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**International Communication Association Audit:
An Exploratory Investigation into Trait or State**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the ability of traits to predict outcomes of the International Communication Association (ICA) Audit. Extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, communication apprehension (CA), and informational receiver apprehension (IRA) were examined in relation to the ICA Audit. Results of a canonical correlation indicated that there were no significant relationships evident between extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. There were no significant relationships between CA and IRA with the Audit. The results indicate support for the Audit's use as a state measure of organizational communication.

Key Words: ICA Audit, extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, communication apprehension, informational receiver apprehension, organizational communication

In today's ever-expanding business environment, the ability of organizations to function effectively continues to increase in importance. More than ever, it is imperative to understand the factors which contribute to overall organizational effectiveness. One such factor is the communication that occurs amongst organizational members. Communication within organizations is a process of conveying information, ideas, opinions, and plans purposefully between individuals (Keyton, 2005). This process has been affected by changes in the organizational structure, as organizations have moved from small and informal to large and complex (Tourish & Hargie, 2004). As technology continues to advance and organizations push to become part of the global market, effective communication becomes a critical part of a functioning organization. Such communication is fostered through active engagement and productivity and establishes trust and respect with members in the organization (HR Magazine, 2008).

In order to optimize results, many organizations have employed tools to assess the status of their internal communication (Hogard, Ellis, Ellis, & Barker, 2002). Utilizing communication audits to assess communication that occurs between organizational members is one way to construct a broad view of organizational life. One traditional tool that has been used is the International Communication Association (ICA) Audit that lends understanding to the communication practices that occur within an organization. Through examining various aspects of the organization across eight specific dimensions, organizational leaders can detect possible communication problems and begin to take appropriate action to address the deficits (Goldhaber & Roger, 1979).

As currently applied, the ICA Audit examines communication within the organization with the assumption that it is assessing the state of the organization, without addressing possible individual variables. Specifically, the Audit does not take into account individuals' traits that may affect their communicative behaviors. Personality research provides insight into the ways that individuals consistently communicate due to their personal temperament (McCroskey, Richmond, Johnson, & Smith, 2004). Drawing upon this concept, the influence that traits have on communication in organizations may in fact be a more pragmatic assessment. Consequently, this study seeks to investigate the possible relationship between trait variables and an employee's performance on the ICA Audit.

International Communication Association Audit

In response to inefficient organizational communication measurement tools, the International Communication Association (ICA) developed a detailed audit that sought to provide a standardized measure of variables related to organizational communication (Brooks, Callicot, & Siegerdt, 1979). Goldhaber and Krivonos (1977) identified a number of limitations with the prior measurement tools that diminished generalizability and predictability. These limitations included use of a single instrument and/or a single organization for data collection, use of insufficient samples and spans of time, and exclusion of actual organizational member behaviors.

The goal of the ICA Audit was to establish an assessment that produced "normed data ... to enable comparisons between organizations" (Goldhaber & Krivonos, 1977, p. 43). Furthermore, they anticipated that the Audit would externally validate several organizational communication propositions and theories, as well as provide channels through which to conduct further research. More importantly, the Audit has the ability to provide "attitudinal, perceptual, and behavioral data" on communication processes within the organization (Goldhaber & Krivonos, 1977, p. 51).

The final product was a collection of instruments used to measure organizational members' perceptions of communication within their organization. Five measurements were developed: a questioning survey, interviews, network analysis, critical incident analysis, and a communication diary (Brooks, Callicot, & Siegerdt, 1979). These measurements focus on a number of

communication variables within the organization such as information exchange (e.g., amount, accuracy, and timeliness), sources of information, actions of organizational members, communication channels, and networks. By examining the outcomes of communication, the auditors can also articulate the level of effectiveness within the organization, as well as the satisfaction of individual members (Brooks, Callicot, & Siegrerdt, 1979). The creation of the ICA Audit is grounded in the approach that individual organizations can be assessed and appropriate solutions to organizational problems can be prescribed (DeWine & James, 1988).

However, the final product of the Audit is merely a snapshot of the organization that “‘takes a picture’ of internal communication processes in an organization at a given point in time” (Brooks, Callicot, & Siegrerdt, 1979, p. 132). Thus, the Audit serves as only a state measure of the organization and its members. This calls into question the ability of the ICA Audit to predict outcomes within the organization (Sincoff & Goyer, 1977).

One possible solution to these criticisms would be to apply instruments that measure the communicative and personality traits of individual members. Such a trait measure could provide a better means of understanding communication processes within organizations. Because traits are behaviors that tend to remain constant across situations, these instruments could aid in an explanation of the Audit’s findings and increase its generalizability. In addition, a trait approach to these audits would allow for more predictability, as well as a longitudinal picture of organizational life. The current situational perspective counters the approach that individual traits affect organizational communication. Finding associations among the ICA Audit and personality and communication traits would provide insight as to which perspective, trait or state, may be more relevant in assessing organizations. Applying a trait measure could be an imperative inclusion to the Audit that has implications for organizations.

In order to establish the relationship between traits and the ICA Audit, the components of the Audit will be compared to five specific traits: Eysenck’s (1967) three primary personality factors (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism), communication apprehension, and informational receiver apprehension. Establishing relationships between these traits across organizations would provide support that the ICA Audit could be used as a trait measurement tool. Furthermore, insights into how traits influence organizational communication would allow organizations to use the ICA as a predictive and/or explanatory tool rather than a diagnostic tool. This information leads to the following research question:

RQ1: Is the ICA Audit a state or trait measurement of communication behavior?

Temperament

The trait approach to personality forwards that individuals possess specific characteristics that are measurable and can be used to explain and predict behavior across situations (Funder, 2004). Research has continued to reveal the relevance that individual personality has on organizational outcomes such as satisfaction (Ilies & Judge, 2002), conflict (Wayne, Musisca, and Fleeson, 2004), motivation (Tibbles, Richmond, McCroskey, & Weber, 2008), and burnout (Zellers, Hochwarter, Perrewe, Hoffman, & Ford, 2004). Eysenck (1967) stated that an individual’s temperament could be condensed into three primary orthogonal traits: extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. Extraversion is associated with gaining stimulation from sociability and can be described by behavioral indicators such as assertiveness, outgoingness, gregariousness, and talkativeness (Eysenck, 1967). Neuroticism is associated with emotional instability and describes individuals who are anxious, nervous, and who frequently experience emotional highs and lows (Eysenck, 1967; Weaver, 1998). Psychoticism is associated with impulsivity and social deviance and is illustrated by behaviors such as sensation-seeking, egocentricity, and autonomy (Eysenck &

Eysenck, 1985; Weaver, 1998). The three dimensions of personality described by Eysenck (1967) are seen as influencing an individual's primary communication style through cognitive, affective, and physiological mechanisms.

This three factor framework has been studied in conjunction with a number of specific communication traits such as communication apprehension (e.g., Beatty, McCroskey, & Heisel, 1998), receiver apprehension (e.g., Hayhurst, 2002), communicator style (e.g., Weaver, 1998), interaction involvement (e.g., Cegala, 1982), listening style (e.g., Hayhurst, 2002; Weaver, Watson, & Barker, 1996), and verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness (e.g., McCroskey, Heisel, & Richmond, 2001). In terms of communication, extraversion has been associated with expressive and supportive communication, neuroticism with compliance and frustration, and psychoticism with distant and dismal interaction (Weaver, 1998).

One primary way to link the ICA Audit to temperament is through information-seeking behaviors. The Audit captures relevant information-seeking behaviors of employees that should be related to the established behaviors of the different personality types. Tidwell and Sias (2005) examined information-seeking behaviors with both extraversion and neuroticism and found that extraverts had a higher frequency of using an overt method of information seeking. Conversely, individuals high in neuroticism did not use overt forms of information seeking when communicating with others. A high level of engagement in information seeking may also be attributed to obtaining information for a specific purpose. Since those demonstrating high extraversion are observed as desiring performance feedback for the purpose of self-improvement, they would look to information seeking as a specific way to better themselves (Northcraft & Ashford, 1990). Furthermore, neurotic individuals' decreased overt communication follows suit with the negative association that neuroticism has with interpersonal interaction in general (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

Psychoticism is described by impulsivity, egocentricity, autonomy, and social deviance (Weaver, 1998). In regard to information seeking, the influence that psychoticism has on communicative behavior is diminished due to the lack of interest in interacting with other individuals (Amiel & Sargent, 2004). Due to their unpredictable and evasive behavior, individuals high in this temperament do not interact well with others (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1985; Richendoller & Weaver, 1994). Furthermore, their focus of interaction is self-serving and thus seeking out information from others is not a priority (Amiel & Sargent, 2004).

Aside from information relay, the ICA Audit also measures outcomes of communication that occur in the organization. In regard to communication behavior in the organizational setting, Eysenck's three personality dimensions have also been studied in conjunction with the three trait-based organizational orientations conceptualized by McCroskey, Richmond, Johnson, and Smith (2004). Each orientation describes consistent communicative behaviors that individuals display in the organization. Upward mobiles, identified as individuals having strong affinity for the organization and possessing goals for advancement, are positively associated with extraversion. In other words, individuals with high aspirations and pride in their organization are also individuals that are likely outgoing, assertive, and social. Indifferents, identified as individuals having little care for their organization because they only work to make a living, and ambivalents, identified as individuals who do not adapt well to their organization because they dislike rules and authority, are both found to be positively related to neuroticism and psychoticism (McCroskey et al., 2004). Thus, individuals possessing these types of orientations are not social within their organizational environment and are likely to feel anxious or frustrated when interacting with coworkers. The differing perceptions in regard to each orientation type have been viewed with outcome indicators

such as employee level of satisfaction and motivation (McCroskey, McCroskey, & Richmond, 2005). In terms of both job satisfaction and motivation, upward mobiles have higher levels of fulfillment and stimulation from their jobs than either indifferents or ambivalents.

Additionally, the ICA Audit also assesses member relationships that occur in the organization. Individual temperament influences the way that various relationships are perceived in the organization (McCroskey, Richmond, Johnson, & Smith, 2004). Organizational culture provides a foundation by which individual members interact. Judge and Cable (1997) found that extraverts greatly preferred team-based organizational cultures. Members high in extraversion are found to favor being in groups because they are stimulated by social interaction (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Conversely, individuals high in neuroticism are much less inclined to join team-based cultures because of the inherent anxiety that is descriptive of this temperament, as well as their rigid, inadaptability, and timid interpersonal behavior (Wiggins, 1996). Individuals possessing high levels of psychoticism, much in line with the depiction of the ambivalent employee described by McCroskey et al. (2004), do not fare well with other individuals due to their lack of agreeableness and their fondness for social deviance (Eysenck, Eysenck, & Barrett, 1985).

Based on the relationships described, the dimensions of temperament have been associated to various communication behaviors. However with the various relationships established, the existing link among extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism and the various sections of the ICA Audit remain unknown. Therefore, the following research question is forwarded:

RQ2: To what extent are the eight sections of the ICA audit meaningfully associated with temperament (i.e., extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism)?

Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension (CA) is defined as “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (McCroskey, 1977, p. 78). Individuals with low levels of communication apprehension actively seek out and enjoy communicating with others. In contrast, individuals displaying high levels of CA tend to avoid situations dealing with communication and interaction with others (Beatty, 1987). Furthermore, these individuals feel anxious when faced with situations requiring communication (Daly & McCroskey, 1975). Specifically, high apprehensives have been shown to be less likely to engage in self-disclosure (McCroskey & Richmond, 1977) and less likely to be satisfied with their communication with friends, acquaintances, and strangers (Rubin & Rubin, 1989).

Communication apprehension has serious implications within the workplace, and research conducted to date reveals negative outcomes for both the individual and the organization. For instance, Bartoo and Sias (2004) found a negative relationship between a supervisor’s level of CA and the amount of information an employee receives. Cole and McCroskey (2003) also examined the effect of supervisors’ levels of CA, reporting that supervisors with high levels of CA are perceived as less credible than supervisors with lower levels of CA. Furthermore, they found that subordinates reported more negative affect toward apprehensive supervisors than toward supervisors possessing lower levels of CA. In addition, an employee’s level of communication apprehension also has implications for the supervisor/subordinate relationship. Madlock, Martin, Bogdan, and Ervin (2007) identified a negative relationship between CA and the quality of the leader-member exchange between supervisor and employee.

Communication apprehension affects individual job choice and job satisfaction as well. Daly and McCroskey (1975) found that individuals with higher levels of CA tend to choose careers with lower communication requirements than individuals with lower levels. Harville (1990) discovered a negative relationship between CA levels and job satisfaction, communication requirements, and

opportunities individuals have to change jobs if dissatisfied in their current careers. Individuals with higher levels of CA also have been found to hold lower positions in the company and report lower salaries than individuals with lower levels of CA (Winiacki & Ayres, 1999). Further implications for employees possessing high levels of CA include a decreased likelihood of emerging as leaders in work groups (Limon & La France, 2005), as well as an increased probability of information overload (Bartoo & Sias, 2004).

Considering communication apprehension is persistent over time, outcomes of the ICA Audit have the potential to be affected by this attribute. In particular, given the propensity for individuals with higher levels of communication apprehension to avoid communication (Beatty, 1987), it is likely that these individuals will be inclined to send less information. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is posited:

H1: There will be a negative relationship between an individual's level of communication apprehension and the amount of information he/she sends.

Another section of the ICA Audit that pertains to communication apprehension is organizational communication relationships. Gibbs, Rosenfeld, and Javidi (1994) found a negative relationship between employees' levels of communication apprehension and their satisfaction with their supervisors, as well as between employees' levels of communication apprehension and their propensity to complain, blame others, and display annoyance with other employees. Due to these relational implications of communication apprehension, it is likely that individuals possessing high levels of communication apprehension will have lower quality organizational communication relationships. Consequently, the following hypothesis is proffered:

H2: There will be a negative relationship between an individual's level of communication apprehension and reports of organizational communication relationships.

Informational Receiver Apprehension

In addition to CA, informational receiver apprehension (IRA) is a pertinent trait-like variable that is important to study in relation to the ICA Audit. Unlike CA, IRA focuses on the person receiving information. IRA was developed as a reconceptualization of receiver apprehension (Wheless, 1975; Wheless, Preiss, & Gayle, 1997). Wheless (1975) identified four issues relevant to receiver apprehension: anxiety, misinterpretation, cognitive adjustment, and inadequate information processing. Extant research on receiver apprehension focused the communication variable as either trait or state with five primary outcome categories including processing anxiety (e.g., Beatty, 1985; Wheless, 1975), listening effectiveness (e.g., Fitch-Hauser, Barker, & Hughes, 1990; Roberts, 1986), information processing effectiveness (e.g., Bock & Bock, 1984; Preiss, Wheless, & Allen, 1990), information processing complexity (e.g., Sheahan, 1976), and educational level (e.g., McDowel & McDowel, 1978; Preiss et al., 1990). IRA shifted the focus to a trait perspective, as well as focused on the cognitive processes which occur (Wheless et al., 1997).

Wheless et al. (1997) expanded the notion of receiver apprehension from the four primary issues to also include the in-process cognition involved with receiving information. They defined informational receiver apprehension as "a pattern of anxiety and antipathy that filters information reception, perception and processing, and/or adjustment (psychologically, verbally, physically) associated with complexity, abstractness, and flexibility" (p. 166). They concluded that an individual has an informational receiver threshold for which he/she attempts to process information. However, once this threshold is crossed a person has difficulties in receiving and processing information (Wheless et al., 1997).

The key characteristics of IRA include complexity, abstractness, and flexibility. Complexity refers to the amount and detail of information as well as the implicit and cognitive schemas an

individual uses to interpret information received (Wheeless, Eddleman-Spears, Magness, & Preiss, 2005). Abstractness conveys the receiver's ability to grasp information nuances and his/her ability to reason with the abstract (Wheeless et al., 1997). Flexibility concentrates on the open-mindedness of a person as well as the adaptability to information provided (Wheeless et al., 1997).

These three characteristics led to the development of a three-factor construct of IRA: listening to information, reading information, and receiving (e.g., written or oral) intellectual information (Wheeless et al., 1997). According to Wheeless et al., each factor measures a distinct aspect of how anxiety affects the perceptions and cognitive processes of receiving information that differs from previous measures of receiver apprehension. The listening to information factor focuses on the complexity and abstractness of the information received. The reading information factor relates to the complexity, abstractness, and flexibility that interrupt the reading of received information; whereas, the intellectual information factor focuses solely on cognitive flexibility. As a whole, the three factors of IRA provide the most comprehensive look at informational receiver apprehension to date (Wheeless et al., 1997).

Since IRA is an outgrowth of receiver apprehension, research findings on receiver apprehension relates to informational receiver apprehension (Wheeless et al., 1997). Unlike communication apprehension, minimal research on receiver apprehension or informational receiver apprehension has been conducted in the workplace/organizational context (Winiiecki & Ayres, 1999). Winiiecki and Ayres sought to understand the relationship between communication apprehension, receiver apprehension, and organizational advancement. They found that receiver apprehension was correlated to lower salaries but not to position in the company. They suggested that both communication apprehension as well as receiver apprehension may prevent employees from processing and receiving information in ways that hinder employee productivity, thus reducing merit increases.

Researchers have sought to uncover potential factors that contribute to the existence of IRA (Ledbetter and Schrodt, 2008; Wheeless & Schrodt, 2001) and relationships with other trait variables (Schrodt & Wheeless, 2001). Wheeless and Schrodt found that both religious beliefs and political views were shown to have a small but definite relationship to IRA. They noted that people who belonged to more conservative, constrained, fundamental political or religious groups had greater levels of informational receiver apprehension (i.e., listening and intellectual factors). In addition, Ledbetter and Schrodt concluded that family conversation orientations (e.g., unrestrained) were negatively related to IRA; whereas, family conformity orientations (e.g., high or low) were positively associated. Schrodt and Wheeless found that IRA (i.e., listening and intellectual) was associated with trait argumentativeness and verbal aggression. More specifically, IRA accounted for greater variance in argumentativeness than verbal aggression because responses to complex messages were often simplistic and irrational.

Informational receiver apprehension has been shown to affect outcomes in the educational and technological contexts. Schrodt, Wheeless, and Ptacek (2000) found that student GPAs and motivations were decreased by IRA. Although both accounted for low variance, the authors argued the variance was still meaningful because of the trait-like conceptualization of IRA. Wheeless et al. (2005) investigated IRA and technology aversion. They discovered that people with higher levels of IRA faced with interactive reception demands experienced anxiety and fear. They reported that this leads to source avoidance. In combination, the previous research led to the following hypotheses:

H3: Individuals with higher levels of IRA will report a surplus discrepancy between the amount of information they need to receive and the amount of information they actually receive.

H4: There will be a negative relationship between an individual's level of informational receiver apprehension and the amount of information he/she reports sending.

H5: There will be a negative relationship between an individual's level of informational receiver apprehension and his/her sources discrepancy value.

Method

Procedures

Participants were recruited from three undergraduate communication courses at a large mid-Atlantic university. To qualify for this study, participants were informed that they needed to be currently employed. Participants were provided with a consent letter informing them that they must be 18 years or older to participate and that their participation was completely voluntary and anonymous. Participants were informed that they were taking part in a study about organizational communication. Afterwards, they completed one of three self-report questionnaires which included either a measure of temperament (i.e., extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism), communication apprehension, or informational receiver apprehension. In addition, each survey contained subsections of the ICA Audit.

Trait 1: Temperament

Participants were comprised of 138 undergraduate students including 82 (59%) males and 49 (36 %) females and 7 (5%) did not report their sex. (See table 1 for complete demographic profile) In following the age categories presented in the original ICA Audit, participants' ages were: 129 (94%) under 30 and 1 (1%) 41-50, and 8 (6%) who did not report their age. Participants reported that the highest level of education completed ranged from high school graduate (29 %) to college graduate (5 %), though the majority reported completing some college or technical school (59 %).

Participants were asked to provide additional information to describe their employment within the organization. The majority of participants reported being employed part-time (71 %). Additionally, 20 (15 %) were employed full-time. Again following the ICA Audit categories, participants' tenure with the organization fell into 2 categories: 63 (77%) 1-5 years and 2 (2%) 6-10 years. Seventeen (21%) did not report their tenure. Overall, 42 (30 %) reported they were currently looking for a new job.

Measurement. In order to measure temperament, a short version of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) scale was used (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1985). The scale is a multidimensional instrument comprised of 32 items that measure participants' levels of extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. Participants were instructed to answer how closely their attitudes reflect the statement provided on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The extraversion dimension is comprised of 10 items that include statements such as "I enjoy meeting new people." The neuroticism dimension is comprised of 10 items that include statements such as "My mood often goes up and down." The psychoticism dimension is comprised of 12 items that include statements such as "I prefer to go my own way rather than act by the rules." Item answers were recoded so that higher scores indicated higher levels in each extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. The three subscales have been used extensively and have been found to be independently valid and reliable (Valencic, Beatty, Rudd, Dobos, & Heisel, 1998). Extraversion typically produces alphas ranging from $\alpha = .80$ to $.82$, neuroticism $\alpha = .81$ to $.86$, and psychoticism $\alpha = .68$ to $.76$ (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1985). For this study, the following Cronbach's alphas were achieved: extraversion $\alpha = .83$ ($M = 37.67$, $SD = 5.75$), neuroticism $\alpha = .85$ ($M = 22.73$, $SD = 6.58$), and psychoticism $\alpha = .60$ ($M = 27.04$, $SD = 4.85$).

Table 1

		Temperament	Communication Apprehension	Informational Receiver Apprehension
Income Type	Salaried	11.6%	9.5%	9.3%
	Hourly	72.1%	77.4%	8.4%
	Piece work	2.3%	1.2%	0%
	Commission	2.3%	2.4%	0%
	Other	2.3%	9.5%	2.7%
Position in Organization	Don't supervise anybody	59.3%	65.5%	68.0%
	First time supervisor	9.3%	13.1%	8.0%
	Middle management	11.6%	10.7%	13.3%
	Top management	1.2%	2.4%	0%
	Other	11.6%	8.3%	10.7%
Level of Education	Less than high school	0%	0%	0%
	High school graduate	30.2%	29.8%	41.3%
	Some college or technical school	52.3%	60.7%	49.3%
	Completed college or technical school	8.1%	9.5%	8.0%
	Graduate work	2.3%	0%	0%
Training	No training at all	23.3%	38.1%	32.0%
	Little training	22.1%	31.0%	32.0%
	Some training	22.1%	28.6%	30.7%
	Extensive training	7.0%	2.4%	5.3%
Salary	Less than \$9,000	52.3%	76.2%	74.7%
	\$9,000 to \$11, 999	5.8%	9.5%	13.3%
	\$12,000 to \$ 17,999	7.0%	6.0%	2.7%
	\$18,000 to \$25,000	2.3%	3.6%	1.3%
	Over \$25,000	4.7%	3.6%	2.7%

ICA Audit. To assess various communication components within the participants' organizations, all eight subsections of the ICA Audit (Downs, 1988) were used. These included sending information, receiving information, follow-up, sources of information, timeliness, organizational communication relationships, organizational outcomes, and channels of communication. Reliabilities reported for the overall ICA Audit have been strong, ranging from .76 to .90 (DeWine, 1988). DeWine and James (1988) also reported an acceptable reliability for the overall scale .93, as well as for the each subsection ranging from .79 - .93. In this study, the subsections reported acceptable reliabilities: receiving information now $\alpha = .76$ ($M = 40.01$, $SD = 8.46$) and needed $\alpha = .86$ ($M = 40.57$, $SD = 8.69$), sending information now $\alpha = .81$ ($M = 38.32$, $SD = 9.39$) and needed $\alpha = .91$ ($M = 38.48$, $SD = 9.73$), and follow-up now $\alpha = .77$ ($M = 16.12$, $SD = 3.93$) and needed $\alpha = .82$ ($M = 16.76$, $SD = 4.27$), sources of information now $\alpha = .83$ ($M = 27.60$, $SD = 6.60$) and needed $\alpha = .89$ ($M = 28.93$, $SD = 7.63$), timeliness $\alpha = .68$ ($M = 19.96$, $SD = 3.98$), organizational communication relationships $\alpha = .92$ ($M = 68.60$, $SD = 12.76$), organizational outcomes $\alpha = .92$ ($M = 45.39$, $SD = 8.75$), channels now $\alpha = .76$ ($M = 23.94$, $SD = 5.81$) and needed $\alpha = .82$ ($M = 23.50$, $SD = 6.60$).

Trait 2: Communication Apprehension

Participants were comprised of 84 undergraduate students including 51 (61%) males, 32 (38%) females, and 1 (1%) who did not report their gender. (See table 1 for complete demographic profile) In following the age categories presented in the original ICA Audit, participants' ages were: 80 (95%) under 30 and 1 (1%) 41-50, and 3 (4%) who did not report their age. Participants reported that the highest level of education completed ranged from high school graduate (30%) to college or technical school graduate (10%), though the majority had completed some college or technical school (61%).

Participants were asked to provide additional information to describe their employment within the organization. The majority of participants reported being employed part-time (58%). Additionally, 12% were employed full-time. Again following the ICA Audit categories, participants' tenure with the organization fell into 2 categories: 77 (92%) 1-5 years and 4 (5%) 6-10 years. Three (4%) did not report their tenure. Overall, 32 (38%) reported they were currently looking for a new job.

Measurement. To assess communication apprehension, the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) was used (McCroskey, 1982). This 24-item scale measures communication apprehension in four contexts: small group (e.g., "I am tense and nervous while participating in group discussions."), interpersonal (e.g., "While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous."), the public setting (e.g., "I feel relaxed while giving a speech."), and meeting (e.g., "Generally, I am nervous when I have to participate in a meeting."). Responses were captured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Data were recoded so that higher responses indicate higher levels of CA. Cole and McCroskey (2003) reported a high Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .96$). In this study, the overall alpha was $\alpha = .93$ ($M = 64.99$, $SD = 16.09$).

ICA Audit. To assess different communication components within the participants' organizations, two subsections of the ICA Audit (Downs, 1988) were used. These included sending information and organizational relationships. Data collected from the sending information now and organizational relationships sections were used to test the proposed relationships between CA and the Audit. In this study, the subsections reported acceptable reliabilities: sending information now $\alpha = .89$ ($M = 39.10$, $SD = 9.28$) and needed $\alpha = .89$ ($M = 39.19$, $SD = 9.12$) and organizational communication relationships $\alpha = .91$ ($M = 68.48$, $SD = 11.58$).

Trait 3: Informational Receiver Apprehension

Participants were comprised of 75 undergraduate students including 40 (53 %) males and 35 (47 %) females. (See table 1 for complete demographic profile) In following the age categories presented in the original ICA Audit, participants' ages were: 74 (99%) under 30 and 1 (1%) who did not report their age. The participants reported that the highest level of education completed ranged from high school graduate (41 %) to completed college (8 %), though the majority reported completing some college or technical school (49 %).

Participants were asked to provide additional information to describe their employment within the organization. The majority of participants reported being employed part-time (69 %). Additionally, 10 (13 %) were employed full-time. Again following the ICA Audit categories, participants' tenure with the organization fell into 2 categories: 67 (89%) 1-5 years and 4 (5%) 6-10 years. Four (5%) did not report their tenure. Overall, 34 (45 %) reported they were currently looking for a new job.

Measurement. To assess informational receiver apprehension, two factors, listening (IRAT-L) and intellectual flexibility (IRAT-IF), of the Informational Reception Apprehension Test (IRAT) were used (Wheless, Preiss, & Gayle, 1997). The items measuring reading including those in the intellectual flexibility section were not used. This 20-item scale contains 13 statements measuring the listening factor (e.g., "While listening, I get nervous when a lot of information is given at once.") and 7 statements measuring the intellectual flexibility factor (e.g., "I enjoy listening to people discuss intellectual problems."). Responses were captured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Data were recoded so that higher responses indicate higher levels of IRA. Ledbetter and Schrodtt (2008) reported acceptable Cronbach's alpha levels: IRAT-L $\alpha = .91$ and IRAT-IF $\alpha = .84$. In this study, each subscale received acceptable alphas: IRAT-L $\alpha = .92$ ($M = 35.93$, $SD = 9.84$), and IRAT-IF $\alpha = .78$ ($M = 19.35$, $SD = 4.70$).

ICA Audit. To assess various communication components within the participants' organizations, three subsections of the ICA Audit (Downs, 1988) were used. These included sending information, receiving information, and sources of information. For these sections, participants reported on the amount of information communicated now and the amount desired. A discrepancy score was computed by subtracting the now from the desired and was used to test the proposed relationships between IRA and the Audit. In this study, the subsections also reported acceptable reliabilities: sending information now $\alpha = .87$ ($M = 39.49$, $SD = 8.17$) and needed $\alpha = .88$ ($M = 40.39$, $SD = 8.59$), receiving information now $\alpha = .91$ ($M = 37.97$, $SD = 9.10$) and needed $\alpha = .91$ ($M = 41.60$, $SD = 9.13$), and sources of information now $\alpha = .86$ ($M = 22.71$, $SD = 6.73$) and needed $\alpha = .85$ ($M = 28.27$, $SD = 6.91$).

Results

Trait 1: Temperament

In order to answer research question two concerning the relationship among temperament and the sections included in the ICA Audit, a canonical correlation was conducted. The canonical correlation involved temperament (i.e., extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism) and all eight sections of the ICA Audit. The results of the analysis failed to produce any significant roots (Wilks' lambda = .70, $F [24, 186] = 1.02$, $p = .45$). Thus, this examination failed to produce any support for meaningful relationships among all variables.

Trait 2: Communication Apprehension

Hypothesis one posited that individuals with higher levels of communication apprehension will report sending less information than individuals with lower levels of communication apprehension. Results of a Pearson correlation indicate that this relationship is not significant,

($r = -.13, p = .25$). Hypothesis one was not supported.

Hypothesis two forwarded that there will be a negative relationship between an individual's level of communication apprehension and reports of organizational communication relationships. Results of a Pearson correlation indicate that this relationship is not significant, ($r = -.22, p = .06$). Hypothesis two was not supported.

Trait 3: Informational Receiver Apprehension

Hypothesis three posited that individuals with higher levels of IRA will report a positive discrepancy between the amount of information they need to receive and the amount of information they actually receive. Results of Pearson correlation indicate that this relationship was not significant ($r = .00, p = .98$). Hypothesis three was not supported.

Hypothesis four posited that there will be a negative relationship between an individual's level of IRA and the amount of information he/she reports sending. Results of Pearson correlation indicate that this relationship was not significant ($r = .12, p = .36$). Hypothesis four was not supported.

Hypothesis five posited that there will be a negative relationship between an individual's level of IRA and the sources discrepancy value. Results of Pearson correlation indicate that this relationship was not significant ($r = .17, p = .22$). Hypothesis five was not supported.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the role that individual traits have on communication activities within the organization. More importantly, the researchers sought to show that traits could predict the outcomes of the ICA Audit and that it is not just a measurement of the state of the organization. The results of this study fell in line with previous research that addresses and supports the validity of ICA Audit as a whole (e.g., Richetto & Dennis, 1976; Scott, 1999; Spiker & Daniels, 1981). The hypotheses and research questions predicted relationships between sections of the ICA Audit with temperament (i.e., extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism), communication apprehension, and informational receiver apprehension. However, through the general lack of significant findings, this study showed that extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, communication apprehension, and informational receiver apprehension do not predict outcomes of the ICA Audit. This study also produced support for the use of the ICA Audit as a diagnostic tool for communication assessment in organizations.

Individual traits are based on the assertion that one's behavior stays consistent across situations (Funder, 2004). Therefore, specific traits are posited to be constant across organizations and situations. Drawing on this premise, the ICA Audit was found to be unrelated to the assessment of trait behavior. The overall consistency for traits across all sections of the ICA Audit failed to materialize. As a holistic indicator of relationships between temperament and perceived communication in organizations, the use of the canonical correlation tested for meaningful relationships across the variables of temperament and sections of the ICA Audit. As noted earlier, the failure to produce any significant relationships seems to indicate that the included personality traits are not able to predict outcomes on the ICA Audit.

Two possible reasons emerge as to why the included traits are not predictive of outcomes on the ICA Audit. First, as argued by Raunonen (1998), a loss in accuracy occurs when traits are studied at a higher level (i.e., primary traits rather than sub-traits) than necessary. Due to the fact that the traits examined in this study were not specifically descriptive of organizational behaviors, the use of the five traits (i.e., ENP, communication apprehension, and informational receiver apprehension) may not be the most telling of trait-like behavior across organizational situations. The concept of organizational orientations posited by McCroskey, Richmond, Johnson, and Smith

(2004) may have been a more accurate variable to use when looking for associations with the ICA Audit.

A second possible reason that the traits examined were not associated with the ICA Audit is that the Audit, as designed, truly captures a snapshot of the organization. This study supports the notion that communication within the organizational setting is based more on state or situational factors than trait factors. The distinction between the two factors lies in the changing nature of an individual. Eysenck (1983) explained that traits endure across time and situation; whereas, states are attributes that by nature are changeable. Thus, this study provided support for the dynamic nature of individuals and their communication in their organization.

Furthermore, communication within an organization does not rely solely on the traits of a given individual. Greenbaum (1974) described relationships between an individual's communication behavior and organizational purposes, procedures, and structures. In particular, Greenbaum explained that organizations with different communication policies will elicit diverse behaviors from its employees. Thus, the current study supports Greenbaum's conclusion that organizational communication is influenced more by state attributes.

Finally, Brooks, Callicot, and Siegerdt (1979) conducted a follow-up study with 16 organizations that had participated in previous examinations using the ICA Audits. They found that the majority of organizations had implemented the suggested changes including new communication practices. The organizations also felt that the Audit and implemented changes provided "some" to "significant" improvement in the communication practices. Brooks et al. point to these findings as support and validation for the ICA Audit as a diagnostic tool. If traits could predict an individual's communicative behavior as measured by the ICA Audit, then Brooks et al. should not have found significant changes in the studied organizations.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study represents an initial attempt to address the association of trait indicators with the situational assessment of organizations provided through the ICA Audit. Although results failed to indicate that traits could predict the outcome of the Audit, future research should continue to validate the ICA Audit as a state measurement by testing it against other trait indicators. Furthermore, the use of other trait-like indicators that specifically reflect communication behavior in the organization, such as the specific organizational orientations identified by McCroskey, Richmond, Johnson, and Smith (2004) may more accurately reflect the behavior that individuals consistently have across organizations.

In addition, to effectively measure any organizational variable, it is imperative that its members are fully assimilated into the organization's culture. One limitation of this study was that the sample was skewed toward a young, less-tenured working population. At the outset of this study, the researchers concluded that a college population should not affect the outcome since this study took a trait perspective. However, the student sample may have different perceptions of the communication activities that occur in their organizations than the mainstream or more established population. This change in perception may be due to their academic involvement, limited experience, low tenure within their organization, and/or their motives for working in the organization.

In regard to the sample size, the canonical correlation suffered from a lower sample because of incomplete participant responses. However, this did not affect the Pearson correlations because GPower3, a flexible statistical power program, indicated that a sample size of 67 was needed to identify moderate effects. Each trait reached this minimum. Future research may also benefit from increasing the sample size to possibly detect existing relationships among all the variables.

In conclusion, this study provides results that add to the existing knowledge concerning the ICA Audit. Although the predicted associations among the traits studied with the Audit failed to be confirmed, researchers are provided with information in support of the validity of the ICA Audit as it stands. Valuable information concerning the examination of organizational perceptions was yielded in this study. As organizations continue to progress, the continual investigation into the accuracy of organizational assessment is warranted.

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