = 3). It is believed that this sample is representative of the region in which this study took place. The mean age of the counselors was 39.52 years, and the mean number of years of education was 17.86 years. The mean number of years of experience was 11.27 years, and the mean number of hours of work per week was 41.99 hours. The mean number of career job changes among the counselors was 2.59 times. Respondents rated their level of job satisfaction on a scale of 1 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (very satisfied), and the mean level of job satisfaction was 7.69.

Among the 60 counselors that responded, a total of 16 different job titles/positions were represented. Among the total number of positions, the highest percentage was the Licensed and/or Certified Therapist at 46% (n = 27) and the next largest job title/position represented was the Substance Abuse Counselor at 15% (n = 9). Three percent were Psychologists (n = 2) and 2% were Psychiatrists (n = 1). Among those that were licensed and/or certified, Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) represented 20% of the sample (n = 12), Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) 15% of the sample (n = 9), and

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT) 14% of the sample (n = 8). Twenty percent of the sample of counselors had no licensure or certification (n = 12).

Work setting data were also collected as part of the demographic questionnaire. For statistical purposes and because of the variability of the participants' responses, work environments were condensed into five broad categories: Private Practice, Other Outpatient Work, Inpatient Facility, In-Home Counseling, and Prison/Juvenile Detention work settings. Other outpatient work included Community Service Board (CSB) operated mental health departments, outpatient substance abuse treatment centers, school or college counseling centers, and battered woman's shelters. The inpatient facility category included participants who worked in acute-care crisis stabilization hospitals and inpatient substance dependency rehab centers. Prison and juvenile detention centers included the mental health centers in those facilities. Among the five categories, 24 participants were represented in the other outpatient work setting category, 20 were in private practice, seven were in inpatient, five were in-home counseling, and six were in the prison/detention center work setting category.

Correlations

Pearson correlations were calculated comparing all three dimensions of burnout (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment) to each of the five personality traits in the Five-Factor Model (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness; see Table 2). Results showed that all five personality factors were either negatively or positively significantly correlated with Emotional Exhaustion. Significant positive correlations were found between Emotional Exhaustion and both Neuroticism $r(60) = .61$, $p = .000$ and Openness to Experience

$r(60) = .27$, $p = .036$. The finding between Neuroticism and Emotional Exhaustion was consistent with the previously predicted hypothesis, but the correlation between Openness and Emotional Exhaustion was not. Emotional exhaustion was also found to be significantly negatively correlated with Extraversion $r(60) = -.38$, $p = .003$. In addition, significant negative correlations were found between high ratings of Emotional Exhaustion and low levels of Agreeableness $r(60) = -.28$, $p = .032$, as well as low levels of Conscientiousness $r(60) = -.52$, $p = .000$ (see Table 2).

Depersonalization was found to be significantly positively correlated with Neuroticism $r(60) = .31$, $p = .016$ as predicted, and with Openness to Experience $r(60) = .26$, $p = .043$. Depersonalization was also found to be significantly negatively correlated with Conscientiousness $r(60) = -.38$, $p = .003$; however, no significant correlations were found between Depersonalization and Extraversion $r(60) = -.22$, $p = .099$ or Agreeableness $r(60) = -.25$, $p = .05$, a finding inconsistent with previously stated hypotheses (Table 2).

Personal Accomplishment was found to be significantly correlated with two: Extraversion $r(60) = .36$, $p = .005$ and Openness to Experience $r(60) = .31$, $p = .017$, consistent with the hypothesis. However, in contradiction to the previously stated hypothesis, no significant correlations were found between feelings of Personal Accomplishment and Neuroticism $r(60) = -.05$, $p = .688$, Agreeableness $r(60) = -.16$, $p = .209$, and Conscientiousness $r(60) = -.05$, $p = .702$ (Table 2).

Table 2

Correlations Between Burnout Dimensions and Personality Types

Personality Factors		EE	DP	PA
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	.605	.311	-.053
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000*	.016*	.688
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation	-.379	-.215	.356
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003*	.099	.005*
Openness	Pearson Correlation	.272	.263	.307
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036*	.043*	.017*
Agreeableness	Pearson Correlation	-.277	-.254	-.164
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032*	.05	.209
Conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation	-.518	-.381	-.050
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000*	.003*	.702

Note. * $p < .05$. For all personality scores, higher scores indicate higher levels of those personality traits being present in the individual. High scores on the Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization and low scores on Personal Accomplishment indicate higher levels of overall burnout. EE = Emotional Exhaustion; DP = Depersonalization; PA = Personal Accomplishment

Hierarchical Regression Analysis

A hierarchical regression analyses was conducted for each of the burnout dimensions to assess the variance accounted for by each of the personality traits and specific demographic variables (Tables 3, 4, and 5). Two models were set up within each regression analysis. The first model included only demographic variables as the predictors (Model 1), and the second model included both the personality and demographic variables (Model 2).

Both Model 1, $F(10, 46) = 2.33$, $p = .026$, and Model 2, $F(15,41) = 5.51$, $p = .000$, significantly predicted Emotional Exhaustion. More specifically, Level of Job Satisfaction ($\beta = -.54$, $p < .05$) accounted for the greatest amount of the variance among all of the demographic variables in Model 1. None of the other demographic variables were significant predictors of Emotional Exhaustion (Table 3). Once the personality variables were added in to the second model, Level of Job Satisfaction ($\beta = -.359$, $p = .001$) was still the greatest predictor of Emotional Exhaustion, with the second largest predictor being the personality trait Conscientiousness ($\beta = -.347$, $p = .003$). In addition, Neuroticism ($\beta = .269$, $p = .023$) and Openness ($\beta = .240$, $p = .038$) were significant predictors of Emotional Exhaustion (Table 3). This finding is in support of earlier research that has shown a correlation between Neuroticism and increased feelings of Emotional Exhaustion (Bahner & Berkel, 2007; Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

Table 3

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Emotional Exhaustion

	Model 1			Model 2		
Variable	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Level of Job Satisfaction	-3.19	.73	-.54*	-2.14	.59	-.36*
Gender	.241	3.07	.01	.311	2.36	.01
Age	-.256	.19	-.25	-.10	.15	-.10
Race/Ethnicity	1.31	1.79	.10	1.22	1.38	.09
Highest Level Education	.745	.85	.12	-.292	.67	-.05
Job Title/Position	-.082	.30	-.04	-.205	.23	-.10
Credentials	.206	.43	.07	.297	.34	.10
Number Years Experience	.216	.32	.16	.001	.25	.00
Avge Number Hrs Per Week	.094	.18	.07	.171	.14	.13
Number of Job Changes	.046	.79	.01	-.125	.65	-.03
Neuroticism				.299	.13	.27*
Extraversion				-.218	.13	-.20
Openness to Experience				.252	.12	.24*
Agreeableness				.041	.12	.04
Conscientiousness				-.332	.10	-.35*
R^2		.34			.67	
Adjusted R^2		.19			.55	

Note. *$p < .05$.

The variance accounted for by both Model 1 predictors, $F(10, 46) = .970$, $p = .482$, and Model 2 predictors, $F(15, 41) = 1.85$, $p = .060$, among the Depersonalization burnout dimension was not as strong (Table 4). Overall, neither model significantly predicted Depersonalization scores. Model 1 results showed that none of the demographic variables alone were significant predictors of Depersonalization. However, when the personality variables where added to Model 2, Openness to Experience was the only variable that significantly accounted for the variance for Depersonalization ($\beta = .370$, $p = .018$); (Table 4).

Model 1 did not significantly predict Personal Accomplishment $F(10, 46) = .946$, $p = .502$. However, the second model (which accounted for both demographic and personality variables) significantly predicted Personal Accomplishment $F(15, 41) = 2.80$, $p = .005$ (Table 5). Level of Job Satisfaction was the highest and only significant predictor of Personal Accomplishment ($\beta = .303$, $p = .031$) within the demographic variables model (Model 1). For Model 2, Extraversion accounted for a significant portion of the variance for Personal Accomplishment ($\beta = .536$, $p = .001$) after the personality variables were added. This finding was significant in that it is in support of previous findings where prior research has found a correlation between the personality trait Extraversion and increased feeling of Personal Accomplishment (Bakker et al., 2006; Zellars et al., 2000; Zellars et al., 2004). Other predictor variables in Model 2 that significantly contributed to the variance were Age ($\beta = .520$, $p = .008$), Number of Job Changes ($\beta = .404$, $p = .033$), Level of Job Satisfaction ($\beta = .339$, $p = .008$), and Agreeableness ($\beta = -.329$, $p = .018$); (Table 5).

Table 4

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Depersonalization

	Model 1			Model 2		
Variable	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Level of Job Satisfaction	-.452	.35	-.18	-.028	.34	-.01
Gender	1.53	1.48	.16	1.61	1.36	.16
Age	-.146	.09	-.34	-.091	.09	-.21
Race/Ethnicity	1.21	.86	.21	1.42	.80	.24
Highest Level Education	.076	.41	.03	-.373	.39	-.14
Job Title/Position	-.139	.15	-.16	-.211	.14	-.25
Credentials	.029	.21	.02	.127	.19	.10
Number Years Experience	.015	.15	.03	-.043	.15	-.08
Avge Number Hrs Per Week	.133	.09	.24	.154	.08	.27
Number of Job Changes	.274	.38	.15	.147	.38	.08
Neuroticism				.029	.07	.06
Extraversion				-.093	.08	-.20
Openness to Experience				.168	.07	.37*
Agreeableness				-.034	.07	-.07
Conscientiousness				-.118	.06	-.29
R^2		.17			.40	
Adjusted R^2		-.01			.19	

Note. *$p < .05$.

Table 5

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Personal Accomplishment

	Model 1			Model 2		
Variable	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Level of Job Satisfaction	.925	.42	.30*	1.04	.37	.34*
Gender	-2.08	1.76	-.18	-2.38	1.47	-.20
Age	.144	.11	.28	.270	.10	.52*
Race/Ethnicity	-.001	1.02	.00	.231	.86	.03
Highest Level Education	.113	.49	.04	-.058	.42	-.02
Job Title/Position	-.017	.17	-.02	-.112	.15	-.11
Credentials	-.128	.25	-.08	.090	.21	.06
Number Years Experience	-.066	.18	-.10	-.247	.16	-.36
Avge Number Hrs Per Wk	.014	.10	.02	.025	.09	.04
Number of Job Changes	.337	.45	.15	.896	.41	.40*
Neuroticism				.054	.08	.10
Extraversion				.294	.08	.54*
Openness to Experience				.108	.07	.20
Agreeableness				-.191	.08	-.33*
Conscientiousness				-.020	.07	-.04
R^2		.17			.51	
Adjusted R^2		-.01			.33	

Note. *$p < .05$.

Stepwise Regression Analysis

To further examine how personality factors might be predictive of burnout when compared to other demographic variables, a stepwise regression analysis was conducted on all three dimensions resulting in three separate analyses (Table 6). A backwards method was used to analyze the data in order to evaluate how uniquely the predictor variables contribute to each burnout dimension. The probability level of .05 was used throughout the analysis. Results for the backwards stepwise analysis for Emotional Exhaustion showed the three highest predictors to be Level of Job Satisfaction (β = -.422, p = .000), Neuroticism (β = .362, p = .001), and Conscientiousness (β = -.315, p = .002); (Table 6). For the second burnout dimension, Depersonalization, results showed Openness to Experience (β = .283, p = .023) and Conscientiousness (β = -.357, p = .005) to account for the greatest amount of the variance. The third analysis on the burnout dimension Personal Accomplishment indicated Extraversion (β = .462, p = .001) to be the highest predictor. Other significant predictors of Personal Accomplishment were Age (β = .319, p = .010), Agreeableness (β = -.316, p = .010), and Level of Job Satisfaction (β = .311, p = .008); (Table 6).

Table 6

Summary of Backward Stepwise Regression Analyses on Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment

	Emotional Exhaustion		Depersonalization		Personal Accomplishment	
Variable	β	Sign.	β	Sign.	β	Sign.
Level of Job Satisfaction	-.42	.000			.31	.008
Gender						
Age					.32	.010
Race/Ethnicity						
Highest Level Education						
Job Title/Position						
Credentials						
Number Yrs Experience						
Avge Number Hrs Per Week						
Number of Job Changes						
Neuroticism	.36	.001				
Extraversion					.46	.001
Openness			.28	.023		
Agreeableness					-.32	.010
Conscientiousness	-.32	.002	-.36	.005		
R^2	.60		.21		.46	
Adjusted R^2	.58		.18		.39	

Note. $N = 60$. Cells that have no value indicate predictor variables that were excluded from the Backwards Stepwise Regression Analysis.
$p < .05$.

Chapter IV

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine relationships between personality factors and burnout among counselors. As hypothesized, specific personality traits were found to be correlated with burnout when studying the counselor population. Strong correlations were found between the personality trait Neuroticism, Emotional Exhaustion, and Depersonalization. These results support the hypothesis that counselors who tend to score higher on the Neuroticism scale of the NEO-FFI 3 (McCrae & Costa, 2010), might be more likely to become burned out in their work. On the contrary and different from what was hypothesized earlier, Neuroticism did not appear to be a predictor of reduced feelings of Personal Accomplishment.

Also consistent with predictions were the significant correlations between Extraversion, Emotional Exhaustion, and Personal Accomplishment. Further support was found within the results of the hierarchical analysis and the backward stepwise analysis which showed Extraversion to be a significant predictor of Personal Accomplishment. These results are consistent with prior research, suggesting that individuals who are more extraverted may find more pleasure or experience an increased sense of personal satisfaction in their work (Bakker et al., 2006; Zellars et al., 2000; Zellars et al., 2004) . On the other hand results of this study failed to show Extraversion as a significant predictor of Depersonalization.

Other findings of this study examined the results of correlations between Agreeableness and the burnout dimensions. As predicted, counselors who scored low on Emotional Exhaustion also scored high in Agreeableness. This finding is not surprising in that, high levels of Agreeableness as a personality trait are primarily associated with being more interpersonal, altruistic, willing to help, and being more sympathetic towards others (McCrae & Costa, 2010) While the causality of this relationship remains unknown, it may be possible that if a counselor scored high in this dimension of their personality, they may be less likely to become emotionally exhausted in his or her work. On the other hand it may be possible that as individuals become more burned out in their work, they may become less agreeable over time. On the contrary, no relationship was found between Agreeableness and low Depersonalization scores or high Personal Accomplishment scores.

Conscientiousness was significantly negatively correlated with Emotional Exhaustion and significantly negatively correlated with Depersonalization (Table 2). The significant correlation between Emotional Exhaustion and Conscientiousness was as hypothesized, but the significant correlation between Depersonalization and Conscientiousness was unexpected. It might be logical to hypothesize that individuals who score high in the area of Conscientiousness might be less likely to depersonalize their clients because of the satisfaction they may receive from caring about the details of their client's lives. Additionally, counselors who tend to be more conscientious may be less likely to be emotionally exhausted as a result of maintaining a professional relationship between themselves (the counselor) and the client. McCrae & Costa (2010) noted that individuals who score higher on Conscientiousness are believed to be more

goal-directed and may tend have higher numbers of personal achievements therefore, they may be less likely to become emotionally exhausted or to depersonalize others at work.

The most surprising result was regarding the personality trait of Openness to Experience. As discussed earlier, Openness to Experience is known as a trait encompassing the facets of fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, and values (McCrae & Costa, 2010). It was earlier predicted that Openness to Experience would show no significant relationship with both Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization scores on burnout; however, the opposite was found. Significant positive correlations were found between Openness to Experience, Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization. In addition, Openness to Experience was shown to be a significant predictor of both Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization within the hierarchical regression analyses and a significant predictor of Depersonalization in the backwards stepwise regression (Tables 3, 4, and 6). Although Openness to Experience was shown to account for some of the variance for Emotional Exhaustion, it was not the strongest predictor. However, for Depersonalization, Openness to Experience was the only significant contributor to the variance (Table 4).

One explanation could be found in McCrae & Costa's (2010) description of individuals who score high in openness. They suggest that these individuals tend to be more "curious about both inner and outer worlds, and their lives are experientially richer than those of closed individuals" (p. 20). They further explain that as a result these individuals "experience both positive and negative emotions more keenly than do closed individuals" (p. 20). Also noted earlier was the idea that counselors are believed to be

more susceptible to burnout due to their level of exposure to the difficulties and/or traumatic experiences within their patient's lives (Maslach et al., 2001; Pines &Aronson, 1988). Therefore, it is logical to believe that a counselor who is high in Openness may experience more intense negative emotions and that may explain the correlation between this personality trait and higher burnout levels.

Overall, there were both strengths and weaknesses found within this study. One weakness was regarding the method by which information was collected from participants about their primary work setting(s). Although participants were given the opportunity to check off more than one work setting, they were not asked to denote which one they spend the majority of their time. This design flaw made the statistical analysis of looking for correlations between the counselor's work setting and levels of burnout difficult. Furthermore, because of the varying number of work settings represented and the sample size, it was not possible to conduct a regression analysis to examine if any of the work settings accounted for any of the variance among burnout levels. In future research, one might better assess the correlations between work setting and burnout variables by having participants rank or order the amount of time they spend at each of their work locations, perhaps by collecting the total number of hours they work a week at each place.

On the other hand, due to the specific population of helping professionals studied, and the difficulty of recruitment, a sample size of sixty was considered to be a good number of counselors willing to participate within the geographic area where the study was conducted. Ideally, future research with the counselor population should include

larger sample sizes of each specific subgroup of counselors such as, a larger number of psychiatrists and psychologists, in order to increase the generalizability of the results.

There are many opportunities for future research as revealed in this study. One area of future research could address how personality variables may or may not contribute to the overall wellness of counselors. Because counselors are most definitely "helping professionals," we can incorporate prior knowledge of how work-related variables may play a role in burnout development, and further study how personality variables interact with those work variables. Research on the interaction between work-related variables and personality factors could lead to better methods of assessing, treating, and perhaps preventing burnout among counselors. Researching how specific personality factors may affect an individual counselor's coping skills within different work settings can further contribute to the field of psychology by helping to appropriately "match" the right counselor to the right job. By doing so, we might be able to identify effective methods of treating burnout based on individuality. Another future direction for study might include studying the ethical practices of counselors, and how burnout might interact with personality so as to affect the counselor's ability to practice ethically or remain effective with clients.

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Appendix A: Introductory Letter

Introductory Letter

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your consideration to participate in my research study. I am in the process of completing my Master's level thesis and this assignment requires that I develop and execute a research study. The study I have chosen to conduct includes a survey for participants on reviewing job-related factors and corresponding individual personality factors. The total time for participation is approximately 30 minutes. I believe that this is a worthwhile study and I am asking for your help through participation. If you would like to participate in this research study, please follow the step-by-step instructions below:

1. **Read the enclosed informed consent form. If there is any information on the consent form that is unclear, I will be available to clarify and answer any questions that you may have. I can be reached at _____.**
2. **Complete the enclosed Brief Demographic Questionnaire**
3. **Complete the two questionnaires enclosed in the envelope in the order in which you find them. Please read the instructions for each test prior to completion. Please fill out each one completely and do not leave any answers blank. If you are unsure of the directions and need further explanation or clarification, I will be available to help. It is very important that you answer each question as honestly as possible.**
4. **After completion, please place the demographic questionnaire and both tests in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided and return to me at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions regarding the survey, I can be reached at_____ or _____.**

Thank you very much for your time and assistance with this. Please let me know if I can be of any help or service to you.

Sincerely,

Stephany A. Norris
Student Researcher
Valdosta State University
stephanynorris@yahoo.com

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Informed Consent

You agree to participate in the survey study under the direction of Stephany Norris, a student researcher at Valdosta State University. You understand that the time to complete the survey will be approximately 20-30 minutes.

The purpose of this study is to examine participant's views on job related variables and corresponding personality traits. On the following pages you will be asked to provide basic demographic information and to complete two brief questionnaires.

There are no known risks involved in your participation in this study. If you need to talk to someone regarding questions or concerns you may have, you can contact the experimenter, Stephany Norris, at _____ or Dr. David Wasieleski at_____. Every effort will be made to keep your data confidential. Your responses are not identified by your name, so do not put your name on any of the materials. You can withdraw consent and discontinue participation at any time without receiving any negative consequences.

This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal Law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-259-5045 or irb@valdosta.edu.

Any questions that you may have about this research other than the ones cited in the paragraph above should be directed to: Stephany Norris,_____or_____.

Your completion of this survey indicates your willingness to participate.

Appendix C: Brief Demographic Questionnaire

Brief Demographic Questionnaire

Age_____ **Gender** (Circle One): M F

Race (Circle One): Caucasian African American Hispanic Asian Other:_____

Highest level of Education Completed (Circle One)

High School/GED Bachelors Degree Masters Degree Doctorate Degree

Primary Work Environment/Setting (Check all that apply)

- o Private Practice
- o Outpatient Center (not private practice) (i.e., Community Service Board related agency, Hospital Outpatient Center)
- o Psychiatric Inpatient Facility (Acute Care)
- o School setting (i.e., elementary school)
- o Opiate Dependency Treatment Center
- o Substance Abuse/Dependency Specific Rehab Center (Inpatient or Outpatient)
- o Residential Treatment Center for Children/Adolescents
- o Group Home for Children/Adolescents
- o Halfway House
- o Shelter (i.e., Battered Women or Homeless)
- o In Home Counseling Services (i.e., DFCS referred or ACT team)
- o Other not listed (Please do not give the name of your organization):

  _____

Job Title or Position Held

_____

Current Credentials (Licensure/Certifications held)

_____

_____

Total Number of Years of Experience:_____

Number of Hours of work per week: _____

Brief Description of Job Duties_____

_____

How many times have you changed jobs in your current career field? _____

Rate your current level of job satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10 (circle one):

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all Satisfied				Neutral					Very Satisfied

Appendix D: Institutional Review Board (IRB) Exemption Letter

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
for the Protection of Human Research Participants

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-02630-2010 **INVESTIGATOR:** Stephany Norris

PROJECT TITLE: Examining the big five personality factors as predictors of burnout among counselors

DETERMINATION:

☑ This research protocol is exempt from Institutional Review Board oversight under Exemption Category(ies) 2. You may begin your study immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

☐ Exemption of this research protocol from Institutional Review Board oversight is pending. You may **not** begin your research until you have addressed the following concerns/questions and the IRB has formally notified you of exemption. You may send your responses to irb@valdosta.edu.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:

Although not a requirement for exemption, the following suggestions are offered by the IRB Administrator to enhance the protection of participants and/or strengthen the research proposal. If you make any of these suggested changes to your protocol, please submit revisions so that IRB has a complete protocol on file.

Barbara H. Gray Date: 8/18/11
Barbara H. Gray, IRB Administrator

Thank you for submitting an IRB application. Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-259-5045.

cc: Dr. Don Leech (Dept. Head)
Dr. James Pate (Advisor)

Form Revised: 09.02.2009