




FROM THE EDITOR

In this issue of the Research Digest, we summarize four studies on psychological type published in 2017 and two graduate theses—a master's thesis and a doctoral dissertation. The studies are a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A theme across a few studies is the role of personality diversity in quality decision-making and problem-based learning. Studies highlight the traits and preferences in managers who work abroad and a fine replication study of preferences in successful computing and information science majors. A phenomenological analysis of dominant extraverted intuitive type entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs is summarized in Bendotti's dissertation, while Fussell offers another replication study of type preferences in students, this time in aviation. The offerings in this Research Digest span the more typical and offer some surprises as well.

Perhaps the biggest occurrence in the type world in 2018 happened in September with the publication of Merve Emre's book, *The Personality Brokers: The strange history of the Myers-Briggs and the birth of personality testing*. In this edition of the Digest, I provide a review of Emre's book.

We invite your thoughts, opinions, and comments on the book review, the reviewed studies, and the Digest as a whole. After each summary is a link that brings you to a form to give us your feedback or request a copy of the article. 

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Research Digest

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The annual *Journal of Psychological Type® - Research Digest* (JPT-RD) summarizes select research published in the previous calendar year on psychological type using the MBTI® instrument. The Research Summaries distill the studies into brief and readable form, bridging research and practice by indicating the relevance of the research for practitioners. The *Field Notes* section alerts readers to other type-related research activities and publications, such as theses and dissertations, relevant white papers and other summaries, as well as ongoing research activities of interest. [🔗](#)

The Personality Brokers: The strange history of Myers-Briggs and the birth of personality testing.

Emre, Merve. (2018). *The Personality Brokers: The strange history of Myers-Briggs and the birth of personality testing*. NY: Penguin Random House.

REVIEW: Emre tells an engaging and personal tale of the two maverick and brilliant women—Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers—whose against-the-odds accomplishment had not been thoroughly told or highlighted. The explication of the sensibilities of Katherine was especially full, providing a personal sense of this highly intelligent and strong-willed Victorian-era woman. Katherine was unknown even to many in the field of psychological type making the revelations of her desire to be of service to others, of her thwarted ambitions and her passion for type especially touching and embodied. The complex personality of Isabel Briggs Myers came through as well, especially in the juxtaposition of her idealism and guileless charm (the image of Isabel, in her 60s, skipping into colleague’s offices at Education Testing Service comes to mind), alongside an intensely keen intelligence and stubborn ambition to manifest the vision she had for

the indicator against positions of researchers at ETS.

For me, the promise in the title of the “birth of personality testing” was not fulfilled; I wanted the rise of personality testing in American culture in the mid-20th century to be more fully explicated. Emre takes fascinating excursions into the Personality and Research Center at Berkley and the role of the Office of the Secret Service in the application of personality types, but they do not land in the final themes of the book. I sensed a tension between two ultimate themes: Isabel Myers and the cultural phenomenon of the MBTI® or the MBTI as the exemplar assessment and theory at the birth of scientific testing of personality in the United States. Emre chose the former and ends up settling on the personal relationship between Myers and Mary McCaulley as they built CAPT before concluding with a critique of a cultish nature of MBTI users. While the role of Dr. McCaulley in the success of the

MBTI assessment and the history of CAPT is a worthy story of an unsung hero, and Emre's treatment of this important relationship was sensitive and supportive, these final chapters diverge from the cultural-historical themes in the core of the book. In what appears to be an attempt to address all audiences—true believers, critics, historians, feminists—the stronger theme, in my mind, of the cultural-historical birth of scientific investigations of personality was abandoned.

A review of this book needs to reference Emre's claims against CAPT. I can state two things with confidence. First, CAPT did not put Emre through a "re-education program" as stated in the book. We never use this term; we simply paid for her to attend an MBTI certification course, as is our practice with external consultants. Second, Isabel Myers' archives were not organized or public when Emre requested access, but they are now. In 2016, CAPT initiated a multi-year project with the University of Florida to digitize Myers' archives and this summer the initial offerings were made public. CAPT is excited about

this project and I encourage you to investigate the archives at <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/myersbriggs>.

I'm disappointed, but not surprised, that Emre and the usual round of MBTI critics triggered by the publication of her book relied on well-worn criticisms of the lack of scientific validity of the MBTI assessment. The 1998 MBTI manual has chapters of evidence of the scientific validity of the instrument (and the new manual with updated, global research is set to be released any day now). As we know, studies are published using the MBTI assessment every year, including a very large study published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* in September 2018. This study explores the link between personality attitudes and behaviors with occupation, with over 170,000 participants, and you can access it through CAPT's research library. We will certainly be highlighting it in next year's Digest. 📄

To give us your thoughts on this book review and URL, or to request a copy of the review, click this link: <https://capt.org/JPT/?RD=182>

Reducing biases of decision-making processes in complex organizations.

Cristofaro, M. (2017). Reducing biases of decision-making processes in complex organizations. *Management Research Review*, 40(3), 270–291.

SUMMARY: Research has established that cognitive biases of decision makers contribute to the quality of decisions and production processes in business, but how can bias in organizational decision making be reduced? This was the research question of Cristofaro’s organizational case study of the decision-making process in a single organization. The case study involved three top tier decision makers responsible for implementation of new business initiatives. Cristofaro gathered and analyzed data through the MBTI® type of the three decision makers, thematic analysis of interviews, six months of observations in the workplace, and use of a quality control checklist.

Three new business initiatives were followed and analyzed in an organization that creates and delivers higher education programs to thousands of students each year. The organization has over 200 employees and is governed by a Board from a consortium of 76 stakeholder companies. The three top tier decision makers in the study were the Head of the Management Department (ESTJ), Head of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ESTP), and a Senior Consultant (ESTJ).

The analyses found biases in each decision process of all three business initiatives, including overconfidence, problems with optimal level of control (lack of control and excessive control from external sources, i.e., board members), use of affect heuristics (i.e., opinion based on personal experience), and, cognitive biases from the similarity of psychological types in the three key players (all three were EST types). Only one of the three new initiatives followed did not suffer the cognitive biases of the EST- decision makers; this program received critique from several other people in the decision-making process, where the other two programs analyzed did not.

New business initiatives that involved critiques from several different stakeholders, diverse cognitive styles (i.e., type preferences) in decision makers, and quality control mechanisms, were more successful than initiatives that had few participants with little difference among their personalities. 🗣️

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Personality differences in managers who have, and have not, worked abroad.

Furnham, A. (2017). Personality differences in managers who have, and have not, worked abroad, *European Management Journal*, Volume 35, pp 39–45

SUMMARY. An increasing number of job opportunities in today's marketplace involve travel or working abroad for extended periods. In this climate, we see more job applicants actively seeking out such positions. Only recently have social scientists started to explore the psychological implications of business transfer and intention to migrate. Agencies are now asking for the best predictors of work efficacy abroad. This research explored the extent to which personality traits play a part in the decision to work abroad.

This study compared the personality profile of a large group (N=13,233) of middle-aged British managers composed of people who had worked abroad and others who had not. Of this group, 3165 were female (318 worked abroad) and 10068 were male (1726 worked abroad); the mean age was 42.36 years old (SD=7.12). The analysis included MBTI® type, Five Factor personality traits with the NEO-PI-R, and the Hogan Development Survey (personality disorder traits). Using data from an assessment center, researchers hypothesized that Extraverted (E) and Perceiving (P) types would be more likely to have experience abroad than Introverted (I) and Judging (J) types.

Those managers who had worked abroad were, not surprisingly, less Neurotic and more Extraverted, Agreeable, Open, and Conscientious. Just one of the four MBTI dimensions showed a significant difference: people with a preference for Thinking were more likely to work abroad than a preference for Feeling. Additional data, though small in significance, suggested that Introverts had spent less time abroad than Extraverts, as expected. ?

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The preference for Thinking in those who worked abroad was particularly unexpected considering that the more Agreeable participants had worked abroad, and in previous correlational studies, the Agreeable scale on the Big Five instrument has correlated with a Feeling preference. Unfortunately, Furnham did not report a correlational analysis between the Big Five trait assessment and the MBTI types.*

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Do dental students' personality types and group dynamics affect their performance in problem-based learning?

Ihm, J. J., An, S. Y. and Seo, D. G. (2017).
Do dental students' personality types
and group dynamics affect their perfor-
mance in problem-based learning?
Journal of Dental Education, 81(6),
744-751.

SUMMARY. Use of a problem-based learning (PBL) tool was incorporated into a correlation study of small groups of Korean dental students, examining gender, MBTI® type and their subsequent performance on the PBL tool. Student groups were given a problem scenario and instructed to solve it in a linear, logical manner: i.e., suggesting hypotheses, developing concept maps, gathering information, and applying that information to the problem to identify interventions.

Students were randomly assigned into teams of 7 or 8 individuals and received 4 weeks of PBL during their first year of dental school. The MBTI assessment was provided prior to the team work. The PBL included a facilitator's evaluation, written tests, and an oral test. Typological distribution of the sample (N = 263 students) included 175 Sensing types (140 were Sensing-Thinking types); and 88 Intuitive types (56 were Intuitive-Thinking types).

The more diverse a group became in personality characteristics, the greater the likelihood of a higher ranking in the PBL. Groups with the highest performance of problem-solving abilities contained TJ types. Over-performing groups clustered around ENTJ, ISTJ, and ESTJ.

A unique aspect of this study included analysis of the student teams by examining the heterogeneity of the teams relative to gender and MBTI type. The Shannon Diversity Index was applied to quantitatively measure how many types there were within each small group. The higher the score, the greater the diversity of MBTI type within each group. 🌀


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Reynolds, J. H., Adams, D. R., Ferguson, R. C. and Leidig, P. M. (2017). The personality of a computing major: it makes a difference. *Information Systems Journal*, 15(4), 69-74.

The personality of a computing major: it makes a difference.

SUMMARY. It comes as no revelation that the number of jobs in the field of computing and information systems is growing. Correspondingly, increasing demand for these majors creates problems in terms of advising, retention, scheduling, and enrollment management. Many colleges offer multiple majors within the computing field, with different courses of study, and students are faced with the challenge of deciding which major is their best option before getting too far into the coursework. This study was concerned with the question of whether personality tools like the MBTI® assessment can help students select the best computing major earlier in the process.

This pilot study analyzed MBTI personality differences in successful students enrolled in Computer Science (CS) and Information Science (IS) majors at a Midwestern state university in 2015. Successful was defined as having completed the capstone course in each major's

coursework. (The CS subset had N=34 and the IS subset N=11.) Results replicated previous similar studies, revealing that IS students tended to report preferences for Extraversion, where CS students tended towards a preference for Introversion. In addition, the IS subset had more preferences for Sensing than CS majors. In typological terms, IS majors were more concentrated in EST preferences, while CS majors were more mixed in preferences (INT, IST, ENT). 

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Previous research has shown that engineering students are largely ISTJ, ESTJ, INTJ, and ENTJ, confirming Mary McCaulley's observation of the commonality of "TJ" types. This pilot study adds to the literature demonstrating the value of type in determining majors and career fit.*

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FIELD NOTES

The Influence of Personality on Innovation: A Phenomenological Study.

Bendotti, B. (2017). The Influence of Personality on Innovation: A Phenomenological Study. Dissertation: D. Ed., Organizational Leadership, Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Pepperdine University.

SUMMARY: Innovation is not only a 21st century buzzword, but more and more the way of doing business. Thus, identifying innovative people, personality styles, and behaviors is a relevant exploration today. This qualitative dissertation explored the lived experience of organizational innovation in 12 Extraverted Intuitive Perceiving (ENXP) entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs (employees who are specifically tasked with bringing innovation to a business). Specifically, the study investigated how ENXPs experience innovation through observing, experimenting, networking, and questioning when being innovative. In addition, the investigation asked how these entrepreneurs applied innovative practices to their businesses.

A phenomenological methodology was used to discover and assess the meaning associated with the life experiences of all twelve ENXP subjects (6 male/6 female and 6 ENTP/6 ENFP—divided evenly) who participated in 60 to 90-minute interviews. The study did not offer the MBTI® assessment but asked for confirmation of their psychological type as either ENFP or ENTP; in addition, participants were required to have had at least 3 years of experience running an intrapreneurial

department, and 3 years of experience relying on innovation as a primary sustaining factor for their department or business.

Analysis of the interviews included insights into the relationship between how ENXPs live—unstructured and spontaneous—that inspires innovation. Dominant extraverted Intuitive types value a team approach, such as a brainstorming process, that promotes innovation. A consistent focus on external factors motivates them to carry out their innovations, such as to improve client experiences, or promote the health of their business. 🗨️

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This dissertation has a small, yet in our mind significant, mistake in the literature review, where Dr. Bendotti referenced the MBTI assessment as being created by C. G. Jung. However, we include this study as worthy of attention because it is a great example of the value of qualitative research to plumb the depths of specific experiences, behaviors, and attitudes of type.*

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A replication study of personality types in students in a professional pilot baccalaureate degree program.

Fussell, S. G. (2017). A replication study of personality types in students in a professional pilot baccalaureate degree program. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL.

SUMMARY. Although there have been several studies analyzing the personality types of pilots, there have been few studies analyzing the personality types of aviation students. Understanding the relationship between student personality and learning style can lead to more efficient and effective curricula design for aviation education programs and flight training schools.

In 1998, Wiggins assessed personality types of students enrolled in a professional pilot program at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Wiggins' study assessed the students' attitudes toward different teaching methods used by instructors and compared learning preferences of the students to their personality types. Fussell's study replicates Wiggins' and added the Kolb Learning Style Inventory (KLSI) to compare the learning styles of aviation students to population norms.

The study sample of 141 aviation students ranged from freshmen to seniors, 9 females, 31 males, enrolled in the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical

University in spring 2017. Students completed the MBTI® assessment and the KLSI to analyze both personality types and learning styles, respectively. The prevailing MBTI type of the sample had preferences of Introversion, Sensing, Thinking, and Judging, or ISTJ. The second most prevalent type found among the aviation students was ISTP, a difference in the orientation dichotomy for Perceiving. When compared to population norms, ISTJ and ISTP was significantly over-represented in the aviation student sample. In comparison with Wiggins (1998), Fussell's study found the same over-representation of ISTJ but at higher percentages (e.g., an 85.37% of Sensing types in Fussell's sample compared to 69.45% in Wiggins). No significant relationship was found to indicate that personality preferences were related to the four learning of the KLSI. 🔄

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