

Exploring the Relationship Between Organizational Culture and the Implementation of
Strategies for Workplace-Violence Prevention

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An Applied Dissertation Approved by the
Abraham S. Fischler School of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova Southeastern University
2013

Acknowledgments

It is with deep gratitude that I acknowledge the vital support and encouragement that I received from my parents and family while working toward achieving a doctorate. My parents remain a constant inspiration to me in their unwavering commitment to the success and happiness of our family. I wish to thank the lovely Jenn Eisenberg for her support, cheer, and patience during this endeavor. Together we are stronger.

I am appreciative of the support, advice, and inspiration that I received from friends, colleagues, and professionals during this process. A special thank you goes to Dr. Christopher Allen, Malcolm Berger, Edward Burke, Chris Casper, Dr. Nydia Cummings, Dr. Stacey Davis, Denison Consulting, Gavin De Becker and Associates, Dr. Merle Friedman, Dr. Marian Gibney, Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, Dr. Gerald Killeen, Capt. Robert Martin, Dr. Reid Meloy, Monica McNerney, Reggie Padin, Rory Steyn, Tom Taylor, Ken Uehara, Barbara Welch, and Dr. Stephen White.

Thank you to the many wonderful people who generously gave me a home while traveling and working on this dissertation. A special thank you goes to Billy, Dean, Katee, Laurie, and Rhonda. I wish to recognize the participating members of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals who provided valuable feedback for the survey tool used in this dissertation. Lastly, I am deeply appreciative of the human-resource professionals who contributed their valuable time and participated in this study.

Abstract

This applied dissertation was designed to reduce incidents of workplace violence by providing recommendations that will help organizations in the implementation of their strategies for workplace-violence prevention. By looking at violence prevention within the context of organizational strategy, violence prevention can be seen as a strategic goal of an organization. Organizational culture has been shown to be of great strategic importance to the success of an organization. Yet, little is known about the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Human-resource professionals are in a key position to provide information about an organization's culture and its violence prevention and intervention efforts, as they are often involved in both of these organizational tasks.

This writer developed a survey instrument to quantitatively measure the extent to which an organization has effectively implemented expert-recommended strategies for violence prevention and intervention. Data obtained from administering the survey and the Denison Organizational-Culture Survey to 63 human-resource professionals were compared to explore the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. An analysis of the data indicated that organizational culture was found to be significantly and positively correlated to the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The prevalence of workplace aggression, threats, bullying, and other forms of violence is extensive and costly (McElhaney, 2004). According to the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS), now known as ASIS International, the prevention and management of workplace violence in the United States can be ongoing and increasingly challenging responsibilities for organizations (ASIS International, 2011). Leaders of organizations carry the legal and ethical responsibility to engage in efforts designed to prevent a broad range of violence and problematic behaviors that have an impact on the people who interact with the organization (ASIS International, 2011; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Kerr, 2010; McElhaney, 2004; Turner & Gelles, 2003).

Due to the complex and multidimensional nature of workplace violence, effective prevention and intervention strategies require a multidisciplinary approach involving the participation of multiple stakeholders within an organization. Effective workplace-violence prevention and intervention programs draw on knowledge and resources from the disciplines of management, security, human resources, law, and mental health (ASIS International, 2011; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Kerr, 2010; McElhaney, 2004; Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2009; Stewart, 2012; Turner & Gelles, 2003).

To adequately prevent and manage workplace aggression and violence, there is a need for the implementation and execution of proactive and ongoing violence prevention and intervention efforts. These efforts include strategies that are designed to detect, investigate, manage, and resolve behavior that has generated concerns for workplace safety from violence (ASIS International, 2011; Occupational Safety and Health

Administration, 2009; Turner & Gelles, 2003). The effective implementation and management of these efforts require ongoing, high-quality training of the professionals responsible for this organizational task (Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2009; Turner & Gelles, 2003).

The ASIS International (2011), along with representatives of the Society for Human Resource Management, published a standard that provides an overview of policies, processes, and protocols that organizations can adopt to help identify and prevent threatening behavior and violence affecting the workplace and to enable organizations to address and resolve threats and violence that have occurred. Although the standard is comprehensive, it is beyond the scope of the document to explore the role of organizational culture and its impact on the implementation of violence-prevention efforts.

The topic. The study aimed to explore the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention by obtaining information from human-resource (HR) professionals. These HR professionals are in a key position to provide information about an organization's culture and its violence prevention and intervention efforts, as they are often involved in both of these organizational tasks.

Audience. The information obtained from this study will benefit professionals involved in the prevention and intervention of workplace violence. This includes professionals in the security and safety industry, law-enforcement officials, mental-health professionals, HR professionals, and organizational leaders. The results may also impact decision and policy makers who work in the field of occupational safety and health (e.g., the U.S. Department of Labor).

Background and Justification

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (2013), nearly two million American workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year, and the number could possibly be significantly more because many cases go unreported. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries reported 13,309 workplace-homicide victims between 1992 and 2009, averaging 700 homicides per year. Workplace violence is the fourth leading cause of death in the workplace (Kerr, 2010). McElhaney (2004) reported that, for women, homicide is the primary cause of death in the workplace. For men, it is only secondary to death due to motor-vehicle accidents. McElhaney reported that an occupational safety and health study conducted by the Northwestern National Life Insurance Institute found that one of four workers were harassed, threatened, or attacked on the job in a 1-year period.

Due to those incidents, 88% of the workers reported that they were psychologically affected, 62% reported that their work was disrupted, 23% were physically injured or sick, and 7% reported no negative effect. A survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management found that one third of the workplaces studied experienced a violent incident in the prior 3 years. Three years later, a follow-up survey found that the problem had escalated, with half the HR managers reporting at least one incident in the 3 years since the prior surveys (McElhaney, 2004). A study conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management in 2011 found that one half of the companies surveyed reported incidents of bullying in the workplace that led to decreased morale, increased stress and depression, and decreased trust among coworkers. The survey found that 27% of HR professionals themselves had been victims of workplace violence (Society for Human Resource Management, 2012).

Houshmand, O'Reilly, Robinson, and Wolff (2012) studied the relationship between bullying and employee turnover. Consistent with past studies, the authors found that, when people are bullied at work, they have a stronger desire to leave their organization. These sentiments often lead to employees leaving if the opportunity arises. Houshmand et al. also found that, for employees who were unable to quit their jobs, simply thinking about leaving was a coping strategy that many used. The results of the study also showed that people were also negatively impacted when others in their work units experienced bullying, and merely working in an environment with a considerable amount of bullying led to high turnover intentions. Kerr (2010) reported that, according to the Employment Law Alliance, 50% of all workers complained that they were abused in some way at work. It has been predicted that incidents of workplace violence may increase in the current economic climate, as workplace violence has been shown to be linked to economic downturns and should be a factor in identifying risks of violence (Kerr, 2010).

The HR professionals deal with the management of people within an organization. Their responsibilities include the hiring of staff and ensuring that they perform to the expectation of the organization. This is achieved through appropriate recruitment, guidance, strategic planning, and training (Handy, 1999). According to the Occupational Safety and Health Association (2009), a lack of staff training in recognizing and managing escalating hostile and aggressive behavior is a risk factor in incidents of workplace violence related to late-night retail workers.

Strategies for workplace-violence prevention and intervention concentrate on a spectrum of behaviors that include overt acts of violence, threats, and other conduct that generates a reasonable concern for safety from violence, in which a nexus exists between

the behavior and the physical safety of employees and others (e.g., customers, clients, and business associates), whether on site or off site of the organization (ASIS International, 2011). Typically, this is part of the broader responsibilities in the area of employee-relations management and relies heavily on HR professionals (ASIS International, 2011; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Kerr, 2010; McElhaney, 2004; Turner & Gelles, 2003).

Wang and Hutchins (2010) investigated crisis management in higher education and found that, despite the increasing level of risks that colleges and universities are facing associated with the complexity of institutional operations, technology, and infrastructure, ample research shows a lack of overall crisis-management plans at the institutional level. An online survey conducted by Simpson Scarborough (as cited by Wang & Hutchins, 2010) revealed that, although institutions had written crisis plans, these plans rarely addressed situations falling outside traditional parameters, such as suicides, strikes, terrorist attacks, mass shootings, administrative scandals, hazing, or incidents of racial discrimination, which have occurred with increasing frequency in recent years.

A similar survey administered by Mitroff (as cited by Wang & Hutchins, 2010) found that 117 of 350 respondents reported that their institutions were generally prepared for only the commonly experienced crises, such as fires, lawsuits, and crimes. Additionally, few of the surveyed institutions have broad-based crisis-management programs or crisis-management teams that are similar to those established in the corporate world. Mitroff also noted that what colleges and universities often refer to as crisis-management teams are really emergency-response teams, whose primary function is to prepare for and respond to natural disasters and environmental crises, or business-continuity teams, whose function is to ensure the continuity of the business functions and

services of major organizations.

Wang and Hutchins (2010) reported that the important lesson of having trained, experienced individuals in crucial positions was learned from the 2007 shootings at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Many of the individuals involved in the management of the aftermath of the Virginia Tech crisis were primarily volunteers who were untrained or had little experience in dealing with the aftermath of a major disaster. Additionally, many of these individuals were grappling with their own emotional responses to the death and injuries of the students and faculty. This led to poor communication, insensitivity, failure to follow up, and misinformation that consequently compounded the confusion and frustration experienced by a number of victims' families.

Deficiencies in the evidence. Reio and Ghosh (2009) pointed to the need for further research to explore the role and responsibility of HR professionals in curtailing workplace incivility, which is often a precursor to workplace violence. These researchers found that HR professionals, specifically HR development practitioners, can help to prevent uncivil acts in the workplace by training supervisors and employees about warning signs of deviant workplace behavior.

Purpose of the study. This study aimed to explore the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention so that recommendations can be made that may reduce the incidents of workplace violence.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this applied dissertation, the following terms are defined.

Organizational culture. This term refers to the set of mental assumptions that guide interpretation and action in organizations by defining the behavior considered

appropriate for various situations. The assumptions are largely tacit and are expressed through formal and informal practices, as well as visual, verbal, and material artifacts (Brown, 2000).

Threat. This term refers to any verbal or physical conduct that conveys intent, or is reasonably perceived to convey intent, to cause physical harm or to place someone in fear of physical harm (ASIS International, 2011).

Threat management. This term is synonymous with case management and incident management and can be considered the process and practice of responding to reports made to or coming to the attention of management with regard to problematic behavior that has generated concerns under the organization's policy for workplace-violence prevention (ASIS International, 2011). The role of the threat manager is to identify the risk, assess its potential, conduct a protective investigation, and implement appropriate management strategies to defuse it (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

Threat-management team. This term refers to an incident-management team or case-management team. It consists of a multidisciplinary group of personnel selected by an organization to receive, respond to, and resolve reports of problematic behavior (ASIS International, 2011; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Kerr, 2010; McElhaney, 2004; Turner & Gelles, 2003).

Workplace bullying. This term refers to the repeated mistreatment against a targeted individual, which is manifested as verbal abuse or conduct that is considered threatening or humiliating, sabotage that interferes with work, or a combination (Daniel, 2009).

Workplace incivility. This term refers to low-intensity, deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm a target in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect

(Reio & Ghosh, 2009).

Workplace violence. This term refers to a spectrum of behaviors that generate a reasonable concern for safety (ASIS International, 2011) and can be defined as any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening and disruptive behavior that occurs in an occupational setting. The violence can range from threats and verbal abuse to assault and homicide (Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2013).

Workplace-violence prevention policy. This term refers to a written policy adopted by an organization that prohibits violence, the threat of violence, or other predetermined actions and behaviors that are considered inappropriate by the organization from a violence-prevention perspective (ASIS International, 2011). It serves to communicate to its employees that the company is committed to an aggression-free workplace and should do so without ambivalence or ambiguity (McElhaney, 2004).

Workplace-violence typology. This term refers to a classification system developed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration that categorizes incidents of workplace violence according to the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim or target and the workplace (ASIS International, 2011).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This study explored the relationship between organizational culture and violence-prevention strategies within the context of organizational strategy. This theoretical framework allowed violence prevention and intervention strategies to be seen through the lens of a strategic goal of an organization as part of its overall plan for success. The framework provided a link between organizational strategy, particularly understanding and adapting the culture of organization as strategy, and violence-prevention efforts. The study utilized the organizational-culture framework established by Denison, Hooijberg, Lane, and Lief (2012), which was developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative investigations of organizational culture.

According to Denison et al. (2012), an organization's culture has an impact on business performance in four ways: It creates an organization's sense of mission and direction, it builds a high level of adaptability and flexibility, it nurtures the involvement and engagement of their people, and it provides a consistency that is strongly rooted in a set of core values. According to Denison et al., managing organizational culture is a vital component of organizational strategy and overall performance.

According to Grant (2010), the main task of organizational strategy is to determine how the organization will deploy its resources within its environment and, in doing so, satisfy its long-term goals. It is vital that the organization knows how to organize itself to implement that strategy. As a link between the organization and its external environment, fundamental to this view of strategy is the notion of strategic fit. For a strategy to be successful, it must be consistent with the organization's external and internal environments, including its goals and values, resources, capabilities, structure,

and systems. Strategy can emerge deliberately as a result of leaders engaging in rational analysis, and it can also develop more organically through adaption to circumstances. Grant distinguished strategy from planning and posited that strategy is not a detailed plan or program of instructions; rather, it is a unifying theme that gives coherence and direction to the actions and decisions of an individual or an organization.

Many organizations turn to human-resource development (HRD) professionals to develop, refine, and implement strategy and to ensure strategic fit with the organization. These individuals are responsible for establishing a set of intentional activities that aim to increase an individual's skills, abilities, or knowledge, as well as direct employees for the organization's benefit. Defining HRD in this manner stresses the managerial and formal sides of development as distinct from informal and incidental learning (Luoma, 2000). A key role that HRD professionals undertake, as part of the overall strategy of an organization, is to develop and maintain an organizational culture that is aligned with the organization's values, capabilities, and strategic goals (Browning & Delahaye, 2011; Hutchins & Wang, 2008; Wang, Hutchins, & Garavan, 2009).

Organizational culture has been shown to be of great strategic importance to the success of an organization. The ability of the members of an organization to harmonize their efforts and integrate their separate skills depends not only on their interpersonal skills, but also on the organizational context. This context is determined by a vital intangible resource that is the culture of the organization (Grant, 2010).

Role of Human-Resource Development Professionals in the Development and Implementation of Organizational Strategy

According to Browning and Delahaye (2011), HRD has greatly evolved over the past 20 years and is now seen as an investment in the future of an organization.

Development in HRD theory, research, and practice has helped to change HRD from a reactive function, focusing on administrative and bureaucratic issues, to a proactive function that focuses on creating learning and development opportunities for employees. These opportunities not only allow employees to reach their potential, but also make a substantial contribution to the long-term survival and sustainability of the organization. The HRD is now seen to have a direct link to business strategy and the achievement of competitive advantage. A reason for the shift is that greater importance is now assigned to the workforce of an organization, which is seen as an important source of competitive advantage and an asset rather than a disposable resource.

Organizational Strategy and Crisis Management

According to Reilly (2008), the strategic management of organizations includes handling ongoing operations and unexpected situations such as organizational crises. The focus of day-to-day operations is on repetition and efficiency, whereas organizational crisis, by definition, is unexpected, high impact, and nonroutine. A crisis represents an unusual situation outside the normal operating frameworks of the affected situation. A common denominator among all types of crises involves the demands that they place on an organization's human resources, including employees, time, and top-management attention.

The HRD addresses the organization's development needs through techniques that include change management, stress management, and training and development. This includes having an effective strategy in place to deal with crises. The HRD initiatives represent a vital aspect of any well-conceived and executed crisis-management strategy. Reilly (2008) explored HRD competencies and crisis communication. The author found an overlap between crisis competencies and strategy for the management of day-to-day

operations.

Reilly (2008) reported that communication is one of the fundamental tools of HRD practice, including communication during a crisis. Effective crisis communication, such as noncrisis (i.e., routine) information flow, requires both external and internal communication. Training and development for crisis management also contributes to an organization's HR competencies as a whole. For example, training in media management for use during a crisis would strengthen an organization's media management during noncrisis time. Similarly, stress-management techniques developed for crisis management would be applicable and have an impact on an organization's day-to-day operations.

Reilly (2008) placed importance on the role of HRD in planning ahead of time for a potential crisis. Reilly reported that today's HR leaders have a strategic role and responsibility to ensure that their organizations are aware of the human side of a crisis and to plan ahead to help minimize its impact. To be most effective, HR leaders should work collaboratively with top-down commitment to develop organization-wide solutions. Further, Reilly stated that crisis preparation must become an "integral part of the strategic consciousness of organizations" (p. 343).

Hite and McDonald (2010) studied the role of HRD and diversity work in organizations. Diversity in an organization can be described as "the differences among people that are likely to affect their acceptance, work performance, satisfaction, or progress in an organization" (p. 284). These researchers reported that globalization and workforce demographics have made diversity an organizational concern. In response to this issue, organizations have typically turned to HRD to be responsible for diversity work. Diversity strategies fit traditional HRD functions of training and development,

career development, and organizational development.

According to Osland, Kolb, Rubin, and Turner (2007), a Gallup poll found that employees who rate their company's diversity efforts highly also reported more company satisfaction and loyalty, and they were more likely to remain with the firm and recommend it to others. Additionally, Osland et al. reported that organizations that desire to maximize the benefits of diversity and minimize the drawbacks must implement strategies that create multicultural organizations. Diversity that is not well managed decreases workgroup cohesiveness, increases interpersonal conflict and turnover, and negatively impacts coherent action on major organizational goals.

Rusaw and Rusaw (2008) reported that, when HRD is built into an organization's strategic planning and design, an organization is more likely to promote effective and flexible responses to operational contingencies. Kerr (2010) emphasized the need for an effective strategy to match the organization's resources and capabilities. For Kerr, it is critical that security strategies match the people, procedures, and equipment, including the technology of an organization.

Link Between Human-Resource Development and Organizational Culture

According to Plakhotnik and Rocco (2011), HRD professionals are responsible for the enhancement of organizational culture by providing organizational development that results in optimal utilization of human potential and improved human performance. The HRD professionals create and implement system-wide organizational interventions to increase correspondence between organizational culture and other components (e.g., structure, processes, practices, and mission), which helps to increase organizational effectiveness.

Additionally, organizational culture can serve HRD as a tool to create consensus

among employees about the organization's strategies, goals, and means of accomplishing them, criteria for performance evaluation, and a system of rewards and punishment. Applied in this manner, organizational culture serves as frame of reference that enables employees to better interpret organizational activities, understand the expectations of their supervisors and peers, respond appropriately in new situations, deal with disagreements, and resolve conflicts. This allows employees to better utilize their skills, knowledge, and abilities to perform their jobs, which then increases their work effectiveness and the organization's long-term economic performance.

The HRD professionals are also responsible for creating interventions that support culture change in organizations. This change is a long process that requires a shift in employees' attitudes and behaviors. The HRD professionals facilitate this shift by creating activities and interventions that help to clarify and integrate new organizational values, goals, and expectations. Simultaneously, organizational culture determines the role and importance of HRD within an organization (Plakhotnik & Rocco, 2011).

Role of Human-Resource Professionals in Violence Prevention and Intervention

Experts highlight the importance of the role of HR professionals in workplace-violence prevention and intervention. For example, according to Turner and Gelles (2003), HR professionals are on the front line in organizations when problems arise with employees and are often the first to take some form of action, including reporting the incident to higher management. The HR professional can be thought of as the triage person who inevitably holds much of the early risk-management responsibility and, in the long run, the liability for the company as it relates to the health and safety of its employees.

The ASIS International (2011) reported that HR personnel occupy a leadership

role in many organizations, often serving in the following roles: (a) developing a workplace-violence prevention and intervention program, including the relevant policies, procedures, and practices; (b) organizing and conducting training; (c) participating in incident management; and (d) enforcing policies for workplace-violence prevention through appropriate corrective action. In organizational settings in which employees are represented by a union, HR personnel may become involved in negotiating with labor representatives regarding policies and procedures established under the organization's program for workplace-violence prevention and intervention, including disciplinary measures to be taken following policy breaches (ASIS International, 2011).

Employees will often direct their concerns or complaints about threats or violence to HR professionals. After receiving a report, HR personnel will contribute key skills to incident management. These include escalating the report to appropriate personnel, conducting or assisting with the investigatory process, communicating with affected or involved employees, and providing input as the organization addresses and resolves the issue through the implementation of disciplinary action or other remedial or preventive measures (ASIS International, 2011).

Kerr (2010) reported that successful workplace-violence prevention might be, in part, due to awareness and prevention strategies taken by HR and security professionals who work in collaboration with managers, union leaders, and business owners. For Kerr, understanding the role of the HR professional in violence prevention and management is vital. Kerr reported that effective strategies include many of the day-to-day tasks and responsibilities of HR professionals. For example, Kerr highlighted that effective violence prevention should start at the point of hiring, with effective employment vetting at the application stage, which is a task often undertaken by HR personnel.

Further, Kerr (2010) suggested that a key aspect to a successful violence-prevention program is the infusion of prevention and action into the organizational culture and the ability to maintain these efforts, which is a primary role of the HR professional. Additionally, according to Kerr, safety directors and HR managers often have the task of being responsible for safety and accident prevention. These personnel will be made aware of near misses. A near miss is defined as an accident or event that could have resulted in a reportable accident to the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Near misses provide an opportunity for violence-prevention strategies to be implemented.

The HR professionals are expected to contribute to a civil and cooperative workplace climate because such an environment is thought to be conducive to personal and professional growth. If the HR professional fails in acting to curtail workplace incivility in its initial stages, work patterns may be disrupted and lead to more intense forms of workplace aggression, including physical violence, harassment, and intimidation. These behaviors may lead to serious legal and economic ramifications, damaging organizational profitability and organizational learning (Reio & Ghosh, 2009).

Ghosh, Jacobs, and Reio (2011) reported that HRD practitioners are increasingly being called upon to implement useful strategies for dealing with workplace incivility, which is a precursor of workplace violence. These researchers suggested that HRD could make a strong, positive contribution to reducing the likelihood of uncivil behaviors, which, in turn, can play a useful role in increasing the overall success of the organization.

Collins (2011) found that it is possible that HRD professionals, through carefully constructed interventions, may be able to improve some of the career-development issues that female victims of domestic violence face. Collins reported that the empowerment of

these women through organizational development, training and development, and career development could be achieved if HRD professionals are innovative in their partnership with organizations that may be willing to provide employment opportunities to female victims of domestic violence. For Collins, HRD practitioners can serve as a substantial mechanism of social change. These practitioners can serve as liaisons between female victims of domestic violence and employing organizations. This position would allow them to create safer and more productive spaces in the workforce for this demographic.

Wang and Hutchins (2010) reported that, prior to any disaster, an organization should implement a successful crisis-management plan that exposes the weaknesses within the current system and build capabilities to deal with a wide variety of resultant and interrelated situations. By doing this, the crisis-management team can enact these capabilities quickly and efficiently during a crisis and will have the opportunity to learn from the experience in order to further improve the program. If an organization is insufficiently prepared, the effects of any event can quickly spiral into multiple crisis events. Adequate training to conduct this role is required, as highlighted by Rusaw and Rusaw (2008). These researchers reported that effective crisis-management programs depend on employees with professional credentials, updated and ongoing learning events, and community-education programs to encourage collaboration in emergencies.

Wang and Hutchins (2010) stated there are a number of areas in which HRD can be used to contribute to crisis management: developing crisis leaders, providing crisis-management training, facilitating crisis communication, designing crisis-management programs, and promoting organizational learning. These researchers highlighted the need for organizations to recognize and respond to the existence of early crisis indicators, which are also known as signals. The HR professionals often play this role. This is

considered the first of six phases of crisis management and is termed signal detection. Failing to respond to these indicators often causes substantial losses in revenue, reputation, and even human life. When a potential crisis situation is detected (i.e., the crisis-preparation phase), organizations need to develop a systematic plan for managing the crisis, identifying critical personnel and other resources, and allocating actions during a crisis situation. An effective crisis plan includes a cross-functional crisis team, business continuity plans that analyze both technological and HR issues, a crisis-communication plan, and crisis training.

A vital part of crisis management is known as containment. In this phase, referred to as the third phase by Wang and Hutchins (2010), the organization must implement strategies that involve actions that allow the organization to respond to and contain the impact of the crisis event so that further escalation and losses can be mitigated or prevented. An example of this is communicating with internal and external stakeholders about how the organization is handling the crisis event and how resources or investments are being secured. Other communication activities are relevant during this phase and include providing emergency contact information to management, employees, retirees, and emergency stakeholders. This ensures that they can learn about operational and employee relation issues. Operational issues include aspects such as building and facility access and security, work schedule changes, and alternative office locations. Employee-relation issues include factors such as compensation and benefits, employee-assistance programs, and travel and relocation.

During the recovery phase of the crisis-management plan, as defined by Wang and Hutchins (2010), organizations begin to enact procedures to resume normal business activities. These efforts include long- and short-term business-continuity recovery plans

and reassuring stakeholders that the organization will return to business as usual.

Following this phase, the organization should enter a no-fault learning phase, which involves not blaming an individual for the crisis event and reflecting critically on the crisis experience, analyzing the crisis impact on central and ancillary system processes, and then adapting behaviors and systems to improve the organization's crisis-management practices. Finally, in the redesign phase, the new knowledge generated from what is learned should be used to promote change and to restructure the crisis management system.

In exploring the role of HRD professionals in integrating crisis-management systems in public-sector organizations, Rusaw and Rusaw (2008) found that crises make organization adaptability imperative and that organizations facing national, man-made, or natural disasters require flexible deployment of resources to attain strategic advantage. Crisis by its nature involves apparently randomized eruptions in ongoing processes of carrying out established purposes, goals, and tasks. Predicting when and where a crisis will occur is difficult. A primary function of many public organizations is to prepare for widespread crises through an integrated process of (a) strategic planning; (b) mobilization of human, financial, and technical resources; and (c) response to crises-induced emergencies. The HRD plays a key role in enabling public organizations to respond to crises.

The HRD in relation to crisis management can be defined as a system of interrelated purposes and tasks that equip, train, and mobilize resources to carry out crisis-management responsibilities. By defining HRD's role in this way, effective and efficient systems of emergency-focused public organizations are linked to training and developing individuals. This allows for HRD to be conceptualized as being responsible

for the design and management of public organizational structures and systems, as well as the training of individuals and teams established for use in crises (Rusaw & Rusaw, 2008).

Rusaw and Rusaw (2008) highlighted a number of steps that crisis-management professionals can take to implement an integrated HRD system in their organizations. These include (a) promoting openness and participation with internal and external stakeholders, (b) using multiple formats of informational outreach, (c) pressing for emergency management and budget prioritization, (d) developing flexible and decentralized leadership structures, and (e) assuring multiple sources of communication are aligned with HRD goals and programs.

Need for Research

According to Wang et al. (2009), incidents of workplace violence fit the criteria for an organizational crisis, and, when workplace violence occurs, crisis management is required. Organizational crisis management is defined as a series of procedures used to sustain or resume normal business operations, minimize stakeholder loss, and apply learning to improve crisis-management processes. These researchers found that, despite the increasingly recognized impact of organizational crises in the individual and organizational performance, crisis management has been a largely overlooked territory in HRD. Wang and Hutchins (2010) reported that crisis management is a relatively new research territory in the field of HRD.

Wang et al. (2009) suggested that HRD scholars make consistent research and continuing research efforts in understanding the unique nature of organizational crises. This research could assist HRD professionals in designing appropriate interventions that would align with an organization's strategic intent and ultimately bring out the optimal

outcomes of crisis management. Wang and Hutchins (2010) posited that, with the increasing number of crisis events occurring in higher education institutions in recent years, including incidents of violence, crisis management has increasingly attracted research attention.

The role of HR professionals has undergone a major shift in the past 25 years. It is now common for organizations to view HR professionals as potential partners who are involved in the strategic decision-making processes of the organization. The HR management includes activities of resource planning, staffing, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, safety and health, labor relations, management of change and culture, work and organizational design, and alignment of HR activities (Schuler & Jackson, 2005).

The ASIS International (2011) reported that effective workplace-violence prevention and intervention strategies require a clear top-down commitment to (a) ensure that the correct prevention and intervention resources are allocated to develop a workplace-violence prevention and intervention program, (b) effectively carry out incident management, and (c) secure training, outside consulting, physical security measures, and other items essential to successful prevention and intervention efforts. The Society for Human Resource Management (2012) reported that this leadership task is most often implemented, coordinated, and overseen by HR professionals.

Fisher (2000) reported that organizational culture is a key component of the work of HR professionals and management. Fisher also noted that behavior changes needed to shape a business culture must start at the top and be constantly reinforced by HR. An action-based approach must be taken with changes occurring through every level and every function. These changes must be consistently led and strategically managed.

The HR professionals play a central role in establishing and implementing an organization's violence prevention and intervention strategy (ASIS International, 2011; Society for Human Resource Management, 2012). A 2012 study conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management found that HR professionals are most likely to be responsible for handling the organization's response to bullying, which is also a precursor to workplace violence, with 87% of respondents naming the HR department as the primary responders to an allegation.

Rusaw and Rusaw (2008) reported that, because HRD provides opportunities for individual and organizational opportunities to learn, the gathering and use of knowledge are crucial to adaptation and survival during crisis situations. However, little is known about how HRD can provide nonformal ways to provide for an integrated crisis-management response. The authors recommended further research that tests the relationship between HRD and organizational systems through means such as surveys or additional field research.

Organizational Strategy

Organizational strategy can be broadly defined as the means by which individuals or organizations achieve their preset goals or objectives (Dauber, Fink, & Yolles, 2012; Grant, 2010). Common to existing definitions of business strategy is the notion that strategy is focused on achieving certain goals, that the critical actions that make up a strategy involve allocation of resources, and that strategy implies some degree of consistency, integration, or cohesiveness of decisions and actions (Grant, 2010).

As an organizational process, organizational strategy is inseparable from the structure, behavior, and culture of the organization in which it takes place. Processes that turn organizational strategies into action, often referred to as operationalization,

implementation of strategies, or strategy doing, unfold through organizational structures and organizational activities. Strategies are implemented through organizational structures and behavior. Behavior in this context can be thought of as the observable outcome of strategies that are put into operationalized action. Operations may be oriented toward the internal environment or the external environment (Dauber et al., 2012).

Grant (2010) reported that, as business environments have become more unstable and unpredictable, strategy has become less concerned with detailed plans and more about the quest for success. There is a greater emphasis placed on strategy as direction rather than strategy as a plan. In turbulent business environments, strategy must embrace flexibility and responsiveness. Strategy can be seen as a tool that offers an organization a buffer against unforeseen threats and way of seizing new opportunities.

To be aware that a change of strategy is necessary or desired, organizations must recognize deficits through a process of organizational learning, including a process of detecting and correcting error. This process is different from the process of adaptation, which does not necessarily lead to a strategy change. It has been argued that only organizations that purposefully construct structures and strategies in order to enhance and maximize organizational learning can be considered as learning organizations. It is important for organizations to consider that there may be barriers to learning, which would lead to delays in strategy changes. Barriers could include poor vertical communication or poor coordination of functions, business, or borders. Assessments such as performance assessments can trigger a change in strategy and structure, but it is important to consider that learning processes rely on favorable organizational conditions, such as open communication structures (Dauber et al., 2012).

Strategy can be designed and obtained through the efforts of managers engaging

in deliberate rational analysis, also known as a rational approach. Strategy can also emerge through adaption to circumstances. Strategy development can be divided into intended, realized and emergent. Intended strategy is strategy conceived by the top-management team. It is derived from the outcome of negotiation, bargaining, and compromise among the many individuals and groups involved in the process. Realized strategy is the actual strategy that is implemented. It is only partly related to that which was intended.

The main determinant of realized strategy is emergent strategy and is composed of the decisions that emerge from the complex processes in which individual managers interpret the intended strategy and adapt to changing external circumstances. Emergent approaches to strategy making allow for adaptation and learning through continuous interaction between strategy formulation and strategy implementation in which the strategy is constantly being adjusted and revised due to experience (Grant, 2010).

The multiple roles of strategy. Strategy can occupy multiple roles within an organization. These include strategy as decision support, coordinating device, and strategy as target (Grant, 2010). As a decision support, strategy simplifies the decision-making process by constraining the range of decision alternatives and by acting as a heuristic, which is a rule that helps to reduce the search required to find an acceptable solution to a decision problem. Second, strategy development allows the knowledge of different individuals to be pooled and integrated. Third, the strategy-making process facilitates the use of analytic tools (Grant, 2010).

As a coordinating device, strategy promotes coordination in organizations in several ways. Leaders of an organization can use strategy to communicate the identity, goals, and positioning of the company to all organizational members. Consensus is

essential to organization effectiveness, and the strategic planning process may provide a forum in which views are exchanged and consensus developed. Once developed, the implementation of strategy through goals, commitments, and performance targets that are monitored during the strategic-planning period also provide a mechanism to ensure that the organization moves in a consistent direction (Grant, 2010).

Strategy can be forward thinking and can play the role as a target. Seen in this way, strategy is concerned not only with how an organization will compete, but also what it will be in the future. With this approach, strategic development not only establishes the direction of an organization, but it also sets aspirations that can motivate and inspire members of the organization. Strategy as a target can be referred to as strategic intent. It creates a gap between resources and ambition. Leaders challenge the organization to close this gap by building competitive advantage (Grant, 2010).

Strategy and crisis management. Rusaw and Rusaw (2008) reported that contingency theory envisions organizations as configurations of fluid structures and processes that respond to ambiguous and rapidly changing environmental conditions and multiple and diverse stakeholders. By viewing strategy through this model, the correct structure is a matter of fit between the organization and its strategy, size, relative degree of task uncertainty, technology, and environment. This is similar to what Grant (2010) defined as strategic fit. For Rusaw and Rusaw, the unpredictable nature of crises calls for organizations to develop nimble structures and systems to respond to a variety of contingent situations in the environment. Crises bring large demands on organizational needs for resources, such as information, technology, and funds.

The requirements necessary for organizational adaptation and survival during crises tend to become inversely related to the rationality of allocation decisions. For

example, creeping crises, as described by Rusaw and Rusaw (2008), are disturbances that escalate and result in widespread, acute threats. Crises such as this generally carry on over time and lead to increased uncertainty in decision making. Additionally, the longer the crisis takes in unfolding, the greater the number of contingencies in the environment that it produces. The generation of informational feedback loops between organizations and their environment weakens, leading to the deterioration of decisions based on this information.

Rusaw and Rusaw (2008) described how organizations create nonformal, adaptive structures to adjust to emergent conditions emanating from a volatile environment. One form of this adaptation is the use of boundary spanners, or individuals who perform key communication linkages between organizations and emergency situations in turbulent environments to minimize the possible loss of important information. They give essential and timely information to emergency victims, overcoming many frequent and unpredictable environment changes that confront hierarchical organizations.

The strategy of structural flexibility, as part of an integrated-response system to increase control during crisis, has long been noted. It has been observed that public-sector organizations, as centers of national control during emergencies, can succeed if they formulate a goal of success, which includes (a) mobilizing all human, material, financial, and technological resources; (b) developing a unified system of coordinating and communicating among organizations engaged in meeting the objective; and (c) providing a clear-cut plan or strategy. One key to achieving success is providing flexible authority through shared organizational responsibility.

Although a single arching strategy governs how organizations gather and utilize resources in combating crises, each organization leader has the authority to respond as

emergency situations arise. Having this decentralized governance system in place enables organizational leaders to develop field-based operational posts. These responders could be dispatched and transferred from place to place easily, and technological and material resources could be obtained as needed (Rusaw & Rusaw, 2008).

Role of Organizational Culture in Strategy

Grant (2010) identified organizational culture as a firm resource of great strategic importance that is potentially very valuable. The ability of members of an organization to harmonize their efforts and integrate their separate skills depends not only on their interpersonal skills, but also on the organizational context. This context as it impacts internal collaboration is determined by a key intangible resource: the culture of the organization. Grant related organizational culture to an organization's values, traditions, and social norms. Peters and Waterman (as cited in Grant, 2010) stated, "Firms with sustained superior financial performance typically are characterized by a strong set of core managerial values that define the ways they conduct business" (p. 131).

Osland and Turner (2011) reported that organizational cultures greatly influence the way that people behave at work. The authors stated that organizational culture guides interpretation and action in organizations by defining the behavior considered appropriate for various situations. The assumptions are largely tacit and are expressed through formal and informal practices and through visual, verbal, and material artifacts that represent the most visible, tangible, and audible elements of the culture of an organization.

As many as 164 definitions of organizational culture have been proposed; however, Schein's definition is often the most frequently quoted:

Organizational culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to

new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (Deem, Barnes, Segal, & Preziosi, 2010, p. 32)

Understanding a group's culture requires an attempt to get at its shared basic assumptions, and one must understand the learning process by which such assumptions came to be (Osland & Turner, 2011).

Echoing Schein's definition, Chawla and Renesch (1995) reported that a culture highlights the interconnectedness of people and that organizational cultural norms come from a blending of peoples' deeply held assumptions, thoughts, language, and actions. In a culture, people interpret and create within a broad context; they can be considered the organization and not a merely a part of it. Osland and Turner (2011) reported that changing organizational culture in the sense of changing basic assumptions is difficult, time consuming, and highly anxiety provoking. It is important for leaders to consider this when implementing organizational change. Leaders should consider how to understand and impact deeper levels of a culture and how to access the functionality of the assumptions at each level. It is also important to deal with the anxiety that is unleashed when those levels are challenged.

According to Schein (2010), culture can be characterized as consisting of three levels. The first is the observable level of culture, which is referred to as the behavior and artifact level. It consists of behavior patterns and outward manifestations of culture, such as the benefits provided to executives, dress codes, levels of technology utilized and where it is utilized, and the physical layout of workspaces. This level is difficult to interpret. Artifacts and behavior may reveal what a group is doing, but they will not explain why the group is doing it.

The second level of culture is termed the values level. Unlike behaviors and

artifacts, values are not directly observable. Values can be thought to underlie and, to a large extent, determine behavior. It should be noted that there may be a difference between stated and operating values and that people mostly attribute their behavior to stated values. The third and deepest level is the level of assumptions and beliefs. Schein believed that underlying assumptions grow out of values until they become taken for granted and drop out of awareness. People may not be aware of, or may be unable to articulate, the beliefs and assumptions, thus forming their deepest level of culture (Fernandez, 2009; Schein, 2010).

Fernandez (2009) contended that understanding culture requires the difficult task of understanding all three levels of culture: behaviors and artifacts, values, and assumptions and beliefs. Additionally, the study of culture may be complicated when trying to discern the group or cultural unit that owns the culture. An organization may have many different cultures or subcultures. It is also possible that no discernable dominant culture exists at the organizational level. This poses a challenge, as recognizing the cultural unit is essential to identifying and understanding the culture.

Many challenges confronting leaders can be traced to their inability to analyze and evaluate organizational cultures. Many leaders find that, when trying to implement new strategies or a strategic plan leading to a new vision, their strategies will fail if they are inconsistent with the organization's culture. Many change makers who come into an organization prepared to make widespread changes often experience resistance to change and, therefore, failure. Challenges with executing organizational transformations arise from failures to analyze an organization's existing culture (Fernandez, 2009).

The impact of organizational culture on organizations. Denison et al. (2012) found that an organization's culture impacted an organization's performance in four main

ways: (a) creating an organization's sense of mission and direction, (b) building a high level of adaptability and flexibility, (c) nurturing the involvement and engagement of their people, and (d) providing a consistency that is strongly rooted in a set of core values. Thurston and Eisener (2006) reported that organizational culture has an impact on the ability of managers and others to introduce change into an organization, either from the bottom or from the top of a hierarchy.

The formal structures of an organization (e.g., rules) and the informal structures (e.g., values, norms, and unofficial rules) bind the negotiations within and among parts of organizations. Rules facilitate the building of collective thinking and behavior. These researchers reported that some organizational theorists maintain that it is essential that people understand goals and are reminded of them and that the culture of the organization supports behaviors aimed at collective success. Similarly, Brown (2000) emphasized that people in organizations already use value judgments and assumptions when making decisions; there simply must be conditions and training to reach successful objectives.

Organizational culture has been shown to influence organizational effectiveness (Kotrba et al., 2012). Organizations that successfully implemented the strategic method known as a balanced-scorecard approach had a culture in which people were deeply aware of and internalized the organization's mission, vision, and core values needed to execute the company's strategy (Deem et al., 2010). Gillespie, Denison, Haaland, Smerek, and Neale (2008) studied the link between organizational culture and customer satisfaction. They found that, with a few exceptions, cultural measures related significantly and positively to customer satisfaction. Fisher (2000) reported that organizational culture has been linked to an organization's profitability, sales, revenue, growth, market share, quality, innovation, and employee satisfaction.

McLean (2005) examined the influence of organizational culture on creativity and innovation. The author found that certain organizational cultures supported higher levels of creativity and innovation, whereas others impeded creativity and innovation. McLean also found that cultures that supported organizational encouragement had higher levels of creativity and innovation. Organizational encouragement is characterized as encompassing encouragement of risk taking and idea generation, supportive evaluation of ideas, collaborative idea flow, and participative management and decision making. Supervisory encouragement was found to have a positive impact on creativity and innovation. Supervisory encouragement includes clarity of team goals, supervisory support of the team's work and ideas, and an environment in which open interactions are supported.

Work-group encouragement, which focuses on cohesion efforts for diverse groups, was found to have a positive impact on creativity and innovation. For example, creative performance is increased when diversity is allowed, when people with dissimilar frames of reference can exchange ideas, and when the organization can effectively integrate creative personalities into the organizational mainstream. A construct labeled freedom and autonomy was found to influence creativity and innovation. The construct relates to granting and allowing freedom and autonomy to employees for determining the means by which to achieve a goal but not necessarily autonomy for goal selection.

McLean (2005) found that organizations with organizational cultures that support autonomy in achieving clearly communicated goals would likely be more successful in terms of creativity and innovation than organizations that do not. The author explored the relationship between the construct resources, which included time and money and creativity and innovation, and found that inadequate time allocated to a task can lead to

distrust and burnout, thereby lowering levels of creativity and innovation. Allocating too much time to tasks can take away from the sense of challenge and decrease creative performance. When it comes to money, enough must be allocated that employees do not have to put their creative focus on finding more resources, thus reducing creativity and innovation; however, providing resources over and above the threshold of what is needed does not boost creativity either.

McLean (2005) reported that a major factor of organizational culture that impedes creative performance is control. A culture that supports and fosters control will result in reduced creativity and innovation. This is largely due to the negative effect that control has on intrinsic motivation. Control is a factor in many organizational tasks and responsibilities, including decision-making processes, control of information flow, and reward systems.

According to Kotrba et al. (2012), traditional research of organizational culture focused on the direct impact of specific culture traits. Although much progress was made with this perspective, Sackmann's (2010) review of the culture-performance literature presents a more complex picture and one that highlights the potential of examining contingent, interactive relationships. For example, organizations present a unique combination of cultural characteristics, and there are many ways that different aspects of an organization's culture may combine to influence performance.

Culture scholars have long noted the paradoxical nature of different cultural orientations. To be effective, organizations need to be able to manage contradictory challenges at the same time. For example, organizational leaders need to balance internal integration and external adaptation of the organization. Effective organizations are able to resolve these types of contradictions without relying on simple tradeoffs (Kotrba et al.,

2012).

Osland et al. (2007) reported that, to manage diversity effectively and minimize interpersonal conflict, the organization should be inclusive and reflect a culture that not only recognizes and appreciates diversity, but also provides opportunities for all cultural groups to respect and learn from each other. The culture should acknowledge the need for similarity, the need to work together effectively, and the need for differences to recognize individual and group interests, concerns, and backgrounds.

Richards (2010) studied the impact of organizational culture and workplace safety. The author found that facilities with high-performance cultures had better safety records. Additionally, Richards reported that an important driver in creating a high-performance culture is to manage and cultivate a desired culture for the organization when a strategic decision is made by leadership.

Organizational culture and workplace-violence prevention. For Kerr (2010), people are at the core of any successful organization, and it is their attitudes toward the organization and each other that will ultimately prevent, deter, detect, and respond to violence in the workplace. Kerr suggested that a key aspect to a successful violence-prevention program is the infusion of prevention and action into the organizational culture and the ability to maintain these efforts, which is a primary role of the HR professional. Additionally, organizational culture and the ways in which the organization views employee strife and morale represent examples of the first tangible pieces of evidence that indicate a problem in the organization exists. Kerr pointed to a violence-prevention strategy that includes an organizational culture that places importance on (a) communication, including high levels of respect and transparency; (b) internal and external feedback; (c) evaluation and examination of strategies, policies, and procedures;

(d) accountability; and (e) effective and timely response to concerns or incidents of violence.

Kerr (2010) further suggested that an important strategy that reduces frustration in the workplace and is relatively inexpensive yet often overlooked is improving communication. Simple courtesy is an effective way of diffusing frustration, and Kerr believed that courteous and respectful communication is a vital aspect to changing or improving a corporate culture. Furthermore, Kerr pointed to the importance of creating trust and transparency as part of a healthy, conflict-free organizational culture, and he believed that the culture of an organization is set from the very top of the organization through actions and not words or policies.

A common dilemma is the denial by members of an organization that a violent incident could happen at their organization (Kerr, 2010). Kerr (2010) explained that this is due, in part, to a naïve belief that the workforce is part of an artificially created family and that family members would not threaten or bully another employee, customer, or vendor. Strategic partners may be used in dealing with cultural concerns within an organization. For example, employee-assistance programs can play a key role in violence prevention. Kerr suggested that the caseload of an employee-assistance program could be inversely linked to the health of the organizational culture. Further, Kerr recommended that organizations utilize employee-assistance programs and regularly communicate their role in the day-to-day operations.

Kerr (2010) encouraged the creation of a culture of security mindedness as part of an organizational culture that prevents conflict and violence. Having a well-organized and integrated plan may be enough to show to both internal and external constituent groups that the organization takes security seriously and can act as a deterrent to

workplace incivility. The need to understand an organization's security mindedness must be a daily part of an organization, and this is accomplished only if it is part of the organizational culture.

An important aspect of violence prevention is the recruitment process (ASIS International, 2011). Kerr (2010) highlighted that effective violence prevention should start at the point of hiring, with effective employment vetting at the application stage. Fernandez (2009) linked recruitment to organizational culture by stating that a major aspect of the tone of organizational culture is determined by who is employed by the organization. As Fernandez noted, one of the most powerful ways of changing an organization's culture is through the type of people brought into, retained, and advanced in the organization. It is important for organizational leaders to be able to establish a desired organizational culture by bringing in and advancing individuals with the values desired by the organization and eliminating those with values that do not match the culture.

Osland et al. (2007) suggested the creation of a multicultural organization with an organizational culture that is inclusive to maximize the benefits of diversity and minimize the drawbacks. An inclusive organization actively seeks to capitalize on the advantages of its diversity, rather than ignoring or stifling the diversity, and minimizes the barriers that can develop as a result of people having different backgrounds, attitudes, values, behavior styles, and concerns. In an inclusive setting, organizational resources (i.e., key jobs, income, benefits, access to information) are distributed equitably and not determined or affected by cultural characteristics such as race and gender. The ability to influence decisions and the way that they are carried out is widely shared and not differentiated by cultural characteristics.

In the inclusive organization, minority group members are fully integrated in the informal networks of the organization. The organizational culture is pluralistic in that it recognizes and appreciates diversity, and all cultural groups are able to respect and learn from each other. Institutional policies, practices, and procedures are flexible and responsive to the needs of all employees. There is an absence of prejudice and discrimination, and majority and minority members are equally identified with the organizational goals. Finally, there is a minimum of intergroup conflict among diverse groups (Osland et al., 2007).

Rusaw and Rusaw (2008) reported that, during a crisis, the extent of public trust in and support of public organizations to be able to fulfill expectations for effectiveness and efficiency appears to be mediated by flexibility of organizational responsiveness. Due to the unpredictable character and widespread impact of a crisis, responses need to be flexible, decentralized, and intergovernmental.

In looking at the integration and maintenance of screening for domestic violence in the health sector, Thurston and Eisener (2006) found that organizational culture was a factor in helping or hindering programs and policies for effective screening for domestic violence. Characteristics of the culture of health-care systems in industrialized nations include a biomedical ethics tradition that focuses on autonomy and fairness, evidence-based practice and decision-making activity, professionalism, and the medical model. It has been found that all of these characteristics lead to a valuing of technical competencies over relational competencies in health-care providers. Furthermore, health-care professionals working within a culture that values and rewards professionalism, autonomy, and technical effectiveness find it difficult to develop the kind of collaborative relationships and open communication that many patients and their families would prefer.

For example, questions about domestic violence differ from typical intake questions in a medical encounter; they require more relational skills and, therefore, may be outside of the norm of practice. This aspect of culture may partially explain some of the individual health professional's explanations for not screening (e.g., fear of offending patients, limited time to screen, or patient nondisclosure and noncompliance). Thurston and Eisener (2006) found that the culture of the health sector might not promote the sense of collectivity that is necessary for effective networking and multidisciplinary policy community participation.

Leadership and organizational culture. Leadership can be seen as the source of beliefs and values that drive a group in dealing with its internal and external problems. When a leader proposes something and it works, and continues to work, what may have once just been the leader's assumption gradually becomes a shared assumption. A set of shared basic assumptions (i.e., a culture) can form by this process and can function as a cognitive defense mechanism, both for the individual members and for the group as a whole. This alleviates deviation from the culture because individuals and groups seek stability and meaning; however, once these are achieved, it is easier to distort new data by denial, projection, rationalization, or various other defense mechanisms than to change basic assumptions (Osland & Turner, 2011).

For Kerr (2010), culture is set only if the actions match and support the words and policies of the business. Confronting executives who perceive themselves to be above the law can be detrimental to the effectiveness of any strategy for workplace-violence prevention. Treating an executive as above the law can extend to the overall respect of how people at all levels within the organization are treated. Bullying at executive levels can be seen as permission for heavy-handed or even hostile actions that may be seen as

acceptable. This kind of behavior has a negative impact on establishing a strategy or changing an unhealthy organizational culture into a healthy one. This process is especially difficult if leadership has combative or disrespectful personalities. Similarly, Fernandez (2009) highlighted the importance of deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching. For Fernandez, the personal example of a strategic leader can send a powerful message to the members of an organization, particularly if the message is consistent and ethical.

The HR and security policies and procedures are often established and accepted by senior management and other high-ranking members of the organization. To be proactive and effective in preventing cultural breeding grounds for violence, senior management must understand the risks and strategies to prevent external and internal challenges associated with violence (Kerr, 2010). Kerr (2010) suggested that the individuals who are in leadership positions of the program for workplace-violence prevention should meet with organizational leaders to elicit their support in prevention efforts and to ensure that all are aware of how their ideas and attitudes impact and even dictate organizational culture.

Fernandez (2009) reported that one of the primary responsibilities of strategic leaders is to create and maintain organizational characteristics that reward and encourage collective effort. Further, according to Fisher (2000), organizational culture may be the most fundamental of these characteristics. A leader's success will depend, to a great extent, upon understanding, creating, and maintaining organizational culture. For Fernandez, leaders at the executive level are the primary source for the generation and reinfusion of an organization's ideology, articulation of core values, and specification of norms that lead to certain behaviors or outcomes. The organizational norms express the

behavior accepted by others and become the culturally accepted way of pursuing goals.

Leaders establish the parameters for formal lines of communication and message content, which can be considered the formal interaction rules for an organization. Values and norms once transmitted through an organization establish the permanence of the organization's culture. Strategic leaders have the task of creating the means and the opportunity to infuse their employees with new ways of looking at themselves and their capabilities. The new ideologies and values of the leader need to be communicated effectively, internalized by employees, and then translated into productive methods of thinking and working (Fernandez, 2009).

According to Fernandez (2009), for productive cultural change to occur, leaders need to correctly analyze the organization's existing culture and evaluate it against the cultural attributes needed to achieve strategic objectives. To do this, leaders must first gain a clear understanding of the strategic objectives for their organization and identify the actions needed to reach those objectives. Next, the leaders must conduct an analysis of the organization's existing ideologies, values, and norms. Two critical questions are useful in this process: Are existing explanations of cause-and-effect relationships and acceptable beliefs and behaviors applicable to the organization's achievement of strategic objectives? Are the organizational members facing ambiguities about the external environment and internal work processes that can be clarified only by organizational leadership?

Fernandez (2009) placed importance on the way that leaders approach critical incidents and organizational crises, and the way that leaders react says a lot about the organization's values, norms, and culture. A crisis brings out an organization's underlying core values, and, frequently, this is the area in which rhetoric becomes

apparent. Reactions to crises are often highly visible, as everyone's attention is focused on the incident or situation. It is during a crisis that disconnects between actions and words will usually become obvious.

Crisis-management strategies require integrated leadership systems that are characterized by shared information and decision-making processes. Confusion can often result during a crisis when individuals demand to know who is in charge. The confusion can be reduced and managed through coordinated leadership. At the political-strategic level, the effort to radically centralize decision-making authority tends to cause more friction than if the individuals resolve it because well-established authority patterns are disturbed. The need for flexibility of thinking and actions during a crisis is particularly acute because crises challenge many commonly held assumptions (Rusaw & Rusaw, 2008).

Crises involve unforeseen contingencies, surprises, confusion, and strained resource levels. Training based on routine disaster awareness and prevention drills is insufficient. Group or network relationships can often detect potentially disruptive situations early in crises and can develop solutions that manage emergent situations more creatively than individuals working alone; therefore, organizations should use a cross-section of executive managers, employee responders, agency spokespersons, and media specialists. It has been found that creating a common framework of meaning from different organizational perspectives can reduce error in interpreting emergent crises (Rusaw & Rusaw, 2008).

A crisis generates a great deal of emotional involvement for the stakeholders of an organization, particularly if the crisis threatens the organization's survival. The reaction to a crisis increases the potential for either reinforcing the existing culture or leading to a

change in the culture. Seen in this way, a crisis can provide an opportunity for a leader to influence the organization's culture in either a positive or a negative manner (Fernandez, 2009). Wang and Hutchins (2010) highlighted the need for effective leadership during a crisis. For these researchers, during a crisis, leaders must draw on a set of specific competencies that will drive the crisis toward resolution, and they must do so in a way that preserves or enhances the organization's operational capabilities, financial and other resources, employee morale, and image with stakeholders.

Wang and Hutchins (2010) identified competencies that characterize crisis leadership. They are all related to organizational strategy and organizational culture, and they are associated with each phase of the crisis-management process: (a) sense-making and perspective-taking abilities in the signal detection phase, (b) issue-selling and organizational agility in the prevention or preparation phase, (c) ability of making decisions under pressure and communicating effectively during the containment phase and damage-control phase, (d) promoting organizational resiliency and acting with integrity at the business-recovery phase, and (e) learning orientation.

Measuring organizational culture. Although organizational culture is a relatively young field of research, it has been found to be an essential influential factor in analyzing organizations in various contexts (Dauber et al., 2012). Gillespie et al. (2008) reported that scholars and practitioners of organizational culture aim to understand or uncover the key issues faced by an organization. In the past, this has entailed indepth, qualitative methodologies with sociological or anthropological origins to identify the unique values and beliefs that characterize a group or organization.

In general, questionnaires purported to measure organizational culture tend to focus on a broader set of characteristics than questionnaires purported to measure

organizational climate. Comparative organizational-culture surveys tend to focus on the values level of culture. The current study utilized the organizational-culture framework established by Denison et al. (2012), which was developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative investigations of organizational culture.

Fisher (2000) reported that, as a researcher, Denison set out to establish a way of making organizational culture quantifiable. Denison was driven by a desire to draw a compelling link between organizational culture and bottom-line business-performance factors. To do this, Denison believed that organizational culture should be understood within the arena of everyday business realities. For Denison, the assumptions and beliefs of organizational culture are manifested in a set of outward behaviors toward the main stakeholders of the organization, and, because they are observable, these behaviors are quantifiable.

The Denison model measures four basic business culture traits: mission, involvement, adaptability and consistency (Fisher, 2000). The mission trait can be thought of as the degree to which an organization knows why it exists and what its direction is. It reflects the degree of clarity to which an organization has direction and purpose (Denison et al., 2012; Fisher, 2000; Kotrba et al., 2012). It has been found that effective organizations pursue a mission that provides meaning and direction for their employees. These organizations are characterized by a clear purpose and direction, goals and objectives, and vision for the future (Kotrba et al., 2012). The involvement trait reflects the extent to which employees are committed to their work, feel a sense of ownership, and have input into decisions that affect their work (Denison et al., 2012; Kotrba et al., 2012). Fisher (2000) stated that it is the degree to which individuals at all levels of the organization are engaged and hold the organizational directions as their own.

Adaptability as an organizational trait is the ability of the organization to know what the customers want and the degree to which it can respond to the external forces and demands placed on it (Denison et al., 2012; Fisher, 2000). Expressed differently, it is the organization's capacity for internal change in response to external conditions. Highly internally focused and integrated organizations can have difficulty adapting to external market demands. For organizations to be effective, they must ensure a capacity for creating change, understand their customers and meet their needs, and continue to learn as an organization (Kotrba et al., 2012).

The trait of consistency is the level of cohesion, integration, or agreement around values and norms. Organizations are more effective when they are consistent and well integrated. The consistency trait reflects behavior that is rooted in a set of core values and when individuals are able to reach agreement, and the organization's activities are well coordinated and integrated (Denison et al., 2012; Kotrba et al., 2012). The consistency trait can be seen as a measure of an organization's systems and processes that support efficiency and effectiveness in reaching goals (Denison et al., 2012; Fisher, 2000).

Fisher (2000) stated that, unlike other culture models, the Denison model embraces, rather than ignores, basic paradoxes faced by businesses and their leaders. According to Fisher, it accounts for the deep challenges of leadership, and it is not an either-this-or-that model but a do-this-and-that model. In current society, for an organization to be successful, it must be able to achieve high quality with lower costs, be precise yet quick, must please shareholders and employees, and be concerned with regulators and customers. Additionally, leaders need to pay attention to internal and external factors impacting an organization, achieve short-term and long-term goals, and become focused and precise yet offer flexibility and fluidity.

Research Questions

The following research questions were established to guide this applied dissertation:

1. What is the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention?
2. What is the relationship between the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention and the organizational-culture traits of mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Participants

Data were collected from a sample of HR professionals working in organizations based in the United States. Additional demographic information was collected from the sample. Information on type of organization served (i.e., for profit or nonprofit) and years of experience as an HR professional was also collected. The volunteer participants were recruited to participate in the survey through an invitation posted online on HR professionals' notice boards and community forums. The target population included HR professionals working in organizations based in the United States.

Instruments

This study used two measures: the Denison organizational-culture survey (DOCS) and the workplace-violence intervention assessment (WPVIA) survey. Descriptions of the instruments are provided in the following paragraphs.

Denison organizational-culture survey. The DOCS was developed after 15 years of research and practice in organizational settings. The DOCS items were written to assess those aspects of organizational culture that demonstrated links to organizational effectiveness, such as having a shared sense of responsibility, processing consistent systems and procedures, being responsive to the marketplace, and having a clear purpose and direction for the organization. The scales of the DOCS have been examined using both reliability analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. Coefficient alphas range from .70 to .86 for the 12 indices and from .87 to .92 for the four traits, indicating acceptable levels of consistency within the scales. Factor-analytic results support the hypothesized structure of DOCS (Denison Consulting, 2012). Permission was obtained from Denison Consulting to administer the survey tool as part of this study.

The 60-item DOCS instrument measures four organizational traits: involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. Each trait contains three indices, for a total of 12 indices. Each index is composed of five items, so each trait contains 15 items. The DOCS instrument utilizes a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The DOCS instrument contains all closed-ended items. The factor structure and scale reliabilities were confirmed in prior studies, and data have consistently demonstrated a good fit to the theoretical model of organization culture (Denison Consulting, 2012).

Workplace-violence intervention assessment survey. The WPVIA is a 22-item survey tool developed by the researcher to quantitatively measure the extent to which an organization has effectively implemented expert recommended violence prevention and intervention strategies. Appendix A includes a nondigital version of the survey. The measure was primarily designed using ASIS International's (2011) American national standard for workplace-violence prevention and intervention (i.e., the Standard) as a theoretical framework. Additional item creation was achieved by using several additional sources: Calhoun and Weston (2003), Collins (2011), Ghosh et al. (2011), Kerr (2010), McElhaney (2004), Turner and Gelles (2003), Reio and Ghosh (2009), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (2009), Osland and Turner (2011), and Wang and Hutchins (2010). A rationale for the items used on the WPVIA survey can be found in Appendix B.

The Standard was published in 2011 by ASIS International and the Society for Human Resource Management as a comprehensive guide for organizations to assess and address violence prevention and intervention. The ASIS International is the preeminent organization for security professionals, with more than 37,000 members worldwide. The

Society for Human Resource Management is the world's largest association devoted to HR management. It represents more than 250,000 members in over 140 countries (ASIS International, 2011). It discusses the implementation of a workplace-violence prevention and intervention program, including protocols for effective incident management and resolution.

The Standard provides an overview of policies, processes, and protocols that organizations can adopt to help identify and prevent threatening behavior and violence affecting the workplace and to better address and resolve threats and violence that have actually occurred. Additionally, it describes the personnel within organizations who typically become involved in prevention and intervention efforts. The Standard proposes a methodology in which an organization can better detect, investigate, manage, and resolve behavior that has generated concerns for workplace safety from violence (ASIS International, 2011).

The Standard reflects a consensus of opinion among professionals from a myriad of disciplines that include security, human resources, mental health, law enforcement, and legal arenas regarding practices viewed as effective, recommended, and, in some cases, vital to workplace-violence prevention and intervention. The Standard is intended to aid organizations to meet important legal obligations related to maintaining a safe workplace. It is not intended, however, to set or define new legal obligations.

The Standard is meant to be a tool and resource that organizations of any size can use to evaluate, develop, and implement policies, structures, and practices related to workplace violence. It should be noted that the requirements and recommendations remain at a generic level, with the expectation that organizations undertaking to implement prevention and intervention strategies will integrate specificity and detail as

appropriate for their organization. The Standard is applicable to any organization that chooses to establish, implement, maintain, and improve a workplace-violence prevention and intervention program, a threat-management protocol, or practices that can assist the organization in effectively managing issues following incidents (ASIS International, 2011).

At the time of this research, no data were available for reliability and validity of the WPVIA, as this was the first time that the WPVIA was being used in a study. The WPVIA utilizes 22 items that assess the extent to which an organization has successfully implemented violence-prevention strategies proposed in the Standard. The WPVIA included closed-ended items, with dichotomous responses (10 items), multiple responses (five items) and Likert-scale (seven items) responses being used.

To test and improve the face validity of the WPVIA, a pilot survey of the WPVIA was administered to a focus group of violence-prevention specialists. Changes were made to the WPVIA survey based on the feedback of 35 members of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, which is a nonprofit organization founded in 1992. The Association of Threat Assessment Professionals is composed of law enforcement officials, prosecutors, mental-health professionals, corporate-security experts, probation and parole personnel, and others involved in the area of threat and violence risk assessment. The purpose of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals is to afford its members a professional and educational environment to exchange ideas and strategies to address such issues as stalking, threats, and homeland security.

The 35 individuals who completed the pilot survey included security professionals, threat-assessment professionals, law-enforcement professionals, specialists in workplace-violence prevention, certified protection professionals, private investigators,

legal professionals, mental-health professionals, and an HR professional. The respondents self-rated themselves as either proficient (48.6%), competent (34.3%) or expert-specialist (17.1%) with regard to their knowledge of workplace-violence prevention. With regard to the extent to which the items on the WPVIA represented a measure of an organization's strategy for workplace-violence prevention, 45.7% of the participants reported *considerable*, 31.4% reported *to a great extent*, 17.1% reported *somewhat*, 0.0% reported *limited*, and 5.8% reported *not at all*.

Procedures

Design. This quantitative study was a correlational approach with an explanatory design that was delivered electronically using the online survey tool called Survey Monkey. Participants answered an 87-item electronic instrument (i.e., DOCS, 60 items; WPVIA, 22 items; and demographic information, five items) in one sitting. The survey took the respondents approximately 20 minutes to complete. Only participants who matched the research criteria and completed the survey were included in the data analysis (Creswell, 2008).

Data analysis. The data from the survey was coded and entered into a statistical software program for analysis. Each item from the WPVIA was correlated with the four organizational-culture traits from the DOCS: involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. An organizational-culture score was calculated by combining the means of the four organizational-culture traits and establishing a mean score. This score was then correlated with the each item of the WPVIA and the WPVIA score. The WPVIA score was correlated with an external-focus score (i.e., the mean scores of the adaptability and mission traits combined). The WPVIA score was also correlated with an internal-focus score (i.e., the mean scores of the involvement and consistency traits combined). The

WPVIA score was correlated with a flexibility score (i.e., the mean scores of the adaptability and involvement traits combined). The WPVIA score was also correlated with a stability score (i.e., the mean scores of the mission and consistency traits combined).

The WPVIA was scored using a scoring key (see Appendix C), and a normative score was compared to the four organizational-culture traits (i.e., involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission) and the 12 organizational-culture indices of the DOCS: empowerment, team orientation, capability development, core values, agreement, coordination, creating change, customer focus, organizational learning, strategic direction and intent, goals and objectives, and vision. The WPVIA score was assigned a grade of A, B, or C using the scoring key. The distribution of participant scores was analyzed using a Pearson chi-squared test and then correlated with the four organizational-culture traits of the DOCS using chi-squared tests. A Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons was used to maintain the family-wise error rate at .05 for all correlational analyses. The results for the data analysis are reported in Chapter 4.

Limitations

This study relied on a correlational approach, which allows for the degree and strength of the association between variables to be determined but not causality. The study provides information about the relationship between the organizational-culture traits (i.e., involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission) identified by Denison et al. (2012) and strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The study also used a self-reporting survey; therefore, it may be subject to social desirability bias, thereby impacting its validity.

Additionally, this study relied on the reporting of only one individual per

organization, thus impacting the validity of the results from the DOCS. The WPVIA was created by the researcher for this study; therefore, no information on reliability or validity for this measure was previously available, which could impact the overall reliability and validity of the study. The level of interpretation for this study is small. The study does not offer an interpretation or explanation of why certain strategies were implemented or whether the strategies were effective in the prevention of workplace violence.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

Results in this chapter are presented based on a survey that was posted online on HR professionals' notice boards and community forums. The goal of this research was to explore the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Section A of the survey covered demographic information. Section B gathered information about the organizational culture of the organization in which the participant was employed. Section C gathered information about the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention within the participant's organization. The information collected by the researcher was used to produce quantitative data.

Demographic Information

The demographic information that was collected using Section A of the survey included information about the professional credentials of the participants, verification of employment by a U.S. organization, information about the category of industry of the participants, information about the tasks that the participants perform in an HR capacity, and the number of years of HR professional experience. Although the demographic information was not the crux of this study, the data were important to ensure that (a) the participants met the criteria of the study, (b) they were able to answer questions adequately about their organization's culture and strategies for workplace-violence prevention, and (c) a broad range of industries was being included in the study.

Eighty-eight people responded to the survey. Participants who were HR professionals, were employed by a U.S. based company, and completed the survey were included in the analysis of the data. Sixty-three respondents were included in the final

study. All participants indicated that they were credentialed as HR professionals. Fifteen percent of participants were additionally credentialed as HRD professionals. Forty-five percent of participants were also credentialed as HR managers. Other HR credentials that were reported by the participants included the following: senior professional in HR (4.76%), director of HR strategic initiatives (1.59%), vice-president of HR (3.17%), HR consultant (1.59%), management with HR responsibilities (1.59%), safety director (1.59%), benefits manager (1.59%), and employee and labor-relations manager (1.59%). The study included HR professionals working in a broad range of industries. Data for the industries included in the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Percentage of Respondents by Industry

Industry	%
Manufacturing	17.46
Nonprofit	11.11
Government	9.52
Telecommunications, technology, Internet, and electronics	9.52
Education	7.94
Insurance	6.35
Utilities, energy, and extraction	6.35
Business support and logistics	4.76
Construction, machinery, and homes	4.76
Health care, medical, and wellness	4.76
Finances and financial services	3.17
Retail and consumer products	3.17
Real estate	1.59
Distribution	1.59
Homeowner's association management	1.59
Professional employer organization	1.59
Publishing	1.59
Textiles	1.59

Data relating to the professional-experience level and occupational tasks of the

HR professionals included in the study were collected. Most of the participants (92%) reported that they had 5 or more years of professional experience in HR. Approximately 6% reported that they had 2 to 4 years of professional experience in HR. Two percent reported that they had less than 2 years of professional HR experience. Participants reported that they performed a broad range of HR tasks for their organizations (see Table 2).

Table 2

Percentage of Respondents Performing Tasks Related to Human Resources

Task	%
Employee relations	88.89
Employment law	82.54
Hiring or talent acquisition	82.54
Compensation and benefits	77.78
Strategic planning	77.78
Human-resource management	76.19
Terminations	75.71
Safety or health	55.56

Organizational Culture

Section B of the survey measured organizational culture using the DOCS.

Participant mean scores for the Denison organizational-culture traits are summarized in Table 3. Scores for the cultural trait of involvement reflect the extent to which employees are committed to their work, feel a sense of involvement, and have input into the decisions that affect their work. The higher the score recorded, the greater these characteristics are present in the organization being studied. A mean score of 3.54 was calculated for the involvement trait for this study ($N = 63$), and a range of 1.67 to 4.73

($SD = 0.59$) was recorded.

Table 3

Participant Mean Scores for Organizational-Culture Indices and Traits

Item	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Involvement	3.54	0.59	1.67	4.73
Consistency	3.54	0.61	1.90	4.73
Adaptability	3.42	0.63	1.80	4.53
Mission	3.49	0.74	1.67	4.80

The consistency trait refers to the level of cohesion, integration, or agreement around values and norms. High scores in this trait reflect an organizational culture in which behavior is rooted in a set of core values, individuals are able to reach agreement, and the organization's activities are well coordinated and integrated. A mean score of 3.54 with a range of 1.90 to 4.73 ($SD = 0.61$) was calculated for the consistency trait for this study.

Adaptability as it relates to organizational culture is a measure of an organization's capacity for internal change in response to external conditions. High scores in this organizational trait reflect a high level of the organization's ability to translate the demands of the business environment into action (Kotrba et al., 2012). A mean score of 3.42 was recorded as the mean for this trait. The scores ranged from 1.80 to 4.53 ($SD = 0.63$).

The organizational trait of mission represents the degree to which an organization has direction and clarity of purpose. High scores recorded for this trait reflect that the organization has a clear purpose and direction, goals and objectives, and a vision for the future. A mean score of 3.49 was calculated for the mission trait for this study, with a

range of 1.67 to 4.80 ($SD = 0.74$). Mean scores were also calculated for the organizational-culture hemispheres: external focus, internal focus, flexibility, and stability (see Table 4).

Table 4

Participant Mean Scores for Organizational-Culture Hemispheres

Item	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
External focus	6.91	1.26	3.47	9.27
Internal focus	7.08	1.10	3.57	9.47
Flexibility	6.96	1.15	3.47	9.27
Stability	7.03	1.25	3.57	9.53

The organizational-culture construct called external focus is calculated by combining scores from the adaptability organizational-culture trait and the mission organizational-culture trait. High scores in external focus reflect an organization that is committed to adapting and changing in response to the external environment. The scores for external focus ranged from 3.47 to 9.27, with a mean of 6.91 ($SD = 1.26$).

The organizational-culture construct called internal focus is calculated by combining scores from the involvement organizational-culture trait and the consistency organizational-culture trait. High scores for internal focus are representative of an organization that is committed to the dynamics of the internal integration of systems, structures, and processes. The scores for internal focus ranged from 3.57 to 9.47, with a mean of 7.08 ($SD = 1.10$).

Flexibility as an organizational-culture hemisphere is calculated by combining the scores from the adaptability organizational trait and the involvement organizational trait. High scores for this construct represent a flexible organization that has the capacity to

change in response to the environment. The scores for flexibility ranged from 3.47 to 9.27, with a mean of 6.96 ($SD = 1.15$).

The organizational culture construct called stability is determined by combining scores from the mission organizational-culture trait and the consistency organizational-culture trait. High scores for this construct represent a stable organization that has the capacity to remain focused and predictable over time. The scores for stability ranged from 3.57 to 9.53, with a mean of 7.03 ($SD = 1.25$).

An organizational-culture score was calculated by combining the means of the four organizational-culture traits (i.e., involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission) and calculating the mean. The mean of the organizational-culture score was 3.50, with a range of 1.76 to 4.67 ($SD = .57$). High organizational-culture scores represent organizations that have high levels of all four organizational-culture traits.

Strategies for Workplace-Violence Prevention

Section C of the survey measured strategies for workplace-violence prevention using the 22-item WPVIA designed by the researcher. Responses were assigned a numerical value of -2, -1, 0, 1, or 2, which represented the degree to which an expert-recommended violence-prevention strategy had been successfully implemented by an organization. Scores of -2 or -1 signified organizational practices that could put the organization at risk for workplace violence. The degree of impediment determined if the score was -2 or -1. A score of 0 signified that the behaviors were neither detrimental nor beneficial for workplace-violence prevention. Scores of 1 or 2 signified organizational practices that supported or were beneficial for workplace-violence prevention.

Additionally, the WPVIA score was assigned a grade of A, B, or C using the scoring key. Raw scores of 11 to 20 were assigned an A, raw scores of 1 to 10 were

assigned a B, and raw scores of -10 to 0 were assigned a C. Forty-four percent of participants' organizations were graded with an A, reflecting a high level of the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Fifty-one percent of participants' organizations were graded with a B, reflecting a medium level of the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Five percent of participants' organizations were graded with a C, reflecting a low level of the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The WPVIA scores ranged from -15 to 115, with a mean of 50.17 ($SD = 29.54$).

Negative scores on this scale meant that the organization had few expert-recommended strategies for workplace-violence prevention in place. Additionally, the organization was engaging in practices that may put the organization at risk for incidents of workplace violence. Positive scores on this scale meant that the organization had successfully implemented strategies for workplace-violence prevention. High scores on the WPVIA represent high frequency of effective implementation of expert-recommended strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

Findings for Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked about the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. To address this research question, correlation coefficients were calculated between the organizational-culture score and each of the WPVIA survey items. The results are reported in Appendix D. For organizations to adequately prevent and manage workplace aggression and violence, it is important to implement proactive and ongoing violence-prevention efforts (ASIS International, 2011). Organizational culture, as reported by the 63 respondents of this study, was found to correlate positively, $r = .29, p < .05$, with the implementation of

a policy or plan for workplace-violence prevention within an organization.

However, no correlation was found between the elapsed time from the last assessment performed or whether an assessment had taken place and organizational culture. Additionally, no correlations were found to exist among the organizational culture and whether a policy or plan for workplace-violence prevention was stand alone, if it was integrated into other broader policies or procedures, or if the organization had one in place. High levels of positive organizational-culture traits were significantly positively correlated with a management team that was supportive of violence-prevention efforts, $r = .35, p < .01$.

Data from this study found that organizational culture is positively correlated with whether there was an employee in the organization who had been delegated the responsibility of implementing strategies for workplace-violence prevention, $r = .32, p < .01$. With regard to the training of an employee who had been delegated the responsibilities of implementing these strategies, no correlation was found between the organizational culture of the participants and whether the employee had received training in workplace-violence prevention. Additionally, no correlation was found between organizational culture and the use of a threat-management team as part of an organization's strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

A significant and positive correlation was found between organizational culture and the enforcement of standards of professionalism, respect through appropriate discipline, and clear identification of appropriate workplace behavior, $r = .44, p < .01$. The study found a significant and positive correlation between organizational culture and a culture that is perceived as one that cares about safety and encourages employees to report circumstances of concern, $r = .36, p < .01$. Additionally, the study found a

significant and positive correlation between organizational culture and the practice of managing and tracking reports of behavior that raised safety concerns, $r = .44, p < .01$.

It has been shown that a key component to an effective violence prevention and intervention strategy is to establish trusted relationships with violence risk-assessment professionals (i.e., threat-assessment professionals) and legal counsel, who can provide assistance during incident management (ASIS International, 2011; McElhaney, 2004). The study found a significant and positive correlation between organizational culture and the strategy of establishing trusted relationships with threat-assessment professionals and legal counsel to assist the organization with incident management, $r = .53, p < .01$.

It has been shown that an effective strategy for workplace-violence prevention is to conduct employee background screening as part of the hiring process (ASIS International, 2011). No correlation was found between the organizational culture of the respondents and whether their organization conducted employee background checks as part of their violence-prevention efforts. The study found a significant and positive correlation between safe termination practices and organizational culture, $r = .26, p < .05$.

According to ASIS International (2011), an important aspect of violence prevention is the implementation of protocols to manage workplace emergencies that arise from incidents of workplace violence. The study found a significant and positive correlation between the implementation of an emergency-management plan to manage emergencies related to workplace violence and organizational culture, $r = .33, p < .01$.

Workplace incivility is defined as low-intensity, deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm a target in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. A significant and positive correlation was found in this study between organizational culture and organizations dealing with incivility promptly and effectively, $r = .45, p < .01$.

According to ASIS International (2011), a policy for workplace-violence prevention should be bolstered and supported by additional policies that, together with the policy for workplace-violence prevention, set clear expectations for appropriate workplace behavior and facilitate incident management. The study found a positive and significant correlation between organizational culture and the presence of a bullying-prevention plan for the workplace, $r = .46, p < .01$.

The study found a significant and negative correlation between organizational culture and the number of incidents that an organization had experienced within a 3-year period, $r = .29, p < .05$. Higher scores of organizational culture meant fewer incidents of workplace violence occurring. Incidents of violence included any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurred in an occupational setting. Near misses can be defined as an accident or event that could have resulted in a reportable accident to the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration. No correlation was found between the participant's organizational culture and whether an organization had a procedure in place to document near misses.

Findings for Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked about the relationship between the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention and the organizational-culture traits of mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency. To address this research question, a series of correlational analyses was performed. Correlational coefficients between WPVIA scores and the organizational-culture traits were calculated. Significant correlations existed between all organizational-culture traits and WPVIA scores. Specifically, WPVIA scores were positively correlated with (a) involvement, $r = .60, p <$

.01; (b) consistency, $r = .51, p < .01$; (c) adaptability, $r = .53, p < .01$; and (d) mission, $r = .57, p < .01$. Correlational coefficients between WPVIA scores and the organizational-culture indices were calculated. The WPVIA scores were significantly associated with all organizational-culture indices (see Table 5).

Table 5

Positive Correlations Between Assessment Survey and Organizational-Culture Indices

Index	r	p
Empowerment	.52	.01
Team orientation	.56	.01
Capability development	.52	.01
Core values	.44	.01
Agreement	.45	.01
Coordination and integration	.44	.01
Creating change	.43	.01
Customer focus	.32	.01
Organizational learning	.59	.01
Strategic direction and intent	.56	.01
Goals and objectives	.50	.01
Vision	.52	.01

Correlational coefficients between WPVIA scores and the four organizational-culture hemispheres of external focus, internal focus, flexibility, and stability were calculated. Significant correlations existed between all organizational-culture constructs and WPVIA scores. Specifically, WPVIA scores were positively correlated with (a) external focus, $r = .60, p < .01$; (b) internal focus, $r = .60, p < .01$; (c) flexibility, $r = .60, p < .01$; and (d) stability, $r = .58, p < .01$.

The relationship between the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention and the organizational-culture traits of mission, involvement, adaptability, and

consistency was further dissected and interpreted by using correlational analysis between the four organizational-culture traits and the survey items of the WPVIA. Correlational coefficients between WPVIA scores and the items of the WPVIA were calculated. The results are reported in Appendix E and summarized below.

Involvement and mission were found to correlate significantly and positively with whether or not an organization had been assessed with regard to vulnerability to workplace violence: $r = .30, p < .01$, and $r = .28, p < .05$. The establishment of a plan or policy for workplace-violence prevention by an organization significantly and positively correlated to mission, involvement, and adaptability but not to consistency: $r = .27, p < .05$; $r = .25, p < .05$; and $r = .29, p < .05$. How a policy or plan for workplace-violence prevention was set up or whether it was stand alone or integrated into other broader policies did not correlate with any of the traits.

Higher levels of support from management toward violence-prevention efforts correlated significantly and positively with involvement and mission but not with consistency and adaptability: $r = .42, p < .01$, and $r = .38, p < .01$. The frequency of the delegation of an employee responsible for implementing violence-prevention strategies within an organization correlated significantly and positively with all four of the traits: $r = .33, p < .01$; $r = .26, p < .05$; $r = .26, p < .05$; and $r = .29, p < .05$. With regard to whether or not a person who had been delegated with the responsibility of implementing violence-prevention strategies had received training in workplace-violence prevention, no correlation was found among the four organizational-culture traits.

The choice to establish a threat-management team within an organization did not correlate significantly with any of the four organizational-culture traits. The enforcement of standards of professionalism and respect through appropriate discipline and whether or

not the organization identified clear lines of appropriate workplace behavior could be correlated positively and significantly with all four of the organizational-culture traits, with adaptability being the highest correlation reported: $r = .39, p < .01$; $r = .32, p < .01$; $r = .47, p < .01$; and $r = .37, p < .01$. All four of the organizational-culture traits correlated significantly and positively to whether or not an organization, as part of its culture, cared about safety and encouraged its employees to report circumstance of concerns: $r = .35, p < .01$; $r = .27, p < .05$; $r = .32, p < .05$; and $r = .34, p < .01$.

The practice to manage and track reports of behavior that raised safety concerns correlated significantly and positively with all four of the organizational-culture traits: $r = .48, p < .01$; $r = .36, p < .01$; $r = .25, p < .05$, and $r = .48, p < .05$. The violence-prevention strategy of establishing trusted or contractual relationships with violence risk-assessment professionals or legal counsel who could provide incident or crisis management correlated significantly and positively with all four of the organizational-culture traits, with involvement having the strongest correlation: $r = .57, p < .01$; $r = .45, p < .01$; $r = .47, p < .01$; $r = .41, p < .01$. Most of the participants (82.5%) responded that their organization conducted employee background screening as part of the hiring process. No correlation was found between this violence-prevention strategy and the four organizational-culture traits.

A significant and positive correlation was found between safe termination practices and the organizational-culture traits of involvement and consistency: $r = .27, p < .05$, and $r = .25, p < .05$. Having protocols in place for managing workplace emergencies that arose from incidents of workplace violence was found to correlate significantly and positively with the organizational-culture trait of involvement, $r = .36, p < .01$, but not with consistency, adaptability, or mission. The prompt and effective

attention of an organization in dealing with incivility correlated significantly and positively with all four of the organizational-culture traits: $r = .34, p < .01$; $r = .48, p < .01$; $r = .42, p < .01$; and $r = .36, p < .01$.

Similarly, whether or not an organization had a program or plan in place to address workplace bullying was found to correlate with mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency: $r = .41, p < .01$; $r = .38, p < .01$; $r = .40, p < .01$; and $r = .45, p < .01$. A significant and negative correlation was found to exist between the numbers of incidents of violence that an organization had experienced within a 3-year period prior to the study and the organizational-culture traits of consistency, $r = .38, p < .01$, and adaptability, $r = .37, p < .01$. In other words, organizations that scored higher in the consistency trait or the adaptability trait had fewer incidents of violence occurring in their organization over a 3-year time period. No correlation was found regarding whether or not an organization had a procedure in place to document near misses.

To assess the overall relationship between WPVIA scores and organizational-culture traits, WPVIA scores were converted to grades of A, B, or C using the scoring key. The WPVIA scores of 11 to 20 were assigned an A, scores of 1 to 10 were assigned a B, and scores of -10 to 0 were assigned a C. Then correlation coefficients were calculated between the WPVIA grade set by recoding the grades to numerical values (i.e., $A = 3$, $B = 2$, and $C = 1$) and each of the four self-reported organizational-culture trait scores (i.e., involvement, mission, consistency, and mission).

Significant and positive correlations were found between each organizational-culture trait and the WPVIA grade set (see Table 6). The results suggest that high scores for organizational-culture traits are consistent with high grades for the effective implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The trait of involvement

was found to have the most impact on the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

Table 6

Positive Correlations Between Grade Set of Assessment Survey and Organizational-Culture Traits

Index	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Involvement	.46	.01
Mission	.43	.01
Consistency	.38	.01
Adaptability	.38	.01

Chapter 5: Discussion

Overview of the Study

This study aimed to explore the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Professionals with experience in HR were selected as the target population because they were in a key position to provide information about an organization's culture and its violence prevention and intervention efforts. The HR professionals are often involved in both of these organizational tasks.

Ramono, Levi-Minzi, Rugala, and Van Hasselt (2011) reported that workplace violence is a complex and widespread issue that has received increased attention from mental-health experts, law-enforcement professionals, and the general public. High-profile incidents (e.g., mass shootings at a workplace) have led to increased public awareness; however, prevalence rates show that nonfatal workplace violence is a more common phenomenon than previously believed. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (2013), workplace violence has emerged as an important safety and health issue in today's workplace. Nearly two million American workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year, and this number could be much higher because many cases go unreported.

Workplace violence can be defined as any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs in an occupational setting. It ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide (Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2013). Strategies for workplace-violence prevention are policies and procedures adopted by an organization that prohibit violence, the threat of violence, or other predetermined actions and

behaviors that are considered inappropriate by the organization from a violence-prevention perspective (ASIS International, 2011; McElhaney, 2004).

The importance of organizational culture is widely acknowledged in the workplace violence and aggression literature; however, the role of organizational culture in violence-prevention efforts remains undertheorized (Rubineau & Vincent, 2012). Organizational culture is the collective behavior of the members who are part of an organization and the meanings that they attach to their actions. It includes the organization's values, visions, norms, working language, systems, beliefs, and habits. Organizational culture may be thought of as the set of mental assumptions that guide interpretation and action in organizations by defining the behavior considered appropriate for various situations (Grant, 2010; Handy, 1999).

To fulfill the study's purpose, to remain within the quantitative design, and to address the research questions, the researcher conducted an online survey with 63 HR professionals working in a broad range of organizations based in the United States. Data relating to the professional experience level and occupational tasks of the HR professionals included in the study were collected. The vast majority of the participants (92.06%) reported that they had 5 or more years of experience as a professional in HR.

The volunteer participants answered items included in the DOCS and the WPVIA. The 60-item DOCS instrument measures four organizational traits: involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. Each trait contains three indices, for a total of 12 organizational-culture indices. The WPVIA is a 22-item survey tool designed by the researcher to quantitatively measure the extent to which an organization has effectively implemented expert-recommended violence prevention and intervention strategies.

This quantitative study used a correlational approach with an explanatory design

that was delivered electronically. Sixty-three participants who matched the research criteria and completed the survey were included in the data analysis. The data from the survey were coded and entered into a statistical software program, and a series of correlational tests was conducted and analyzed.

Summaries of the Findings

Research Question 1. The first research question focused on the relationship between organizational culture and strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The researcher reached the following conclusions through an examination of findings:

1. The study found a statistically significant and positive correlation between organizational culture and strategies for workplace-violence prevention.
2. Effective organizations (i.e., those with high scores for organizational culture) implemented higher levels of expert-recommended strategies for workplace-violence prevention.
3. Effective organizations (i.e., those with high scores for organizational culture) had lower levels of reported incidents of workplace violence.

Research Question 2. The second research question focused on examining the relationship between the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention and the organizational-culture traits of mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency. An analysis of the data revealed the following:

1. There was a significant and positive correlation between the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention and all four of the organizational-culture traits: mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency. The organizational-culture trait of involvement had the strongest correlation with the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention, followed by mission, adaptability, and consistency.

2. High scores in the organizational culture traits of consistency and adaptability correlated with lower levels of reported incidents of workplace violence.

3. The implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention correlated significantly and positively with all 12 of the organizational-culture indices. The highest correlation reported was between the organizational-culture index of organizational learning and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The lowest correlation found was with the organizational-culture index of customer focus.

4. The implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention correlated significantly and positively with the organizational-culture hemispheres of external focus, internal focus, flexibility, and stability.

5. A grading system, which was used by the researcher to assign a grade to the organizations' efforts for workplace-violence prevention, revealed a correlation between strategies for workplace-violence prevention and all four of the organizational-culture traits. The trait of involvement was found to have the strongest correlation, suggesting that involvement had the most impact on the effective implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

Implications of the Findings and Recommendations for Future Research

Although there is much literature available on strategies for workplace-violence prevention (ASIS International, 2011; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Kerr, 2010; Turner & Gelles, 2003), little research was found that examined the relationship between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. These strategies include policies and procedures that are designed to detect, investigate, manage, and resolve behavior that has generated concerns for safety from violence (ASIS International, 2011; Occupational Safety and Health Administration,

2009; Turner & Gelles, 2003).

Suggestions for plans for workplace-violence prevention emphasize the importance of culture. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in a report on how to prevent incidents of violence, stated that, without an organizational culture that supports the reporting of workplace violence, a violence-prevention plan would be ineffective. However, no concrete suggestions for building such a culture were offered (Rugala & Isaacs, 2004).

The results of the study suggested a possible method for organizations to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Greater effectiveness of the implementing strategies for workplace-violence prevention could be achieved through an organization's purposefully changing or enhancing the organizational culture to one that promotes organizational effectiveness. This study offers insights into the characteristics of an organizational culture that is supportive of violence-prevention efforts.

The study found a link between the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention and organizational culture. Specifically, the organizational-culture traits (i.e., mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency) were found to significantly and positively correlate with strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Of the four traits, the organizational-culture trait of involvement was found to have the strongest correlation. The study was correlational in design; therefore, no causality can be inferred about the relationship. However, the findings support other studies examining the impact of organizational culture and organizational strategy. Organizational culture has been shown to have the ability to positively influence (a) organizational effectiveness (Kotrba et al., 2012); (b) customer satisfaction (Gillespie et al., 2008); (c) profitability,

sales, revenue, growth, market share, quality, innovation, and employee satisfaction (Fisher, 2000); creativity (McLean, 2005); and workplace safety (Richards, 2010).

Grant (2010) reported that organizational culture has been shown to be of great strategic importance to the success of an organization. Organizational culture has been shown to have an impact on the ability of leaders to introduce change into an organization, either from the bottom or from the top of a hierarchy (Thurston & Eisener, 2006). This study reveals that the ability to change or to implement new policies and procedures effectively within an organization may prove to be a powerful determinant of an organization's ability to implement and maintain strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

The findings of the study support Kerr's (2010) premise that it is the attitudes of the members toward an organization that will ultimately cause them to prevent, deter, detect, and respond to violence in the workplace. Kerr suggested that a key aspect to a successful program for workplace-violence prevention is the infusion of prevention and action into the organizational culture and the ability to maintain these efforts.

This study supports Rubineau and Vincent's (2012) proposed solution for improving efforts toward workplace-violence prevention. These researchers asserted that, rather than defining a set of severe behaviors subject to zero tolerance, a culturally informed approach suggests reducing the frequencies of all negative interpersonal behaviors for the entire continuum. Consistent intervention across the entire continuum is more likely to rewrite norms and change organizational culture for a successful and enduring reduction in workplace violence.

The study found a positive and significant correlation with all four of the organizational-culture traits (i.e., mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency)

and their corresponding indices. These findings support and lend statistical evidence to the expert recommendations for the leaders and management of organizations to understand and shape organizational culture as part of workplace-violence prevention. For example, ASIS International (2011) recommended policies and practices that help to establish a culture that expects professionalism and respect among employees, between employees and managers, and among employees, customers, clients, vendors, and others who interact with the workplace.

According to ASIS International (2011), it is vital that an organization should consider the implementation of management and disciplinary practices that enforce behavioral standards at all levels of the organization and that encourages early intervention with all behaviors of concern. The ASIS International (2011) highlighted that the nature and sequence of steps an organization will take when designing, implementing, and evaluating a violence-prevention program will depend on a variety of factors, including the size, characteristics, culture, and resources of the organization. The findings of the study reflect on the need of leaders to analyze and measure the organizational culture to determine if it is conducive to strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

Of the four organizational-culture traits, involvement was found to have the highest significant correlation with the effective implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. This trait reflects the extent to which employees are committed, feel a sense of ownership, and have input into decisions that affect their work. It is a measure of an employee's level of empowerment. The outcomes of empowerment are employees who are more effective, innovative, and capable of exerting upward influence than disempowered employees.

Empowered employees also have higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of fear and stress. Employees have to choose to be empowered; however, organizations can encourage this mindset through the following actions: reducing hierarchical and bureaucratic structures, increasing access to sources of system power (e.g., access to strategic information, resources, and managerial support), fostering an organizational culture that values the human assets of the organization, and establishing direction and boundaries relating to empowerment (Osland et al., 2007).

The results of the study suggest that empowerment may be the strongest determinant of an organization's ability to implement effective strategies for workplace-violence prevention. This study established a correlation between empowerment and strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Further empirical research would be needed to establish causality. However, it can be noted that several key factors required for the effective implementation of a violence-prevention plan, as recommended by violence-prevention professionals, relate to organizational empowerment. For example, ASIS International (2011) stated that effective workplace-violence prevention and intervention efforts require a clear top-down commitment by management to ensure that the right resources are allocated to develop a program for workplace-violence prevention and intervention.

Additionally, ASIS International (2011) highlighted that sufficient resources and authorizations must be provided to establish, implement, operate, monitor, and maintain violence-prevention programs, including thorough employee training and education. It is also vital that employees feel assured that reports made under the policy will be treated with the highest degree of discretion and will promptly be investigated and addressed by the employer. Reducing organizational fear is a key component of increasing

organizational empowerment (Osland et al., 2007).

The use of teams has been identified as a way of increasing the level of empowerment experienced by individuals in organizations (Osland et al., 2007).

Teamwork has also been identified as an important factor in successfully implementing and maintaining strategies for workplace-violence prevention. For example, ASIS International (2011) reported that an important maxim that applies to both prevention and incident management is the notion that no one goes it alone. Effective prevention and management demands a team approach, requiring the assistance of personnel from within the organization and externally.

High scores in the organizational-culture trait of consistency correlated with lower levels of incidents of workplace violence. The trait of consistency is a measure of the level of cohesion, integration, or agreement around values and norms. High scores in this trait reflect an organizational culture in which behavior is rooted in a set of core values, individuals are able to reach agreement, and the organization's activities are well coordinated and integrated (Kotrba et al., 2012). The study was correlational in design; therefore, no causality can be inferred about the relationship found between consistency and lower frequencies of incidents of workplace violence. However, it should be noted that many aspects of consistency are vital for the successful implementation and maintenance of a strategy for workplace-violence prevention.

For example, Kerr (2010) encouraged the creation and fostering of an ongoing and consistent culture of security mindedness as part of an organizational culture that prevents conflict and violence. According to Kerr, having an integrated plan may be enough to demonstrate that the organization takes security seriously and can act as a deterrent to workplace incivility. The ASIS International (2011) recommended striving to

engage all employees in the process of creating a safe and secure work environment. It has also been found that high levels of consistency translate into low levels of conflict (Osland et al., 2007). Further research would be needed to explore the relationship between consistency in an organization and lower levels of workplace violence to determine if a causal relationship exists.

In recent times, adapting to change has become a critical issue for organizational survival (Sevaguru & Safa, 2009). High scores in the organizational-culture trait of adaptability correlated with lower levels of incidents of workplace violence. Adaptability is the organization's capacity for internal change in response to external conditions. It has been found that highly internally focused and integrated organizations can have difficulty adapting to external market demands. To be effective, an organization must ensure that it has the capacity to create and adapt to change, understand the customers and meet their needs, and continue to learn (Kotrba et al., 2012).

The trait of adaptability is composed of three indexes: creating change, customer focus, and organizational learning. It is interesting to note that, although all three of these indexes correlated positively and significantly with the implementation of workplace-violence prevention, the index of organizational learning correlated the strongest of the three and also the strongest of all 12 of the organizational-culture indices that were correlated. Further research would be necessary to explore the possibility that a causal relationship exists between high levels of organizational learning and low incidents of workplace violence.

The implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention correlated significantly and positively with the organizational-culture hemisphere of external focus. Organizations that score high in external focus are committed to adapting and changing

in response to the external environment (Denison Consulting, 2011). McElhaney (2004) reported that an essential element in the prevention of workplace violence is overcoming the natural tendency toward denial and avoidance. The effective implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention requires organizations to perceive the necessity and benefit of these strategies and then have a willingness to commit to implementing them. The research suggests that organizations with high levels of external focus exhibit this behavior, have reacted to the external environmental cues, and have taken workplace-violence prevention seriously.

Uncovering this correlation is useful because it may provide clues in discovering the reasons that, despite the known devastating effects and increasing frequency of workplace violence, more than 70% of workplaces in the United States do not have a program or policy in place to address workplace violence. Data from 2005 showed that only 10% of organizations that had suffered the effects of an incident of workplace violence reported to have changed their programs or policies in an effort to safeguard employees from further acts of violence (Erdmann, 2009). Further research could investigate organizations that have high levels of external focus to determine the feedback mechanisms they use to detect, analyze, and respond to the security and safety needs of the organization.

Organizations that exhibit high levels of internal focus are strongly committed to the dynamics of the internal integration of their systems, structures, and processes. They value their members and pride themselves on the quality of their products and services (Denison Consulting, 2011). The study found that this organizational-culture hemisphere correlated significantly and positively with violence-prevention strategies. It has been found that organizational culture has an impact on organizational training. For example,

organizational-culture influences must be understood and managed to ensure the effective design, implementation, and integration of training programs within an organization. To be effective, organizational leaders must assess the size of the gap between the desires of the stakeholders and the individual members of the organization.

Disregarding this gap may result in a lack of buy-in from individual members and negatively affect a program's intended outcome. A lack of communication between the individual members of an organization and key stakeholders can create a mentality of us versus them, further impacting a program's effectiveness (Hatala & Gumm, 2006). Further research could be useful to determine if a causal link exists between the organizational-culture hemisphere of internal focus and the successful implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Engaging and involving members of an organization is a key aspect of a successful program for workplace-violence prevention (ASIS International, 2011). Greater understanding of how this type of engagement occurs and how it relates to organizational culture may improve the effectiveness of the design, integration, and implementation of programs for workplace-violence prevention.

A significant and positive correlation was found between the organizational-culture hemisphere of flexibility and strategies for workplace-violence prevention. High scores for flexibility represent an organization that has the capacity to change in response to the environment effectively and efficiently. Flexible organizations are strongly focused on their customers and employee feedback. High levels of flexibility are typically linked to higher levels of product and service innovation, creativity, and a fast response to the changing needs of customers and employees (Denison Consulting, 2011).

Albrecht (2013) reported that effective violence-prevention response plans are active and subject to ongoing review and improvement. According to Albrecht, success in

workplace-violence prevention requires intelligent response and observation, the use of as many team-based resources as possible, anticipation of the subject's potential actions, and the use of a mixture of intuition, experience, and thorough understanding of people. Further research is required to understand how the organizational-culture hemisphere of flexibility relates to the frequency, speed, and type of responses used in the prevention and management of workplace violence.

The organizational-culture hemisphere of stability is a measure of an organization's ability to remain focused and predictable over time. A stable organization is typically linked to high return on assets, investments, and sales growth. High levels of this hemisphere reflect strong business operations (Denison Consulting, 2011). Stability correlated significantly and positively with the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Kerr (2010) highlighted that effective workplace-violence prevention requires ongoing efforts. Policies and procedures must be evaluated, updated, and reinforced regularly. Employees should understand what their employers consider acceptable behavior, and there should be consistency and stability with regard to the organization's expectations and disciplinary actions. Further research in this area could explore the relationship of business operations and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

As part of this study, the researcher examined the use of a grading system in assessing strategies for workplace-violence prevention. In reviewing the literature, the researcher did find not public-safety grading systems in use for the assessment of organizations' strategies for workplace-violence prevention. However, grading systems are already in use for other aspects of public safety. For example, a grading system is widely used as part of the strategy of public-health agencies to prevent food-borne

diseases. Local health departments routinely inspect restaurants to assess compliance with established hygienic standards. Ratings are given on a numerical scale, and points are deducted for violations found, such as keeping food at the incorrect temperature or improperly storing food. Numerical values are then converted to a letter grade. The purpose of a grading system can range from enhancing legal compliance to establishing incentives for organizational change to communicating risks with the public (Hatfield & Seiver, 2000).

In this study, the researcher assigned a grade to the WPVIA score using a scoring system similar to that in use to prevent food-borne disease in restaurants. A significant and positive correlation was found between WPVIA grades and all four of the organizational-culture traits. Further research would be necessary to determine causality between WPVIA grades and organizational culture and to refine the grading system; however, the correlations showed that a WPVIA grade might be a useful tool in understanding and assessing strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Further research could focus on the development and use of a grading system to assess and recommend changes to organizations' strategies for workplace-violence prevention.

Limitations

Sample population. Although 63 participants were included in the final study, the study relied on single-respondent samples. Only one HR professional from each of 63 organizations completed the survey. Denison, Nieminen, and Kotrba (2013) reported that a scan of the literature on organizational-culture surveys revealed that reliance on one or a few trusted respondents to fill out the survey (e.g., managers with extensive organizational experience) is not an infrequent practice, but it does raise obvious questions about the representatives of these samples. Denison Consulting (2012)

recommended that, in using the company's survey tool, it is important to have numerous members of an organization complete the survey to improve the internal validity of the results. External validity could also have been improved through the use of a much larger sample size.

Study design. Although the study found a significant correlation between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention, the study relied on a correlational approach. This meant that the strength and degree of the link between the two variables was determined, but no causality could be inferred about the relationship. Additionally, the study relied on a self-reporting survey; therefore, it may have been subject to social desirability bias, thereby impacting its validity. To test and improve the face validity of the WPVIA, a pilot survey of the WPVIA was administered to a focus group of violence-prevention specialists. Changes were made to the WPVIA survey based on the feedback of 35 members of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. However, the WPVIA was created by the researcher for this study; therefore, no information on reliability or validity for this measure was previously available, which could have impacted the overall reliability and validity of the study.

After scoring the WPVIA and reporting the results, it became evident that refining the survey items and the scoring system may prove necessary to improve the usefulness of the data. For example, the researcher collapsed some of the data into binary scores, which meant that the answer either earned a score or it did not. A Likert-scale scoring system may have been more effective in interpreting the data sets. Lastly, the study could have benefited from having demographic information about the size of the organizations that were included in the study. It would have been useful to analyze the impact of the

size of the organizations on results obtained by the study.

Learning Organizations and the Implementation of Strategies for Workplace-Violence Prevention

Creating a learning organization may be an effective strategy to improve the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Of the four organizational-culture traits, involvement was found to have the strongest correlation with the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention by this study. Involvement reflects the extent to which employees are committed, feel a sense of involvement, and have input into the decisions that affect their work. Organizations with high involvement empower their employees, use teamwork, and continuously develop the capacity of their employees (Kotrba et al., 2012).

Involvement is composed of the organizational-culture indices of empowerment, team orientation, and capability development, which are all key features of a learning organization. Empowerment is a measure of the level in an organization that individuals have authority, initiative, and the ability to manage their own work. Team orientation measures the value placed on working cooperatively toward common goals for which all employees feel mutually accountable. Capability development focuses on measuring the level that an organization continually invests in the development of employee's skills in order to stay competitive and meet ongoing business needs (Denison et al., 2013).

Of the 12 organizational-culture indices, the study found that organizational learning had the strongest correlation with strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Organizational learning reflects an organization that receives, translates, and interprets signals from the environment into opportunities for encouraging innovation, gaining knowledge, and developing capabilities (Denison et al., 2013). Learning organizations

share many of the key features of the organizational-culture trait of involvement and the organizational-culture index of organizational learning.

The learning organization can be defined as an organization that facilitates the learning of all of its members and continuously transforms itself (Kotelnikov, 2013). A learning organization is a group of people who have woven a continuous, enhanced capacity to learn into the corporate culture; it is an organization in which learning processes are analyzed, monitored, developed, and aligned with goals. A learning organization moves beyond simple employee training into organizational problem solving, innovation, and learning. Learning organizations focus one of their most important assets: their people (Kapp, 1999).

There are several essential features of a learning organization: continuous learning at the systems level, knowledge generation and sharing, critical thinking, a culture of learning, a spirit of flexibility and experimentation, and the trait of being people centered (Cors, 2003). According to Chawla and Renesch (1995), the learning organization is built on a philosophy that can be described as an assumption of competence and is supported by the qualities of curiosity, forgiveness, trust, and togetherness. With this philosophy, each individual is expected to perform to the limit of his or her competence with the minimum of supervision.

Chawla and Renesch (1995) reported that, in learning organizations, people are always inquiring into the systemic consequences of their actions rather than just focusing on local consequences. Further, they can understand the interdependencies underlying complex issues and act with perceptiveness and leverage. When issues or problems arise, they seek out deeper understanding rather than moving to simply fix the problem. These capabilities lead the learning organization to be more generative and more adaptive than

traditional organizations. Assumptions and certainties are challenged, and the learning organization displays a commitment to openness and the ability to deal with complexity. Security that is achieved in these organizations is not through stability but in the process of achieving dynamic equilibrium of knowing and not knowing through constant questioning.

Cors (2003) found that organizational learning promotes continuous improvement and innovation, as well as fosters community building. Learning organizations are more likely than other organizations to (a) be adaptable and flexible, (b) lack complacency, (c) experiment with and create new knowledge, (d) rethink means and ends, and (e) tap people's potential for learning as a strategic competitive advantage.

Further research could examine the relationship between learning organizations and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. These questions stem from this potential relationship: Could creating a learning culture be used as a strategy to improve efforts toward workplace-violence prevention in organizations? Do learning cultures have fewer incidents of workplace violence or the precursors to violence, such as bullying or incivility?

Conclusion

This survey-based study was designed to reduce incidents of workplace violence by providing recommendations that will help organizations in the implementation of their strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The researcher developed the WPVIA for this study to measure efforts toward workplace-violence prevention. The DOCS was used to measure organizational culture. Professionals in HR provided information about organizational culture and violence-prevention strategies pertaining to their organizations.

An analysis of the data indicated that organizational culture was found to be significantly and positively correlated to the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Additionally, all four of the organizational-culture traits of involvement, adaptability, consistency, and mission were found to significantly and positively correlate to strategies for workplace-violence prevention. A grading system was used by the researcher to score and classify violence-prevention efforts and was found to correlate significantly and positively with all four of the organizational-culture traits.

Because the study was correlational in nature, future research could investigate the possibility of causality between organizational culture and the implementation of strategies for workplace-violence prevention. Additionally, further research could focus on the strategic use of creating and enhancing learning organizations to reduce workplace violence.

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Appendix A
Assessment Survey

Assessment Survey

You are being invited to participate in a research study about the relationship between organizational culture and strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The study is being conducted by Jonty Tau Braun, a Doctoral student of the Abraham S. Fischler School of Education at Nova South Eastern University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education.

There are no known risks if you decide to participate in the research study. There are no costs to you for participating in the study. The information you provide will help the researcher correlate data between organizational culture and strategies for workplace-violence prevention. The questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but the information learned in this study will be used to make recommendations that may to reduce the incidents to workplace violence.

This survey is anonymous. You do not have to include your or your organizations name as part of the survey. If you are taking the survey online, no IP addresses will be collected as part of the research. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. You may provide your name and email address if you choose to receive the results of the study, however this is voluntary.

There are no correct or incorrect answers to the survey. Please try to answer them to the best of your ability and please try to answer the survey in its entirety.

Section A

Demographic Information

1. Please check all that apply to your professional credentials:
 - ☐ Human Resource Professional
 - ☐ Human Resource Development (HRD) Professional
 - ☐ Human Resource Manager
 - ☐ Other (please specify)

2. I am currently employed by a U.S. company/ organization:
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

3. Please select the category that best describes your industry:
 - ☐ Advertising and Marketing
 - ☐ Agriculture
 - ☐ Airlines and Aerospace
 - ☐ Business Support and Logistics
 - ☐ Construction, Machinery and Homes
 - ☐ Distribution
 - ☐ Education
 - ☐ Entertainment and Leisure

- ☐ Finances and Financial Services
 - ☐ Food and Beverage
 - ☐ Government
 - ☐ Health Care, Medical and Wellness
 - ☐ Hospitality
 - ☐ Homeland Security
 - ☐ Insurance
 - ☐ Manufacturing
 - ☐ Military and Defense
 - ☐ Nonprofit
 - ☐ Pharmaceuticals
 - ☐ Publishing
 - ☐ Real Estate
 - ☐ Retail and Consumer Products
 - ☐ Security
 - ☐ Telecommunications, Technology, Internet, and Electronics
 - ☐ Textiles
 - ☐ Utilities, Energy and Extraction
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
4. Please check all that apply to the professional tasks you perform in your HR role:
- ☐ Compensation & Benefits
 - ☐ Employee Relations
 - ☐ Employment Law
 - ☐ Hiring/ Talent Acquisition
 - ☐ HR Management
 - ☐ Safety/ Health
 - ☐ Strategic Planning
 - ☐ Terminations
5. Please choose a category that describes the number of years of your professional human resource experience:
- ☐ Less than two years
 - ☐ Two to four years
 - ☐ Five or more

Section B

Survey Items

Please note there are no correct or incorrect responses to the survey items.
Unless otherwise indicated, please circle only one response to the following questions:

1. When was your organization last assessed with regards to vulnerability to workplace violence?
- Never | Last month | Within 3 months | Within 6 months | Within 12 months | Within 24 months | 48 months ago or more | Not Sure

2. Who conducted the assessment?
Circle all that apply
Internal Security Personnel | External Security Professionals | Human Resource Professional(s) | A Multi-Disciplinary Team | Government Agency | Not Applicable
3. Does your organization have a workplace-violence prevention plan/policy in place?
Yes | No | Not Sure
4. Is the plan or policy:
“stand alone” | integrated into other broader policies or procedures | None in place
5. Is management supportive of violence-prevention efforts?
Impedes | Unsupportive | neutral | Fairly supportive | Highly Supportive
6. Is there an employee(s) in your organization that has been delegated the responsibility of implementing workplace violence-prevention strategies?
Y | N | Not Sure
7. Has this employee(s) received training in workplace-violence prevention?
Y | N
8. What division(s) is this employee(s) part of:
Not Applicable | Human Resources | Human Resource Development | Management | Security | Legal Department | Occupational Safety and Health | Union | General
9. Does your organization have a designated Threat Management Team?
Y | N
10. The organization that I am part of, enforces standards of professionalism and respect through appropriate discipline, and identifies clear lines of appropriate workplace behavior.
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree
11. My workplace, as part of its culture, cares about safety and encourage employees to report circumstances of concern:
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree
12. Does the organization have an established practice to manage and track reports of behavior that raises safety concerns?
Yes | No | Not sure

13. Has your organization established trusted and or contractual relationships with violence risk assessment professionals and/or legal counsel who can assist during incident/crisis management?
Yes | No | Not sure
14. Does your organization conduct employee background screening as part of the hiring process?
Yes | No | Not sure
15. Does your organization engage in safe termination practices? (Does your organization have a security and safety plan in place for terminations?)
Yes | No | Not sure
16. Does your organization have protocols in place for managing workplace emergencies that have arisen from incidents of workplace violence?
Yes | No | Not sure
17. Incivility in my organization is dealt with promptly and effectively
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree
18. My organization has a program/ plan in place to address workplace bullying
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree
19. How many incidents of violence has your organization experienced in the last 3 years?
None | One incident | Less than 5 | Greater than 5 | Greater than 15 | Do not know
20. My organization has a procedure in place to document “near misses” (incidents/ conflict that had the potential of turning violent but did not).
Y | N | Not sure
21. Human resource professionals have an important role to play in the development of workplace violence-prevention strategies
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree
22. The culture of an organization has an impact on an organization’s ability to effectively implement and manage a workplace-violence prevention plan
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree

Appendix B

Rationale for Items on the Assessment Survey

Rationale for Items on the Assessment Survey

1. When was your organization last assessed with regards to vulnerability to workplace violence?

Rationale: It is recommended that organizations that plan to implement workplace-violence prevention and intervention programs, should conduct a needs assessment, designed to evaluate the presence of any specific risks of violence affecting the workplace (whether from internal or external sources), and the organization's readiness to respond to threats and violent incidents. A needs assessment helps in ensuring that the organization understands its safety and security needs and effectively focuses its workplace violence initiatives (ASIS International, 2011).

2. Who conducted the assessment?

Rationale: Due to the complex and multi-dimensional nature of workplace violence, an effective violence prevention and intervention strategy requires a multidisciplinary approach involving the participation of multiple stakeholders within an organization. Workplace-violence prevention involves several disciplines, including: security, management, law, mental health and human resources (ASIS International, 2011, Calhoun & Weston, 2003, Kerr, 2010, McElhaney, 2004, Turner & Gelles, 2003, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2009).

3. Does your organization have a workplace-violence prevention plan/policy in place?

Rationale: To adequately prevent and manage workplace aggression and violence there is a need for the implementation and execution of proactive and ongoing violence prevention and intervention efforts. These efforts include strategies that are designed to detect, investigate, manage and resolve behavior that has generated concerns for workplace safety from violence (ASIS International, 2011, McElhaney, 2004, Turner & Gelles, 2003, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2009).

4. Is the policy or program "stand alone" or integrated into other broader policies or procedures, or none in place?

Rationale: When performing a needs assessment, the organization should conduct a detailed evaluation of its current violence prevention and intervention practices. In doing so, the organization should evaluate how current practices compare to those required or recommended and identify "gaps." This question will garnish information about how organizational culture impacts the development (and type) of policy or program.

5. Is management supportive of violence-prevention efforts?

Highly supportive | Fairly supportive | neutral | poorly supportive | unsupportive

Rationale: Support of management in efforts to promote workplace-violence prevention has been shown to be vital to the successful implementation of such programs (ASIS International, 2011; McElhaney, 2004; Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2009).

6. Is there an employee(s) in your organization that has been delegated the responsibility of implementing workplace violence-prevention strategies?
Rationale: Depending on the size, resource, preferences, and internal workings of an organization, the major responsibility for establishing a workplace-violence prevention and Intervention Program will largely fall on human resources, security, and legal personnel (ASIS International, 2011).
7. Has this employee(s) received training in workplace-violence prevention?
Rationale: Adequate training in workplace-violence prevention has been shown to be vital to the implementation of workplace-violence prevention and Intervention programs (ASIS, 2011, McElhaney, 2004, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2009).
8. What division(s) is this employee(s) part of?
Rationale: It has been found that due to the complex and multi-dimensional nature of workplace violence, effective prevention and intervention strategies require a multidisciplinary approach involving the participation of multiple stakeholders within an organization. Effective workplace-violence prevention and intervention draw on knowledge and resources from the disciplines of management, security, human resources, law and mental health (ASIS International, 2011, Calhoun & Weston, 2003, Kerr, 2010, McElhaney, 2004, Turner & Gelles, 2003, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2009).
9. Does your organization have a designated Threat Management Team?
Rationale: Due to the challenges and complexity of workplace-violence prevention, organizations need a group of individuals who understand the process of threat assessment and who have experience in managing information, developing information sources, and using the expertise of threat assessment professionals (Turner & Gelles, 2003).
10. The organization that I am part of enforces standards of professionalism and respect through appropriate discipline and identifies clear lines of appropriate workplace behavior.
Rationale: ASIS International (2011) highlights the importance of organizations enforcing standards of professionalism and respect through appropriate discipline and identifies clear lines of appropriate workplace behavior. ASIS International states that this aspect of organizational behavior should be accessed as part of an evaluative process to identify “gaps” in policy and procedure with regards to a workplace violence-prevention strategy.
11. My workplace, as part of its culture, cares about safety and encourage employees to report circumstances of concern:
Rationale: Ravasi & Schultz (2006) defines organizational culture as the set of mental assumptions that guide the interpretation and actions of an organization by defining the behavior considered appropriate for various situations. Organizational culture has been shown to impact a wide range of organizational behaviors (Osland & Turner, 2011). ASIS International (2011) encourages organizations to ascertain whether the

workplace fosters a culture that cares about safety and encourages employees to report circumstances of concern.

12. Does the organization have an established practice to manage and track reports of behavior that raises safety concerns?
Rationale: ASIS International (2011) points to the importance of having an established practice for managing reports of behavior that raise safety concerns, including a centralized way to record and track reports over time.
13. Has the organization established trusted relationships with violence risk assessment professionals and legal counsel who can assist during incident/crisis management?
Rationale: It has been shown that a key component to an effective violence prevention and intervention strategy, is to establish trusted relationships with violence risk assessment professionals (threat assessment professionals) and legal counsel, who can provide assistance during incident management (ASIS International, 2011, McElhaney, 2004).
14. Does your organization conduct employee background screening as part of the hiring process?
Rationale: It has been shown that an effective workplace violence-prevention strategy is to conduct employee background screening as part of the hiring process (ASIS International, 2011).
15. Does your organization engage in safe termination practices? (Does your organization have a security and safety plan in place for terminations?)
Rationale: It has been found that a key component of a workplace-violence prevention and intervention plan is to engage in safe termination practices. These include implementing safety and security procedures as part of a termination process.
16. Does your organization have protocols in place for managing workplace emergencies that have arisen from incidents of workplace violence?
Rationale: Effective incident (crisis) management is reliant upon predetermined protocols to be in place before an incident occurs. This includes protocols for managing workplace emergencies (ASIS International, 2011).
17. Incivility in my organization is dealt with promptly and effectively
Rationale: Workplace Incivility is defined as low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm a target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. If workplace incivility is not curtailed in its early stages, work patterns may be disrupted and lead to more intense forms of workplace aggression, including physical violence, harassment and intimidation. It has been found that these behaviors may lead to serious legal and economic ramifications, damaging organizational profitability and organizational learning (Reio & Ghosh, 2009).
18. My organization has a program/ plan in place to address workplace bullying
Rationale: A workplace-violence prevention policy should be bolstered and supported by additional policies that together with the workplace-violence prevention policy, set

clear expectations for appropriate workplace behavior and facilitate Incident Management. These policies include anti-harassment and discrimination policies.

19. How many incidents of violence has your organization experienced in the last 3 years?

Rationale: Violence in the workplace is a serious security issue in the United States and elsewhere (Stewart, 2012). ASIS International (2011) reports that in the United States, the prevention of workplace violence is an ongoing and challenging responsibility for organizations. Data garnered from this question will be useful in ascertaining if there is a relationship between organizational culture and the number of workplace violence incidents that an organization experiences.

20. My organization has a procedure in place to document “near misses” (incidents/ conflict that had the potential of turning violent but did not).

Kerr (2010) reports successful workplace-violence prevention includes awareness and prevention strategies taken by human resources and security professionals, working in collaboration with managers, union leaders and business owners. For Kerr an important component of a successful strategy is for safety directors and human resource managers to document near misses. Near misses can be defined as an accident or event that could have resulted in a reportable accident to the Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Kerr states that near misses provide an opportunity for violence-prevention strategies to be implemented. ASIS International (2011) states that organizations as an essential prevention and intervention tool, should adopt practices designed to maximize the reporting of conduct or circumstances that raise a concern for possible violence. The organization should remain mindful that it seeks information that is accurate, complete and timely and that the more quickly a threat or concern with possible violence is reported, the greater the opportunity for successful intervention.

21. Human resource professionals have an important role to play in the development of workplace violence-prevention strategies.

Rationale: Human resources personnel commonly play a central and leadership role in establishing and implementing an organization’s violence-prevention strategies (ASIS International, 2011, Collins, 2011, Ghosh, Jacobs and Reio, 2011, Kerr, 2010, Reio & Ghosh, 2009, Wang and Hutchins, 2010)

22. The culture of an organization has an impact on an organization’s ability to effectively implement and manage a workplace-violence prevention plan

Rationale: A key aspect to a successful violence-prevention program is the infusion of prevention and action into the organizational culture (Kerr, 2010).

Appendix C

Scoring Key for the Assessment Survey

Scoring Key for the Assessment Survey

Question 1: All responses, except “Never” = +1

Question 3: Response “Y” = +1

Question 5: Impedes = -2

Unsupportive = -1

Neutral = 0

Fairly supportive = +1

Highly supportive = +2

Question 6: Response “Y” = +1

Question 7: Response “Y” = +1

Question 10: Strongly Disagree = -2

Disagree = -1

Neutral = 0

Agree = +1

Strongly Agree = +2

Question 11: Strongly Disagree = -2

Disagree = -1

Neutral = 0

Agree = +1

Strongly Agree = +2

Question 12: Response “Y” = +1

Question 13: Response “Y” = +1

Question 14: Response “Y” = +1

Question 15: Response “Y” = +1

Question 16: Response “Y” = +1

Question 17: Strongly Disagree = -2

Disagree = -1

Neutral = 0

Agree = +1

Strongly Agree = +2

Question 18: Strongly Disagree = -2

Disagree = -1

Neutral = 0

Agree = +1

Strongly Agree = +2

Question 20: Response “Y” = +1

Raw Score X 5 = WPVIA Score

WPVIA Grades

WPVIA Raw Scores of 11 to 20 = Grade A

WPVIA Raw Scores of 1 to 10 = Grade B

WPVIA Raw Scores of -10 to 0 = Grade C

Appendix D

Correlation Coefficients Between Organizational-Culture Scores and
Items on Assessment Survey

Correlation Coefficients Between Organizational-Culture Scores and
Items on Assessment Survey

WPVIA Item	r
When was your organization last assessed with regards to vulnerability to workplace violence?	.24
Does your organization have a Workplace-violence prevention plan/policy in place?	.29*
Is the policy or program: stand alone; integrated into other broader policies or procedures; none in place; not sure?	-.20
Is management supportive of violence-prevention efforts?	.35**
Is there an employee(s) in your organization that has been delegated the responsibility of implementing Workplace Violence-prevention strategies?	.32**
Has this employee(s) received training in Workplace-violence prevention?	.21
Does your organization have a designated Threat Management Team?	-.16
The organization that I am part of, enforces standards of professionalism and respect through appropriate discipline, and identifies clear lines of appropriate workplace behavior.	.44**
My workplace, as part of its culture, cares about safety and encourage employees to report circumstances of concern.	.36**
Does the organization have an established practice to manage and track reports of behavior that raises safety concerns?	.44**
Has your organization established trusted and or contractual relationships with violence risk assessment professionals and/or legal counsel who can assist during incident/crisis management?	.53**
Does your organization conduct employee background screening as part of the hiring process?	.17
Does your organization engage in safe termination practices? (Does your organization have a security and safety plan in place for terminations?)	.26*
Does your organization have protocols in place for managing workplace emergencies that have arisen from incidents of workplace violence?	.33**
Incivility in my organization is dealt with promptly and effectively.	.45**
My organization has a program/ plan in place to address workplace bullying.	.46**
How many incidents of violence has your organization experienced in the last 3 years?	-.29*

My organization has a procedure in place to document "near misses" (incidents/
conflict that had the potential of turning violent but did not). .16

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: n=63

Appendix E

Correlation Coefficients Between Organizational-Culture Traits and
Items on Assessment Survey

Correlation Coefficients Between Organizational-Culture Traits and
Items on Assessment Survey

Question	Involvement	Consistency	Adaptability	Mission
When was your organization last assessed with regards to vulnerability to workplace violence?	.30* *	.13	.12	.28*
Does your organization have a Workplace-violence prevention plan/policy in place?	.27*	.23	.25*	.29*
Is the policy or program: stand alone; integrated into other broader policies or procedures; none in place; not sure?	-.14	-.18	-.21	-.17
Is management supportive of violence-prevention efforts?	.42* *	.24	.20	.38**
Is there an employee(s) in your organization that has been delegated the responsibility of implementing Workplace Violence-prevention strategies?	.33* *	.26*	.26*	.29*
Has this employee(s) received training in Workplace-violence prevention?	.23	.16	.15	.19
Does your organization have a designated Threat Management Team?	-.19	-.09	-.09	-.20
The organization that I am part of, enforces standards of professionalism and respect through appropriate discipline, and identifies clear lines of appropriate workplace behavior.	.39* *	.32**	.47**	.37**
My workplace, as part of its culture, cares about safety and encourage employees to report circumstances of concern.	.35* *	.27*	.32*	.34**
Does the organization have an established practice to manage and track reports of behavior that raises safety concerns?	.48* *	.36**	.25*	.48*
Has your organization established trusted and or contractual relationships with violence risk assessment professionals and/or legal counsel who can assist during incident/crisis management?	.57* *	.45**	.47**	.41**
Does your organization conduct employee background screening as part of the hiring process?	.14	.14	.14	.17
Does your organization engage in safe termination practices? (Does your	.27*	.25*	.19	.21

organization have a security and safety plan in place for terminations?)

Does your organization have protocols in place for managing workplace emergencies that have arisen from incidents of workplace violence?	.36* *	.29	.26	.27
Incivility in my organization is dealt with promptly and effectively.	.34* *	.48**	.42**	.36**
My organization has a program/ plan in place to address workplace bullying.	.41* *	.38**	.40**	.45**
How many incidents of violence has your organization experienced in the last 3 years?	-.22	-.38**	-.37**	-.07
My organization has a procedure in place to document "near misses" (incidents/ conflict that had the potential of turning violent but did not).	.14	.14	.19	.10

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**.. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: n=63