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USING THE PERSONALITY TYPE SYSTEM TO ASSESS PERSONALITY TYPES OF
SOCIAL WORKERS

by
Stephanie Anne Canal

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
Of
The Graduate School
At
Rowan University
May 4, 2004

Approved by _____

Date Approved 5/4/04

ABSTRACT

Stephanie Anne Canal
Using the Personality Type System to Assess Personality Types of Social Workers
2003/04

Dr. John Klanderman
Dr. Roberta Dihoff
Master of Arts in School Psychology

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a tendency for a certain personality type among social workers. Sixty-four social workers were given the Personality Type System and a demographics information sheet. The Personality Type System is a self-report inventory that categorizes personality on four scales: extraversion/introversion, sensation/intuition, thinking/feeling, and perceiving/judging. The demographics information sheet categorized the participants in five areas: gender, age, marital status, childhood family dynamics, and years of social work experience. The scores and categories were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations. The personality test scores indicated that the social workers had a tendency for the extraversion, sensation, feeling, perceiving or ESFP type of personality. The only demographic category that shared a significant relationship with the personality types was the years of social work experience category.

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Chapter 1: The Introduction

Need

Our society is one of great variety. People come from many different backgrounds that make each a unique individual. At some point in every individual's life he or she has to determine what will be his or her best career choice. Most people make this decision on their own, based on what they are interested in and move on from there. In many situations, people are not satisfied with their career. This may be for a variety of reasons, such as, feeling stagnant in their position, not getting enough money, etc. But, perhaps most importantly is the idea that the given individual's personality is just not right for the job. One solution to this problem is to go through career counseling. Career counseling will give a battery of tests to help and individual determine the best career for them. Perhaps the most important part of this battery of tests is the personality test. This helps identify the best careers for an individual's personality. If there is one job in our society that requires a certain personality, it is that of the social worker. This is one of the most stressful careers in our society today and it requires a well-rounded individual to fulfill the various duties. In this study, a personality test, The Personality Type System, will be given to social workers to determine if there is a tendency for a certain personality type among social workers.

Purpose

Social workers play an important role in our society. They are responsible for helping many people with major parts of their lives. They help people find careers, they help people to overcome major problems, such as overcoming addictions or losing custody of their children, they help limited individuals with daily required life skills. With all this to contribute to our society, it is necessary that social workers be open-minded, resourceful, and good communicators. With such a diverse list of responsibilities, it takes a special personality to be a social worker; it is not a job for everyone. That is the purpose of this study, to determine if there is a tendency for a certain personality type among social workers.

Hypothesis

In every career there is a need for a certain personality type. This is why the process of career counseling was developed, to help individuals find the right career for their specific personality type. That is where the idea for this study was developed, to determine if there is a tendency towards a certain personality type among social workers. This study will use the Personality Type System personality test to lend support to the idea that social workers have a tendency towards a certain personality type.

Theory

The selection of a career may be one of the most important decisions made in an individual's lifetime. This is because of the amount of time in one's life that is spent in the job setting. The average person spends over 100,000 hours during the course of a lifetime at work or involved in a work-related activity (Provost & Anchors, 1987). That is why it is very significant that an individual choose a career carefully. This need to find

a job that is suitable for each person is why the process of career counseling was developed. For such a big decision, individual's need guidance, and that is the role of the career counselor. Not only is career counseling important for the individual, but also for the society as a whole. If a person is not happy in their occupation, they are more than likely not going to be working to the best of their ability. This creates a problem because we have a society that is running at half capacity. When a person is happy with their career it affects everyone and everything around them in a positive way.

Historically, career and vocational counseling have served as the cornerstones upon which the counseling profession was built. Career counseling is an ongoing, personal interaction between counselor and client with a focus on career related issues. The interaction is psychological in nature, with the relationship between counselor and client serving as an important function (Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, 1998).

Career counseling like any other form of counseling is a process that can be organized into phases. According to Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, the two phases are: Client goal or problem identification, clarification, and specification, and client goal or problem resolution. It is during this second phase of career counseling, client goal or problem resolution, that the use of assessments takes place. Although there are various types of career counseling situations and settings, each one needs at least one measurement of the dimensions of the client's personality.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a personality assessment instrument that is related to Jung's personality theory. Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers developed it in the 1920s. Carl Jung's theory of psychological types is based on the interactions of the two attitudes (extraverted/introverted) and four functions

(thinking/feeling/sensing/intuiting). According to Jung the extraverted thinking type lives strictly in accordance with society's rules. These people tend to make good scientists because their focus is on learning about the external world and using logical rules to describe and understand it (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

The extraverted feeling type tends to repress the thinking mode and to be highly emotional. These people are emotionally responsive and make friends easily, and they tend to be sociable (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

The extraverted sensing type focuses on pleasure and happiness and on seeking new experiences. These people tend to be very outgoing and are strongly oriented toward the real world and are adaptable to different kinds of people and situations (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

The extraverted intuiting type is attracted by new ideas and is creative. These people find success in business and politics because of their ability to take advantage of opportunities. They are very changeable and move quickly from one idea to another (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

The introverted thinking type does not get along very well with other and has problems communicating. These people are concerned with privacy and like to deal with the abstract and theory. They are often seen as arrogant and stubborn (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

The introverted feeling type tends to repress rational thought, they are capable of strong emotions, but have difficulties expressing them. They seem to have little consideration for others' feelings and appear withdrawn and cold. These people are mysterious and quiet (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

The introverted sensing type appears passive, calm, and detached from the rest of the world. These people are very sensitive and express themselves in music and art.

These types tend to repress their intuition (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

The introverted intuiting type focuses so seriously on intuition that they seem to have little contact with reality. These are the aloof, daydreamers that seem unconcerned with other people and situations. These people have difficulty with everyday life and planning for the future (Schultz & Schultz, 2001).

Definitions

Personality- the unique, relatively enduring internal and external aspects of a person's character that influence behavior in different situations (Schultz & Schultz, 2000).

Career Counseling- an ongoing personal interaction between counselor and client with a focus on career related issues (Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, 1998).

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)- A personality assessment instrument developed by Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers which uses dichotomous classifications in four dimensions which are attitudes towards people (introverted/extraverted), ways of perceiving (sensation/intuition), judgment (thinking/feeling), and orientation toward the outer world (judgment/perception) (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997).

The Personality Type System- a personality assessment instrument similar to the MBTI, developed by Jungian analyst, Aryeh Maidenbaum, Ph.D.

Extraversion- a characteristic in personality in which the person chooses people as a source of energy.

Introversion- a personality characteristic in which the person prefers solitude to recover energy.

Sensation- a personality characteristic in which the person perceives the world in a practical manner.

Intuition- a characteristic in personality in which the person perceives the world in an innovative manner.

Thinking- a personality characteristic in which the person makes choices on an impersonal basis.

Feeling-a personality characteristic in which the person makes choices on a personal basis.

Judging-a personality characteristic related to decision making in which a person prefers closure, plans, and definite options.

Perceiving-a characteristic in personality related to decision-making in which a person prefers to keep options open and fluid, open to new experiences.

Assumptions

For the purposes of this study, it has been assumed that the sample of social workers that participated in the study was a random sample. It has been assumed that the social workers represented a random sampling of gender, age, marital status, childhood family dynamics, and years of social work experience. Another assumption of this study is that all participants will have the same testing experience. Because the Personality Type System is a self-report assessment each individual will not have the same experience during his or her report. They each may interpret directions or items in a different manner or may be effected by different external or internal variables in their testing environment, for example personal conflicts or noises in the room.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is its small sample size. The study only used sixty-four participants; a larger sample size may give more reliable and valid results. Another limitation of this study is the fact that most of the participants, with the exception of five, were female. The study may again yield more valid or reliable results if it was more representative of the population. Another limitation to the study, is that the majority of the participants were between the ages of twenty and thirty. Also, all of the participants were employed at the same agency; this will limit the study, because it should represent social workers from a variety of employers to be more generalizable. Again, the study may have yielded more valid results if each participant took the inventory in the same environment, with the same administrator.

Overview

The following study is divided into several chapters. The next chapter will be a thorough review of past research. It will provide an overview of past studies and research that are related to this study, including studies using the MBTI in career counseling and testing on social workers. The design of the study is discussed in Chapter Three. This will include a description of the sample and the measure used. Chapter Four will cover the results of the study. Finally, Chapter Five will summarize the results and findings of the study and will provide an explanation for the outcomes of the study.

Chapter 2: The Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter covers recent research using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). It first details studies that have been done to evaluate the quality and utility of the MBTI. The research then covers the many different areas in which the MBTI has been used. It has been used with students to identify learning styles, also to help students make career decisions either to decide what type of career they should follow or to choose a specialty within a specific career field. The chapter then covers studies that have been done on the MBTI used in various career counseling situations. The MBTI has also been used in research within organizations to help place employees in the best area to fit their personality type as to improve productivity, which also summarized in this chapter. The last of the research that is covered in the chapter is studies that have done various testing on social workers.

Evaluations of the MBTI

The utility of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) has been analyzed in many studies. In a research review of the MBTI, the various uses of the MBTI were identified (Mccaully, 1990). It was found that the MBTI has been used in career counseling since 1976 and has even been translated into Japanese where it has been used in the same context for over 50 years. The MBTI was also found to have been used for academic advisement. Most of the commonly used statistical methods in research

contradict the theory behind the MBTI and its psychometrics and therefore researchers using traditional statistical methods have reported criticisms of its use. Another research review of the utility of the MBTI found that there is insufficient evidence to support the claims about the widespread use of the MBTI (Pittenger, 1991). It was found that studies that reported positively about the MBTI validity did so only by using single validation procedures when in fact to prove the true validity of a given measure requires a corroboration of sources of validity, consequently it was concluded that the MBTI should not be used as often as it is to aid in such important decisions as choosing a career.

In a study that was conducted solely to confirm the construct validity of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a factor analysis was conducted on 1,030 working adults (Jackson, Parker, and Dipboye, 1996). This was compared to alternative models of responses to MBTI items. The reliability of its factors and the validity of its scoring were analyzed in terms of gender and the MBTI model was found to fit best compared to the other models. In a meta-analytic reliability generalization study done on the MBTI, was conducted using research done using the MBTI between the years of 1998-2001 (Capraro & Capraro, 2002). Coefficient alpha and test-retest reliability were examined to identify the general reliability of the test. It was found that the items reliably measure what they are expected to measure and on average the administrations of the MBTI that were used in the study yielded scores with acceptable reliability across studies.

Using the MBTI with students

The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) has been used for various reasons on studying students. In a study designed to research the relationship between student classification and learning style, personality type, marital status, gender, and employment

status of 115 undergraduate college students, the MBTI was used (Soucy, 1996). This helped the researcher determine that student classification was not related to personality type. The MBTI was used in another study to identify the relationship between self-management, time-management, and personality type of 347 college students (Verble, 1995). In this study the judging-perceiving dimension of the MBTI was strongly related to self-management and time-management.

A study was designed to discover the relationship between career decisiveness and personality type (DiRusso, Carney, & Bryan, 1995). The study divided students into two groups according to career decisiveness, less decisive (LDS) and more decisive (MDS). It was found that the ESF preferences of the MBTI were most common among MDS and the IST preferences were most common among the LDS, proving that personality type is correlated with an individual's ability to decide on a career. Another study on students' career decisions was done using the MBTI to determine the impact of personality type on learning disabled students' interest in career planning (Humes, 1992). This study, however, found only a weak relationship between personality types and vocational interests.

Another popular use of the MBTI with students is to aid in a student's decision on a specialty within a specific career choice. In a study that used medical students and their specialty selections within the medical profession, the MBTI was used to predict which personalities were best fit with certain specialties (Friedman & Slatt, 1988). This study indicated that the predictive validity of the MBTI should be reexamined. . A similar study using business students the MBTI was used to predict student business concentration (Martin & Bartol, 1986). This study found that there are limitations in the

utility of the MBTI for that purpose. Another study was done on business students and was designed to study the relationship between personality and career expectations of 533 students (Jarlstrom, 2000). The MBTI was used to help determine personality type. The study found that there were significant differences in career choices for each personality type. Extraverts were found to prefer management and introverts were found to prefer technical positions. Sensing types also preferred technical positions where intuitive types preferred creative positions. Thinking types showed a preference for technical positions and feeling types preferred more creative positions. Those students who were found to be judging types preferred technical positions and the perceiving types preferred independent and creative positions. Another study used student teachers as the sample (McCutcheon, Schmidt, & Bolden, 1991). This study examined relationships between supervisor's ratings of the students teaching behaviors, grade point average, the Pre-professional Skills Tests (PPST), and personality types measured by the MBTI. The Classroom Procedures Evaluation Form (CPEF) measured the supervisor ratings. MBTI variables were found to be significantly related to 10 of the 40 CPEF items. This led to the conclusion that the MBTI is particularly relevant to the prediction of specific teacher behaviors and it was also useful in predicting certain student teaching behaviors that need correction by a supervisor. This study also indicated that the MBTI is a promising factor in career choice within the field of education and gave credence to personality-based career counseling within teacher education.

MBTI in Career Counseling

The Myers Briggs Type Indicator has been used in many studies involving career counseling clients to determine its ability to assist these clients in career decisions. One

study used the MBTI and the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) (Buboltz, Johnson, Nichols, Miller, & Thomas, 2000). Scores of 426 participants on both measures indicated that personal style scales of the SII are related to the MBTI dimensions. The results supported the idea that personality traits are related to career interests. Another study used 50 midlife women who were participating in a program that combined individual and group career counseling. The study examined the effectiveness of this counseling on well-being, career decision making, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. The women were given a pre and post counseling battery of measurements including the MBTI. It was found that the preferences for extraversion or introversion was significantly related to self-esteem, well-being, and having support from family members. Another study using the MBTI in career counseling used the SII and the MBTI both separately and together and compared the effectiveness. The subjects were divided into four groups: taking the SII, taking the MBTI, taking both instruments, and neither instrument. The participants who completed both inventories showed the greatest amount of change regarding career goal, specificity of career goal, and level of certainty with reference to career goal. These results supported the idea of relating the understanding of an individual's personality with effective career development. They also advocated for the combined use of the SII with the MBTI in career counseling. Another study showed support for using the MBTI in combination with the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII) (Miller, 1992). In this case study, it was found that an association between the two measurements was strong enough to be a useful tool to assist career counseling clients in motivating to carefully select careers based on their personality preferences, interests, and attitudes. Where SCII helps identify specific careers they may be of interest, the MBTI allows for further

insight into why these certain careers are appealing to the individual and which would be the best selection for his or her personality. A study with similar findings suggest the use of the MBTI to help career counseling clients understand the results of their Strong Interest Inventory (SII) (Healy, 2000). The participants in this study were 153 men and 217 women in a career counseling program. The correlations were tested separately for men and women due to past research findings that men and women score significantly different on the MBTI thinking/feeling scale and the realistic scale of the SII. The findings were for women, nine of the ten relationships were statistically significant and for men, eight of the ten were statistically significant. Another study used the MBTI to help identify career counseling clients career obstacles (Healy & Woodward, 1998). The participants in this study were 118 adults who were in a career counseling program. The participants took the MBTI and were rated by their counselor on twelve career obstacles. The various scores when then correlated with each other separately for males and females. The results were significant for five of the obstacles that were related to the thinking/feeling scale for men, however they failed to be significant for women. Although is was helpful in many areas, the results suggest more research before using the MBTI to identify or clarify career obstacles.

Using the MBTI within the Workplace

The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is often used in studies conducted within the workplace to determine if personality type relates to the selection of a specific career. Two studies were found using the MBTI to evaluate hospital nurses. (Van Ham, 1995) This study examined the relationship between psychological variables and women's management progress using hospital nurse managers and hospital staff nurses.

The nurses took the MBTI other inventories to assess psychological variables. The results showed significant differences in personality type between the nurse managers and the staff nurses. The staff nurses preferred sensing over intuition more than the managers and feeling over thinking more than the managers. The other study done on nurses was to compare levels of burnout, coping strategies, and personality types of hospital nurses. The nurses were split into two groups, ICU nurses and non-ICU nurses. It was found that the non-ICU nurses were mostly sensing, feeling, and perceiving types and the ICU nurses were mostly intuitive, feeling, and perceiving. One study used the MBTI to separate its participants into groups (Harrison, 1997). The study was done on individuals who entered alternative certification programs to become teachers. There were four participants selected who took the MBTI and were separated, each representing one of the four learning styles based on the results of the MBTI. They were then studied to explore the effects of their personal learning styles on their teaching style. Another study was done using the MBTI with women who had chosen to become business owners (Spencer, 1996). It was found that the women's' personality type variables, as found by the MBTI were directly related to their choices in becoming business owners. Another study researched the many uses for the MBTI in the workplace (McPherson, 1995). This The researchers suggested using the MBTI to aid office professionals, office managers, and office employees in training, career counseling and planning, team building, organizational development, and communication. The MBTI has also been used to study different specializations within counseling psychology (Ream, 1996). This study used the MBTI to analyze differences between clinical practice-oriented and academic/research-oriented counseling psychologists. Six factors including the scores on

the MBTI Thinking-Feeling scale were used to determine the differences between the two groups. The MBTI scores were not found to be as significant as the career-related characteristics. The personalities of police have also been investigated using the MBTI (Hanewicz, 1978). This study used 1,282 police officers (veteran and recruit) from Michigan and Florida. The results indicated that the police officers mostly shared the same preference for each of the categories. Although they were quite close on the Extraversion-Introversion scale they preferred extraversion (51%) over introversion (49%). They preferred intuition (62.5%) over sensing (37.5%), feeling (62.5%) over thinking (37.5%), and perceiving (59.4%) over judging (40.6). The findings suggest that certain personality types appear to dominate in police organizations. The study also investigated if there was a personality change among recruits after they had spent time on the job. The results did not prove that hypotheses, which leaves one to conclude that certain personality types are drawn to police work because it is compatible with their strengths and interests. Another study was done using the MBTI on health professionals (Stilwell & Wallick, 2000). The study was done to determine changes in profiles of medical students MBTI profiles over time, differences between the profiles of men and women and the effects of the increased number of women in medical school, possible associations between types and career choices, and possible type differences of graduates selecting primary care and specialties. Data was collected on 3,987 graduates from 12 schools each gave their MBTI type and their specialty choice. This data was compared to data collected in a previous study completed in the 1950s. It was found that since the 1950s there are more judging types in the health professions. There are also more feeling types in the health professions than there was in the 1950s to which the researchers

attributed that women are usually prefer feeling and there are more women in the health professions than there were in the 1950s. Also, individuals with a preference for introversion and feeling are more likely to select a primary care specialty, feeling types are more likely to choose family medicine than thinking types, and the type that was most represented in the surgical specialties were male, extraverted, thinking types. Obviously, it was concluded that personality type as found by the MBTI can be considered useful in understanding medical specialty choice. One financial services organization hosted a study done with their employees who were enrolled in a leadership development program (McCarthy & Garavan, 1999). The participants were given the MBTI and a questionnaire on which they were to rate how well the MBTI aided their development process and how it helped them to achieve a higher sense of self awareness on a Likert scale from 1-7, 7 being most helpful. The MBTI was rated no lower than a 5.5 on being helpful in all the areas of the development process questioned. Another study was done using teachers as the participants (Mills, 2003). This study compared personality types of normative teachers and exceptional teachers of gifted students by using the MBTI. IT was found that the exceptional teachers were more likely to prefer intuition and thinking than the normative teachers. The researchers thus concluded that personalities may play a role in a teacher's effectiveness in teaching gifted students.

Psychological Testing in Social Work

There have been many psychological studies done that focus on social workers and their roles. Because social work is a stressful career researchers have done studies on burnout as it relates to social workers. One such study included assertive community treatment (ACT) case managers to identify predictors of burnout (Salyers, 1999). What

was found was that several job characteristics were predictive of burnout. These included caseload size, frequency of client contact, proportion of clients with substance abuse problems, and frequent team meeting. Also rural case managers reported higher burnout than urban case managers and Caucasian case managers and those who were not of the same race as the majority of their clients reported more burnout. Some personality traits were also identified as predictors of burnout, which were optimism and sense of coherence. A similar study was designed to research the relationship human service professionals' levels of education, the type of clientele, and their tendency toward antisocial personality characteristics (burnout) (Laughed, 1997). Both education level and the population of clientele proved to be significant. The conclusion was that those human services professionals who have doctoral degrees and serve a clientele with severe/chronic disorders show more tendencies of antisocial characteristics. Ethical integrity has also been investigated in social workers (McGann, 2000). In this study, thirty mental health professionals, including 14 social workers, were given questionnaires and were interviewed to discover the factors, which contribute to a high quality of ethical integrity. The factors that were found were: values, extensive experience with boundary issues (gift giving, sexual attraction issues, and physical touch), attribute's of one's personality, modeling of behavior and lifestyle of parents and other adults, level of self-awareness, and the impact of living or working in a rural context. Another study regarding social workers and their role was conducted by interviewing the clientele of social workers (Ribner, 2002). The researcher concluded through these interviews that the clientele were most satisfied with their relationship with their social worker when they felt a sense of equality in their relationship, when the worker was nonjudgmental,

and when it the relationship paralleled other relationships (friendships) in the clientele's lives. There have been very few studies conducted that used the MBTI with social worker. One such study that was mentioned earlier researched 178 undergraduate students who were categorized as either more or less decisive about their career choices (DiRusso, Carney, & Bryan, 1995). The study found that the more decisive group tended to prefer the extraversion and judging orientations of the MBTI. Also, this more decisive group tended to be more human service-oriented, so it is concluded that the human service-oriented participants tended to prefer the extraversion and judging orientations.

Summary

In this chapter a description of the many studies conducted that have detailed the widespread and various uses of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was given. First, studies that gave a general evaluation of the MBTI and its many uses were covered. These included a general detailed review, a negative review of its use, a positive review of its use, and a meta-analytic study that concluded the reliability of the test. It then detailed the many studies done using the MBTI with students. These included two studies that used the MBTI to help identify learning styles. It also reviewed studies that used the MBTI to assist students in making career decisions, which were choosing a career or making a decision about a direction to take within a career of choice. It then covered the uses of the MBTI in career counseling, these studies ranged from helping clients identify their career obstacles to helping clients understand why they may prefer a certain career according to their personalities. The chapter then gave examples of studies that were conducted using the MBTI within certain careers. The MBTI has been used with business organization employees, business owners, hospital staff, teachers, and

police officers. Finally, the chapter concluded with a section on psychological testing with social workers. One study in which the MBTI was used and human service-oriented people were identified.

Chapter 3: Design of the Study

Sample

The sample of social workers used for this study was chosen primarily for accessibility and convenience. This sample was assumed to be representative of the social work population. Originally, the author hoped to obtain the sample from two sites. One group were working social workers from a non-profit agency, the other group was from an undergraduate Social Work program. However, the author had difficulty get the approval from the correct people at the undergraduate program, so due to time constraints, only the sample from the non-profit agency was used. The author is currently employed at the non-profit agency and had familiar connections with the social workers and program directors at the agency. Ninety social workers were asked to participate in the study, with sixty-four of the personality inventories being returned (n=64). In addition to completing the Personality Type System, the participants were asked to complete a demographics information sheet. (Appendix A) This sheet was utilized to categorize the social workers in five different areas: gender, age, marital status, childhood family dynamics, and years of social work experience. Table 3.1 shows that 90.8 percent (n=59) of the social workers in the sample were female, the other 7.7 percent (n=5) of the social workers in the sample were male. Therefore, the majority of social workers in the sample were female.

Table 3.1: Percent of Sample in Each Gender Category

Gender	Sample Size	Percent
Male	N=5	7.7%
Female	N=59	90.8%

In the age category, Table 3.2 shows that 50.8 percent (n=33) of the social workers were between twenty and thirty years of age, and 24.6 percent (n=16) were between thirty and forty years of age. So, most of the social workers, 75.4 percent were between the ages of twenty and forty. In the age categories of forty to fifty years and fifty to sixty years, there were 10.8 percent (n=7) in each category. There were only 1.5 percent (n=1) of the social workers that was sixty years old or older and none of the social workers were under 20 years of age.

Table 3.2: Percent of Sample in Each Age Category

Age	Sample Size	Percent
Under 20 years	N=0	0%
20-30 years	N=33	50.8%
30-40 years	N=16	24.6%
40-50 years	N=7	10.8%
50-60 years	N=7	10.8%
60+ years	N=1	1.5%

In the category of marital status 55.4 percent (n=36) of the social workers were single and forty percent (n=26) were married. Table 3.3 shows that only 3.1 percent

(n=2) of the social workers were divorced. The results show that the majority of the sample was either single or married.

Table 3.3: Percent of Sample in Each Marital Status Category

Marital Status	Sample Size	Percent
Single	N=36	55.4%
Married	N=26	40%
Divorced	N=2	3.1%

In the area of Childhood family dynamics the social workers were asked if a single parent or both parents raised them. Table 3.4 shows that 24.6 percent (n=16) were raised by a single parent and 73.8 percent (n=48) were raised by both parents. Therefore, most of the social workers in the sample were raised by both parents.

Table 3.4: Percent of Sample in Each Childhood Family Dynamics Category

Childhood Family Dynamics	Sample Size	Percent
Single Parent	N=16	24.6%
Both Parents	N=48	73.8%

In the category of years of social work experience, the majority, 46.2 percent (n=30) of the social workers, had three years or less experience and only 12.3 percent (n=8) had three to five years of experience. Table 3.5 shows that the categories of five to ten years of experience and ten + years of experience, each was represented by twenty percent (n=13) of the social workers.

Table 3.5: Percent of Sample in Each Experience Category

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Sample Size</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-3 years	N=30	46.2%
3-5 years	N=8	12.3%
5-10 years	N=13	20%
10+ years	N=13	20%

Measures

The instrument used for this study was The Personality Type System developed by Jungian analyst Aryeh Maidenbaum, Ph.D. It is similar to and based on the same theories as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is a personality assessment instrument that is related to Jung's personality theory. Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers developed it in the 1920s. The MBTI is widely used for research and applied purposes, especially in employee selection and counseling (Schultz & Schultz, 2000). It is one of the most popular and widely used instruments for the assessment of personality in normal individuals. Both the MBTI and The Personality Type System use dichotomous classifications in four dimensions, which are: attitudes towards people (introverted/extraverted), ways of perceiving (sensation/intuition), judgment (thinking/feeling), and orientation toward the outer world (judging/perceiving) (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). There are sixteen possible "type formulas" that reflect the preferences in each of the four dimensions. One of the most fundamental premises used in interpreting the results of the MBTI is that individuals are more skilled within their preferred functions (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997).

Design

Prior to administering The Personality Type System, the social workers' program directors were briefed on the use of the system and were requested to survey their workers during a program directors meeting. The directors gave their verbal permission to survey their workers during that meeting. The directors were given two weeks to have the inventories completed by their workers and returned to the author. The author followed up with an email approximately one week after the inventories were distributed to remind any directors that had not handed their inventories in that they had a week to have them completed and handed in to the author.

The personality test was presented as a simple test designed to give insight to each participant's personality type. Attached to the personality test were the consent form, the demographics information sheet, instructions, and a scoring sheet. After completing the personality test and demographics sheet they were returned to each individual program director, which then returned them to the author.

In this study, the main idea was to see if the social workers had a similar tendency for the four personality dimensions. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, and trends were explored when comparing gender, age, marital status, childhood family dynamics, and years of social work experience and each of the four personality dimensions.

Testable Hypothesis

Using the demographic information and the personality scores of sixty-four social workers, descriptive statistics were run to determine the frequencies of each of the four personality dimensions to determine if there was a common trend in the personality types

of the social workers. This study sought to reject the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no commonality in the personality types of the social workers. The goal of this study was to accept the alternate hypothesis, which stated that there was a common trend in the personality types of the social workers.

Summary

This study utilized a random sampling of social workers, The Personality Type System, and statistical analysis to test the hypothesis being studied. The participants were surveyed, the tests were scored, and statistical tests were completed. Were there common trends in the personality types of the social workers? If so, did any of the demographic factors contribute to these trends? In Chapter 4, the results of the study will be reported and any significant interactions between gender, age, marital status, childhood family dynamics, years of social work experience, and the scores on the personality test will be discussed.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Results

This study hypothesized that social workers have a common trend in their personality types. The hypothesis is based on a belief that certain personality types are more prevalent in specific types of careers; therefore social workers should have common personality types. This chapter shows the results of this study as they relate to the hypothesis.

Analysis of Results

The Personality Type System used in this study, uses dichotomous classifications on each of the scales of the four dimensions of personality. The results of the social workers scores on the personality test were analyzed to assess if there was a common trend among their personality types on each of the scales. The first dimension, measures the individual's attitude towards people is the Extroverted/Introverted scale. Table 4.1 shows that when the results of this scale for the social workers were analyzed, they showed a strong tendency for the social workers to be extroverted with a percentage of 70.8 (n=46), with an introverted percentage of 27.7 (n=18).

Table 4.1: Percent of Sample Scores on the Extraverted/Introverted Scale

Classification	Sample Size	Percent
Extraverted	N=46	70.8%
Introverted	N=18	27.7%

The second dimension on the personality test, measures the person's ways of perceiving, which is the Sensation/Intuition Scale. Table 4.2 shows the results of the social workers scores on this scale. The social workers results showed a strong tendency for sensation over intuition, with a sensation percentage of 72.3 (n=47) and only 26.2 percent (n=17) for intuition.

Table 4.2: Percent of Sample Scores on the Sensation/Intuition Scale

Classification	Sample Size	Percent
Sensation	N=47	72.3%
Intuition	N=17	26.2%

The third dimension of personality scored by the personality test is the Thinking/Feeling Scale. This scale measures the individual's judgment. Table 4.3 shows the results for the social workers' scores on this scale. These scores showed a tendency for the social workers to be more feeling when making decisions than thinking. The percent of feeling scores was 63.1 (n=41) and the percent of thinking was 35.4 (n=23).

Table 4.3: Percent of Sample Scores on the Thinking/Feeling Scale

Classification	Sample Size	Percent
Thinking	N=23	35.4%
Feeling	N=41	63.1%

The fourth and final dimension of the personality test measures a person's orientation toward the outer world with the Judging/Perceiving Scale. Table 4.4 shows that the scores for this scale were more of an even split for the social workers than the previous three scales. Perceiving represented 58.5 percent (n=38) of the social workers and forty percent (n=26) scored as judging.

Table 4.4: Percent of Sample Scores on the Judging/Perceiving Scale

Classification	Sample Size	Percent
Judging	N=26	40%
Perceiving	N=38	58.5%

Although it was not a part of the hypothesis for this study, statistical analysis were run to correlate these four personality scales to the demographical information given by each social worker for gender, age, marital status, childhood family dynamics, and years of social work experience. Chi-Square tests were run to correlate these demographic categories with the personality scales to assess if there was any relationship between variables.

Only one of the demographic categories showed to have a relationship with the personality scores. This was the years of social work experience category. As mentioned previously, the highest frequency for years of experience category was for zero to three years of social work experience this represented 46.2 percent (n=30) of the sample. Table 4.5 shows the Pearson Chi-Square scores for each of the personality scales as they related to years of social work experience. The only significant relationship was between the Perceiving/Judging Scale and years of social work experience, $X^2_{(3)}=9.582$, $p<0.022$. The Thinking/Feeling Scale had the next strongest relationship with years of social work experience, but was not quite significant, $X^2_{(3)}=6.609$, $p<0.085$. Years of social work experience showed to have no relationship with the Sensation/Intuition Scale, $X^2_{(3)}=1.836$, $p<0.607$. The years of social work experience category also had no relationship with the Extraverted/Introverted Scale, $X^2_{(3)}=1.730$, $p<0.630$.

Table 4.5: Pearson Chi Square Probability of Years of Experience for Each Scale

Personality Scale	Pearson Probability
Extraversion/Introversion	P<0.630
Sensation/Intuition	P<0.607
Thinking/Feeling	P<0.085
Perceiving/Judging	P<0.022

Summary

In summary, the scores on the four personality dimensions for the social workers show that there was a tendency to be the extraverted over the introverted type, the sensation over the intuition type, the feeling over the thinking type, and the perceiving over the judging type. Although each individual who scored as the more common type on one scale did not necessarily score as the more common type on the other scales, overall the results show a tendency for the social workers to be the ESFP personality type.

As previously mentioned, the results only showed significance for the years of social work experience to have an effect on these personality types. Furthermore, this demographic category was only significant for the Perceiving/Judging Scale. Since the most prevalent of the years of social work experience categories was zero to three years of experience, the results show that having this little amount of experience, the social workers had a tendency to be more perceiving which means that perceive new experiences and situations on how they feel, emotionally. These results will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions

Summary

The personality types of sixty-four social workers were compared across various demographic categories in this study. The hypothesis stated that social workers have a tendency towards certain personality types as classified by The Personality Type System, a test similar to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or MBTI. This hypothesis was based on the idea in career counseling that certain personality types are common in specific careers. The Personality Type System along with a demographic information sheet was administered to social workers that work in a non-profit agency in southern New Jersey. This self-report personality inventory measured four different dimensions or scales of personality type. These dimensions are Extraversion/Introversion, Sensation/Intuition, Thinking/Feeling, and Perceiving/Judging. The demographic information sheet categorized the sample of social workers in five areas. These areas were gender, age, marital status, childhood family dynamics, and years of social work experience. The results were statistically analyzed for any common trends among personality types and if the demographic categories had any relationships with these types.

The results of this study showed that the social workers did in fact have a tendency towards a certain personality type. More specifically, they showed a tendency towards the extraversion, sensation, feeling, perceiving or ESFP type of personality.

When the results of the demographic categories were statistically analyzed to determine any relationship between each category and the personality type categories, only the years of social work experience demographic showed any significance. Specifically, these results showed significance in the zero to three years category as it related to perceiving of the perceiving/judging scale. Therefore, this study proved the hypothesis and furthermore, gave insight into the fact that years of social work experience effects certain aspects of the personality.

Discussion

The finding that the social workers had a tendency towards the extraversion, sensation, feeling, perceiving or ESFP type was very significant, because this is one of the four of the sixteen possible personality types that has been identified in the field of career counseling as being prevalent in social service based careers. The other three are INFJ, ESFJ, and ISFJ.

The fact that gender did not have a significant relationship with the personality scales was not surprising, because the sample was mostly comprised of female social workers. Only 7.7 percent (n=5) of the participants were male, therefore, there was not enough information on male social workers to have a significant relationship with the personality scores. Another factor that was not significantly related to the personality scales was age. This is most likely due to the fact that more than half of the sample 50.8 percent (n=33) were twenty to thirty years of age. So again, there was not enough data on the other age categories to show a significant relationship with the scales. Since, only 3.1 percent (n=2) of the sample was divorced, the marital status demographic did not have enough information about each category to come up with a significant relationship

with the personality scores. Again the distribution of the categories in the childhood family dynamics demographic were not even, with 73.8 percent (n=48) of the sample having been raised by two parents, so there was not enough information on those individuals in the sample who were raised by a single parent to show a relationship with the personality types. Although there was a skewed distribution among the sample for the years of social work experience category, with 46.2 percent (n=30) of the sample having zero to three years of experience, this category did have a significant relationship with the perceiving scale. This is probably due to the high level of stress and burnout that is encountered in the field of social work. The more years of experience that a social worker has, the more resistant they are to being emotional about the sometimes horrific things that they encounter. This would explain why the individuals in this sample with less experience would score higher on perceiving, they may be more likely to base how they help their clients on their emotions and try to be positive and think of creative ways to help. Where a more seasoned social worker, because they have seen so much and may have a tendency to judge clients on past experience and logical thinking, they may not be quite as understanding.

Conclusion

In reviewing the results, it can be concluded that a person's personality type can affect the career choice that they make. This study lends support to the field of career counseling and its use of personality inventories. It shows that certain personality types are a good fit for specific careers and that if an individual is not happy in their career, it is a strong possibility that it is due to their personality type. Since the social workers in this study were found to have a tendency for the ESFP type, which is recommended for social

services careers in career counseling literature, it also lends support to the idea that in the social work field specifically, it takes a certain personality to do the job. Since the years of social work experience category showed to have a relationship with the personality types, this study may uphold the idea that social workers can experience high stress and burnout, which would change their outlook and personality type.

Implications for Further Research

The author has a few specific suggestions for future studies in this area. First, a larger more random sample is important. The sample should represent age, gender, and years of experience more adequately. Although marital status and childhood family dynamics may not have an effect on an individual's personality or career choice, it would be interesting to see these two factors more appropriately represented.

Another suggestion for future studies would be to gather a sample from more than one setting. This is because certain workplaces have a specific atmosphere, which may support a tendency for their employees to be a certain personality type.

It may also be a good idea for future studies to include a stress level inventory of the participants. Social workers are often identified as having very stressful careers and high instances of burnout. Stress and burnout can have a significant effect on a person's personality, so it would be helpful to know if the participant's were at a high level of stress when taking the personality inventory.

It is the hope of this author that future studies yield the same results. It is interesting to see that there was a common trend in the personality types of this sample of social workers. It would be helpful for the field of career counseling if, in the future,

there were more expansive studies done on specific careers, just as this study focused on social work.

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APPENDIX A: Consent Form

Consent Form

I agree to participate in the study entitled "Using the Personality Type Evaluator to Assess Personality Types and Characteristics of Social Workers", which is being conducted by Stephanie Canal of the School Psychology Program at Rowan University. The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a common personality type among social workers. The data collected in this study will be used for a Master's thesis.

I understand that I will be required to take the Personality Type System, which is a personality test. My participation in this study should not exceed ½ hour.

I understand that all the data collected in this study will be kept confidential. I understand that my name will not be used in any publication of this study.

I understand that there are no physical or psychological risks involved in this study, and that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without penalty.

I understand that my participation does not imply employment with the state of New Jersey, Rowan University, the principal investigator, or any other project facilitator.

If I have any questions or problems concerning my participation in this study, I may contact Stephanie Canal at (609) 266-1431.

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

(Signature of Investigator)

(Date)

APPENDIX B: Demographics Sheet

This sheet contains statements about individual and work situations. Please be sure to respond to all of the statements

Circle a response for each item.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age: Under 20 years old 20-30 years old 30-40 years old
 40-50 years old 50-60 years old 60+ years old

3. Marital Status: Single Married Divorced

4. In your childhood were you raised by: Single Parent Both Parents

5. Years of social work experience: 0-3 years 3-5 years 5-10 years 10+ years