

The BCPI with the ACL is AOK:

An Executive Summary of Shari L. Rife's 2001 Master of Science Thesis

By

Jeffrey Welton

The International Center  
For Studies in Creativity

## **Thesis Title:**

Exploring the Personality Composition of the Four Preferences Measured by the Buffalo Creative Process Inventory

### **Introduction/Overview**

The *Buffalo Creative Process Inventory* (BCPI) is a relatively new measure designed to assess where people are the most productive in the creative process. The purpose of this thesis was to further validate the BCPI and to explore the personality composition of the four preferences it measures. This was done by administering the BCPI and the *Adjective Checklist* (ACL) to the same subjects and then comparing the results with correlation hypotheses. The investigator, Rife (2001), was excited by the results and the correlations that appeared.

Rife used three questions to guide her study: “What are the significant differences or similarities, in terms of the personality makeup across the preferences, measured by the BCPI? Will the ACL traits align in theoretically expected ways with the BCPI? In what ways does the ACL provide a deeper understanding of the preferences measured by the BCPI?” (Rife, 2001).

### **Background/Content**

There has been a general change in creativity research from a level approach to a style approach. Creative style is how one is creative while creative level is the amount of creativity displayed by an individual. Such style research includes: Zilewicz (1986) who discovered relationships between problem solving strengths and cognitive style; Puccio (1987) who discovered relationships between Adaptor-Innovator preferences and problem solving behavior; and Puccio, Talbot and Treffinger (1995) who found relationships between perceived qualities of products and Adaptor-Innovator style.

A number of measures have been created to recognize and identify a person's style preferences. One style test is the *Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory* (KAI, Kirton, 1994) developed by Michael Kirton which supports the theory of two styles. Adaptors work within a system to improve things and innovators challenge or ignore the system to improve things.

*Innovate with Creator, Advancer, Refiner, and Executor Profile* (C.A.R.E., Fahden & Namakkal, 1995) is another test that identifies an individual's preferences based on four innovation types in order to improve team innovation process. The four approaches are Conceptual, Spontaneous, Normative and Methodical.

The *Creative Problem Solving Profile* (CPSP; Basadur, Graen, & Wakabayaski, 1990) tests an individual's inclination towards the parts of the creative problem solving process. The preferences are listed as Generator, Conceptualizer, Optimizer and Implementor.

The *Adjective Checklist* (ACL) was used in this study to measure psychological needs, ego functioning, and measures of intellect and creativity. The ACL is a 300-item, paper-and-pencil checklist designed to measure personality characteristics.

The focus of this study, the *Buffalo Creative Process Inventory* (BCPI; Puccio, 1999), is a similar test based on the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) model. The 36-item test defines the preferences as Clarifier, Ideator, Developer and Implementor based on the three stage CPS model of Understanding the Problem, Generating Ideas and Planning for Action.

The BCPI is in the process of becoming an effective tool in measuring an individual's preference in relation to the creative problem solving process. This study is similar to correlation studies between the BCPI, KAI and the BCPI and Basadur's measure. In both cases the results followed expected theoretical directions (Puccio, 1999).

## **Description of Population and Method**

65 males and 69 females participated in this research study with a mean age of 40. Specifically the group was made up of 47 front-line plant managers and supervisors from locations across the US; 41 associates from a Buffalo company; 23 students enrolled in a creative studies course; 16 professionals with extensive training in the CPS process; and 7 personal acquaintances.

Two paper-and-pencil tests, the BCPI and ACL, were administered at various times taking a total of 20 minutes to complete both. The results of the BCPI were scored and graphed and feedback and informal debriefs were made available to the subjects. The data was then entered into a database.

The ACL was theoretically aligned with the BCPI. The two tests were compared to find that 25 of the 37 ACL scales conceptually related to the BCPI and were included as part of this research according to Rife. Both results were inputted into a common database and the data from the BCPI was correlated with the data from the ACL.

## **Findings**

There were 49 significant correlations identified between the BCPI and ACL further expanding the “robustness” of the measure. The correlations were separated into three categories: the variables that correlated across all of the BCPI preferences; the variables that did not correlate with any of the preferences; and the variable that correlated with some of the preferences.

The scores for each of the four BCPI preferences were average, ranging from 3.46-3.68. Of the five subject group, no two were significantly different. This information was similar to the mean scores reported in the manual and further validates the measure.

Those ACL variables that did not correlate with any BCPI preferences also proved to have little theoretical link with the BCPI. Some variables that were relevant across all

preferences were creative personality, self confidence, achievement, and then succorance was negatively correlated.

The Ideator preference had a number of unique variables including total number of adjectives checked, affiliation and exhibition. Endurance was a variable that crossed all of the preferences except Ideator. Similarly, six variables related to the Implementer preference. They were change, autonomy, dominance, masculine positively related and abasement and self control were negatively related. A number of variables were significant across all of the preferences including creative personality, self confidence, favorable and achievement.

There were also a number of specific correlations that could be used for debate within the measure. Self control was negatively correlated with the Ideator and Implementer preferences. Low scorers on the self control variable are described as being impulsive to defy management, having interpersonal encounters that often involve rule breaking and are headstrong. Autonomy and Dominance were also significantly correlated with Ideator and Implementer.

The author found 24 out of the 49 significant correlations agreed with her hypotheses. To summarize, those variables that had no theoretical link to any of the preferences showed little correlations. The variables that did relate to one or more preferences did so in agreement with Rife's hypotheses and aligned in theoretically expected ways.

## References

- Basadur, M., Graen, G. & Wakabayashi, M. (1990). Identifying individual differences in creative problem solving style. *Journal of Creative Behavior*, 24 (2), 111-130.
- Fahden, A. & Namakkal, S. (1995). *Innovate with C.A.R.E. Profile*. Carlson Learning Company.
- Kirton, M. J. (1994). *Adaptors and innovators: Styles of creativity and problem solving*. Routledge: New York.
- Puccio, G. J. (1987). *The effect of cognitive style on problem solving defining behavior*. Unpublished master's project, State University of New York College at Buffalo: Buffalo, NY.
- Puccio, G. J. (1999). Creative problem solving preferences: Their identification and implications. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 8 (3), 171-178.
- Puccio, G. J., Treffinger, D. J. & Talbot, R. J. (1995). Exploratory examination of relationships between creativity styles and creative products. *Creativity Research Journal*, 8 (2), 157-172.
- Rife, S. L. (2001). *Exploring the personality composition of the four preferences measured by the Buffalo Creative Process Inventory*. Unpublished master's thesis, Buffalo State College: Buffalo, NY.
- Zilewicz, E. P. (1986). *Cognitive styles: Strengths and weaknesses when using creative problem solving*. Unpublished master's project, State University of New York College at Buffalo: Buffalo, NY.