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Personality Type as an Indicator of Teacher Career Selection: Elementary Teacher or Special Education Elementary Teacher

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PERSONALITY TYPE AS AN INDICATOR OF TEACHER CAREER SELECTION: ELEMENTARY TEACHER OR SPECIAL EDUCATION ELEMENTARY TEACHER

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An Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Lindenwood University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Art June 30, 2000

This study examined the relationship between elementary teachers and special education teachers and their preferred MBTI type. The sample consisted of 49 elementary teachers (25 regular classroom and 24 special education) within the public school system in Lincoln and Warren counties in Missouri. The subjects were all Caucausion females ranging in age from 22 to 52 years with an educational level ranging from Bachelors degree to Masters degree plus. The sample reported from 1 to 30 years of teaching experience. Each participant was asked to complete the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and a demographic questionnaire. Chi-square analyses and the two-sample t-statistic were computed at the 0.05 level of significance. The results indicate that ther was no difference between preferred MBTI types of elementary teachers and special education teachers.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

It has long been thought that a person's personality type has a distinct impact on his or her career choice. According to Isaacson and Brown (1993) Anne Roe and John Holland, two widely respected personality-based theorists, both believed that the appropriateness of an occupation for a specific individual depends on that individual's personality. Past research has shown considerable proof that personality type and career selection are connected. People who choose careers which fit with their particular personality type tend to be happier and perform better in their jobs.

When examining the background of personality type, the name Carl Jung often comes to mind. According to Jungian theory, one is born with a predisposition for certain personality preferences (Kroeger & Thuesan, 1988). These preferences include four pairs of opposites: Extraverted vs. Introverted; Sensing vs. Intuitive; Thinking vs. Feeling; and Judging vs. Perceiving. The first pair of opposites, Extraverted vs. Introverted, was initially conceived by Jung (1917, cited in Monte, 1995) in an attempt to examine the differences between the therapeutic approaches of Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler. Jung believed Freud demonstrated a preference for "things in the external world" (Monte, 1995, p.325). This led Jung to believe that Freud was an extravert Adler, on the other hand, presented as an introvert because his "focus is more subjective with the accent on the individual's striving for inner security" (Monte, 1995, p. 325). Monte, 1995 states that Jung was not satisfied with the simple division of personality into two rigid types so he added four functional types: sensation, intuition, thinking and feeling.

With the addition of the last set of preferences, judging or perceiving, one can get a true picture of how people interact with the world, prefer to gather data, prefer to make decisions, and prefer to orient their lives. According to Kroeger and Thuesan (1988) Jung believed that ones preferences reflect genetic predispositions and the effects of ones earliest moments. " As life develops, your environment greatly influences the direction your preferences will take" (Kroeger & Thuesan, 1988, p. 10)

If Jung was correct in his theory that people have different types of personality and these different types affect interaction with the world, gathering data, making decisions, and orienting his/her life, then it would be impossible to believe that personality would not play a part in career choice. Holland (1959, cited in Apostal & Marks, 1990) states that the influence of personality on career development was recognized many years ago. Understanding and describing the influence that personality type has on career choice is currently of major interest to career theorists and researchers.

This study is just one of many that is designed to study the connection between personality type and career choice. Specifically, it attempts to determine if there is a link between personality type (as assessed by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) and career selection among elementary teachers and special education teachers.

According to Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998) the MBTI is a self-report inventory based on the personality theory of C.G. Jung. It indicates the basic preferences of people with regard to perception and judgement. The effects of each preference, singly and in combination, can be put to practical use. It is intended for use

with grades 9-16 and with adults. The MBTI yields 4 different scores which, when put together in different combinations, provides a profile consisting of 16 different personality types: Extraversion vs. Introversion, Sensing vs. Intuition, Thinking vs. Feeling, and Judgement vs. Perception. These profiles are used to describe one's attitude towards the world and everyday life and the function by which one perceives information and judges perceived information in order to make decisions.

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is any relationship between teacher career selection (Elementary Teacher vs. Special Education Teacher) and personality type, as measured by the MBTI. Due to the difficulty obtaining a large enough sample size to produce statistically significant results using all 16 types, as described by Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998), it was decided to compare preferences on the four individual scales (EI, SN, TF, and JP) with career selection.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Past studies have revealed a strong link between personality type and career selection. Some of these past studies indicate a more prevalent personality type among the following career selections: pharmacists, lawyers, probation officers, librarians and teachers. In reviewing these different studies as well as several more, it has been determined that personality type is indeed a strong predictor for career selection.

Theory of Career Development

John O. Crites developed a Career Mastery Inventory (CMAS) in the 1960's. According to Crites (1996) the CMAS was developed from a program of research on vocational maturity. Crites (1996) stated that one of the variables directly related to realism of career choices was personality and this was one of the six factors that career counselors need to examine when determining the degree of career development. Crites (1981, cited in Peterson & Nisenholz 1995) also stated that the practice of career counseling can fit within the framework of the various major theoretical approaches to counseling, such as person-centered and behavioral; however, as a counseling speciality, career counseling has had a number of theoretical formulations specifically associated with it to aid in the understanding of how careers and lifestyles develop. "Career development theory tends to be multidisciplinary, combining psychological, sociological, and even economic ideas and terms" (Peterson & Nisenholz, 1995, p. 303).

Herr and Cramer (1979,1984, cited in Peterson & Nisenholz) identified five major types of approaches to career development:

1. The trait-factor, or matching, approaches. These approaches relate personal

traits such as aptitudes and interests to characteristics required by a given job.

2. Decision theory. In decision theory the person chooses between vocational alternatives by using concepts unique to this approach.

3. Situational or sociological emphases. In these approaches the emphasis is on situational factors such as location in space and time, political and social factors, ethnic, religious, and family beliefs, and value systems.

4. Psychological personality approaches. This perspective takes into consideration the individual's personality structure and needs.

5. Developmental approaches. Adherents of these approaches emphasize the person's long-term development.

All of the above mentioned approaches to career development have been used in the past. However, this investigation into career selection will primarily focus on the psychological/personality-based approach.

The psychological/personality-based approach is evidenced through the work of John L. Holland and his vocational personalities and work environment typology. Holland (1997) listed the following six principles as the background of his typology (1) the choice of a vocation is an expression of personality, (2) interest inventories are personality inventories, (3) vocational stereotypes have reliable and important psychological and sociological meanings, (4) the members of a vocation have similar personalities and similar histories of personal development, (5) because people in a vocational group have similar personalities, they will respond to many situations and problems in similar ways, and they will create characteristic interpersonal environments, and (6) vocational satisfaction, stability, and achievement depend on the congruence between one's

personality and the environment in which one works. The basic premise behind Holland's theory, as stated by Isaacson and Brown (1993) was that a person expresses his/her personality through his/her career choice. Bolles (1996) stated that in Holland's theory, all jobs, careers, skills, and personality types are reduced to just six clusters or families: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, or Conventional. Peterson and Nisenholz (1995) go on to state that Holland believed that environment can also be classified into the same six categories and people search for environments in which they can comfortably express themselves. Holland (1997) further stated that people search for environments that allow them to exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes, and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles. Holland's theory directly supports the idea that if one examines his or her personality type prior to career selection, it would lead to increased career satisfaction as well as better performance while on the job. "More explicitly, it is assumed-other things equal-the congruence of person and job environment leads to job satisfaction, stability of career path, and achievement. Conversely, incongruence (i.e., person and job are mismatched) leads to dissatisfaction, instability of career path, and low performance" (Holland, 1996, p. 397).

Holland (1996) also states that Vocational Identity provides a simple explanation of career stability or instability. For example a person with a good sense of identity has a stable picture of his or her goals, interests, skills, and suitable occupations. Therefore he or she are more likely to seek out careers that are congruent with his or her personal characteristics. DiRusso, Carney and Bryan (1995) agree, when personality orientation and work environment are congruent, individuals are more satisfied and fulfilled in their

careers, but when a mismatch occurs between personality and environment, a person's career is less satisfying and fulfilling.

Theory of Personality Type and The MBTI

A theorist who investigated personality type was Carl Jung. The MBTI is an instrument based on the personality theory of Jung. Isabel Briggs Myers and her mother, Katharine Cook Briggs developed the questionnaire "to see if it was possible to 'indicate' Jung's types so that Jung's theory could be tested and, if validated, put to practical use" (McCaulley & Martin, 1995, p.219). McCaulley and Martin (1995) stated that career assessment was the motivation behind the development of the MBTI. Myers saw many people in World War II doing jobs they hated in an attempt to be patriotic. She believed that Jung's ideas could be put to use when trying to find a better fit between work and personality.

"Many of the users of the MBTI are career counselors" (Berens, 1990, p.4); however, the MBTI has many applications in addition to career counseling. According to McCaulley and Martin (1995) all applications of the MBTI are meant to show how type differences can be used constructively in making individual decisions, understanding and communicating with others, and helping groups become more productive. The current study will focus on the application related to career selection.

"Career development specialists are charged with the task of helping individuals identify and define their uniqueness and how their unique characteristics fit into the world of work as into their whole life" (Berens, 1990, p. 7). This task can be made easier through the use of the MBTI. Myers and McCaulley (1985,cited by Apostal, 1991) stated

the personality dimension of Sensing-Intuition , as assessed by the MBTI is particularly influential in career interest development and occupational choice.

Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998) continued by stating the dimension of Thinking-Feeling is just as important as the dimension of Sensing-Intuition because the Sensing-Intuition dimension explains ones' preferred way of gathering information and the Thinking-Feeling dimension explains ones' preferred way of decision making. Heavrin (1992) went so far as to state that the MBTI provides valuable information relating to the kind of work people would likely enjoy and what is likely to interest them over the long term. Healy and Woodward (1998) believe that the MBTI can also be used to help one overcome career obstacles. They stated that "although the MBTI is designed to assess proclivities rather than deficits, relationships with obstacles are probable because of the nature of the bipolar scales. Each scale indicated a tendency to lack the converse constructive proclivity. In other words, one's high MBTI scores indicate attitudes and tendencies useful in accomplishing some career tasks, but also indicates a lack of preference for other tasks that may also improve one's career" (Healy & Woodward, 1998, p. 75).

Career counselors must be cautious when using the MBTI with some clients, especially clients whom "appear to be highly stressed, quite anxious, or depressed" (Abella & Dutton, 1997, p. 20) due to the fact that such clients "might misreport themselves" (Voorde & Berens, 1990, p. 29). Voorde and Berens (1990) go on to state that some clients have adapted so strongly to their context that they do not see themselves as they really are. Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998) support this idea. The example that they used was "a Sensing type raised in a family in which the

parents and siblings prefer Intuition may learn to value Intuitive qualities over Sensing qualities, attempt to develop those qualities, and therefore answer as an Intuitive type" (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998, p. 120).

Personality Types Within Specific Careers

The relationship between personality type and career selection has been examined for years. Over the last 10 years alone there have been hundreds of different studies examining the relationship between ones' personality type and one's career selection. The following studies are just a sample of the studies that have been conducted. They examine personality types of people in the following careers: pharmacy students, attorneys, probation officers, librarians, and medical students.

Lowenthal (1994) conducted a study designed to determine the most widely occurring personality type of pharmacy students and pharmacy practitioners. It was believed that, if the congruence of the MBTI personality preferences of students from four different schools of pharmacy can be demonstrated, then other schools of pharmacy can apply the conclusions. Lowenthal wanted to determine if MBTI preferences were similar between pharmacy students and practicing pharmacists. This would allow Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to identify students who would not succeed in the pharmaceutical field.

Lowenthal (1994) stated that the data was collected from VCU's School of Pharmacy students during orientation days for five consecutive years, including entering students from all classes as well as one graduating class. The data collected from pharmacy students in other schools was provided through cooperation of faculty

members. MBTI preferences of licensed pharmacists were collected at pharmacy association meetings and workshops throughout the state.

Lowenthal's (1994) collected data was analyzed according to group size and chi-square values were calculated. The study yielded the following results (1) students will self-select health care professions and appropriate curricular options when given the opportunity, (2) schools of pharmacy need to review and modify their recruiting and admission practices to help bring a more diverse group of students into the profession to better meet the needs of client-oriented pharmaceutical care practice, (3) neither E nor I seem to be predominate in the different health care professions; slightly more practitioners prefer S over N; many more practitioners are F and most are J, (4) female VCU students were more extraverted, more feeling, and more judging than their male colleagues, (5) the preferred MBTI type of VCU students was Introvert-Sensing-Thinking-Judging (ISTJ), (6) no significant differences were found between the MBTI preferences of the students at VCU and those of other schools, and (7) I/ESTJ are the predominant personality types of both students and practitioners.

Richard (1993) examined the relationship between personality type and career selection, using 3,014 practicing attorneys. According to Richard (1993), all of the participants in this study were American Bar Association members. The attorneys were asked to complete the Myers-Briggs type Indicator. Richard (1993) stated the results of the study indicate the predominant personality type among attorneys was Introvert-Intuitive-Thinking-Judging. Richard's research showed that 57 percent of all lawyers prefer Introversion compared to 43 percent preferring Extraversion. This is significant when compared to the 75 percent of adults in the United States who prefer Extraversion.

This holds true for both men and women. However, when looking at gender differences among lawyers, 41 percent of males and 49 percent of females prefer Extraversion. According to Richard (1993) about 70 percent of the U.S. population prefers Sensing. In contrast, 57 percent of all lawyers prefer Intuition. No significant gender differences were found.

The third scale of the MBTI is where the largest gender difference is found. On the Thinking-Feeling scale, studies show that approximately 60 percent of all men in this country prefer Thinking to Feeling, while only 35 percent of women do. Among lawyers, however, the figures tell a different story. Fully 81 percent of male lawyers preferred Thinking, as did 66 percent of female lawyers. Averaged together, these thinkers represent 78 percent of all lawyers.

According to Richard (1993) on the final scale of the MBTI , in general population, 55 percent of people have a Judging preference while 45 percent prefer Perceiving. Lawyers have a 63 percent preference for Judging and a 37 percent preference for Perceiving.

Richard (1993) went on to state that the legal profession is strongly concentrated among less than half of the different 16 types on the MBTI. In fact, the following four types represent more than half of all lawyers: ISTJ, ESTJ, INTJ and ENTP. According to Richard (1993) the results of this study has convinced an increasing number of law schools to incorporate the MBTI into their repertoire of tools used in assisting students when making occupational decisions.

Sluder and Shearer (1992) further support the link between personality type and career selection in their study of probation officers. A total of 206 probation officers were

surveyed. The MBTI, along with a survey instrument, was presented to each probation officer attending training sessions. Officers completed both instruments anonymously.

The subjects were made up of 52.7 percent male and 47.3 percent female. Race/ethnicity divisions were 66.3 percent white, 23.9 percent Hispanic, 6.8 percent Black, and another 4.0 percent indicated preferences in other categories. Subjects ranged in age from 22 to 74 years, with a mean age of 34.3 years. The average number of year's experience was 3.01.

The findings from this study indicate that 40 percent of all of the probation officers examined were classified as either ESTJ or ISTJ. According to Sluder and Shearer (1992), relatively few probation officers were classified in the Intuitive, Feeling, and Perceptive preference grouping. Sluder and Shearer went on to state, further research should be completed to determine whether particular MBTI types are better performers, have higher levels of job satisfaction, or suffer higher levels of job burnout.

Scherdin and Beaubien (1996), using 1600 librarians conducted a fourth study of the correlation between personality type and career selection. The respondents represented a random sample of librarians from the membership scrolls of the American Library Association and the Special Library Association. Each participant was required to complete the MBTI and a demographic questionnaire.

The study conducted by Scherdin and Beaubien (1995) yielded the following preferences: 63 percent Introverted, 60 percent Intuitive, 61 percent Thinking, and 66 percent Judging. The two most frequent types among librarians were ISTJ with 17 percent and INTJ with 12 percent. Scherdin and Beaubien go on to state that these

findings contrast with the traditional ISFJ preference which is currently assigned to librarians by most career counselors. Extroverts were a rarity in this particular study. ESTP and ESFP preferences were reported by just 1 percent of the respondents.

Lester (1995) also conducted a study examining the correlation between personality type and career choice on medical students. The purpose of this study was to provide students with information which may help them decide between different specialties. In 1993,psychological-type data was collected from 14 of 32 cardiologists and 28 of 44 pathologists. The MBTI preferences of the two groups were similar. Combining the cardiologists with the pathologists, 45 percent of the physicians were ISTJ and INTJ types. When compared to the personality type of family practitioners they differed on the Extraversion-Introversion scale and the Thinking-Feeling scale.

MBTI as a Predictor of Career Selection

The MBTI has not only been used to determine a link between current career selection and personality type, it has also been used to determine future career selection as examined in a study conducted on 141 LD high school students. The subjects were enrolled in a LD resource room program in two large high schools in northern Virginia. Humes stated that the age range was 14 through 18 years, with 101 boys and 40 girls.

According to Humes (1992) each subject was given the MBTI-AV and the SDS-E. The results indicate that there were statistically significant differences between the MBTI-AV types and SDS-E codes. The personality types preferred by at least 10 percent of the students, as a group was ENFP, ESFP, ESTP, and ENTP. The SDS-E scores indicated the vocational combinations chosen by at least 10 percent of the students included realistic-investigative (RI) and social-artistic (SA). Spearman pairwise

correlations signified only a weak relationship between personality configuration and vocational interests as assessed by the MBTI-AV and SDS-E. Results of this study indicate that the proposed link between personality type and career selection may not be true for every person in the intended population. However, the results did provide some implications for high school counselors to note. First, "personality-wise, LD high school students in resource rooms place predominately along the Extraversion-Perception (E-P) MBTI continuum and that careers related to this temperament axis should be explored with them" (Humes, 1992, p. 364). Second, in the general population, 60 percent of the people prefer Judging (J); in this sample subpopulation 67 percent preferred Perceiving (P).

Garden (1997) chose to examine psychological type as a predictor of future career paths of 341 software technical professionals in small high-tech companies. Each subject was given the abbreviated version of the MBTI as well as a questionnaire. Results indicated the type distribution was predominantly INTJ. When examining future career paths, the different personality types showed significantly different choices. The results indicated: E's preferred managerial positions while I's preferred technical, S's preferred managerial positions while N's preferred technical positions, challenging projects, and owning their own business, T's preferred managerial, technical, and owning their own company while F's preferred challenging projects, and J's preferred managerial and technical while P's preferred challenging projects and owning their own business.

Katz, Joyner, and Seaman (1999) also used the MBTI when examining career goals, specificity of career goals, or level of certainty with reference to career goals.

Participants consisted of 427 freshman and sophomore students who were enrolled in 18 classes taught by the first author.

The different treatment conditions consisted of: MBTI and an interest inventory joint interpretation group, 99, MBTI only interpretation group, 108, interest inventory only interpretation group, 114, and control group,106. The results indicated that the joint interpretation group showed a higher rate of change than participants in any other group. Katz, Joyner, and Seaman (1999) state that their findings lend support to the use of the MBTI as a vocational counseling instrument.

MBTI and Teaching Career

Sears, Kennedy and Kaye (1997) examined future career selection and personality type further. They examined the personality type of 4,483 participants who were in an early teaching experience program. This study had two primary objectives: the first was to determine the personality type of the subjects and the second was to identify the personality type of 886 students who completed their preparation to become teachers.

The participants consisted of 4,483 students who completed the Freshman Early Experiencing Program at Ohio State University during an 8-year period from fall 1977 to spring 1984. Data was collected by administering Form F of the MBTI and gathering information from OSU's Alumni Office five years later. The information received from the Alumni Office consisted of a list of students who successfully completed a baccalaureate degree in education from OSU and a list of students who, for a variety of indeterminate reasons, did not obtain this degree and the education major (elementary, secondary,

general K-12, etc.). This data was then subjected to an initial comprehensive log-linear logit-model analysis followed by a logit-model configural frequency analysis.

According to Sears, Kennedy and Kaye (1997) the results indicated that students who preferred S-F-J profiles tended to remain in education subsequent to an exposure to the realities of teaching during their freshman year. Other significant results gained from this study indicated that SFJ's were attracted to elementary education while NTJ's were more likely to choose higher levels of education. Sears, Kennedy and Kaye (1997) state that teachers who graduate with kindergarten through grade 12 certification in areas like music, art and physical education were sensing (S), thinking (T) and perceiving (P). These findings are supported by Hadfield and McNeil's (1994) study on preservice elementary teachers to determine a relationship between their personality type and mathematics anxiety.

Hadfield and McNeil (1994) reported finding ENFP, ISFJ, ESFJ and ISFP to be the most prevalent reported personality types among preservice elementary teachers. According to Hadfield and McNeil's (1994) results certain personality types are attracted to the elementary school teaching profession. These finding support the proposed link between personality type and career selection, especially between elementary level educators and higher level educators. Lennon and Melear (1994) report that when education majors are grouped according to major (elementary, special education, etc.) they are comprised of a somewhat homogeneous group with approximately half of the students being of the SF function.

Smith, Munday and Windham's (1995) findings also support the findings of Sears, Kennedy and Kaye (1997). This study by Smith, Munday and Windham (1995)

found that among secondary teachers, NT's were more prevalent. Intuitive/Thinking types are creative, analytical, logical, and imaginative. N/T's tend to migrate toward higher levels of education due to their strengths. Analytical and logical thinking are used more in higher educational levels than they are in elementary levels.

In his book People Types & Tiger Stripes, Gordon Lawrence (1996) answers the question "What types commonly become teachers?" Lawrence (1996) states that elementary teachers have the following type preferences: ISFJ 17.9 percent, ESFJ 12.4 percent and ENFP 10.2 percent. Lawrence (1996) does not have a separate category for Special Education Teachers at the Elementary level.

Martin (1995) also examined which personality types are more likely to choose teaching as a career. His findings are somewhat different from Lawrence's (1996). Martin (1995) found that ISFJ's and ESFJ's indicate a preference to be a teacher in grades 1-12. ESFP's and ESFJ's preferred elementary teaching, while ENFP's and ESFJ's opted for teaching Special Education. Overall, it seems unanimous that a teacher of any level will have a preference for Feeling over Thinking and will tend to lean toward a definite preference for Extraversion over Introversion. However, the preferences of Sensing vs. Intuition and Judging vs. Perceiving are not clear.

The MBTI is not only used as a predictor of career selection; it may also be used as a possible indicator of future success in a chosen career. Sprague (1997) explored this issue further. According to Sprague (1997) matching personality types between student teachers and cooperating teachers may increase overall ratings given to the student teacher. This may also be true when considering teacher-principal personality matches as overall ratings of job performance. Boersma, Kienholz and Jevne

(1989) state that University courses in individual differences have traditionally focused on differences associated with ability, rates of learning, strengths and weaknesses, and needs as assessed by standardized tests.

The reviewed literature strongly supports a hypothesis that personality type is a strong indicator of career selection and career success. As mentioned throughout this review of literature, personality type plays a part in everything from career selection to career stability and job performance. The author believes that a study on the personality type of elementary teachers and Special Education teachers at the elementary level may reveal a difference in preferred personality type. Such a study could prove to be beneficial for predicting career success of future educators. If every future educator were given the MBTI before selection of a preferred field it could possibly prevent premature teacher burnout.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is any relationship between career selection (Elementary Teacher vs. Special Education Teacher) and personality type, as measured by the MBTI. Due to the difficulty obtaining a large enough sample size to produce statistically significant results using all 16 MBTI types it was decided to compare preferences on the four individual scales with teacher career selection.

Null Hypotheses

This study examines 4 null hypotheses:

1. There is no relationship between the extraversion/introversion preference in Special Education and Elementary teachers.

2. There is no relationship between the sensing/intuition preference in Special

Education and Elementary teachers.

3. There is no relationship between the thinking/feeling preference in Special Education and Elementary teachers.

4. There is no relationship between the judging/perceiving preference in Special Education and Elementary teachers.

Chapter 3

Method

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 24 Elementary Special Education teachers and 25 Regular classroom teachers at the Elementary level within the Lincoln County and Warren County public school system in the state of Missouri. The two groups were comprised of 100% Caucasian females. Group one (Regular classroom Elementary teachers) ranged in age from 22 to 52 years. The mean age was 36.52 years (SD=10.86). Group two (Special Education teachers) ranged in age from 23 to 50 years. The mean age for group two was 35.21 years (SD=9.25). Group one had a mean of 12.68 years (SD= 10.55) of teaching experience while group two had a mean of 10.08 years (SD=8.41) of experience. Both groups consist of teachers with varying levels of education ranging from a Bachelors degree (BA) to a Masters degree plus (MA+). Group one was comprised of 40% BA, 24% BA+, 32%MA, and 4% MA+. Group two consisted of 25% BA, 33.3% BA+, 37.5% MA, and 4.2% MA+.

Table 1

Demographic Information

	Regular Education Teachers	Special Education Teachers
Age: (Mean)	36.52	35.21
Yrs. of Exp.: (Mean)	12.68	10.08
Level of Education:		
BA	10	6
BA+	6	8
MA	8	9
MA+	1	1

The sample used in this study was a sample of convenience consisting of Elementary teachers and Special Education teachers. The Elementary teachers were chosen by asking for volunteers at faculty meetings. All Special Education teachers within the two counties participated in this study due to the relatively lower number of available subjects.

This study has limited generalizability, due to the limited sample size and demographic characteristics. The results of this study are generalizable to Lincoln County, Missouri, Warren County, Missouri, and other counties with similar demographic patterns. However, this study and its results could provide a framework for future studies which could provide information that may be generalizable to other parts of the state or country.

Materials

Form M (hand-scoring) of the MBTI was used. According to Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998) Form M is a self-administered questionnaire consisting of 93 forced-choice questions, resulting in preference scores on four bipolar scales: extroversion-introversion, sensing-intuition, thinking-feeling, and judgement-perception. Whichever of the two scales on each of the four bipolar scales receives a higher preference score is coded as the preference for that scale, resulting in one of the sixteen types (such as ESFP, etc.).

Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998) stated that standardization data for the MBTI consists of percentile norms for the four indicator scores derived from small samples of high school and college students. In the 1960's the Educational Testing Service published the MBTI. Since that time the MBTI has been frequently used to

determine a link between personality type and career selection. This supports the use of the MBTI as the primary instrument in this study.

Split-half reliabilities for the four scales on form M are listed in the .80s and .90s according to Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998). The validity of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is often questioned because of its structural model of bipolar discontinuous types. However, it is an excellent example of a construct-oriented test.

The MBTI was a good choice for this study because it was relatively easy to administer and was not overly expensive. The MBTI was designed to be used with adults and it has good reliability.

The second instrument used was a demographic form developed by the author in consultation with her advisor and a professor of statistics and research methods (see Appendix A for a copy of the form). The demographic form consisted of a control number and a checklist for ethnicity, gender, and occupation (Special Education teacher or Regular Classroom teacher). A place was provided for the subject to write in their number of years of experience, age, and level of education.

At the bottom of the demographic questionnaire was a statement reguarding confidentiaility and informed consent. The participants were assured that information identifiying them or their responses would not be included in writing within this study.

Procedures

This study is a correlational study designed to determine the relationship between personality type and teacher career selection, primarily elementary teacher or special education teacher at the elementary level. Subjects consisted of volunteers who attended faculty meetings within the Lincoln County and Warren County school districts.

Each subject was given a packet containing the demographic questionnaire and the MBTI Form M booklet and answer sheet. The participants were instructed to return the completed MBTI Form M answer sheet and the demographic questionnaire. In return, the participants were promised a copy of the abstract from this thesis, along with the results of their MBTI.

Chapter 4

Results

Descriptive statistics calculated include n (the number of responses), mean, standard deviation, and t scores for both the Regular classroom Elementary teachers and Special education Elementary teachers for the following variable in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

	Regular Education Teachers			Special Education Teachers			
	n	mean	S.D.	n	mean	S.D.	t
Extraversion:	14	11.84	5.91	12	11.50	6.52	0.191
Introversion:	11	9.16	5.91	12	9.54	6.47	-0.216
Sensing:	15	14.92	5.02	11	12.33	7.26	1.455
Intuition:	10	11.08	5.02	13	13.67	7.26	-1.455
Thinking:	3	5.04	5.73	1	5.33	4.40	0.046
Feeling:	22	18.60	5.73	23	18.67	4.40	-0.046
Judging:	13	13.32	6.28	16	13.29	5.79	0.016
Perceiving:	12	8.68	6.28	8	8.70	5.79	-0.016

*$p<0.05$

The two-sample t-statistic was computed to determine the statistical significance of the difference in MBTI subscale scores for the Regular Elementary classroom

teachers and the Elementary Special Education classroom teachers. The t-test determined that there was no significant difference between Regular Elementary teachers and Elementary Special Education teachers on all of the MBTI subscale scores at the 0.05 level of significance.

In addition to the t-test based on each subscale score, a preference style was identified for each subject for each of the four MBTI variables. To find the dominant preference for each subscale, preference was determined by the subjects' higher score on one of the two poles. If the scores were equal preference was given to I, N, F, or P depending on the dichotomy.

Table 3

Crosstabulations of MBTI Preference Styles and Teacher Career Selection

Preference	Regular		Special Ed.		X^2
	f	%	*f*	%	
1) Extraversion	14	56%	12	50%	0.177
Introversion	11	44%	12	50%	
2) Sensing	15	60%	11	45.8%	0.987
Intuition	10	40%	13	54.2%	
3) Thinking	3	12%	1	4.2%	1.002
Feeling	22	88%	23	95.8%	
4) Judging	13	52%	16	66.7%	1.090
Perceiving	12	48%	8	33.3%	

*p<0.05

Chi-Square analyses were performed to examine the relationship between preference style and teaching career selection. Table 3 suggests that Regular Elementary teachers prefer Extraversion (56%) over Introversion (44%) while Special Education Elementary teachers show no clear preference between Extraversion and

Introversion with both receiving 50%. On the SN dichotomy Regular Elementary teachers preferred Sensing (60%) to Intuition (40%). Special Education Elementary teachers demonstrated more of a preference for Intuition (54.2%) over Sensing (45.8%). Both groups of teachers preferred Feeling to Thinking (88% of Regular Elementary and 95.8% of Special Education). Fifty-two percent of Regular Elementary teachers and 66.7% of Special Education Elementary teachers preferred Judging over Perceiving on the JP dichotomy.

As evidenced in Table 2 and again in Table 3, there is no statistically significant difference between the preferred MBTI subscale scores and teacher career selection. This makes it difficult to make any clear assumptions based on the data offered.

Chapter 5

Discussion

For this sample, there were no significant relationships found between MBTI preferences and teacher career selection. However, a weak relationship between the participant groups did indicate a difference on the Sensing vs. Intuition dichotomy. When reexamining the four null hypotheses: 1.) There is no relationship between the extraversion/introversion preference in Special Education and Elementary teachers; 2.) There is no relationship between the sensing/intuition preference in Special Education and Elementary teachers; 3.) There is no relationship between the thinking/feeling preference in Special Education and Elementary teachers; and 4.) There is no relationship between the judging/perceiving preference in Special Education and Elementary teachers, the author found no statistical evidence to support the rejection of the four null hypotheses.

From visual inspection of the data gathered as well as the crosstabulation performed, it is immediately evident that, with few exceptions, the subjects tended to have very similar MBTI preferences. In support of Sears, Kennedy and Kaye (1997) and Hadfield and McNeil (1994) the preferred MBTI type of Regular Elementary teachers tended to be ESFJ's however, Special Education Elementary teachers tended to ENFJ's or INFJ's. Although these preferred types indicate a difference on the SN dichotomy the numbers do not represent a statistically significant difference.

According to Lawrence (1996) the most common personality type for elementary teachers are ISFJ, ESFJ, and ENFP. This directly supports the indicated preferred

personality type of ESFJ for the elementary teachers in this study. However, this brings up a question about the indicated preferred personality types (ENFJ or INFJ) for the elementary special education teachers in this study. Why did the special education teachers in this study tend to prefer Intuition to Sensing? Perhaps this question is best answered by Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, and Hammer (1998) when they described NFJ's as relying on insights about people and complex pictures of the future and being encouraging and motivational to energize people to grow.

Limitations:

The main limitation of this study was the sample size (49). This sample, although it was not small when compared to the entire elementary teacher population within Lincoln and Warren counties (over 10% of the total population), it is considered small when trying to suggest implications to the rest of the state or even country.

Other variables, which may have limited the finding of significant differences between MBTI preference and teacher career selection, were gender and race. Both variables were not representative of the entire Elementary teacher population in the country or even within the state of Missouri. All subjects were Caucasion females.

Recommendations:

Though no significant relationships were found between MBTI preferences and teacher career selection in this study, the question as to the relationship between MBTI and career selection in general still remains valid. Through previous research, evidence had been found to support a link between MBTI preference and career selection, even in the teaching field. Further research needs to be performed in an effort to understand how one's MBTI preference affects teacher career choice. Future studies might attempt

to get a larger, random sample, which better represents the targeted population. Through future studies, researchers may be better able to understand the link between personality type and teacher career selection. This information would be very useful to help insure better teacher job performance and fewer cases of teacher burnout.

Appendix A

Control Number _____

Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer all questions:

Ethnicity: (circle one) White, non-Hispanic African-American Hispanic

Asian-American Native American Other

Gender: (circle one) Female Male

Occupation: (circle one) Regular Classroom Teacher (K-6)

Special Education Teacher (K-6)

Age:_____

Years of Experience:_____

Level of Education:_____

Confidentiality and Informed Consent: No information, which identifies individual participants or their responses, will be provided in any writings on this study; results will be reported in aggregate form only. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and may be withdrawn or refused at any time. By completing and returning the enclosed forms, the participants acknowledge that they understand the nature and purpose of the are freely agreeing to participate.

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