

Research Paper

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Profile of Undergraduate Therapeutic Recreation Students

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Abstract

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) has been used globally to identify personality preferences of different professions and to classify occupations based on these tendencies, creating professional profiles. Research shows that people with similar personalities and preferences tend to gravitate to like professions, but is this true of recreational therapy? This study was conducted over a three-year period with undergraduate students majoring in therapeutic recreation. Students completed the MBTI as part of an administration class to understand their personality type and the impact on their management style. Results of the MBTI were analyzed to identify if there was a predominate preference on the MBTI. This study replicated a study conducted by Jin and Austin (2000). The results of this study showed that approximately 60% of students identified as one of three personality types (ESFJ, ENFJ, or ENFP). Information on personality type, as well as implications for students, instructors, and placement supervisors, are presented. Information from this study may assist in the classroom and in career counseling for individuals interested in being recreational therapists.

Keywords

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, MBTI, recreational therapy, therapeutic recreation, undergraduate students

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Introduction

The Myers-Briggs Type Personality Indicator (MBTI) is the most widely utilized personality test in the world, selling two million copies per year and having been translated into more than 30 languages (Salter, Evans, & Forney, 2006; Steele & Young, 2008; Waite & McKinney, 2015). MBTI is widely used in career planning and counseling due to the ability to classify occupations by personality tendencies (McCauley, 1981; Salter et al., 2006). Research has shown that individuals in the same or similar professions tend to display similar personality characteristics. Jin and Austin (2000) stated that the MBTI allowed for the identification of “the dominant personality types displayed within an occupational group” (p. 36). When professionals understand their personality types and differences, they can improve their teamwork, learn to express different ideas and perceptions, and identify ways to reduce tension and manage conflict that may be attributed to personality differences (Waite & McKinney, 2015). Additionally, people whose personality style matches their work environment generally have greater career satisfaction and more success in their chosen professions (Lam, 1980).

For this reason, researchers have encouraged continued exploration of personality type of health profession students for the purposes of learning, teaching strategies, and career counseling (Jin & Austin, 2000; Lam, 1980). A variety of health professions, including nursing (Waite & McKinney, 2015), occupational therapy (Hardigan & Cohen, 2003) and music therapy (Steele & Young, 2008) have created a personality type profile to identify traits and personalities common to their profession. There has only been one study focused on recreational therapy (RT) and the MBTI (Jin & Austin, 2000) and no profiles exist using the results of this previous research.

The purpose of this paper is to replicate the study by Jin and Austin (2000) and to identify if there have been changes over the last two decades that may provide updated information for career counseling and planning for college advising. Jin and Austin (2000) encouraged further study in RT to support their research on students’ personality types. Information from this current study can be used in career counseling and planning for college advising programs, or in RT career guidance. Results of this study can influence teaching of undergraduate programs through increased understanding of learning styles and preferences. Additionally, this study can inform educational programs to help students learn strategies or techniques to compliment (or supplement) their existing skill set. After an overview of the MBTI and the use of it with health professions, a discussion follows specific to recreational therapy practice using the results of this investigation.

Literature Review

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The Myers-Briggs Personality Indicator was developed by Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers in the 1940s and 1950s (Waite & McKinney, 2015), with the purpose of showing people’s preferences in judgment, processing information, and behaviors based on forced choices (Capraro & Capraro, 2002; Johnson et al., 2001; Rezler & French, 1975). It is based on the personality theory developed by Carl Jung who believed that people had mental and/or psychological preferences toward performance that are often unconscious (Kennedy & Kennedy, 2004). Isabel Myers was motivated to develop the MBTI as a way to “help by finding a means for people to understand

rather than destroy each other and to assist individuals in using their gifts” (Allen, 1994). The MBTI has been used in a variety of ways including to determine fit within a profession, career counseling (Steele & Young, 2008), and links to learning style and academic achievement (Hardigan & Cohen, 2003). The MBTI is frequently used with young adults as this is a time when one’s disposition is “most differentiated” (Salter et al., 2006, p. 174).

The MBTI Questionnaire

First published in 1962, the questionnaire identified individual tendencies and preferences for various personality characteristics through forced choices between dichotomous characteristics (Rezler & French, 1975; Waite & McKinney, 2015). These characteristics related to attitudes, perceptions, judgment, and style. Attitudes were reflected in the variables of extroversion or introversion (E/I); perception related to sensing or intuition (S/N); judging reflected preferences towards thinking or feeling (T/F); and style demonstrated tendencies toward judging or perceiving (J/P) (Waite & McKinney, 2015). These preferences explained (Allen, 1994; Myers & Briggs Foundation [MBF], 2018a; MBF, 2018b; MBF, 2018c; MBF, 2018d):

- Where an individual gets their energy and puts their focus, such as on the outer world (extroversion) or inner world (introversion). Extroverts generally prefer action, variety, and conversation with others. Introverts are content to work independently and prefer depth to variety.
- How individuals take in information, whether one takes in information through the senses (sensing) or a preference to look for patterns, interpretation, and meaning (intuition). Those who prefer sensing focus more on observation, using their senses and being exact, while those who are intuitive prefer to use their guts and instincts.
- A preference toward a decision-making style such as using logic and consistency (thinking) or examining the people and circumstances (feeling). Thinkers strive to make logical, objective decisions, and feelers desire harmony, putting others’ interests first.
- The way an individual prefers to behave and be observed by others, with more structure (judging) or being more flexible and open to new opportunities (perceiving). Those who prefer judging like to have life organized and certain; perceivers like flexibility and spontaneity.

The results of the MBTI questionnaire lead to the identification of a preference within each dichotomous pair. An individual’s choices lead to the identification of one of 16 main personality types as identified in Table 1.

Table 1
Sixteen MBTI Personality Types

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

Although people tend toward one of each pair, they may display characteristics of all personality characteristics at different times. “The MBTI assessment recognizes those qualities that are preferred and used customarily” (Waite & McKinney, 2015, p. 177). Additionally, individuals tend to develop:

skills and interests associated with their dominant and auxiliary functions (S, N, T, or F) and to be somewhat less interested in the tasks requiring use of their two less preferred functions... The same principle applies to the four attitudes (E or I, J or P), though here the effect of preferences may be more in how the tasks are carried out, rather than the choice of the tasks themselves. (McCauley, 1981, p. 50)

Awareness of personality tendencies provides increased awareness of one’s self, including how to manage one’s responses to situations (Waite & McKinney).

MBTI Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to how consistent a test is in measurement (Pittenger, 1993). To examine the reliability of the MBTI, Randall, Isaacson, and Ciro (2017) completed a meta-analysis and systematic review on the MBTI. Using six of 221 studies, the researchers found the MBTI displayed reasonable construct validity, and that the sub-scales of E-I, S-N, and J-P had satisfactory reliabilities. Capraro and Caparo (2002) also conducted a meta-analysis on a number of MBTI studies. A total of 210 articles were used focusing on studies completed between 1998 and 2001. The authors cited a number of studies that showed statistically significant correlations between MBTI scores, behaviors, and an individual’s assessment of their personal MBTI type. In their meta-analysis, the authors found that the reliability of the MBTI was acceptable across all studies used. However, the authors did note, “But like all measures, the MBTI yields scores that are dependent on the sample characteristics and testing conditions” (p. 599).

In their study, Johnson and colleagues (2001) also described several studies that showed the reliability of the MBTI, but mention some questions about the stability of the types. These authors also mentioned other criticisms of the MBTI including: lack of support for the dichotomous scales, concerns about the structure of the factors (or types and constructs) of the MBTI, and the lack of higher order statistical testing of the MBTI. The Johnson et al. also expressed concerns about limiting personality to only four or five dimensions. In addition, some psychologists have found little value in the test as few, if any, significant conclusions can be drawn from the MBTI (Pittenger, 1993).

Acknowledging these limitations and conflicting results of the reliability and validity of the MBTI, the authors of this study believe that using the MBTI may not predict every behavior and action a person may choose, but it allows a person to become aware of preferences and tendencies in the four areas measured. While all individuals have choices in their actions and behaviors, individuals also tend to follow certain patterns and choices.

Health Professions’ Use of MBTI

The MBTI has been used with a number of health professions to develop a personality profile for each of the professions. While variations exist within each profession,

consistency has also been found in predominant personality types as identified in these studies. Rezler and French (1975) conducted one of the earliest studies on personality type and health profession students. The researchers concluded that health profession students (including medical art, dietetics, medical laboratory sciences, medical records administration, occupational therapy, and physical therapy):

showed higher percentages of feeling vs. thinking scores in all six groups of students; judging vs. perception in all but occupational therapy students, an almost equal distribution between extroversion and introversion, with extroversion predominating in the professions which have more opportunities and functions requiring direct patient contact; and almost equal distribution between sensing and intuition. (p. 25)

Lam (1980) added to this stating that feeling types were attracted to all health professions, and that “Fields requiring emphasis on verbal communication, innovation, relating many complex fields to each other (medicine, nursing and occupational therapy) are particularly attracted to NF types” (p. 5).

In looking at personality profiles of different professions, researchers have identified predominate personality types. Following is a list of health professions that recreational therapy professionals might interact with and their identified MBTI type(s):

- Music Therapy: ENFP and ENFJ (Steele & Young, 2008)
- Nursing: ESTJ (Waite & McKinney, 2015)
- Occupational Therapy: ENFP (Lam, 1980; McCauley, 1981; Rezler & French, 1975), ESFP (Rezler & French, 1975), and ESFJ (Hardigan & Cohen, 2003; McCauley, 1981)
- Osteopathic Medicine: ESTJ (Hardigan & Cohen, 2003)
- Physical Therapy: ESFJ (Lam, 1980; McCauley, 1981), ESTJ (Hardigan & Cohen, 2003; Rezler & French, 1975) and ENFP (McCauley, 1981)
- Physician's Assistant ESFJ (Hardigan & Cohen, 2003)
- Social Work: ENFP and INFP (McCauley, 1981)
- Speech-Language Pathology: ENFP and ESFJ (McCauley, 1981)

Specific to therapy disciplines, Hardigan and Cohen (2003) observed that ESFJ was the predominant profile for physical and occupational therapy students in their study, which they interpreted to mean “they are warm-hearted, talkative, whose main interest is in things that affect people’s lives” (p. 6).

Recreational Therapy

Recreational Therapy and MBTI Studied within the Profession

In 2000, Jin and Austin researched the personality types of therapeutic recreation (TR) students using the MBTI. Jin and Austin (2000) cited Provost’s (1990) study indicating that recreational therapists would most predominately fit the ESFP (Extroversion, Sensing, Feeling, and Perception) personality type. They summarized Provost’s idea of RTs being ESFP as “ESFPs enjoy being active and being with others so they may merge work and play through their occupation of recreation therapy” (p. 36).

Jin and Austin (2000) used the MBTI on a convenience sample of 73 undergraduate TR majors from two universities in the Midwest. All participants were either juniors or seniors, aged 20-23. The majority were female ($n=57$). The researchers used the MBTI Form G, which consisted of 126 items. Using percentage to report on personality types of TR majors, the results showed ESFP (Extroversion, Sensing, Feeling, Judgment) and ENFP (Extroversion, Intuition, Feeling, Perception) as the most common personality types in their sample. ESFP represented 24.7% of the sample, while ENFP included 19.2% of the sample, accounting for a total of 43.9%. These two types were followed (in order) by ISFJ (9.6%), ISTJ (8.8%), and tied were ESTJ, ENFJ, and ESFP (8.2%). In their article, Jin and Austin offered implications for practice and teaching based on the two predominant personality types they identified.

Recreational Therapy and MBTI Mentioned External to the Profession

While Jin and Austin (2000) have the only published research on recreational therapy and MBTI, there are several websites that include recreational therapists in their discussions on career choices based on MBTI types, which are consistent with Jin and Austin's findings. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), an organization that oversees community colleges in Illinois, developed a resource for individuals as they consider careers. ICCB (n.d.) identified suggested careers based on Myers-Briggs Type. "Recreation workers" were listed as an ideal career for those with a MBTI type of ESFP due to the fact, that they are "optimistic and fun-loving, their enthusiasm is great for motivating others" (7th para.).

Another website, Truity, provides a variety of personality tests for the public to use. Truity included recreational therapists under the MBTI personality type of ENFP "The Champion" (2017b). This website (2017a) describes ENFP as people who are creative and seek to help others, as well as "explore possibilities for themselves and other people, and approach their work with vision and inspiration... they seek out fun, novel tasks that allow them to be imaginative and relate to other people in an unstructured, supportive way" (1st & 2nd para.).

A final webpage that has information on recreational therapy and MBTI is by Sohn, a business consultant. On his blog, Sohn (2015) posted the best jobs for the 16 MBTI types. Recreational therapists were indicated as ENFP, "expressive advocates" (4th grouping). ENFP is classified under the Empaths grouping which stated, "Empaths love their work when they can improve people's lives and make the world a more beautiful place" (4th grouping).

Methods

As part of the Administration in Therapeutic Recreation course at a Division 2 Midwestern university, senior level undergraduate students completed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® Self-Report Form M self-scorable as a class assignment, where it was interpreted by one of the researchers who is certified to administer the MBTI®. The MBTI was used to discuss personality type and management implications related to MBTI traits. Discussions were integrated throughout the semester about the impact of personality on various aspects of management.

Administration of MBTI

Following IRB approval, students were read an approved announcement informing them that they would be completing the MBTI for class and inviting them to share the information anonymously and confidentially for research purposes. This announcement was given verbal in class and posted online. To complete the MBTI, each student was provided with a copy of the MBTI Form M Self-Scorable to complete and bring back to class. The form was in booklet format with 93 items, in which individuals choose between two words. Upon completion of all items, the scoring sheet required the individual to total points in each of the areas to determine the person's preferences. The result was an indication of the four predominant preference types of the individual. In the following class, the researcher who is a certified MBTI practitioner interpreted the results, explaining each of the types related to personality, preferences and choices. Discussion was held on implications of each identified personality type related to being a manager.

After class, students were asked to submit information on their personality type obtained from the MBTI Form M self-scorable via Survey Monkey. Students entered their MBTI four-letter personality type, as well as individual scores for each personality indicator. Students were also asked to enter their cohort graduation year, gender, year of birth, and practice area of interest. One last question asked if TR had always been the student's declared major. Data were collected and voluntarily obtained from 80 students over a three-year period ($N=115$, $n=80$, 69.7% participant rate).

MBTI Form M Reliability and Validity

Form M is a self-scorable form, and currently the most widely used version of the MBTI. Schaubhut, Herk, and Thompson (2009) published a manual supplement that detailed the psychometrics of this form. Reliability, or how consistent a measurement tool is, was evaluated using measures of internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Internal consistency and test-retest reliability were examined across several factors including employment status, ethnicity, age, and country/international region of origin (Schaubhut et al., 2009). Overall, reliability scores ranged from 0.81 to 0.91 with each of these four variables. Test-retest reliability examined MBTI results at three weeks, four weeks to six months, six to 12 months, and more than one year after taking it the first time. Results in type ranged from 0.57 to 0.81 showing "good reliability for each preference over long periods of time" (Schaubhut et al., 2009, p. 8). Ring (2008) noted that Form M was more reliable than the previous Form G, specifically writing, "internal consistency is quite high... Test-retest reliabilities of Form M are consistent over time" (p. 7).

Validity is defined as how well a tool measures what it is intended to measure. Schaubhut and colleagues (2009) used construct validity to evaluate Form M. They specifically compared Form M to other commonly used personality measures such as the CPI 260 and the Strong Interest Inventory with convergent validity (how similar the measures were related) and divergent validity (how different the measures were related). In each comparison, the MBTI results were found to be similar to each of the other tools, indicating that the MBTI measures what it intends to measure. Schaubhut et al. also conducted a subjective evaluation of best-fit in which an individual identified which type fit them best and this was then compared to their MBTI results. For best-fit results showed that 72.9% of individuals who participated agreed on all four preferences indicated by their type (p. 15).

Data Analysis

To analyze data, SAS 9.4 (SAS Institute) was utilized. Prior to data analysis, data were cleaned, removing unnecessary information such as start and end dates. Correcting the format for provided information was done, such as students who included their full date of birth rather than just their year or who placed the MBTI letters in incorrect order.

Since the focus of this study was on identification of the predominant MBTI personality type and implications for recreational therapy as compared to Jin and Austin (2000), summative data were first analyzed. Scores were tallied and percentages calculated on each preference scale and on the overall types. In addition, a cross tabulation table was developed showing the number of students with preferences in each of the 16 areas. Frequencies for each of the 16 preferences were calculated as was reported by other studies (Jin & Austin, 2000; Steele & Young, 2008; Waite & McKinney, 2015). To determine if any of preferences showed statistical significance, the binomial test was run comparing each pair. The binomial test is used to determine statistical significance between two categories (University of Dayton, n.d.). A deeper analysis was conducted to determine significance in patterns and potential career paths, as was done in McPhail's (2002) study on nursing, personality types and leadership.

Findings

The results of reported student scores on Form M for this study note specific preferences which are displayed in Table 2. The students showed clear preferences in Extroversion ($M=13.71$) over Introversion ($M=7.19$) with a 6.52 point difference, and in Feeling ($M=17.33$) over Thinking ($M=6.35$) with a 10.98 point difference. The students showed smaller preferences in Intuition ($M=13.21$) over Sensing ($M=12.41$) with a difference of 0.8 points, and Judging ($M=11.7$) over Perceiving ($M=9.75$) with a 1.95 difference.

Table 2

Average Score

Personality Characteristic/Preference	Average Points
Extrovert (E)	13.71
Introvert (I)	7.19
Sensing (S)	12.41
Intuition (N)	13.21
Feeling (F)	17.33
Thinking (T)	6.35
Perceiving (P)	9.75
Judging (J)	11.7

The overall personality types for this study revealed clear preferences for certain personality types. Of the 80 study participants, the predominant MBTI types were: ESFJ ($n=20$, 25%), ENFJ ($n=15$, 18.75%), and ENFP ($n=14$, 17.5%), accounting for 61% of the sample. Adding the next two highest types, ISFJ ($n=8$, 10%), and INFP ($n=7$, 8.75%), accounts for 80% of the sample. The remaining MBTI types had one to three respondents. Two personality types were not present, ESTP and INTJ. Table 3 displays the number and percentage of the sample for each of the 16 personality types.

Table 3

Recreational Therapy Students by MBTI Profile Type

ISTJ n=2 2.5%	ISFJ n=8 10%	INFJ n=3 3.75%	INTJ n=0 0%
ISTP n=1 1.25%	ISFP n=2 2.5%	INFP n=7 8.75%	INTP n=1 1.25%
ESTP n=0 0%	ESFP n=3 3.75%	ENFP n=14 17.5%	ENTP n=1 1.25%
ESTJ n=1 1.25%	ESFJ n=20 25%	ENFJ n=15 18.75%	ENTJ n=2 2.5%

These results differ slightly from Jin and Austin (2000), who identified ESFP and ENFP as the predominant two MBTI types for recreational therapy students. Jin and Austin found a prevalence in Perceiving, whereas this study found a prevalence in Judging. Career guidance sites found ESFP (ICCB, n.d.) and ENFP (Sohn, 2015; Truity, 2017b); however, none of these career guidance sites identified how they obtained their results or on what information they are basing their recommendations.

Another finding related to the students responding to this study is that of the 80 TR students who participated in the study, only 24 (30%) entered the university as therapeutic recreation majors, while 56 (70%) declared another major and later switched to TR as a major. Majors in which students started out included exercise science/athletic training (19%), nursing (13%), allied health sciences (10%), physical therapy (10%), and radiation therapy (10%). Additionally, identified majors included special education, speech therapy, natural resource management/parks and recreation management, diagnostic imaging/sonography, psychology, social work, and business.

Related to the binomial tests, p values were used for each comparison between the types: EI, NS, FP, and TJ. Results showed that there was statistical significance between EI (CI=95%, $p=0.0002$) demonstrating that extroversion is significantly higher statistically than introversion in this sample. FP ($p<0.001$) and TJ ($p=0.0092$) also showed significance. NS was the only pair that did not show statistical significance ($p=0.2882$).

This demonstrates that there was statistical significance towards certain preferences identified by the MBTI within this study of TR students. Table 4 displays cross tabulations comparing the different characteristics from this study.

Table 4

Cross Tabulation by Preference

Attitude		
Extroverted (E)	Count	56
	% within Attitude	70%
Introverted (I)	Count	24
	% within Attitude	30%
Perception		
Sensing (S)	Count	37
	% within Perception	46%
Intuition (N)	Count	43
	% within Perception	54%
Judging		
Thinking (T)	Count	8
	% within Judging	10%
Feeling (F)	Count	72
	% within Judging	90%
Style		
Judging (J)	Count	58
	% within Style	73%
Perceiving (P)	Count	22
	% with Style	27%

Note: Adapted from Steele & Young (2008)

Discussion and Implications

While personality profiles can be of assistance in offering career advice and shaping education, the fact remains that each therapist is an individual who may display preferences toward certain traits and choices but who makes choices and decisions in various ways. However, knowing that TR students demonstrate a preference towards the personality of ESFJ (25%) provides an opportunity to understand tendencies of this group. Understanding one's personality tendencies via the MBTI can help individuals explore their own self-concepts and preferences, as well as learn to manage situations and responses (Pulver & Kelly, 2008; Waite & McKinney, 2015).

Adjectives used to describe individuals who display ESFJ include: cooperative, people-oriented, loyal, warmhearted, harmony seeking, enthusiastic, empathetic and conscientious (MBF, 2018c; MBF, 2018e). They "like to work with others to complete tasks", affirming that they like to work in teams (MBF, 2018e). Additionally, ESFJ personality types "notice what others need in their day-by-day lives and try to provide it" (MBF, 2018e), which affirms skills required by a recreational therapist in assessing,

planning, and implementing interventions to improve the lives of consumers. It is also important to note that ESFJ types desire recognition and appreciation for their role (MBF, 2018e).

When looking at the overall preferences, there is value in understanding these preferences. For this sample, preferences were toward Extroverted, Intuition (slight preference), Feeling, and Judging.

- Extroverts (E) are seen as “people” persons, are comfortable working in groups, and get their energy from being around others (MBF, 2018a). They tend to talk through their problems/concerns and want to have input from others.
- Intuitive (N) individuals pay attention to impressions, patterns, and meaning within the information obtained. They prefer to think through the problem, think about the past and future, and work in the abstract. They also prefer to be innovative, rather than doing the same thing (MBF, 2018d).
- Feeling (F) types like to look at situations from different perspectives, include values, and may seem to follow their heart. Harmony and cohesion are important as Feeling types are people and communication oriented (MBF, 2018f).
- Judging (J) types generally apply their thinking/feeling to what you see in their behavior. They tend to be planned, organized, and like to feel like life is under control. Judging types may appear task oriented, like to work before play, plan ahead, and make lists (MBF, 2018b).

Each of these descriptors reflect skills and traits frequently seen in recreational therapists.

Comparing this study to that of Jin and Austin (2000), there are differences in the results. One probable reason for the difference between this study and Jin and Austin could be the 20-year difference between the studies, accounting for societal and generational changes. Jin’s and Austin’s study would have included students born in the 1980s, known as Millennials; whereas, this study included students born in the mid to late 1990s, referred to as Generation Z (Bialik & Fry, 2019). It is acknowledged that the two generations are very different (Cioletti, 2018). Technology has always been a part of Generation Z, who probably never lived in a home with a landline or without touch screen technology (Carraway, 2018; Cioletti, 2018). Millennials lived during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, wars in the Middle East, and the presidency of the first US African-American president, creating significant historical moments within their life time that affected their perceptions and experiences (Dimock, 2019). Technology evolved during their lives and they remember the 2008-2009 recession. They are also known as the “trophy kids”, and view their generation as idealistic, self-absorbed and wasteful (Pew Research Center, 2015). On the other hand, Generation Z is characterized by believing in socially progressive causes and living life with access to 24/7 information. They are viewed as confident, valuing education and making one’s self better. “They want to feel like they’re part of something... desiring experiences over possessions” (Cioletti, 2018, p. 10). These generational differences and lived experiences may account for variations in findings between this study and that of Jin and Austin.

Implications for the Three MBTI Types

In this study, ESFJ ($n=20$, 25%), ENFJ ($n=15$, 18.75%), and ENFP ($n=14$, 17.5%) were the three predominant personality types. In looking at each of the types, there

are clear implications and considerations for students, professionals, managers, and educators. Individuals who identify as ESFJ like to use facts, warmth, sympathy, and work with people (Center for Applications of Psychological Type [CAPT], n.d.). People preferring ESFJ are people focused, enjoying nurturing others and valuing community. Skills that ESFJs generally possess include the ability to gather information, and promote and support others. Health, teaching and service professions appeal to ESFJs.

Like ESFJs, ENFJ individuals tend to use their warmth and sympathy, and like to explore possibilities (CAPT, n.d.). These individuals like organization, creativity, harmony and imagination, while being interested in others' development and growth. They are enthusiastic and willing to look at things from others' viewpoints (CAPT, n.d.). ENFJs tend to choose teaching, counseling and health professions. ENFP individuals overlap in some ways with their ENFJ counterparts.

Focusing on possibility, warmth and sympathy, individuals who are ENFPs are interested in people and helping others grow. ENFPs like to be active, involved with people, and find solutions to problems. Creativity, energy, relationship and enthusiasm also characterize this personality type. People who are ENFP tend to choose careers that require routine, organization, and structure such as teaching, psychology, art, and public relations (CAPT, n.d.).

Implications for Students and Educators

Based on Jin and Austin (2000) and this study, TR students fall into extroversion, indicating they tend to be people focused, willing and able to work in groups, and gaining energy from being with others. In another study, students who indicated a preference for extroversion also showed lower scores in depression, and higher scores in positive well-being, self-control, and efficacy than those who fall on the side of introversion (Bughi et al., 2017). Another study showed that students who are judging types tended to have higher GPAs than perceiving types, as well as those who are introverted and feeling (DiRienzo et al., 2010). In knowing one's MBTI, students and educators can identify how students learn best and can adapt teaching methodologies (Allen, 1994), although Murphy et al. (2017) found that students who both indicate extroversion and introversion expressed the same preferred teaching methods and class participation.

There are also implications for students and educators related to the finding that only 30% of students entered the university declaring themselves as therapeutic recreation majors, and 70% declared another major who later switched majors. This finding demonstrates that therapeutic recreation remains a discovery major. Educators and professional organizations such as the (National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification) NCTRC and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association need to consider opportunities to promote and educate high school students, students who have not declared a major, and first year students interested in health professions.

Implications for Education and Placement Supervision

For educators and fieldwork supervisors, the information in this study may be beneficial. It is important for placement supervisors to understand their preferences and behaviors to enable them to reflect and examine their impact on others. This study demonstrates the preference towards working in groups—both in interprofessional and collaborative manners for students in the classroom and in clinical settings.

The focus on teamwork is evident in the extroversion and intuitive preferences. Students need opportunities to process and talk through their thinking to enhance

their clinical skills. Students in this study demonstrated a preference towards looking for patterns while generating impressions as they think through situations and explore different perspectives; this skill is beneficial in the assessment process as students identify ways to use past leisure interests to enhance current and future engagement. Furthermore, the task orientation and goal-driven focus of judging types serves TR students well as they will often work as clinician supervisors or in small departments handling large caseloads. Table 5 demonstrates considerations for education and work based on the results of this and other studies.

Table 5

MBTI Applications for Education and Work

Size and Complexity of Information	Applicability	Scope	Structure
Introversion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller, shorter meetings • Quieter environment • Reflection time • Focused, more in-depth theme 	Sensing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-on activities, demonstrations, and case studies • Specific tasks with demonstrated results 	Thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New ideas • Intellectual stimulating topics • Fact and technically based information • Objective and analytical 	Judging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow clear goals and objectives • Well-designed, structured, and organized • Self-paced
Extraversion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large groups • Intensive and quick paced • Frequent contacts and interaction • Active 	Nuition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory then application • Complex problems with difficult solutions • Traditional classes 	Feeling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship focused • Outcomes directed toward people • Impact, values and meaning • Subjective 	Perceiving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluid learning • Variety • Open-ended and flexible • Exploration • Process focused

Note: adapted from Moore et al. (2004); Schoessler et al. (1993); and Worthington & Clay (1995).

Studies support the use of the MBTI for field placement supervisors and students to assist in understanding each other’s behaviors, preferences and communication styles and to enhance the supervisor’s supervision of the student (Moore, Dettlaff, & Dietz, 2004). Suggestions given by these authors include things such as:

- For students who are extroverts: Provide face-to-face supervision and use of groups; providing opportunities early in the placement to interact with clients; giving student opportunities to talk through their experience; and discussing on-going performance.
- For students who are introverted: Provide individual supervision with additional written communication; give students time to prepare; allow time for internally processing and thinking about issues; provide structure and order to the placement; and provide feedback when needed.

In regard to career counseling and guidance, using the MBTI in combination with a career interest survey may help identify preferred work activities, values and styles that can be matched to professional profiles; however, alone the MBTI might not be the best tool for identifying careers or majors (Pulver & Kelly, 2008).

While this study is beneficial in generalizing preferences for identifying education implications, supervision, and career counseling, the MBTI is not the ultimate answer for any profession. A professional profile such as one created by this study based on the MBTI is not static; people change and can adjust their behaviors, action and choices. However, understanding one's preferences enables individuals to be aware of their own tendencies and those of others.

Limitations of this Study

Since this is the second study on the MBTI and the recreational therapy profession, there are limited comparisons that can be made. Additionally, because of the small sample from one university, the results may not reflect the personality types of the entire field of recreational therapy, although the findings are similar to those of Jin and Austin (2000). Additionally, this study focused on students who have limited experience in practice. Preferences may change with more clinical experience.

Recommendations

Future studies related to personality type and recreational therapy should focus on professionals to determine if there is a predominant personality type or preferences in practitioners. Attention could be given to personality preferences by role (e.g., therapist, supervisor/manager, or educator) and practice setting. This information could be helpful in future career guidance and in shaping education. For those interested in the MBTI, another study possibility is to look at changes in personality preferences over time from student to therapist/practitioner to manager, to see if preferences vary based on the role one holds at different times.

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