From the Editor

This year we offer a variety of studies to consider. Moyle and Hackston address criticisms of the MBTI® assessment and theory before moving into an explication of the value of employee development. Desmoulins-Lebeault and Gajewski add to the literature with an incentivized experimental process to analyze personality and risk aversion. Gjurković and Šnajder conducted a linguistic analysis of Reddit posts to predict personality type. Sitzmann, Ployhart, and Kim conducted a large data analysis from The Myers-Briggs Company's database to link the theory of occupational strength with personality heterogeneity. Hoffarth offers a dissertation on personality testing and self-development in corporate America post-WWII.

There were a number of studies last year using MBTI theory to program bots, e.g., to make parole board decisions or to understand decision-making more broadly. These are interesting and innovative studies, but we didn't include them because they are not primarily about the MBTI, theory or application, itself. The researchers were not experts on the MBTI system, nor did they consult one and their questions were not about the value of the MBTI in this application. It may be that these types of studies can open up new possibilities for the MBTI, but they're not directly relevant to practitioners and people who use knowledge of type in their lives.

We want to hear from you as well: what quality research is being conducted on type and/or the MBTI in your circles? What areas of research do you think are important?

Kesstan Blandin, Ph.D.
Director of Research
Editor, Journal of Psychological Type—
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.

Personality and Risk Aversion

Desmoulins-Lebeault, F., Gajewski, J. F. and Meunier, L. (2018). Personality and risk aversion. *Economics Bulletin, 38*(1), 472–489.

SUMMARY: The study of personality assessment and risk aversion is growing, but there has been little research specifically using the MBTI® assessment in research on risk aversion. Desmoulins-Lebeault builds on a paper by Filbeck to examine this area in business and counseling fields. The author started with 333 business school students and used an incentivized experiment process. The initial hypothesis was that people with preferences for Introversion, Sensing, Feeling, and Judging would be more risk averse.

The authors used a lottery task to test the participants' risk aversion. Participants chose lotteries presented in order of increasing risk. Ten participants were randomly selected and their lottery choices were played out. For these ten participants, gains were paid in cash according to their chosen lotteries.

The results seemed to support the initial hypothesis: there were significant preference differences in the proportion of respondents choosing the safest lottery (the sure amount) with scores predominantly for Introversion, Sensing, and Judging. There was not a significant difference in the first analysis for the Feeling dimension. The author and Filbeck also found that women were more risk averse than men, a finding evidenced in a number of studies.

With such a large sample at hand, Desmoulins-Lebeault was able to confirm Filbeck's initial hypothesis that the effects concerning Introversion, Judging, and risk aversion are strong. The MBTI may be an insightful tool to use in research on risk aversion in various fields.

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=192**

Gjurković, M. and Šnajder, J. (2018). Reddit: A gold mine for personality prediction. *Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Computational Modeling of People's Opinions, Personality, and Emotions in Social Media*, 87–97.

Reddit: A Gold Mine for Personality Prediction

SUMMARY: One of the prohibitive problems in the field of personality prediction is the difficulty in acquiring large numbers for the dataset. It can be difficult, and costly, to administer assessments to large groups. Gjurković and Šnajder use a thoroughly modern approach in their attempt to address that problem. By using Reddit as a resource they created the MBTI9k dataset, a collection of data with over 9k users and nearly 23 million comments. Reddit is the largest online forum on the internet with many subforums specific subjects, including ones where users discuss their MBTI® types.

The authors didn't administer the MBTI, or any assessments, to anyone, relying instead on publicly available information, e.g. comments and flair, to predict personality with users self-reporting their MBTI types. Gjurković and Šnajder then conducted a linguistic analysis on the MBTI9k dataset and compared the results of the analysis predicting personality type to users' self-reported MBTI preferences. Results found clear features that match the various poles of each personality dimension. The authors claim they matched scores between 67% and 82% on the individual dimensions and 82% accuracy for exact or one-off accurate type prediction, which is comparable with reliability results of the standardized tests.

We live in a post-Cambridge Analytica world, where the specter of privacy invasion and data mining hangs over all online information gathering efforts now. Information posted on Reddit is publicly available, though not explicitly labeled as for such purposes. While predicting personality from Reddit posts appears harmless enough, we acknowledge the call from various fields for more ethical discussion of such data collection efforts.

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Personality Assessment for Employee Development: Ivory Tower or Real World?

SUMMARY. This article addresses key criticisms of the MBTI assessment with logical, reasonable, research-backed points and insights. The authors cover a comprehensive range of critical points: trait versus preference, test-retest reliabilities, prediction validity, factor structure and the absence of neuroticism, fake-ability, and Barnum effects.

The majority of the article is an excellent essay on employee development: what it is, its value, and the criteria for choosing the best assessment. Levels of self-awareness predict outcomes for well-being, the authors point out, thus an instrument that is accessible, engaging, and a vehicle for self-awareness is optimal. "In development, the focus is not the scores on the assessment but what is done with those scores (p. 6)."

In assessing criteria for the best instruments to use in employee development, the authors indicate the need to predict developmental outcomes rather than performance. And they close with a provocative suggestion for more research on what they are calling experiential validity, which not only relies on opinions from various experts, but brings the test taker's perspective into account.

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A Process Model Linking Occupational Strength to Attitudes and Behaviors: The Explanatory Role of the Occupational Personality Heterogeneity

SUMMARY. Prior research and theory have established that people tend to select occupations that are a good match for their personalities and consist of people with similar attributes. The current study looked at how situational conditions of occupations influence personality heterogeneity of an occupation, rather than individual differences. Using a sample of 178,087 individuals employed in 315 occupations (provided by The Myers-Briggs Company), the authors propose a process model that seeks to explain how occupational strength influences personality heterogeneity, which in turn affects attitudes and behaviors.

Strong occupational situations are those that provide clear environmental clues regarding desirable behaviors and attitudes. Two aspects of occupational strength were used: autonomy (level of freedom to determine tasks and make decisions) and task significance (level of seriousness and impact of decisions). Three indices of attitudes and behavior were used: job satisfaction, tenure, and turnover intentions.

Higher levels of autonomy and task significance were positively correlated with job satisfaction and tenure, and negatively correlated with turnover intentions. However, occupational autonomy was not significantly related to personality heterogeneity. That is, high autonomy did not increase nor restrict differences in personality in an occupation. High task significance was significantly negatively related to heterogeneity, having a restrictive effect. Not all personalities are equally equipped to manage situations where one's decisions can have a very serious impact on others.

Among other implications of the study, the authors note that the degree of personality heterogeneity in occupations, occupational strength, and the "modal" personality (archetypal personality type of an occupation) should be available as people consider career choices. Occupational type tables that certified practitioners employ in advising on career choices indicate levels of personality heterogeneity and a modal personality type can be assembled from the representations of each dichotomy.

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Building the Hive: Corporate Personality Testing, Self-Development, and Humanistic Management in Postwar America, 1945–2000

Hoffarth, M. J. (2018). Building the hive: Corporate personality testing, self-development, and humanistic management in postwar America, 1945–2000.

University of Pennsylvania

SUMMARY. A main theme in Hoffarth's thesis is that management techniques evolved in corporate America after WWII (1945–2000) creating an environment that encouraged consideration of individual differences in personality and behavior. The author contends that this development constrained the ways people lived and worked inside and outside the office. This thesis explored a perspective that self-discovery and self-actualization are more constraining than liberating for people. The author puts forward the term "hive psychology" as a phenomenon that emerged through bringing together individual adjustment (a concept that arose after WWII) and concepts of self-actualization/self-development in the 1970s.

Personality assessments such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) enabled the corporate elite to use assessments in a way that was "seemingly more democratic, participative and inclusionary." Many analyses are explored in depth by the author, including historic, cultural, social and political changes that occurred in America over the course of six decades.

The author laid groundwork for clarifying a sudden rise in popularity of the MBTI upon its transition into corporate America institutions through the collaboration between Isabel Briggs Myers and Mary H. McCaulley, aided by Consulting Psychologists Press® (CPP®, Inc.) taking over publication of the assessment and establishment of the Center for Applications of Psychological Types® in 1975.

By the early 1990's, personality tests had become indispensable in corporate America, and the MBTI, known world-over, facilitated a focus on teamwork, communication and leadership. In management development programs it was used for team-building exercises, problem resolution, and for executive coaching. Overall, Hoffarth presents a clear, thorough and valid portrayal of the history of personality testing in postwar America.

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